

districts

3



INTRODUCTION

The Downtown Core Area Plan establishes five Downtown Core Area Districts. As stated in the Introduction, these new Districts do not replace existing neighbourhood names, boundaries or special character areas. Rather, they are a way to recognize that there are unique social, physical and environmental characteristics in certain parts of the Downtown Core Area that cut across neighbourhood boundaries and unite broader geographic areas.

The policies and actions contained in this Section are intended to support each District's current function and general character, while also improving each District's public realm, parks and open spaces, infrastructure, building forms and transportation networks.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

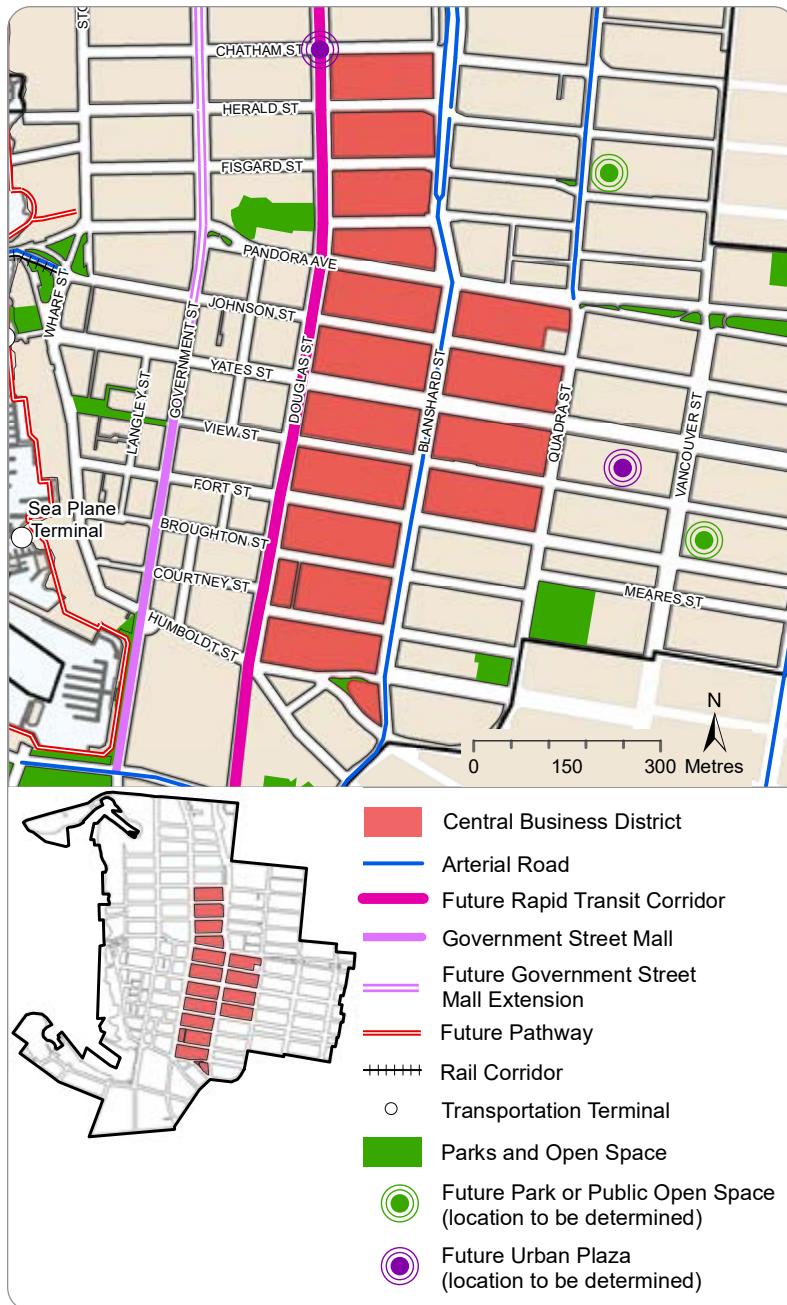
The Central Business District (CBD) is approximately 29.5 hectares (73.8 acres) in size and covers a 15-block area. Eleven blocks stretch northward from Burdett Avenue to Caledonia Avenue between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street; and four blocks are located between Blanshard Street and Quadra Street, bounded by Pandora Avenue to the north and Fort Street to the south. The CBD borders the Residential Mixed-Use District to the east, the Historic Commercial District to the west, the Rock Bay District to the north and the Inner Harbour District to the south. (SEE MAP 9: CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT)

The CBD is the main employment centre for Victoria and the Region as a whole. Its concentration of higher density office buildings helps to attract and retain a range of supporting commercial uses – such as restaurants, cafés, convenience stores, office supply stores, retail stores, hair salons and other personal service businesses, as well as major banks and other financial institutions – to provide the daily amenities and services required by the businesses, employees and residents within the CBD. Hotels also play a significant commercial role in the CBD, supported by the ferry, sea plane, bus and train terminals that are located within walking distance of the CBD.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Central Business District that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That the CBD remains economically healthy, is able to adapt to changing economic and market conditions and reinforces its long-term function as the primary employment centre for the city and the region.
2. That the CBD is able to provide a safe and welcoming environment, rich with amenities for workers, residents and visitors alike.
3. That the CBD is able to provide an adequate land base to primarily accommodate commercial and office development while it grows over the next 30 years.
4. That new development respects the scale, character and function of the CBD.



Map 9: Central Business District

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

LAND USE

- 3.1. Provide zoning within the CBD to accommodate a strong concentration of commercial employment uses, along with such complementary uses as multi-residential development, hotels, restaurants, public institutions, personal service businesses and retail stores.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

- 3.2. Support new development that clearly reinforces and enhances the position of the CBD as the primary employment, commercial and cultural centre for the city and the region.
- 3.3. Ensure that the City of Victoria Economic Development Strategy includes policies and strategies that are focused on improving the economic resiliency of the CBD.

HIGH-DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

- 3.4. Support high density commercial buildings within the CBD to make efficient use of infrastructure and to maintain compact building footprints.
- 3.5. Residential development should be restricted to a maximum density of 3:1 FSR (Floor Space Ratio) within the CBD to reinforce the CBD's function as an employment centre.
- 3.6. Focus higher density development along the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street corridor and along Yates Street to support the density policies of this Plan.

PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED ENVIRONMENT

- 3.7. Support and encourage pedestrian activity within the CBD by encouraging the provision of active commercial street-level uses where appropriate, and well-designed public realm improvements.
- 3.8. Design new developments within the CBD to include ground floor space that is capable of accommodating commercial uses.
- 3.9. Refer to the *Downtown Public Realm Plan & Streetscape Standards* to guide future streetscape improvements.
- 3.10. Provide well-designed public realm services and amenities to support commercial and residential development.

CONNECTIVITY

- 3.11. Improve travel routes between the CBD and surrounding Districts by developing well-designed, clearly marked and safe pedestrian, cycling and transit networks.
- 3.12. Locate through-block walkways to provide strategic access through longer city blocks and meaningful connections with the Pedestrian Network as illustrated in Map 16. (SEE SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY)

TRANSIT SUPPORT

- 3.13. Support the use of transit by encouraging the location of high density transit-supportive uses such as commercial and residential mixed-use development within the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street corridor and along Yates Street.
- 3.14. Support the use of transit by encouraging street-level retail, restaurants, cafés, grocery stores, convenience stores and personal service businesses in new development along Douglas Street and Yates Street.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 3.15. Amend the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* to provide development standards for new commercial, residential and office developments that reflect the scale, density and context of the CBD.
- 3.16. Ensure the sensitive integration of new development with existing heritage properties along the 700 block of Yates Street and the 700 and 800 blocks of Fort Street.

FORT STREET

- 3.17. Improve the physical condition of the public realm along Fort Street through public and private streetscape enhancements that encourage pedestrian activity and support retail.

EDGE CONDITION

- 3.18. Ensure that designs for new buildings located along the edges of the CBD consider scale, orientation, setbacks, mass and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding Districts.

PARKING

- 3.19. Provide on-site parking for new developments as underground structured parking.
- 3.20. Consider opportunities to integrate publicly accessible short-term parking as part of new commercial developments where underground structured parking is provided on site.
- 3.21. Consider opportunities to increase the provision of publicly accessible short-term parking in order to meet the objectives of the City of Victoria *Parking Strategy*.

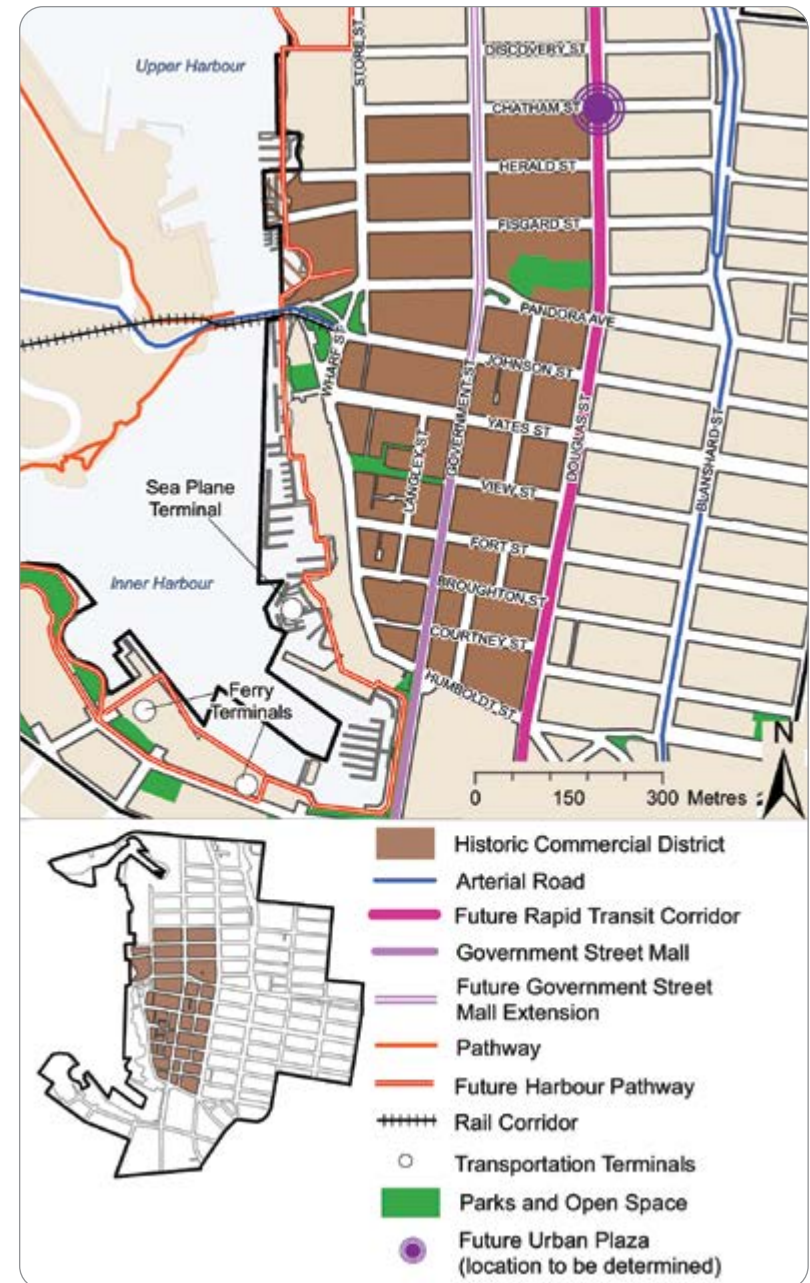
HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The Historic Commercial District (HCD) is approximately 23 hectares (57 acres) in size, and is bounded by Wharf Street and the waterfront on the west, Douglas Street on the east, Chatham Street on the north and Humboldt Street on the south. (SEE MAP 10: HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT)

The HCD forms the primary hub for retail, entertainment and tourism within the Downtown Core Area. The concentration of rehabilitated heritage buildings and attractive streetscapes also serves to attract other uses and activities including offices, hotels, personal service businesses and arts and culture. The HCD includes the Old Town Area, a portion of the waterfront north of the Johnson Street Bridge and Chinatown – which Parks Canada named as a National Historic Site in 2002 to commemorate its status as Canada’s oldest intact and continuously active Chinatown. The HCD also contains a range of other character areas including Bastion Square, which is the oldest part of the city and original site of the Hudson’s Bay Fort Victoria in 1858, as well as Trounce Alley, Broad Street, Market Square and Centennial Square. One of the most prominent features in the HCD is the Government Street Mall, which currently stretches northward from Belleville Street to Yates Street and connects the Inner Harbour with the Old Town Area. Government Street Mall is characterized by its wide sidewalks and attractive streetscaping that complements the surrounding historic buildings and encourages pedestrian and cycling activity, while also accommodating general purpose vehicular traffic and commercial vehicles that provide deliveries and services to the surrounding businesses. The pedestrian-oriented design of the Government Street Mall along with the grid pattern of the local street network serves to maintain reduced speed levels for vehicles.

The HCD is characterized by a “saw-tooth” streetscape that generally rises and falls in height between one and five storeys, with articulated brick and stone facades, buildings located up to the public sidewalk and continuous street-level storefronts.

Ongoing revitalization efforts in the HCD over the past two decades have resulted in the rehabilitation of approximately 85 heritage buildings, upgrades to historic commercial storefronts, and a number of improvements to the public realm through streetscaping, public art and special events programming. These upgrades and improvements have drawn boutique hotels, specialty retail stores, cafés and restaurants to the area and with the help of the Bay Centre, a regional-scale shopping centre on Douglas Street with over 39,000 m² (420,000 ft²) of retail space – cemented the HCD’s place as a destination for tourism, shopping and entertainment.



Map 10: Historic Commercial District

HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Historic Commercial District that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. That the placemaking character of the HCD is retained and continues to contribute to Victoria's competitive advantage as a destination for retail, entertainment and tourism.
2. That programs, strategies and public and private initiatives for the revitalization of the HCD are maintained and supported.
3. That the HCD becomes a model for sensitive integration of new infill development and public realm improvements into the historic environment.
4. That the HCD is able to attract and accommodate growth in the tourism, retail, entertainment sectors.
5. That the compact, diverse, low-scale and small-lot character of the HCD is retained.
6. That the local population base is increased through the integration of residential dwellings on the upper storeys of existing buildings.

HISTORIC COMMERCIAL DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

LAND USE

- 3.22. Provide zoning within the HCD that accommodates a diverse range of active commercial uses such as retail stores, cafés and restaurants, along with complementary uses such as multi-residential development, hotels, public institutions, tourist services and personal service businesses.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCY

- 3.23. Ensure that economic development initiatives undertaken by the City of Victoria reinforce the function and character of the HCD as a destination for retail shopping, entertainment and tourism.

COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL ACTIVITY

- 3.24. Locate active commercial uses such as retail stores, cafés, restaurants and other tourism and entertainment-related uses at the street level to encourage increased pedestrian activity and complement the public realm.
- 3.25. In addition to active commercial uses, consider the location of office use at the street level only where they are located directly adjacent to and have direct access to a lane, alley or through-block walkway.

CENTENNIAL SQUARE

- 3.26. Maintain Centennial Square as a hub for civic activity and special events.
- 3.27. Ensure that any design or redevelopment initiatives for Centennial Square result in a more inviting, active and functional civic gathering space.
- 3.28. Give priority to public realm improvements that enhance connectivity between Centennial Square and surrounding streets.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

- 3.29. Maintain design guidelines and development standards that support rehabilitation of existing heritage buildings and public realm improvements, and that ensure new development is integrated sensitively into the historic context of the HCD.
- 3.30. Continue to support policies, regulations and programs to protect heritage buildings and encourage their rehabilitation, seismic upgrade and re-use.
- 3.31. Retain the HCD's current compact, diverse, low-scale and small-lot character.
- 3.32. Explore the feasibility of extending the term length of the Heritage Tax Incentive Program up to 15 years to encourage the further rehabilitation and seismic upgrading of existing heritage buildings.

RESIDENTIAL USES

- 3.33. Locate residential dwellings on the upper storeys to retain and accommodate more active commercial uses at the street level, except where residential dwellings are located directly adjacent to, and have direct access to a lane, alley or through-block walkway.

PUBLIC REALM

- 3.34. Support and implement public realm improvements that are sensitive to the historic character of the HCD and which reflect the urban design guidelines of this Plan.
- 3.35. Improve public wayfinding in the HCD through streetscape improvements that have a cohesive and consistent design.

CONNECTIVITY

- 3.36. Establish strong Pedestrian and Cycling Networks through the area, with a priority on designated Greenways. (SEE SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY)

GOVERNMENT STREET

- 3.37. Develop and maintain Government Street as a Pedestrian Priority Street as described in Appendix 3.
- 3.38. Extend the retail and pedestrian-oriented character of Government Street northward from Yates Street to Pembroke Street through streetscaping and public realm improvements and appropriate land use to provide an attractive and lively environment that connects the Inner Harbour District through the Historic Commercial District to the Rock Bay District.

PARKING

- 3.39. Continue to support the provision of short-term on-street parking to help maintain the HCD as a focus for active commercial uses including retailing and entertainment.
- 3.40. Ensure that the provision of long-term parking gives consideration to the economic function of the HCD, in balance with the Downtown Core Area Plan's transportation and mobility objectives and policies (SEE SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY).

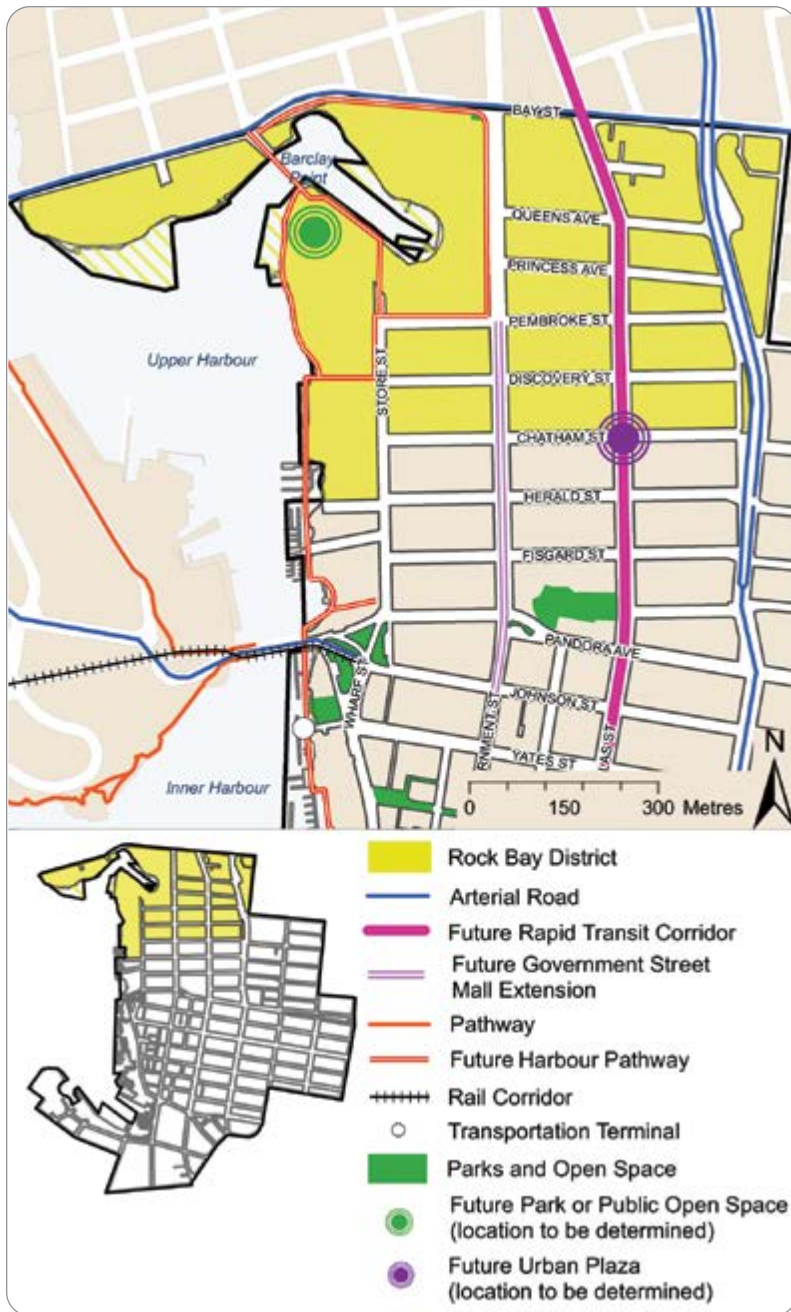
ROCK BAY DISTRICT

The Rock Bay District (RBD) is approximately 44 hectares (110 acres) in size and encompasses the northern part of the Downtown Core Area, including the waterfront area that runs from Herald Street to the Point Ellice (Bay Street) Bridge. It forms part of the Burnside neighbourhood, as far east as Dowler Place and Blanshard Street. (SEE MAP 11: ROCK BAY DISTRICT)

The RBD hosts both marine and non-marine related industrial and industrial-support activities along the waterfront and a blend of other industrial and commercial uses throughout the rest of the District in a mixture of older industrial and commercial buildings, including several heritage buildings. It has limited residential development located primarily between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street.

The District's history as an industrial area, in combination with limited redevelopment, has resulted in minimal upgrading to infrastructure and streetscaping which is evident through overhead utility wires and cables, discontinuous public sidewalks, minimal landscaping along building frontages and streets, limited on-street parking, undefined or informal parking areas between the street and private buildings, minimal pedestrian lighting and limited public park/open space.

The Rock Bay District, unlike the other Districts within the Downtown Core Area, has a significant amount of underdeveloped or vacant land that could accommodate future office, high-tech industries, and limited residential development in addition to its current industrial and commercial development. In combination, the City will undertake future planning for an Arts and Innovation district within the Rock Bay area as outlined in the City's economic development strategy: *Victoria 3.0 – Recovery Reinvention Resilience (2020–2041)*. Planning for the Arts and Innovation district will focus on developing policies and strategies for transforming and strengthening the RBD as a key employment centre for Victoria that supports research and development, well-paying jobs, high-quality public spaces, Indigenous economic development, and climate adaptation.



Map 11: Rock Bay District

ROCK BAY DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Rock Bay District that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. To guide the transformation of the RBD into a key employment centre.
2. To improve the environmental conditions of the RBD through the integration of green and innovative infrastructure, site planning, uses and building technology.
3. To attract and maintain a range of commercial and light industrial businesses to locate within the RBD in order to provide a more diversified and resilient employment base.
4. To develop an employment-based environment that attracts new and emergent employment sectors such as high-tech and other related businesses.
5. To accommodate high density residential and commercial development within the Douglas Street/Blanshard Street Corridor.
6. To integrate a strong public transit network that supports the location of employment uses and activities.
7. To provide new public parks or open spaces in and around RBD for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors alike.
8. To maintain and strengthen the economic function of the working Harbour within the Rock Bay District.

ROCK BAY DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

ROCK BAY LOCAL AREA PLAN

- 3.41. Develop a detailed local area plan for the Rock Bay District that provides greater detail and direction on land use distribution, employment composition, residential development, urban design, transportation mobility, density bonus and amenities, public realm improvements, economic development, green infrastructure, and zoning requirements.
- 3.42. Consider and evaluate new development and public realm improvements based on the policies described in this Plan until such time as a local area plan is completed for the Rock Bay District.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

- 3.43. Support the redevelopment of the RBD as an employment-focused area that provides a balance of industrial support services, light industrial, high-tech, with an accompanying balance of commercial and limited residential development.
- 3.44. Explore the use of financial tools and programs such as density bonusing in order to encourage and support the development of the Rock Bay District as an employment-focused area.

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

- 3.45. Through the *Official Community Plan*, include portions of the Rock Bay District within a Development Permit Area to implement the policies and design guidelines of this Plan.
- 3.46. Ensure zoning for waterfront properties includes development standards and design guidelines to mitigate the impact of industrial operations on the local marine environment.
- 3.47. Continue to support the location of marine-dependent industrial uses and activities along the waterfront portion of the RBD.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.48. Locate residential and residential mixed-use development primarily between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street.
- 3.49. Ensure that residential development is located, designed and sited to mitigate any potentially negative effects on the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities.

MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

- 3.50. Provide active street-level commercial uses along Government Street and Douglas Street.

TRANSIT SUPPORT

- 3.51. Support the location of higher density residential and commercial buildings along Douglas Street to enhance Douglas Street as the primary transit corridor.

CONNECTIVITY

- 3.52. Ensure that all streets and sidewalks provide clear connections for pedestrians to travel between the RBD and the surrounding Districts.
- 3.53. Provide direct, safe, well-designed and strategically located pedestrian and cycling connections across Government Street and Douglas Street as well as to key destinations including parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.54. Support upgrading of infrastructure services in the RBD as new development occurs to increase long-term capacity.
- 3.55. Ensure that infrastructure upgrades support the City of Victoria *Infrastructure Master Plan* and consider the integration of green infrastructure, where appropriate.
- 3.56. Support the use of best management practices to improve the quality and volume of stormwater discharge into the local marine environment.

EDGE CONDITIONS

- 3.57. Ensure that designs for new buildings located along the edges of the RBD consider scale, orientation, setbacks, massing and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding neighbourhoods and Districts.

WATERFRONT

- 3.58. Support the development of a long-range detailed master plan for the redevelopment of the Transport Canada/BC Hydro site in conjunction with ongoing remediation efforts.
- 3.59. Incorporate direct public pedestrian access to the Harbour as part of the site design for new development or redevelopment along the waterfront, except where it may negatively impact the general operation and function of adjacent employment activities that are dependent on direct marine access.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- 3.60. Support the development of a waterfront community park generally located near Barclay Point that provides direct pedestrian and cycling connections with the Harbour Pathway.
- 3.61. Ensure parks and open spaces are well-designed, attractive, functional and integrated with the pedestrian network.

- 3.62. Integrate new parks and open space with the completed Harbour Pathway and with Greenways as identified in the City of Victoria *Greenways Plan*.
- 3.63. Ensure all new public parks and open spaces meet the urban design objectives of this Plan.
- 3.64. Develop specific location and design details for new public parks and open spaces as part of the implementation of the Downtown Core Area Plan.

HERITAGE

- 3.65. Undertake an inventory and evaluation of remaining historic industrial properties in the RBD as potential additions to the Heritage Register.
- 3.66. Support the rehabilitation and re-use of the RBD's remaining heritage properties to celebrate the District's industrial heritage.
- 3.67. Consider extending the Heritage Tax Incentive Program (T.I.P.) throughout the RBD and extend its term up to 15 years to support the adaptive re-use of industrial heritage properties.

TRANSPORTATION

- 3.68. Continue to recognize Douglas Street as a primary transit corridor through transit-supportive land use and development.
- 3.69. Support higher densities along Douglas/Blanshard Street corridor to improve viability of future rapid transit.
- 3.70. Support the policies of the City's *Greenways Plan* to develop Chatham, Store, Pembroke, Government and Bay Streets as Shared Greenways, within the context of the RBD as an employment centre.
- 3.71. Ensure Greenways do not adversely affect the operation or function of industrial and other employment activities in the RBD.

INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT

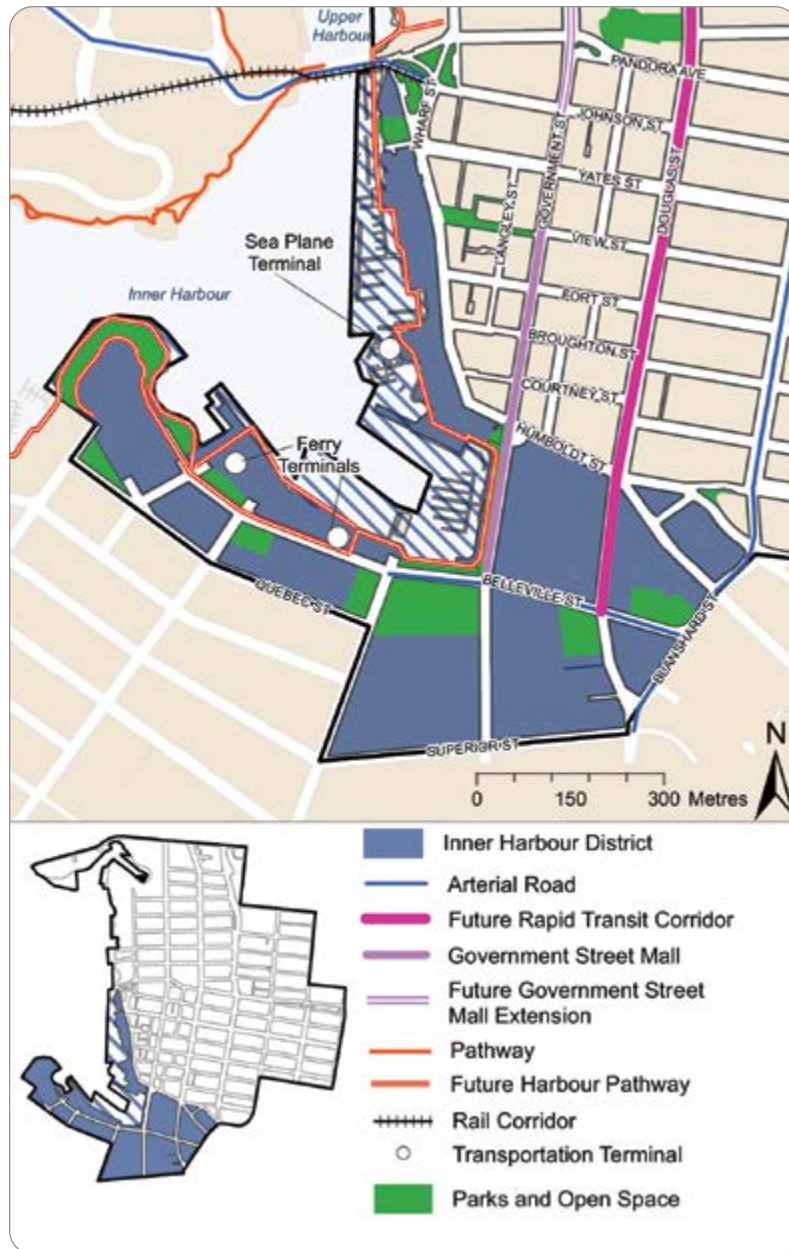
The Inner Harbour District (IHD) is approximately 37 hectares (93 acres) in size and encompasses the waterfront lands located between the Johnson Street Bridge and Laurel Point. The IHD also includes portions of the Legislative Precinct lands in recognition of their proximity to the waterfront and the Inner Harbour. (SEE MAP 12: INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT)

The IHD is recognized both locally and internationally for its picturesque quality, vitality and character. Its waterfront setting attracts tourists, visitors and residents year round, and is noted for its:

- World-class Gateway to Victoria;
- Home to the Provincial Legislature within the historic Parliament Buildings;
- Scenic views across the Harbour;
- Pedestrian-friendly environment and high-quality streetscaping along Government Street and Belleville Street;
- Concentration of historic and modern landmark buildings include the Royal British Columbia Museum, the Provincial Parliament Building and its grounds, the Empress Hotel and the Inner Causeway, which has been designated a Heritage Conservation Area in the City of Victoria's *Official Community Plan*; and
- Prominent public and open spaces where a variety of major public ceremonial, celebratory and special events are held every year.

The IHD is centered on the working Harbour which includes a number of marine-related businesses and activities, including ferry and float plane terminals and mooring for private boats. These marine transportation options, combined with a regional bus depot and a nearby regional railway terminal, make the IHD a major transportation hub and gateway for the city.

The District is also home to a large number of Provincial Government offices and to commercial businesses that serve tourists and Provincial Government workers, such as hotels, retail stores and restaurants, but has limited residential development.



Map 12: Inner Harbour District

INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT – OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Inner Harbour District (IHD) that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. To reinforce and support the location of Provincial Government offices.
2. To successfully maintain and strengthen the IHD as the focus for tourism, government, culture, heritage, and economic development.
3. To develop and maintain a cohesive, well-designed and vibrant waterfront area.
4. To create a more fluid and seamless extension of the public realm northward toward the Johnson Street bridge and beyond, toward the Rock Bay District.
5. To improve public access to the waterfront.
6. To maintain a working Harbour.

INNER HARBOUR DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

- 3.72. Support the location and operation of marine-dependent activities along the IHD waterfront.
- 3.73. Maintain the IHD as a focus for tourism-related activities as well as Provincial Government office and business activities.
- 3.74. Ensure that new development within the IHD accommodates uses that contribute to the vitality and economic health of the area.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

- 3.75. Support the protection and rehabilitation of heritage properties and ensure new infill development and improvements to the public realm are sensitively integrated into the historic environment.
- 3.76. Maintain key public views of the Inner Harbour to meet the urban design objectives of this Plan. (SEE SECTION 6: URBAN DESIGN)

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 3.77. Ensure residential dwellings are part of mixed-use development that includes active commercial uses at the street level.

PUBLIC REALM

- 3.78. Support public realm improvements that meet the urban design objectives of this Plan.
- 3.79. Support public realm improvements that enhance the IHD's role as a gateway to the city for people arriving by sea plane, ferry, bus or train.
- 3.80. Support public realm improvements that result in improved wayfinding and connectivity between the IHD and the rest of the Downtown Core Area.
- 3.81. Encourage the addition of more active street-level businesses fronting onto Belleville Street as part of the potential redevelopment or upgrading of the Belleville Ferry Terminal.

TRANSPORTATION

- 3.82. Establish well-defined, safe and efficient Pedestrian and Cycling Networks, with a priority on developing and enhancing designated Greenways.
- 3.83. Support the continued operation of transportation terminals for ferries, sea planes and bus.

CONNECTIVITY

- 3.84. Ensure that direct public pedestrian connections are available between the Harbour Pathway and Belleville Street and Wharf Street.
- 3.85. Support streetscape improvements that result in a more cohesive and uniform appearance along the length of Belleville Street and Government Street, and extending northward through the Historic Commercial District.
- 3.86. Consider opportunities for improving public access to the water that do not negatively affect the viability and functioning of the working Harbour.

TOURISM

- 3.87. Support the retention of existing and the development of new, tourist and visitor attractions and facilities in order to continue to support and increase the number of tourists and visitors to the IHD and surrounding area.
- 3.88. Support the development or establishment of new visitor attractions that serve to enhance the prominence of the IHD as a world-class destination.
- 3.89. Consider improvements to the wayfinding system to better inform visitors and tourists about key attractions and destinations throughout the Downtown Core Area, including those in the IHD.

SHIP POINT AND WHARF STREET PARKING LOT

- 3.90. Develop a master plan to guide the redevelopment of the Ship Point and the Wharf Street parking lots in partnership with affected land owners as well as public and private stakeholders.
- 3.91. Ensure that the terms of reference for the master plan consider the following elements:
 - Project Stakeholders;
 - Desired uses;
 - Building designs;
 - Public realm improvements;
 - Pedestrian connectivity;
 - Public views;
 - Public access;
 - Development standards;
 - Public amenities;
 - Economic development; and
 - Implementation strategy.
- 3.92. Ensure that the master plan and redevelopment of the Ship Point and the Wharf Street parking lots support the objectives and policies of this Plan.

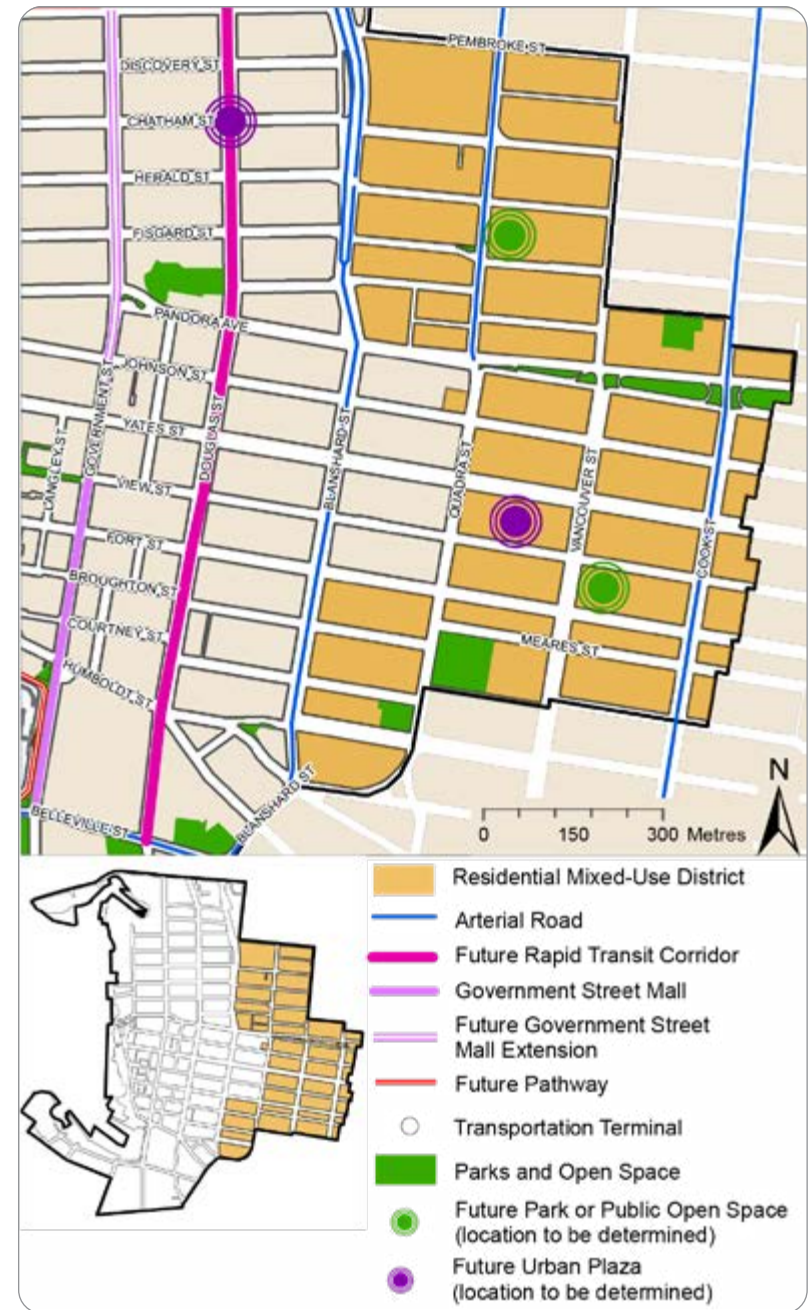
RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT

The Residential Mixed-Use District (RMD) encompasses 53.6 hectares (130 acres), and contains the entire Harris Green neighbourhood along with portions of the North Park neighbourhood and a small portion of the Fairfield neighbourhood. Its general boundaries are Pembroke Street to the north, Meares Street to the south and Cook Street to the east between Meares and Mason Streets, while the small Fairfield portion is bounded by Blanshard Street to the south, Fort Street to the north, Quadra Street to the east and Rupert Terrace to the south. (SEE MAP 13: RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT)

The RMD is the largest of all the Downtown Core Area districts and includes the majority of the residential land base for the area, with some under-utilized or vacant parcels still available. Because of the RMD's close proximity and direct connections with the Central Business District, it is today a mixed-use urban community, with a concentration of compact mid to high-density residential, mixed-use and commercial development. The District also contains several institutional, cultural and recreational facilities, including the Provincial Law Courts, the Royal Theatre, the YMCA and several historic churches.

Fort Street is a special character area corridor within the RMD. It is designated as a Heritage Conservation Area through the Official Community Plan and is recognized for its concentration of heritage properties with smaller scale commercial uses at street level, such as retail stores, restaurants and cafés, creating a lively and active shopping area.

Quadra Street is also a special character area, recognized as a cultural corridor containing a series of prominent heritage landmarks, cultural institutions, and places of worship in the RMD.



Map 13: Residential Mixed-Use District

RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

The policies and actions for the Residential Mixed-Use District (RMD) that are contained in this Plan collectively address the following objectives:

1. To encourage multi-residential development appropriate to the context and function of each neighbourhood and reflects the differences in allowable building heights and density throughout the RMD, along with other land uses, public amenities and services that help to develop complete communities.
2. To ensure new residential development includes active street-level businesses where appropriate, to provide commercial services and activities and increase pedestrian activity within the public realm.
3. To accommodate the development of higher density commercial buildings along Blanshard Street, Pandora Avenue, Yates Street and Fort Street only, in order to keep the Central Business District as the primary focus for higher density commercial development.
4. To support keeping existing commercial uses, such as restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores, medical clinics and personal service businesses, within the District to provide necessary services for the local community, but does not support auto-oriented uses that require large outside storage/ display areas such as car lots.

RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE DISTRICT – POLICIES AND ACTIONS

RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

- 3.93. Amend the City of Victoria *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*, as required, to reflect the design guidelines for residential development as described in this Plan.

MIXED USE

- 3.94. Encourage active commercial and retail uses at street level along Blanshard Street, Yates Street, Fort Street, Quadra Street and Pandora Avenue to encourage increased pedestrian activity and improved vitality.

TRANSIT SUPPORT

- 3.95. Support the location of higher density transit-supportive development along Yates Street.

DENSITY

- 3.96. Develop new zoning for the RMD that includes density levels to accommodate mid-rise to high-rise residential, commercial or office development as described in this Plan, the North Park Neighbourhood Plan (2022) and the Fairfield Neighbourhood Plan (2019).

PUBLIC REALM

- 3.97. Ensure that all streets and sidewalks provide legible and well-designed public realm environments for pedestrians to travel between the RMD and surrounding Districts.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- 3.98. Support the upgrading of infrastructure and utility services as new development occurs to increase long-term capacity.

TRANSITIONS

- 3.99. Ensure that designs for new buildings and improvements to the public realm located along the edges of the RMD consider scale, orientation, setbacks, mass and building height to provide sensitive transitions to surrounding Districts.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

- 3.100. Support the development of a neighbourhood park within the North Park neighbourhood as well as within the Harris Green neighbourhood.
- 3.101. Consider the provision of additional density in exchange for the development of an urban plaza, as part of a private development within the Harris Green commercial centre.
- 3.102. Ensure parks, plazas and open spaces are well-designed, attractive, functional and integrated with both the Pedestrian Network and Greenways.
- 3.103. Ensure all new parks, plazas and open spaces reflect the design guidelines set out in this Plan for public realm improvements.
- 3.104. Identify specific locations and detailed designs for new parks, plazas and open space as part of the implementation of this Plan.