



Participate in a Community Forum at Crystal Garden Friday and Saturday

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — One of B.C.'s leading experts on sustainability planning, Mark Holland, will kick off the City of Victoria's community forum this Friday night at Crystal Garden to update the Official Community Plan. Local Victorians Adrien Sala, Cara Segger, Daniela Cubelic, and Franc D'Ambrosio will join Holland in a public discussion about the future of Victoria over the next 30 years.

"When it comes to shaping the future of our City, everyone has something important to contribute," said Mayor Dean Fortin. "Whether it's how you feel about housing, transportation, downtown vitality, or our economy - we want to capture the community's vision for Victoria well into the future."

Recently appointed to the City of Vancouver's Greenest City Action Team alongside such leaders as Dr. David Suzuki and former BC Premier Mike Harcourt, Holland is widely known for his ability to "make sense of sustainability" in a pragmatic way that leads to action. His past work also includes serving as the project coordinator for the Southeast False Creek development project, site of the 2010 Olympic Village and a leading model of sustainability in North America.

Friday's event begins at 4 p.m. with refreshments and live music by the Gord Clements Quartet and an opportunity to view displays and information related to the Official Community Plan process. The public discussion with Holland begins at 5:30 p.m.

Opportunities for the public to engage continue throughout the day Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with hourly presentations and discussions on topics such as local food, the economy, population growth, heritage preservation, and housing in Victoria. Results from the recent citizens' survey will be on display as well as presentations on the CRD Regional Growth Strategy, the Rapid Transit Project by BC Transit, and the City's draft Downtown Core Area Plan. Training sessions for citizens interested in leading Community Circle discussions in their neighbourhood will also be available.

The format for Saturday is drop-in with fun activities for youth and free child care provided.

An Official Community Plan sets out a vision for the City and about how the City should change over the next 30 years. Council, staff and citizens will refer to the community plan to help make decisions on things like where to locate affordable housing, how the city will respond to climate change, community's transportation priorities, and how the City will provide recreational services. The current plan was developed in 1995.

The Official Community Plan will be updated over the next 12 months. For a full list of event activities and more information visit www.shapeyourfuturevictoria.ca

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For More Information:

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Backgrounder on Speakers

Mark Holland is one of BC's leading sustainability planners and thinkers. In 2009, he was appointed to the City of Vancouver's Greenest City Action Team alongside such leaders as Dr. David Suzuki and former BC Premier Mike Harcourt. A LEED™-accredited planner, Mark's past work includes serving as the project coordinator for the Southeast False Creek development project, site of the 2010 Olympic Village and a leading model of sustainability in North America.

Mark is considered one of the more innovative thinkers on sustainable cities of his generation including being credited with authoring many emerging ideas and frameworks such as the 8 Pillars of a Sustainable Community, the 10 Pillars of a Sustainable Business, Agricultural Urbanism, Urban Magnets and subculture precincts for downtown revitalization, and the acclaimed Resilient Cities Manifesto in 2009. His concept of Experience-Driven Planning when applied to the Town of Ladysmith won the top award for small town planning in Canada in 2009 from the Canadian Institute of Planners, and in 2004 he was selected as one of *Vancouver's top 40 under 40* by Business in Vancouver Magazine.

An acclaimed speaker, Mark is widely known for his ability to "make sense of sustainability" in a pragmatic way that leads to action.

Adrien Sala is a freelance journalist and contributor to CBC Radio One on a local, provincial and national platform and is the host and producer of Eat Out Loud, a bi-weekly podcast for Eat Magazine. He has served as editor-in-chief for the street-level arts and culture magazine, The Metropolitan and currently owns Shoebox Studio, a sound studio in Market Square designed for podcast production.

Cara Segger has been actively involved in the Victoria community for many years. With a background in geography from the University of Victoria her research includes housing affordability, sustainable urban growth, dockland revitalization, food security, and the landscape of homelessness. Currently she provides graphics and marketing services to a variety of profit and non-profit organizations in between supporting the Victoria Youth Empowerment Society.

Daniela Cubelic is the owner of Silk Road, located in Victoria's Chinatown and currently serves on the board of the Downtown Victoria Business Association and as chair of the Victoria Dragonboat Festival Society. Over the years Silk Road has received local, national and international acclaim for its quality products, sustainable business practices and commitment to the community.

Franc D'Ambrosio is a local architect and urban designer. He is involved in public and private initiatives that propose the integrated design of environmentally responsible architecture, urban land-use and planning toward the making of more humane and sustainable towns and cities. A LEED-accredited professional of the Canadian Green Building Council and Director of Smart-Growth BC, Franc's work has earned him numerous awards over the years.