

1. Introduction



Victoria West, or “Vic West,” is a waterfront neighbourhood nestled between the Gorge Waterway and Outer Harbour. It is in the traditional territories of the Lekwungen people and has a rich history that stretches back thousands of years.

The Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan provides detailed policies to guide future development and change in the Victoria West community over the next 25 years. It identifies potential public and private sector investments and initiatives that support the community’s vision for the future.

This plan builds on the 1986 Victoria West Plan. Over the last 30 years, Vic West has seen extensive changes. Former industrial lands have been transformed into master planned sub-neighbourhoods, including Songhees, Dockside Green, Railyards and Roundhouse. A diversity of housing has flourished in the residential neighbourhoods east of Alston Street. Regional active transportation corridors such as the Galloping Goose and E&N Trail connect Vic West to downtown and other parts of the region. Growing numbers of commuters use Vic West’s major roads. Community-led projects such as public

food gardens, placemaking, public art and the community centre have transformed public spaces and built community.

This plan, which was launched in spring 2016, was developed in collaboration with the community to ensure future growth is shaped by those who know the neighbourhood best. Residents, business owners, employees, community groups and development professionals were all involved in shaping the neighbourhood to keep it a great place to live, work, play and visit.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

By 2041, the city of Victoria is expected to have grown by 20,000 people. The City's Official Community Plan provides high level guidance for where and how those people may live, work, shop and play in the city. The neighbourhood plan translates this guidance to the local level, including:

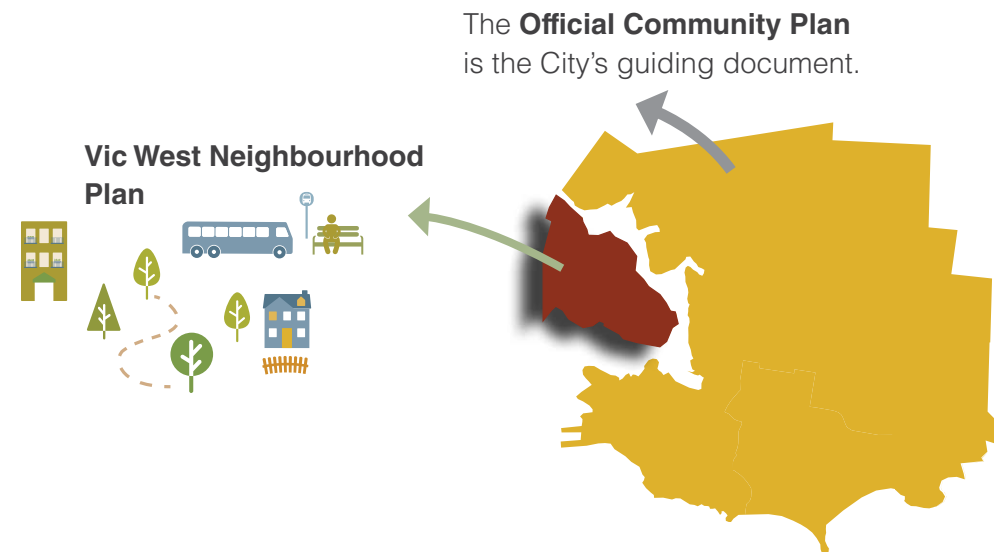
- What kind of housing is desirable? Where should housing, shops and services be located? And what should they look like?
- How will people move around the neighbourhood?
- How can parks and public spaces be improved?
- What will future residents and businesses need?

The neighbourhood plan will largely be accomplished through private development. The City uses a neighbourhood plan with other related policies, guidelines and regulations to evaluate the impact and suitability of public and private projects and initiatives related to land use, development, infrastructure, parks, community facilities and transportation. Private and public projects will be reviewed for their ability to help achieve the plan's vision and goals.

The City also uses a neighbourhood plan as a guide in preparing operating and capital budgets, planning work priorities and determining public improvements.

The neighbourhood plan will be implemented over a 20-30 year time frame, although regular monitoring will take place throughout the life of the plan.

The Vic West Neighbourhood Plan provides more certainty about the community's vision for the area – for developers, for the City and for residents.



How to use this Plan

The neighbourhood plan helps guide future development by refining the Official Community Plan (OCP) direction for appropriate density, form and design of new development and adjacent streetscapes. The OCP remains the City's guiding bylaw for considering new development, and where conflicts arise, the OCP takes precedence. The OCP defines Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas which include guidelines for the form and character of new development. The neighbourhood plan may contain recommendations to make changes to the OCP so that the two documents are in alignment.

The neighbourhood plan also provides guidance to consider programs, projects and partnerships which can be considered for inclusion in the City's capital plan or general operations which can be funded in whole or in part as amenities resulting from development; or which might be achieved through partnerships with the community.

Vic West Plan Process



Figure 2. Plan Process

A New Neighbourhood Plan

The plan vision and goals set a future direction for how Victoria West will develop, evolve and change over time. During the first phase of community engagement, citizens were asked to help build the vision and goals for the future of Victoria West. The vision and goals were used to guide the development of the strategies, policies and actions in this plan.

Neighbourhood Vision Statement

“ In 25 years, Victoria West is a safe and welcoming community with diverse people, housing and businesses. The old and new are knitted together to create an eclectic and exciting mix of people, places and culture. It is a leader in neighbourhood sustainability, showcasing strong businesses, active transportation, a vibrant waterfront, healthy ecosystems, local food and innovative housing. ”

Neighbourhood Plan Goals

The following neighbourhood plan goals were developed based on community input.

Topic	Goals	Chapter
Transportation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve connections to destinations inside and outside Vic West 2. Tame the major roads to make them safer and more pleasant for people 3. Design for all modes of travel 	3
Parks, Open Space & Waterways	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve access, trails and facilities along the waterfront 2. Protect and enhance Vic West's shoreline ecosystems 3. Enhance neighbourhood parks to welcome all ages and activities 4. Protect the urban forest 	4
Residential Areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage a mix of housing sizes, costs, tenures and types 2. Create more affordable housing 3. Showcase new, innovative housing types 4. Protect existing historic houses 	6
Urban Villages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen and diversify the mix of businesses in urban villages 2. Improve the walkability, bikeability and public realm in and around urban villages 3. Support new housing within a 5 minute walk of urban villages 	8
Employment Lands	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain the working harbour and adjacent industrial lands to support the maritime industrial cluster 2. Protect and enhance light industry and other employment in Vic West 3. Celebrate the industrial heritage of the neighbourhood 	9
Heritage	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect the historic character of significant buildings and important sites 2. Celebrate and interpret the heritage of the neighbourhood 	10
Infrastructure and Green Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity to meet the future needs of residents and businesses 2. Use stormwater management to restore ecological processes. Become a leader for sustainable buildings and infrastructure 3. Identify and address neighbourhood climate change impacts 4. Develop strategies for adaptation to climate change and sea level rise 	11

Figure 3. Plan Goals

Neighbourhood Plan Goals (cont'd.)

<p>Neighbourhood Food System</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create more places to get and grow food close-to-home 2. Integrate food production into public places 	<p>12</p>
<p>Neighbourhood Well-being</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refresh indoor community facilities to support residents of all ages in a growing community 2. Create more childcare options to support families with children living in Vic West 3. Foster a safe and inclusive community for all residents 	<p>13</p>
<p>Arts, Culture and Placemaking</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knit the old and new parts of the neighbourhood together 2. Preserve the unique, eclectic feel of Vic West 3. Showcase Vic West's unique identity through public art and urban design 4. Encourage events, programming and community-led projects to bring neighbours together in public spaces 5. Support creative entrepreneurs 	<p>14</p>

Figure 3. Plan Goals, cont'd.