



SUMMER 2023

CITY OF VICTORIA | Newsletter

connect

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt People.

OUR DWTN

BROUGHT TO YOU BY CITY OF VICTORIA

Downtown awaits. See you there!

City Invests \$1 Million in OUR DWTN

Downtown Victoria is getting some additional investment from the City's new OUR DWTN revitalization program to give everyone a safe and enjoyable experience when exploring the city centre.

The new program re-invests in the core and focuses on new programs and activities, beautification, cleaning and enhanced safety. Currently, the area of focus includes Wharf to Blanshard Streets and Belleville to Discovery Streets.

"OUR DWTN is designed to convey our shared ownership in the heart of our city and to instill a sense of community pride in our downtown, and remind us all why we fell in love with Victoria in the first place," says Mayor Marianne Alto.

Council has allotted close to \$1 million to activate and refresh the downtown core with a mix of new retail experiences, pop-up culinary options, recreational and cultural programming, and events and placemaking initiatives – all in a clean and safe downtown.

Watch for lively downtown block parties, summer markets, events and festivals, as well as walking tours and more food trucks. Busing and musical entertainment in key business districts are also in the works.

From May to August, increased VicPD foot patrols in partnership with the City's Bylaw officers' new Feet on the Street program that runs until the end of the year, provide a visible presence, engaging with the business community and proactively enforcing bylaws.

The program also supports enhanced on-call cleaning, new lighting and new indoor and outdoor events for the fall and winter months, with warmth, seating/shelter and the sale of hot food and beverages.

Artistic projections on downtown buildings and a new winter festival consisting of pop-up retail, creative entrepreneurs and maker spaces will bring a refreshed retail experience to downtown in the colder months.

Increased programming, activating storefronts and Victoria's downtown late-night economy will increase safety with more people downtown all hours of the day.

Learn more at victoria.ca/OurDwtN.

City Grant Summer Opportunities

This might be music to your ears...



This summer, apply for up to \$10,000 in Victoria Music Strategy funding or up to \$7,500 in My Great Neighbourhood Grants for a project in your neighbourhood.

Learn more and apply at victoria.ca/grants.



New on the Street: 30 km/h Speed Limits

New 30 km/h signs are up on local streets in the Hillside Quadra neighbourhood. These signs mean that reduced speed limits are now in effect. To reduce the number and impact of crashes, speed limits on all local streets in Victoria are being lowered from 50 km/h to 30 km/h. Local streets are those that are typically in residential areas, do not have a centre line and have lower volumes of traffic. The change will not affect major roads. This summer, signs will be going up in Burnside Gorge, followed by Oaklands in the fall.

More info at victoria.ca/30km.

Beat the Heat

When temperatures rise during the summer, it's important to know the risks associated with excessive heat and take precautions to stay safe and healthy. Be aware of the symptoms of heat illness such as confusion, rash, sweating, fatigue and cramps, and check on those at risk, including seniors over 65 and people with chronic medical conditions.

More info at VictoriaReady.ca and IslandHealth.ca.



Check out **CityVibe** for a listing of fun City-sponsored events this summer.
victoria.ca/cityvibe

A New Home for Victoria Fire Department

The Victoria Fire Department Headquarters isn't the only one to have a new place to call home.

The new state-of-the-art, post-seismic safety facility at 1025 Johnson Street which became fully operational in May includes 130 units of purpose-built affordable homes for low- and moderate-income seniors, families and individuals.

The City owns the first three levels where the Victoria Fire Department operates. With funding from BC Housing, Pacifica Housing owns and operates the top eight storeys. There is also one level of commercial office space.

In addition, BC Emergency Health Services will occupy space to operate a stand-alone, two-ambulance bay as a downtown location for paramedics.

The new downtown facility includes six bays for Victoria Fire Department apparatus, Victoria's first purpose-built Emergency Operations Centre and houses the department's Administration, Fire Prevention, Training, Suppression and Emergency Management divisions.

It is one of the largest mixed-use fire hall developments of its kind in Canada that combines affordable housing and fire department operations. Learn more at victoria.ca/vfdhq.



Victoria Fire Department Headquarters

Maintaining Our City – On the Surface and Underground

As summer approaches, underground and transportation construction projects are underway across Victoria.

This year, work continues on the water, sewer and stormwater pipes that we rely on every day. Underground work on Blanshard, Cook, View, Chatham, Store and Toronto Streets will help prepare the city for earthquakes and changing climate conditions. Above ground, we are focusing improvements on safety, accessibility and livability. Look for new sidewalks, crosswalks, protected bike lanes, traffic calming, EV fast chargers, accessible parking stalls and more. In addition to filling potholes around the city with help from new AI technology, we are paving more streets than ever before, repairing sidewalks and cleaning our streets to keep our roads and sidewalks in good shape. More information and a map of current and planned large-scale projects are available at victoria.ca/roadwork.



Blanshard Street water main upgrades

Climate-Friendly Home Cooling

Don't let the heat get the best of you this summer. Upgrade to a heat pump and keep your home comfortable all year round.

Heat pumps keep you warm in the winter and cool in the summer. It has never been easier with more than \$11,000 available in rebates when switching from oil or natural gas to a heat pump. By making this change, you can significantly reduce your home's carbon emissions and save money. The Home Energy Navigator program can help by providing free support and resources to make your home more climate friendly.

More info at: HomeEnergyNav.ca

Victoria's New 2023 – 2026 Strategic Plan

One of the first tasks of Victoria's new City Council was to develop the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, which includes eight priorities to guide the City's work over the next four years.

- Climate Action and Environmental Stewardship
- Housing
- Transportation
- Parks, Recreation and Gathering Spaces
- Community Well-Being and Safety
- Economic Health and Community Vitality
- Truth and Reconciliation
- Arts, Culture, Music, Sport and Entertainment

The recently adopted Strategic Plan aims to transform Victoria into a more affordable, safer and inclusive city by 2026. The goal is to create a dynamic environment where residents can envision a future for themselves and future generations.

"Collaboration with the community, staff and Council is crucial to realizing this vision and I'm confident that together, we will build a city for everyone," says Mayor Marianne Alto.

The four-year plan prioritizes decisive leadership, innovative approaches to climate action, housing, transportation and meaningful reconciliation with the Lək'wəḡən-speaking Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

The 2023–2026 Strategic Plan serves as a road map, guiding investment of taxpayers' dollars to provide high-quality services and programs to Victoria residents and businesses.

Learn more at victoria.ca/strategicplan.

Park Improvement Projects

Stadacona Park Playground

The City is constructing a new, inclusive and accessible playground in Stadacona Park to replace an aging playground and provide improved amenities for the community. Construction began in May and will be complete by fall 2023. The existing playground will remain open during construction.

Topaz Park

Victoria's newest turf sport fields now open at Topaz Park provide a state-of-the-art playing experience for local athletes of all ages. The sport field project upgrades the previous facility and includes a full-size turf soccer pitch, youth-size multi-purpose field, softball diamond and spectator seating. The City received \$2.4 million in provincial and federal funding to help with the cost of the project.

The replacement and expansion of the turf sport fields is part of an initial \$10 million investment in improvements guided by the Topaz Park Improvement Plan, which includes the new skate and bike parks that opened last year. Design work for the next phase of improvements to Topaz Park is underway and includes new pickleball courts, an upgraded lacrosse box and an improved leash-optional dog area.



Grand opening celebration of Topaz Park's new turf sport fields

Victoria is a Tree City of the World

For the third year running, the City of Victoria has been recognized through the Tree Cities of the World program, an international effort to recognize cities and towns committed to ensuring that their urban forests and trees are properly maintained, sustainably managed and duly celebrated.

Learn more about our urban forest by joining a free monthly tree tour. Visit victoria.ca/recreation to register.

Business Starts Here

The Business Hub at City Hall is a welcoming first point of contact for business start-ups, relocations, expansions, investors and others interested in creating prosperity in the City of Victoria.

The main goal of the Business Hub is to make it easier to do business in Victoria. We're here to help you navigate the City's business processes and connect you with relevant agencies to get your business up and running as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The City's Business Ambassador is available weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Appointments are recommended but you can also drop in, call or email.

bizhub@victoria.ca | 250.361.0629 | victoria.ca/bizhub

Mark Your Calendar

Here is a list of events to help get your summer started!



Victoria Pride Parade
July 9

Celebration of Greater Victoria's 2SLGBTQIA+ community
victoriapridesociety.org



TD Art Gallery Paint-In
July 15

Stroll down Moss Street and explore more than 160 Island artists

aggv.ca

Get Growing, Victoria!

July 24 – August 13

Summer seedling distribution



victoria.ca/getgrowing

Victoria Dragon Boat Festival

August 12 – 13



Celebration of sport, culture and diversity in the Inner Harbour

victoriadragonboatfestival.com

Free-B Film Festival

Select Fridays and Saturdays
August 11, 12, 18, 19, 25, 26
9 p.m.



Watch a nostalgic film in the park under the stars at Cameron Bandshell

victoriafilmfestival.com

CityVibe – A Summer of Music and Culture

Explore over 200 concerts, festivals, arts programs and family-friendly events in 120 days, in one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Grab your sunglasses, gather a few friends and pick from over 150 free concerts and cultural activities, over 40 festivals and more. There is something new to attend every day of the week from June to September. It's going to be a great summer! Details at victoria.ca/cityvibe.

FREE Community Events:

Downtown Pop-Up Concerts

Thursday – Sunday
Various locations

Downtown is the place to be with free live music at Fort Commons, Broad Street, Songhees Park Plaza and Government Street.

10th Annual Eventide Music Series

Wednesdays in July and August
Centennial Square

Celebrate Victoria's independent music scene with an all-ages free concert series including a food vendor and licensed beverage area.

Beacon Hill Park Concerts

and Arts Programming
Monday to Sunday, afternoons and evenings
Cameron Bandshell, Beacon Hill Park

A variety of concerts ranging from jazz to pop to classical music, as well as dance, wellness, singing and kids programming.

Fisherman's Wharf Park Concerts

Saturdays and Sundays
12 Erie Street

Enjoy afternoon concerts by the water with lots of space to spread out a blanket and take in the sights and sounds of the park.



Cameron Bandshell

Folk Music Series

Tuesday evenings in July and August
Cameron Bandshell, Beacon Hill Park

Folk music lovers won't want to miss this weekly series of traditional and contemporary folk music concerts.

Youth Music Series

Wednesdays in July
Cameron Bandshell, Beacon Hill Park

This showcase of young, up-and-coming musicians is a wonderful way to discover new music and support emerging local artists.



Park Your Ride at the Downtown Bike Valet this Summer

Free, Secure Parking for Your Wheels

Summer Hours

Monday – Tuesday	7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Wednesday – Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Friday	7:30 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Saturday	10 a.m. – 10 p.m.
Sunday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

More info: victoria.ca/bikeparking



Book the NeighbourSpace

Do you know there is a free downtown space to meet with your neighbours and plan community projects?

NeighbourSpace is located at 711 Douglas Street, beside the Crystal Garden. It includes a meeting room, lounge space, white boards, a resource library and even board games.

Learn more and book your four-hour block of time at victoria.ca/neighbourspace.



Summer Youth U-PASS

Get free, unlimited transit this summer and beyond for 13–18 year old Victoria residents with the BC Transit Youth U-PASS. 12 and under always ride free.

[Upass.victoria.ca](https://upass.victoria.ca)

Connect
With Us

engage@victoria.ca | engage.victoria.ca

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