



Victoria West Neighbourhood Plan

Engagement Summary of Feedback on Draft Plan

The draft Vic West neighbourhood plan was released to the community for feedback in August 2017. Every household was mailed a brochure with the plan highlights, links to the plan and online survey, and the list of events to attend. The plan was presented to the community at a series of open houses, pop-up displays and neighbourhood events.

- 188 people completed the online survey.
- 110 people attended two open houses
- 80 people dropped by the City’s booth at the Vic West Corn Roast
- 50 people attended three pop-up events
- 89 people attended four Pizza and a Planner events
- 25 youth participated at Skate Park pop-up
- 25 attended a presentation to Vic West Land Use Committee
- Pop-up up at swim-a-Month Club
- Presentation to Gorge Waterway Initiative



The following is a summary of what we heard from the community.

Overall Support

Overall support for the draft plan is strong. 81% of survey respondents were very or somewhat supportive and 96% of sticky dots at the open houses rated the draft plan as very or somewhat appropriate.

“I feel if the plan were implemented the Vic West area would be more active and interesting.”

“From my reading of the plan, I see a well thought out development strategy that aims to maintain the liveability of the area whilst acknowledging the inevitable growth that is coming.”

“This Plan keeps what is important in the community while allowing for more incremental and fine grain density growth as the population increases.”

While levels of support for the plan were high, some community members expressed significant concern about new housing types introduced into areas of the community and height allowances in urban villages. There were also concerns that these land use decisions would lead to large scale redevelopment of the traditional residential areas and a large number of people moving into the neighbourhood.

***The following support levels combine “very” and “somewhat” supportive rankings.**

Urban Villages

Support for the key initiatives related to strengthening urban villages ranged from 69% to 85%. The highest support was for establishing the Westside Village area as the heart of the neighbourhood. There was strong support for Westside Village to become more outward facing and better integrated with its surroundings. Some expressed concern about allowing six storeys and the impact that development would have to parking in the area. The lowest level of support (69%) was for initiatives to strengthen Craigflower Village. Many expressed an interest in seeing more shops, services and housing nearby. Others were concerned about changing the character of the village by allowing 3 – 4 storeys for multi-use buildings or residential in the area. Some expressed concerns about current issues around traffic management and traffic calming and the need to make the area safer for pedestrians and cyclists. In the Catherine Street and Edward Street area, the strong support was tempered by concerns about



building heights and changing the character of the neighbourhood.

Transportation & Mobility

Levels of support for key initiatives for transportation and mobility were high. 100% of open house participants and 89% of survey respondents were very or somewhat supportive of the three initiatives:

- completing the pedestrian and cycling routes in the Neighbourhood Active Transportation Map
- better connecting the neighbourhood to existing regional multi-use trails
- assessing key intersections, crossings and areas for improvement

Comments included concern that traffic congestion and traffic calming should be made a higher priority. Commuter traffic continues to be an area of concern for the neighbourhood. Concerns were also expressed about the impact to safety about combining pedestrian and cycling improvements.



Housing – Traditional Residential

Levels of support for different housing types in the traditional residential areas of the neighbourhood ranged from 60 – 83% by survey respondents and 87 – 100% by open house participants. The lowest level of support (60%) was for reducing the size of lot where duplexes are allowed, with 24% of survey respondents somewhat or very opposed. Concerns related mostly to the loss of yards and parking and impact to the larger lot character. The highest levels of support were for protecting heritage and re-using heritage buildings by allowing additional housing. General concerns related to new housing types impacting parking availability and traffic congestion and maintaining the look and feel of the neighbourhood. Some expressed concerns about bridge capacity to support more people living in the neighbourhood.

Housing – Urban Residential

Levels of support for different housing types in the urban residential areas of the neighbourhood ranged from 71 – 77% by survey respondents, with similar and higher levels of support from open house participants. Concerns related to taller heights overshadowing neighbouring housing. Some respondents felt that five storeys was too tall for Esquimalt Road and Lime Point. A few respondents felt that redevelopment and taller buildings on Skinner would hurt the character of the street.



Waterfront

Levels of support for key initiatives to strengthen connections to the waterfront ranged from 87 – 96% from survey respondents, with nearly 100% support from open house participants. Feedback included prioritizing the clean-up of the shore and water, funding and installing more docks, adding more features to enhance the park areas.

Jobs

Levels of support for key initiatives to support jobs in the neighbourhood ranged from 72 – 81% from survey respondents, with almost 100% support from open house participants. Many expressed support for having high paying jobs in the neighbourhood. There were many concerns expressed about the environmental impact of industry in the harbour. Some expressed concern about the height of buildings proposed in the initiatives.

Parks

Levels of support for key initiatives to strengthen connections strengthen parks and food systems ranged from 78 – 91% from survey respondents and 100% support from open house participants. There were many comments about off-leash areas with mixed opinions. Some expressed concern about the loss of pedestrian walkways to cyclists. There was strong support for more food growing and community gardens.