

VICTORIA
ACCORD

Legislative

Precinct

Volume One

Urban Design Manual

prepared
on behalf of
The British Columbia Buildings
Corporation
by
Paul Merrick Architects Limited

June 2, 1994

1-39	map modified to reflection reduction in proposed housing
1-40	stats table modified to reflect removal of 1115m ² (12000 sq. ft.) of housing from program
1-42	illustration modified - housing block removed
1-43	map modified to reflect changes to LP2C, LP2E, deletion of LP3 from guidelines
1-46	map modified to reflect reduction in housing area on LP2E
1-47	stats table modified to reflect removal of 279m ² (3000 sq. ft.) of housing from program
1-49	illustration modified to reflect reduction in housing area
1-50 to 1-52 LP4A, LP4B	LP3 pages deleted; these pages now dedicated to
1-53 to 1-55	deleted from manual
VI-1	references to CD-LP3 deleted, text modified to reflect reduction from four Zones to three and eleven Development Areas to ten.
VI-2,3	maps modified to reflect reduction from four Zones to three and eleven Development Areas to ten
VI-10 to VI-12 CD-LP4	CD-LP3 pages deleted; these pages now dedicated to
VI-13 to VI-15	deleted
zoning stats table	modified to reflect reductions in office area on LP2A and residential areas on LP2C and LP2E; LP3 (V-lot) deleted from table

REVISIONS LIST NO. 2

MAY 11, 1994

TO URBAN DESIGN MANUAL

2-18 through 2-41	deleted
2-18 through 2-42	revised and reformatted to reflect requested division into two sections, Public and Private open space
1-26 through 1-28	revised to include designation LP1A1 and LP1A2
1-28	text highlighted with outlines and courtyard dimension added
1-32	text added to clause 3
1-33	dimension added to graphic
1-34	caption on upper graphic changed
1-36	clause 3 modified
1-37	dimensions added to graphic
1-38	note added to graphic
1-39	clause 3 modified; reference to building heights modified
1-42	additional text
1-43	new clause added (clause 3)
1-46	minor revisions to text re. building heights
1-51 tion	additional building height and storey limit information added to table

REVISIONS LIST NO. 3

MAY 16, 1994

Supplementary Illustrative Material	sections added to volume 2
1-3 manual	note added re. 'descriptive' nature of graphics in
1-8	three new clauses added
1-23	cross-walk references changed
following 1-25	name corrected
1-36	clauses 3 & 4 modified
1-39	clause 3 modified
1-42	graphic modified
1-43	clause 2 modified
1-46	clause 3 modified
1-49	tree added to graphic
2-5	'regional' amended to 'neighbourhood'
2-14	clause D.1 deleted

REVISIONS LIST NO. 1

APRIL 19, 1994

TO URBAN DESIGN MANUAL (DATED APRIL, 1994) FOR:

PROJECT: VICTORIA ACCORD
BRITISH COLUMBIA BUILDINGS CORP.
VICTORIA, B.C.

PROJECT NO.: 9214

CONSULTANT: PAUL MERRICK ARCHITECTS LIMITED

The following revisions supersede the information contained in the original text issued for the above named Project, to the extent reference and shall become a part thereof.

PAGE NO.	DESCRIPTION
1-1	LP3 deleted from table of contents
1-2	areas modified to reflect reductions in office areas on LP2A and residential areas on LP2C and LP2E
1-3	references to new construction on South Lawn deleted
1-4	LP3 deleted from table of contents
1-5	references to new construction on South Lawn deleted
1-6	references to LP3 deleted, map modified to reflect this
1-10 to 1-15	references to LP3 deleted, map modified to reflect this
1-18	references to new construction on South Lawn deleted
1-20, 22, 23, 25	map modified to reflect deletion of LP3 from guide lines
page following 1-25	acknowledgement of Selkirk Waterfront Manual
1-32	map modified to reflect changes to LP2C, LP2E, deletion of LP3 from guidelines
1-33	stats table modified to reflect removal of 1858m ² (20000 sq. ft.) of office space from program

- 5 pages added to beginning of Built Form Section "Generic Illustrated Material"
- References to above section added throughout volume 1 section 2
- statistics summary table modified

REVISIONS LIST NO 4

MAY 31, 1994

- 1 - 6 Map and text changed
- 1 - 12 building heights changed, LP2B
- 1 - 20 text and map key changes
- 1 - 23 map updated
- 1 - 25 text changes
- 1 - 18 public art notation added

Table of Contents

Volume One - Urban Design Manual

Part One	Preamble	Executive Summary and Using the Guidelines.....	1-2
	Introduction	Introduction and Background.....	1-5
	Context	Site Description.....	1-6
		Site History.....	1-7
	Urban Design Objectives	Urban Design Objectives.....	1-8
	Use	Land Use.....	1-9
		Mixed Use.....	1-11
		Building Heights.....	1-12
		Views.....	1-13
		Housing.....	1-14
		Offices.....	1-16
		Retail.....	1-17
		Public Amenities.....	1-18
		South Legislature Square.....	1-19
	Parking	Parking.....	1-22
	Heritage House	Preservation & Relocation	1-24
	Implementation	Zoning	1-25
Part Two	Development Area Guidelines	LP1A.....	1-26
		LP1B.....	1-29
		LP2A.....	1-31
		LP2B.....	1-38
		LP2C.....	1-41
		LP2D.....	1-45
		LP2E.....	1-48
		LP4A & LP4B.....	1-52

Volume Two - Built Form Guidelines

Part One	Built Form	Generic Illustrative Material.....	2-3
		Siting and Form.....	2-8
		Exterior Finish.....	2-13
		Signage.....	2-20
Part Two	Shared Outdoor Space/ Landscape	Table of Contents.....	2-21
		Preamble.....	2-22
		Public Open Space.....	2-23
		Private Open Space.....	2-37
Appendices		(Under separate cover)	
	Appendix 1	Legislative Precinct Project Review Group Design Guidelines	
	Appendix II	Questionnaire Results of September 1993 Public Open House	
	Appendix III	Policy Committee Summary Document (Included)	
	Appendix IV	Master Agreement	
	Appendix V	Summary Information	

Design Guidelines

Executive Summary

This document details design guidelines for the Legislative Precinct in Victoria. The planning work was initiated in July 1992 through a joint Provincial-Municipal agreement called the Victoria Accord. The following Urban Design Manual and Built Form Guidelines are a result of an extensive one year public consultation process in which community members and interested groups participated in a series of 20 review meetings and 3 major open houses during 1993.

The advice of this group is embodied in the draft report which is included as Appendix 1. These recommendations form the basis for this rezoning application.

The lands are currently zoned R2 which permits one and two family dwellings as well as public buildings. R2 zoning limits building height to 11m and 40% site coverage. Under these restrictions a maximum of 1.48 times site area can be constructed. This present zoning does not acknowledge the special aspects or opportunities of these lands and the attached development guidelines are intended to establish a master plan for an appropriate evolution of the built form surrounding the Legislative Buildings.

Four separate comprehensive development zones are described. These zones include a mix of residential, office and retail uses planned to satisfy the following goals (see Appendix 1):

- Goal 1* There should be a mix of land uses around the Legislature.
- Goal 2* New development should be compatible with the James Bay neighbourhood and the Legislature Buildings and ensure that streets are people-oriented.
- Goal 3* There should be amenities to serve the residents and employees of the new developments.
- Goal 4* Traffic and Transportation - A viable transportation plan must be in place before the development proceeds which will serve the residents and employees of the new buildings and support the easy travel in and out of the neighbourhood for the James Bay Community. A move to the use of public transit is essential.
- Goal 5* The special significance and heritage value of the Legislative Precinct to the people of British Columbia must be recognized in all of the project work.
- Goal 6* The design and mass of any new building must respect the presence of the Legislative Buildings.
- Goal 7* Remaining views of the Legislature should be preserved from all sides. New views created by the development could enhance the mass of the Legislature.

The zoning and development guidelines will permit:

Total office space of 42,463 m² (net new space 24,500 m²)

Total residential space of 21,793 m²

Total retail space of 3,278 m²

Total amenity space of 806 m²

Total space of 69,081 m² (net new space of 51,118 m²)

Site area is 44,038 m²

Overall floor space ratio is 1.13

The totals do not include the Queen's Printer building (3923 m²) or land (1400 m²)

Plans for the South Lawn of the Legislature were discussed as part of the public review process but are not included in the rezoning application . The South Lawn is Crown land unlike the balance of the Precinct which is owned by B.C. Buildings Corporation and is not subject to Municipal process. It is intended that various improvements, including upgrading of ground paving treatment and intensification of planted material, will be undertaken in this area in conjunction with the densification and new construction in the surrounding areas.

Using the Design Guidelines.....

Design Guidelines, Drawings and Details

For all sections of the Design Guidelines, the text must be read in conjunction with the site plan drawings, detail sheets, and parcel descriptions which accompany each section. These drawings form part of the design guidelines, support the documentation and provide a scope for design. In all cases, as part of the design process, all sections should be consulted together with reviewed, revised and latest issued drawings approved by the City of Victoria Planning Department. The design guidelines shall apply to all areas on the site, at the site perimeters and beyond the site at such areas as the Legislative forecourt.

It is to be expressly noted and emphasized that, while the various graphic images which are incorporated into the Guidelines have been chosen to depict general attitudes regarding desired overall image, level of detail, and material quality, they are not to be taken as prescriptive or limiting in the sense that other building images, building materials, and components may be equally acceptable in creating the desired level of quality envisioned for the new work to be undertaken in the Precinct.

Table of Contents

Volume One -

Urban Design Manual

Part One	Introduction	Introduction and Background.....	1-5
	Context	Site Description.....	1-6
		Site History.....	1-7
	Urban Design Objectives	Urban Design Objectives.....	1-8
	Use	Land Use.....	1-9
		Mixed Use.....	1-11
		Building Heights.....	1-12
		Views.....	1-13
		Housing.....	1-14
		Offices.....	1-16
		Retail.....	1-17
		Public Amenities & Open Space.....	1-18
	Parking	Parking.....	1-22
	Heritage Houses	Preservation & Relocation.....	1-24
	Implementation	Zoning.....	1-25
Part Two	Development Area Guidelines	LP1A.....	1-26
		LP1B.....	1-29
		LP2A.....	1-31
		LP2B.....	1-38
		LP2C.....	1-41
		LP2D.....	1-45
		LP2E.....	1-48
		LP4A & LP4B.....	1-52

Q" Lot

Up to 60 dwellings

222,000 sq.ft. offices

Up to 22,000 sq.ft.
storefront retail,
restaurant, office

7,000 sq.ft. childcare
centre

Up to 394 underground
parking spaces

Landscaped walks and
courtyards

"South Block"

Demolition of temporary
offices, relocation of
heritage buildings

Up to 131 dwellings

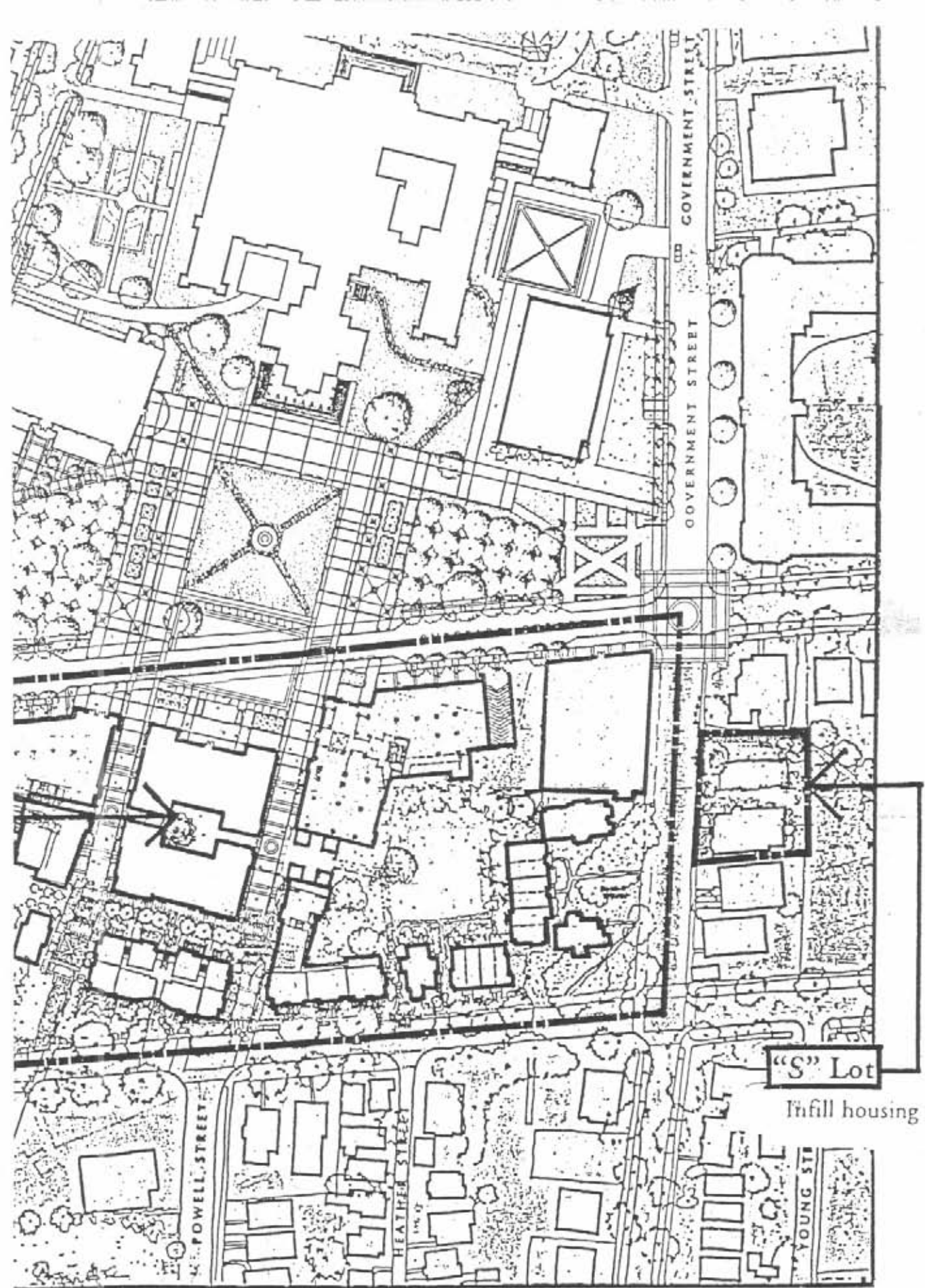
234 000 sq. ft.offices

13 000 sq. ft. retail,
restaurant, office

Up to 563 underground
parking spaces

Landscaped walks and
courtyards





"S" Lot
Infill housing



Introduction and Background

The Victoria Accord is an agreement, signed in July 1992, between the Province of British Columbia and the City of Victoria to collaborate on the planning and implementation of major projects in Victoria over a five year period, beginning in 1993. The planning process for the Legislative Precinct is one outcome of the Victoria Accord. The Accord recognizes the need for development on provincially-owned lands surrounding the Legislature to provide improved government office space and significant urban benefits in a historic and symbolic area of the City.

The juxtaposition of the Legislative function with the James Bay community is apparent in the original patterns of settlement of the City of Victoria. Planning for the Precinct has an extensive history, dating as far back as Francis Rattenbury's original designs for the Legislature. Repeated studies have been undertaken to propose changes for the area which will effectively frame the Legislative Buildings with an appropriate context while recognizing that their immediate environs is essentially made up of local area neighbourhoods. In some cases neighbourhood housing is of historic significance in relation to the development of the James Bay community, and has been recognized by the City as such.

A review group representing interested parties, including local neighbourhood residents, City and Provincial government officials, architects, urban planners, and other consultants, has considered various planning options since 1992. The populace of greater Victoria has also been consulted through a series of public open houses held in mid-1993. Specific legal, planning and engineering issues continue to be addressed, and formal subdivision and rezoning applications, of which these volumes form a part, have been prepared in close consultation with officials representing the Accord.

The rezoning proposal establishes three Comprehensive Development Zones, on the provincially-owned parcels currently known as Q-lot, South Block and S-lot. The zoning and other associated mechanisms are intended to provide the City of Victoria with regulatory control of the development and use of the sites and ensure no substantial variation from the approved concept.

The first phase of the project, development area LP-1B, comprising a mix of government office, commercial/retail and public amenities, will proceed to Development Permit application in early 1994. This project is consistent with the proposed zoning and urban design concepts, and is therefore proceeding concurrently with the overall rezoning. Area LP-1A will comprise both social and market housing, and may proceed concurrently with the first phase of development, or shortly thereafter.

The remainder of the project will be developed on a parcel by parcel basis as described in the Master Agreement. This Master Agreement will contain the preconditions for the Phased Developments. The development sequence will be determined by Provincial office space requirements and housing market conditions. The largest single component will be the development of area LP-2A fronting the Legislature. This will involve the demolition and replacement of 'temporary' and substandard government office structures which have been in place since World War II.

As part of the comprehensive precinct review, the South Lawn area, including the existing 'Bunker' and armouries, has been studied. Recommendations, at the discretion of the Crown, include a thorough program of landscape public/open space treatment encompassing 'the Lawn' south of the Legislature, including adjacent crosswalks and road surfaces to knit the Precinct into a cohesive whole. The character of the site work, buildings and amenities in the early phases will establish the benchmark of quality development needed for market acceptance of the residential phases.

The overall objective is to synthesize elements that will make an interesting and vital neighbourhood. The mix of uses programmed for the various zones and the variety of housing types proposed for the residential areas will ensure diversity, based on traditional urban design principles. If successful it will provide the Provincial Legislature Buildings with an urban frame which has been envisioned, in one form or another, since they were built. The resulting development will provide amenities and effect a comfortable transition to the surrounding residential areas, respecting character, form, massing, scale, and existing activity.

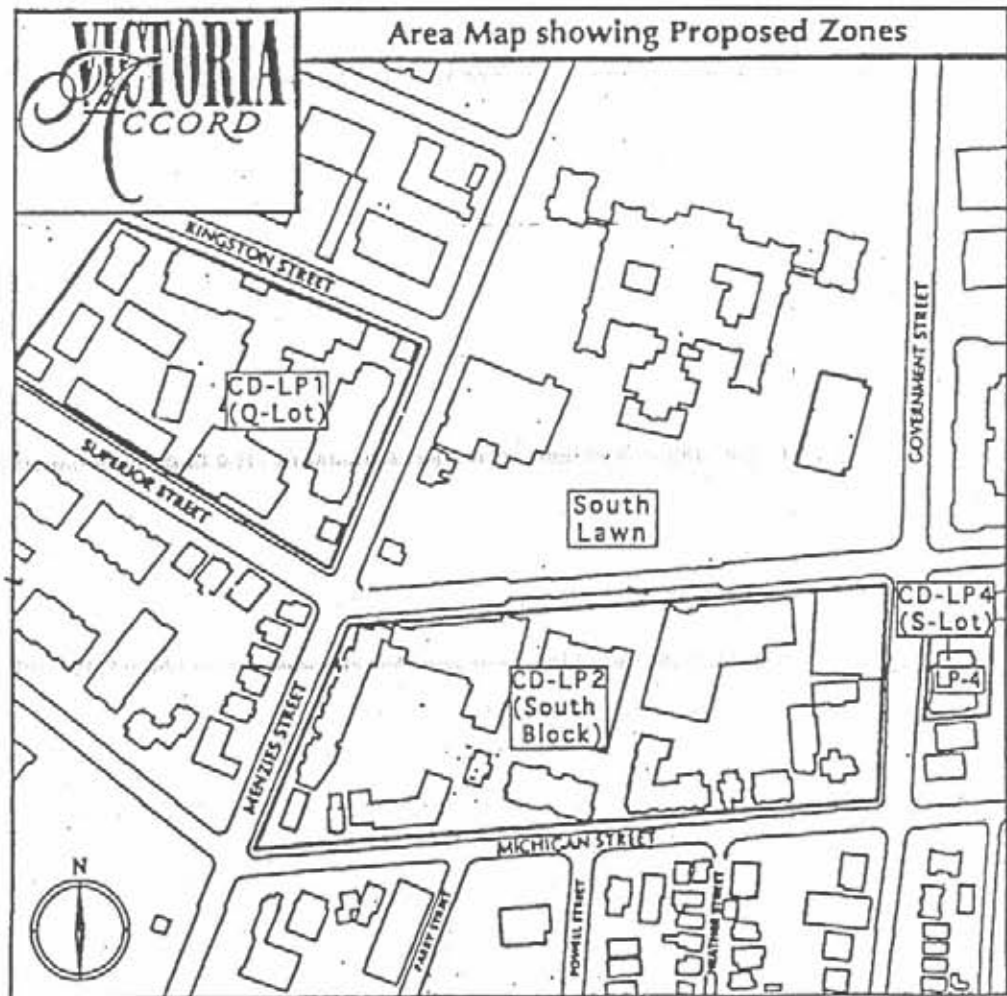
Site Description

The three Legislative Precinct zones comprise a total of 4.56 hectares of land previously zoned R2. They are located on the James Bay peninsula, in the James Bay District of the City of Victoria. The largest zones, LP1 and LP2, both front onto the Provincial Legislature block.

LP1 is bounded by Kingston St. on the north, Menzies St. on the east, Superior St. on the south, and it abuts existing single and multiple dwelling residences to the west. It has a total area of 1.73 ha. Within the property lines, an existing Catalpa tree is to remain.

LP2 occupies the entire block south of the Legislature, bounded by Superior St. to the north, Michigan St. to the south, Government St. to the east, and Menzies St. to the west. It has a total area of 2.72 ha. Within the property lines, the existing Queen's Printer and several heritage-designated houses are to remain.

LP4 fronts the east side of Government St. in the block between Superior and Michigan Sts. It has a total area of .111 ha.



Site History

James Bay

The flat landscape of James Bay Peninsula made it especially valuable farmland, providing food for the Hudson's Bay Company men stationed at Fort Victoria. Other than a few farmhouses, residential development did not begin until the construction of the James Bay Bridge and the "Bird Cages," (the Province's first Parliament Buildings) in 1858. It became fashionable to locate near the Province's first house of government and many of Victoria's early social and political elite took up residence on lands surrounding the Legislative Buildings until the prestigious Rockland District was developed.

Surrounded by water on three sides, James Bay became a natural location for industrial activity and much of the waterfront land stretching from the Inner Harbour to the Outer Harbour was consigned to industrial interests. The adjoining residential dwellings were built in typical cottage idioms, emblematic of working-class neighbourhoods of the 1880s and 1890s. Many of these residences were "widow's cottages" representing rental housing built for investment annuities.

By the turn of the century virtually all large tracts of land had been subdivided except for an area west of Holland Point which remained undeveloped until the 1940s.

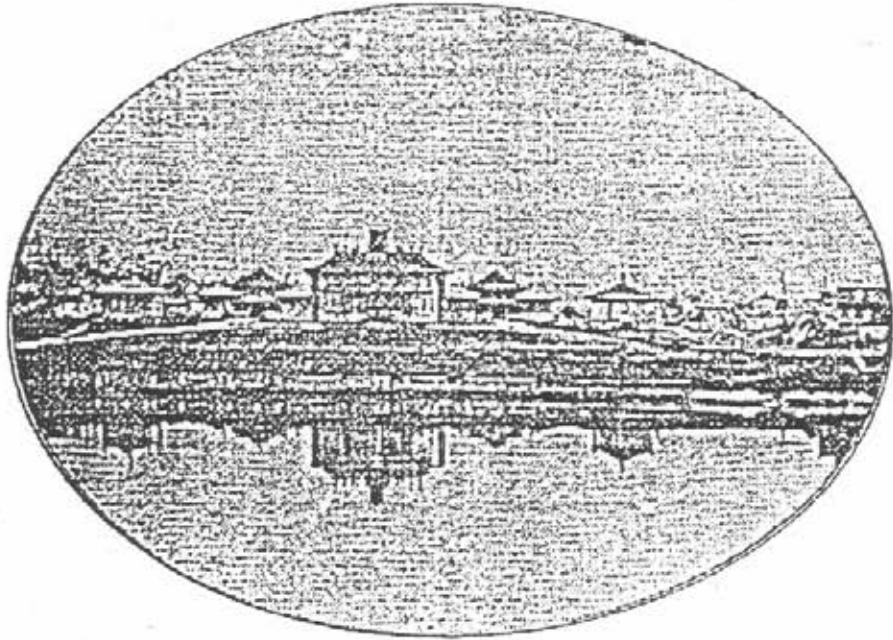
Rapid growth of Greater Victoria in the 1950s and 1960s created enormous pressures for redevelopment in James Bay and many of its landmark residences were demolished. Fortunately, there remain several cohesive groups of dwellings which form especially attractive historic streetscapes.

Land use policies in James Bay support the principle of conservation and strengthen the future prospect for preservation of heritage residences in the neighbourhood.

—from *This Old House: an Inventory of Residential Heritage in Victoria*, produced by the City of Victoria

The current planning of the Legislative Precinct acknowledges the historic context and current importance of the sites within the urban framework of Victoria. The intention has been to design an urban image inspired by both the Provincial Legislature Buildings and historic detached houses of the area.

The historic and symbolic importance of the Legislature is respected and emphasized by paying special attention to the surrounding street edges and the development of the public spaces adjacent to it. Existing axial relationships are reinforced (i.e. the extension of Parry and Powell Streets) and new vistas are created wherever possible or appropriate.



A view of the original Provincial legislature buildings, ca. 1890

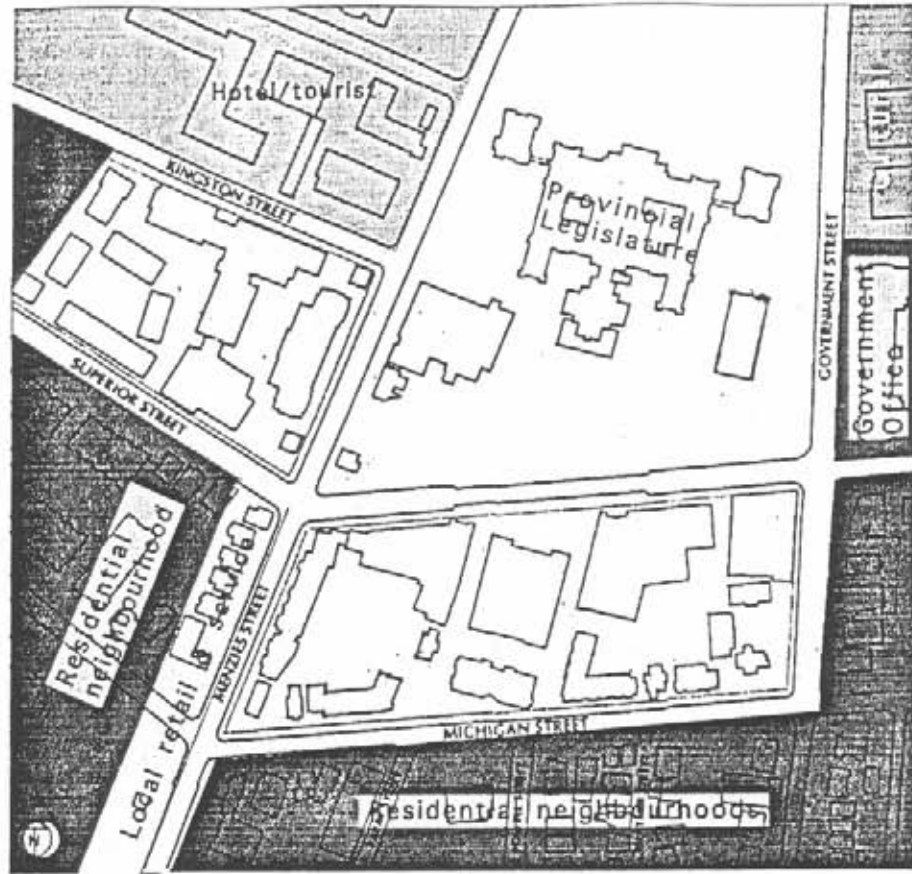


The James Bay community, ca. 1898

Urban Design Objectives

- Take the opportunity offered by these sites to create a distinctive Precinct for the Legislature and effectively integrate it with the surrounding neighbourhoods.
- Compose architecture which is contextually sensitive without being slavishly bound to any stylistic or formal preconceptions.
- Maintain, extend and integrate a continuous network of shared open spaces with the Lawn of the Legislature as a central focus.
- Accommodate pedestrians and cyclists in the streets and throughout the various development parcels.
- Establish a network of paths which will connect residential areas and work places with the publicly accessible open spaces on and off the site.
- Provide open spaces of different sizes to offer places of solitude or to accommodate a variety of recreational activities, large and small gatherings, special events.
- Compose a landscape for the site which is inspired by indigenous and historic landscapes while responding to a specific local context.
- Design public rights-of-way that serve as places for social interaction and pedestrian activity and accommodate vehicular traffic flow.
- Accommodate virtually all vehicle parking below grade, except selected on-site areas for limited visitor or courier parking.
- Include a variety of housing types to encourage a diversity of residents and to help foster a real and vital neighbourhood.
- Consider the issues of personal safety and security in the design of publicly accessible spaces to provide a non-threatening environment essential to a vital community.
- Encourage Precinct activity with community-oriented recreational facilities and compatible retail, commercial and neighbourhood amenity space.
- Enrich the diversity of activity on the site by encouraging shops and offices together with residential development.
- Allow a 'vertical mix' of uses within buildings to give character to the street. This means allowing, where appropriate, residential uses over offices, retail, or other uses.
- Initiate and maintain public participation in the project through information meetings, presentations and personal contact throughout the planning process.
- Promote cooperative interaction with Municipal Departments to achieve a plan which is compatible with the City planning goals for the District.
- Establish a Comprehensive Zoning which will ensure adherence to the approved concept and allow for flexibility and incremental growth in response to future economic conditions, user demands and planning goals.
- Design to accommodate incremental implementation.
- Create intimacy and accessibility by paying careful attention to the uses and human scale of architectural elements in any proposed construction.
- To use high quality, substantial materials in the new construction and built form.
- Commitment to undertake Traffic Demand Management Studies prior to and during implementation of the various phases of the Urban Design Concept.
- Consideration of all information generated by ongoing TDM reviews and the incorporation of appropriate recommendations established by these studies.

Land Use



Adjacent Land Use

Existing adjacent land uses are central to the principles established for the realization of the Legislative Precinct.

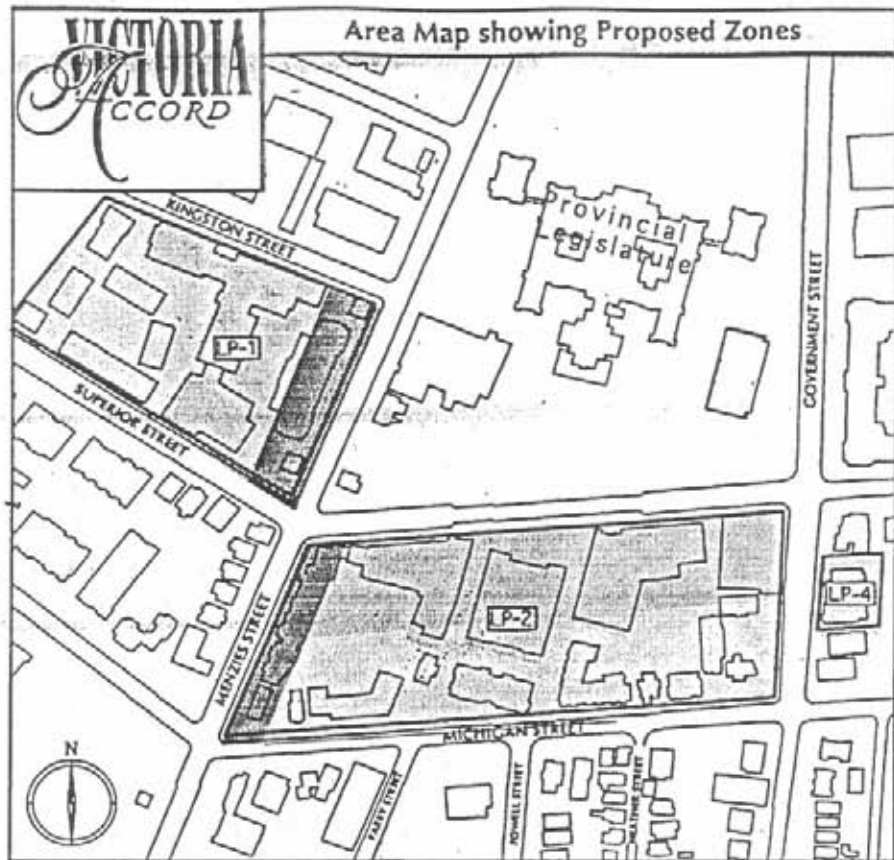
Residential areas lie to the south, east and west. Specific contextual constraints are imposed by the scale of houses and hotels, apartment and other buildings (particularly northwest and northeast of the Legislature Buildings) adjacent to some of the sites. Further details and considerations can be obtained by referring to the individual parcel guidelines sections within each zone.

The most significant impact on any site is evidently its proximity to the Provincial Legislature. This has view corridor impacts on the massing of proposed construction and functional constraints where government uses are considered.

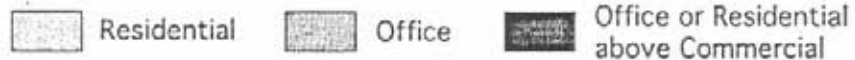
The challenge remains to achieve effective transitions across the sites from the formal government uses surrounding the Legislative Block through the residential uses ringing it.

There should be a mix of land uses on the South Block and "Q" Lot; these should be offices, housing and retail as well as green space and public space.

--Guideline 1.1,
Project Review Group
Report



Proposed Land Use



Proposed uses are recommended for the lands within the Legislative Precinct to facilitate the Precinct's integration with surrounding land uses.

Generally, the new uses and building sizes proposed for the Legislative Precinct sites are stratified radially from the Legislature outward. Government office uses will be concentrated (for obvious functional and symbolic reasons) facing the Legislature. The ground floor/street fronts of these buildings will mainly contain service, retail and lobby spaces wherever possible. This will foster a lively street/sidewalk character.

Adjacent to the residential neighbourhoods 3-4 storey multiple dwelling buildings, with some allowance for ground floor commercial areas in certain specified locations, will make the transition from the higher office/commercial areas around the Legislature. These development parcels will make available open space and other public amenities to benefit the surrounding neighbourhoods by providing green connectors linking various domains of the public realm.

Mixed Use

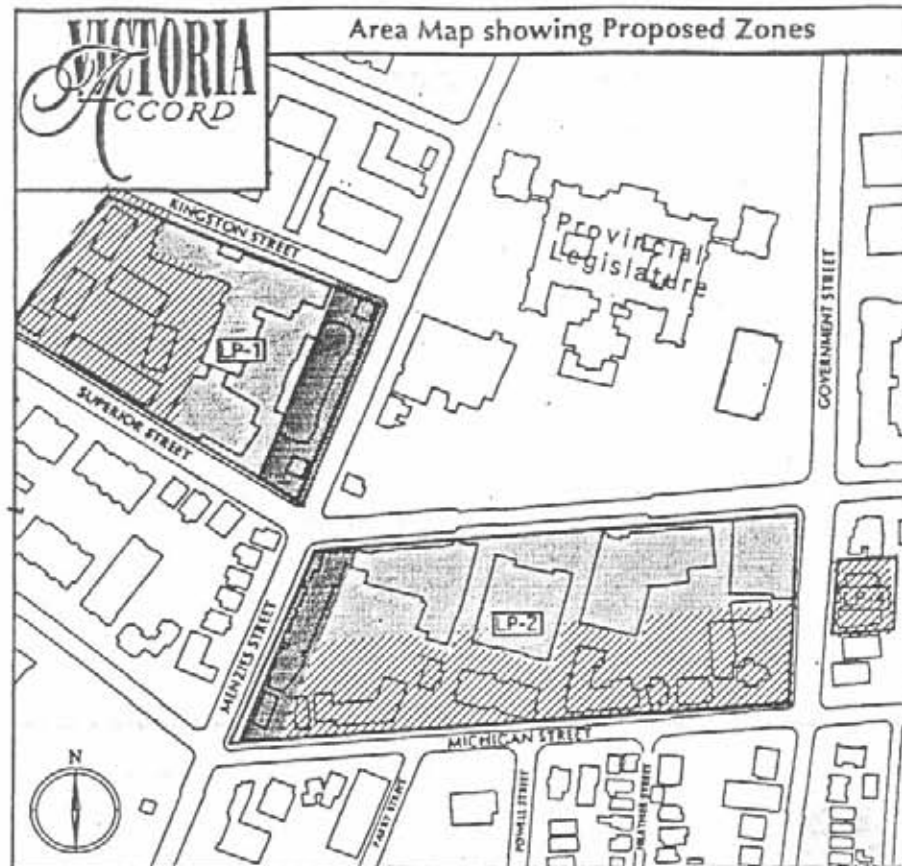
Mixed use in the Precinct shall be considered an independent objective, not merely a means of achieving integration with surrounding uses.

Approximately 1.4 ha (30%) of the total site area is proposed for office use, mainly to house governmental offices and related functions. There will be grade level retail along Menzies St., including retail below residential in the block between Superior and Michigan Streets.

The proposed zoning by-law allows some flexibility in the allocation of uses over the zones as a whole. The minimum allocations prescribed for each use in the zoning by-law are designed to ensure the diversity sought for the Precinct.

The preliminary locations, configuration, and form of the buildings intended for various uses have been established in this manual. Different but compatible uses are allowed in adjacent buildings, and where appropriate, within the same structure.

A mixed-use neighbourhood offers the potential for residents to work, shop and reside in the same localized area. It is anticipated that a significant and increasing number of people will walk or cycle to a work place within the Precinct. Several aspects of the plan acknowledge and encourage this possibility.



 Residential  Office  Retail

Grade Level Uses

Streets designed for good walking and cycling experiences, a variety of routes available to, from, and through the site, provision for bicycle parking at every building, and numerous stopping and sitting areas should all be provided to encourage an interconnection of work-place, home, recreation and amenity.

An important aspect of a comfortable and animated streetscape is the encouraged use of public transit systems. All development in the area shall recognize this factor, and incorporate attractive, user-friendly waiting and unloading areas wherever appropriate.

Successful integration of uses depends on a number of conditions. It is important to have a range of mixed-use areas in a neighbourhood. All buildings or streets may not be appropriate locations for multiple uses. The plan must provide for a range of urban environment opportunities, from all-residential buildings or townhouses on quiet streets, to apartments over a store at a lively corner.

Uses should be allowed to change over time. Urban buildings, once established, evolve due to social and economic forces. It is not uncommon for service buildings to be converted to apartments or for apartments to become retail shops or offices.

While it is impossible to plan for every eventuality, an urban design which considers potential change is important. By providing for good vehicular and pedestrian circulation in and around buildings, well-defined entry points, adequate open spaces and appropriate landscaping, a neighbourhood can accommodate many future uses.

Building Heights



Maximum building heights in storeys

The maximum height of buildings within the Precinct will be six storeys. The six storey buildings are restricted to the north side and central portion of LP1B on Q-lot.

Office buildings on the balance of parcel LP1B will range from 3 to 5 storeys, with the largest bulk concentrated along Kingston St. Buildings shall step down to a maximum three storey street parapet height along Menzies St. and the eastern portions of Kingston and Superior Sts. The main bulk of the Menzies St. building shall not exceed a maximum of four storeys.

Two- to three-storey residential buildings will occupy the west end of Q-lot, permitting good sun penetration into the mid-block.

On south block, commercial buildings will range from three to five storeys, with the lowest massing abutting residential areas. The tallest (five storey) massing within the zone will be on the detached central block which faces the Legislative library across Superior St. South Block residential buildings will vary from three to four storeys.

Massing on S-lot, LP4, will be consistent with its residential context.

Building design should allow maximum light penetration to interiors and minimize overshadowing effects on adjacent open spaces, and in all cases respect existing or potential views of the main dome of the Legislature (Refer to section on Views).

Views

As more of Victoria is developed, the ability to maintain visual contact with key landmarks will become more critical. Orientation is important to the comfort and pleasure of living, working, or visiting in the City. Views of both natural and man-made landmarks help us find our way around. When they become familiar to us we know where we are and we can easily direct others.

The views within the Legislative Precinct are many and varied. A high priority in the urban design will be to heighten the sense of awareness of the presence of the Legislature, recognizing the importance of the main dome and its symbolic role in the urban landscape of Victoria. This shall be accomplished by framing discrete views of the Legislature from the surrounding developments. Relocated heritage houses which currently occupy the zones will also be placed at corners and next to routes through the built fabric, punctuating the Precinct with a perception of historical reflection. An example of both principles working together is suggested at the northeast corner of the Menzies/Michigan intersection, where two houses will be relocated to signal a pedestrian entrance into the block while framing a view of the Legislature's dome beyond. Many other similar examples are evident throughout the Precinct.

Immediate and distant views are important considerations in the siting of individual buildings and landscape elements.

Interesting views shall be composed wherever possible along streets, intersections, and through public open spaces.



Main views to and from the site

New view corridors can be created by pedestrian pathways through the South Block development.

--Guideline 7.1, Project Review Group Report

The proposed urban concept recognizes the dominant importance of the main dome of the Legislature, including the gilded statue of Captain Vancouver, by requiring that in no instance shall a building exceed the geodetic height of the base of the main dome (40m: refer to Height Guidelines for Parcel LP-1B in the Development Area Guidelines).

New buildings shall attempt to frame rather than impede views of the Legislature Buildings. Other views throughout the Legislative Precinct site shall be composed to create anticipation and to provide pedestrians the opportunity of exploration.

In the residential areas, the courtyards will be viewed from at least two sides of the housing, and usually on the remaining sides from office, commercial, or other residential spaces. In addition to being visually pleasing to residents, the views should offer casual surveillance of the courtyards, increasing security.

The roofscape of the Legislative Precinct buildings should form a distinctive composition when viewed from neighbouring areas. When viewed from off-site, roofs will generally step up toward the Legislature, emphasizing its importance without obscuring it, while other roof features will define and distinguish special urban design features. It is important that roof forms create an interesting and varied profile without parodying existing landmarks including the Legislature and Empress Hotel. This shall be accomplished with simple indigenous roof forms (which may include flat roofs), articulated in careful consideration of the overall thesis.

Housing

New housing must concern itself with two key factors: livability and affordability...Housing should be both 'market' and 'non-market'.

--from Guideline 1.2,
Project Review Group
Report

The surrounding James Bay community and its historic development is the significant feature to which new housing must respond. Specific neighbourhood features including such characteristics as street setbacks, heights of buildings and continuity of the street wall, and proportion of glazing to wall surface are encouraged in the proposals for housing for each parcel within the zones. The relationships which can be extracted from the micro-context of each site form the most important constraints in arriving at building form, orientation and market characteristics.

The existing context of detached housing and relatively low apartment and commercial buildings permit good sun penetration into open spaces and courtyards. The outstanding character of many of the surrounding residential streets, as well as the central location of the parcels, also contribute to the suitability of these sites for housing development.

Many factors determine housing costs. The available tools designers have to control housing value are unit size, character, and orientation. It is desirable to encourage as wide a range as possible of housing types. This, along with a variety of physical settings, will accommodate a diversity of lifestyles.



Residential Areas

New housing should be on the western end of 'Q' Lot and along the south bordering Superior St. On South Block, new residential should be oriented along Michigan St.
--Guideline 2.2, Project Review Group Report

Housing Types

The residential neighbourhood is comprised of several sub-areas. These enclaves will have particular identities and character arising from their respective locations on the site, special features, and micro-context. The following are recommended character descriptions of the housing sub-areas.

Superior/Kingston Housing (LP1A)

The west half of the LP1 zone is designated for housing. This area is to be developed with a series of low-rise buildings assembled around internal lanes and landscaped courtyards, intended to function as private outdoor spaces, to which the units should have direct access. On the street sides of these buildings the ground floor units will potentially have direct front door access and porches. With designated build-to limits requiring only a small display garden, these facades will define a human-scaled street edge. A percentage of the housing on this site may be developed as public or rental-assisted. The character of the housing on this site will reflect principles derived from the architecture of the existing neighbourhoods, as noted on page 1-29 (Architectural Design Guidelines, LP-1A).

Menzies apartments/townhouses (Parcel LP2B)

This parcel is to be developed with two to three floors of housing over retail space. The housing form in this area shall consist of double- or triple-height townhouse units which will potentially have entrances off of a landscaped courtyard in the rear. Entrances to these buildings may also be located along Menzies St., both for the convenience of the residents and to acknowledge Menzies as an urban street.

Two heritage houses are to be relocated to the south end of the parcel and their exteriors are to be renovated to preserve their historic character. (Refer to Heritage Houses in Table of Contents)

Michigan apartments/townhouses (Parcels LP2C, 2D, 2E)

Townhouses will ideally form the majority of housing development to be located on the north side of Michigan St. and west of Government St. Their height shall vary from 3-4 storeys along the overall frontage, permitting good sun penetration to the garden courtyards behind them. The build-to limits require only small front yards, help to define a human-scaled street, and permit larger unit-accessible landscaped open spaces to be created within the sites.

Heritage houses shall be relocated intermittently along the frontage, particularly near pedestrian routes through blocks, to reinforce the standard of construction expected for this frontage and to place them where their unique quality can best be appreciated by pedestrian users of the Precinct. (Refer to Heritage Houses in Table of Contents)

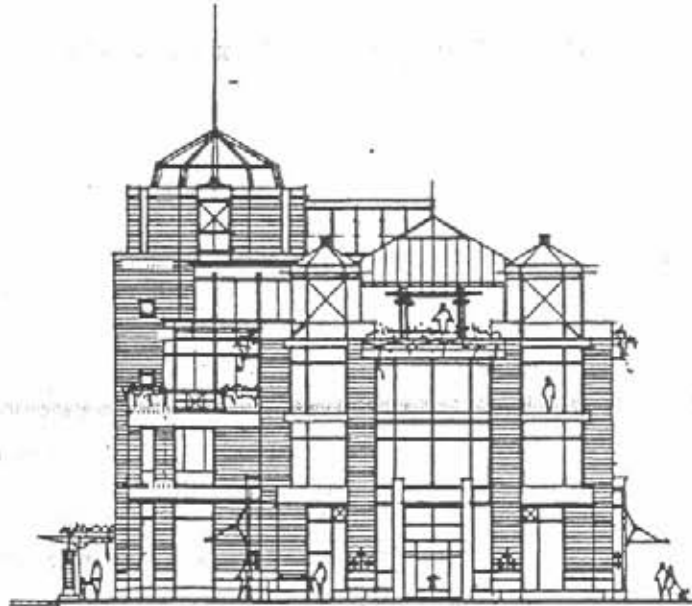
The west portion of parcel LP2E, fronting Michigan St., may be developed as low-rise apartments grouped around an internal courtyard. This building is intended to effectively terminate the massing of the South Block East office complex. It could provide opportunity within the zone for the provision of low-cost or rental-assisted apartments.

Government St. housing (Zone LP4)

Two heritage houses are to be relocated to this zone from the South Block and renovated to preserve their historic character (Refer to Heritage Houses in Table of Contents). The interiors of these houses will be converted for multiple-dwelling occupancy.

Preliminary calculations indicate that the mix of housing types and densities proposed for the various sites would result in a total new residential population in the Precinct of approximately 494 people (This is based on an assumption of 3.2 people/family household for half the number of proposed units, with the remaining half of households accommodating 2 people each).

Office Environment



The creation of an interesting and positive work environment at the Legislative Precinct is a priority. The mixed use principle on which the project is based will only succeed if all aspects of daily life are provided for. Opportunities for diverse activities, both casual and programmed, have been considered.

People will be able to travel to and from work in a number of ways and along a variety of routes. The area is well-served by the existing transit network, and various improvements are under consideration. The inner harbour seabus service provides another potential commuter option from other parts of the City. The possibility of streetcar service connecting the Precinct with the north downtown core has been discussed and could potentially offer benefits in addition to enhancing commuter service.

As they leave their offices, workers will walk past small shops, cafes, and restaurants. The Lawn and courtyards within the blocks will be near at hand and will be important meeting places. Cultural amenities such as the Provincial Museum, and natural amenities such as Irving and Beacon Hill parks are a short walk away. Those living on the site could go home for lunch. Daycare facilities will be available on-site.

Rather than simply present blank curtained windows to the street, ground floor office areas shall be designed to make a positive contribution to the street scene. This will be accomplished by locating uses with public access requirements at sidewalk level. These could be office/institutional uses such as, for example, the government bookstore, motor vehicle license bureau, or library.

Architecturally, all office space at grade level shall be articulated with care, offering a variety of fenestration and base conditions, inspired by the Legislature Buildings, while not replicating them. All materials facing office buildings on the ground floor shall be of highly durable and carefully detailed materials.

Retail Frontage

Retail uses should be located along the west side of Menzies St. along the boundary with 'Q' Lot, and along the east side of Menzies St. along the boundary with South Block. There should be housing above retail or office space.

--Guideline 2.1,
Project Review Group
Report



Lively shopping areas in the Precinct

The mixed-use concept guiding the project encourages the integration of retail, office and residential uses across the site. Retail areas along Menzies Street to be incorporated in the new building fronts at grade will extend this use north from the Toronto/Menzies/Simcoe St. 'village' area south of Michigan St. Entrances to offices and residential above the shops, commercial or service-institutional storefronts, and passageways to parking areas, will also open onto this street and further contribute to its activity and colour.

In conjunction with the anticipated eventual conversion of the existing Armouries to a number of different uses, including (potentially) shops, the new building immediately across from it on Menzies St. is intended to have a similarly-scaled market hall character on its ground floor, again to reinforce the retail character of Menzies St.

The size of retail stores, as well as the design of signs, display windows and entrances, will be reviewed for conformance to the Design Guidelines (refer Volume Two, Section 1.3) to maintain an attractive, small-scale streetscape. Canopies or colonnades, landscaped and attractively-paved sidewalks and ample public seating shall add to the comfort and character of this shopping street and encourage year-round use.

Public Amenities

There should be amenities to serve the residents and employees of the new developments.

--Goal 3,
Project Review Group
Report

Amenities should include childcare for employees which would be accessible for residents of the community, play space to be associated with new family housing, green space usable for employees and residents of the community and a community amenity space.

--Guideline 3.1,
Project Review Group
Report

There should be some form of community benefit - a meeting space of recreational facility(ies) associated with the new development. A new library branch close to bus routes and shopping areas is desirable. This benefit might be provided "off site" as part of a land or development exchange, or on site.

--Guideline 3.2,
Project Review Group
Report

Public art should be part of the development.

--Guideline 3.3,
Project Review Group
Report

Social Settings

Provision has been made in the concept design to encourage community-related uses to occupy ground level spaces in buildings adjacent to parks, public open spaces, and focal points such as street intersections and corners.

The South Lawn may accommodate local community-initiated events, as well as ceremonial functions pertaining to the Legislature. By virtue of its location, it will also function on a daily basis as a kind of casual interface where the two groups mix.

Open courtyards within several of the sites provide natural locations for social gatherings and cultural activities. Views and pathways out of these spaces will provide a perceptual sense of their role in the larger public realm without destroying their integrity as distinct spaces.

The Public Realm

The urban design of the Legislative Precinct has been developed around three key components oriented to the public.

The South Lawn: a Concept of Celebration

The Lawn is the space on the Legislative Block immediately south of the Legislative Buildings. It is recommended that the present isolated character of the Lawn as a 'ceremonial park' be modified to expand, enhance, and even celebrate the area as a public space belonging to all British Columbians. The central lawn should remain as a quiet contemplative quadrangle having the existing fountain as a focus, cleared of its surrounding cluttered foliage. The eastern and western edges may be flanked by formally arranged arbours and bosques of trees. The arbours could accommodate seasonal craft shops and bistros, anchored on each side of the Lawn at the southern Michigan St. edge by more substantial restaurant gazebos stylistically sympathetic with Rattenbury's original thesis.

The eventual renovation and rehabilitation of the Armouries will help to further frame the Lawn as a formal yet active outdoor space, offering a framework for a variety of activities.

Hard-surfaced paved pathways and areas, lawns and flowerbeds, and trees will be introduced in stages concurrent with development of the surrounding sites. Elements of the hard-surface treatment of the South Legislative square will extend across Superior St. and into the Menzies/Superior and Government/Superior intersections. This will be an important device in assisting the perception of the Legislature and its environs as a unique Precinct of the City.

Detailed design of the various portions will include consultation and approval from the City Planning, Engineering and Parks Departments prior to construction.

PUBLIC ART

Part of BCBC's mandate will be to incorporate public art at prominent locations throughout the Legislative Precinct. This may take many forms ranging from the outdoor installation of major permanent or commissioned pieces in courtyards and at or near building entrances to ongoing, temporary exhibits of smaller pieces in building lobbies and other points of intense public use. Opportunities will be sought to display a wide range of types of artworks, whether sculptural, painterly, or crafted, embracing a wide range of styles and including traditional west coast native art. In this last regard, it is worth noting that currently a major portion of the BC Museum and Provincial Archives collections remain in storage for lack of places to display them. Thus incorporation of a variety of quality display spaces in the Precinct is a highly appropriate and desirable as a major aesthetic goal of the Project. Consideration for Public Art should be incorporated into the building at an early stage in the design process.

Planning development should facilitate walking and cycling in James Bay.

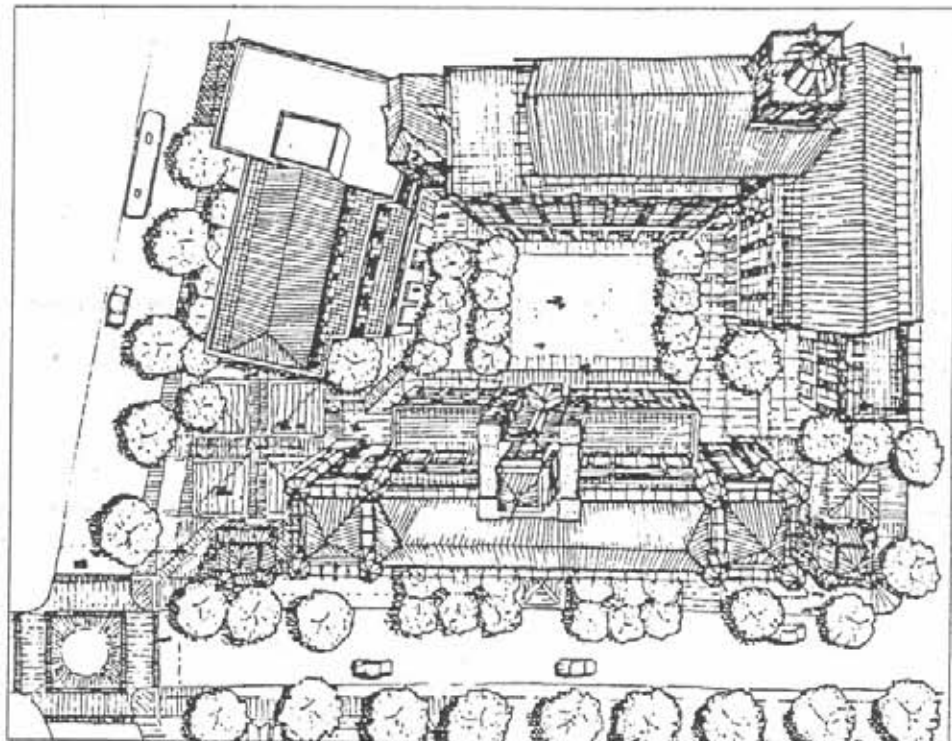
--Guideline 4.3,
Project Review Group
Report

Courtyards and Pathways

Courtyards are a vital element in the tradition of making workable and humane cities. In addition to the open space they provide, they differentiate communal from semi-public or private space, and they permit light and air into adjacent buildings and views from within them. Courtyards will be an important element on both commercial and residential Precinct sites. The major courtyard spaces are to be located in the office/commercial area west of the Legislature on LP1 and at the interface between office/commercial and residential areas on the south block, parcel LP2. A variety of smaller courtyards and semi-contained open spaces, mainly in the residential areas, are also to be provided. Effort shall be made to ensure that building massing and orientation permit sunlight into courtyards for a significant period of each day. Subject to the constraints imposed by courtyard size and other factors, such as below grade parking garages, lawns, trees and other planting in courtyards shall be encouraged, especially where uses such as daycare would mandate this.

Courtyards and pathways are essential in providing opportunities for community interaction. Familiarity of place and the considered safety and security of these places provides the basis for a vital community.

The form and articulation of the edges are as important to the success of the courtyard as the courtyard surfaces themselves. Building walls close to grade must provide a human-scale and tactility in the rhythm and proportion of their openings and in their material qualities. For instance, a series of stone- or brick-faced piers forming an arcade with entrances and shop windows behind them forms a much better edge than a solid wall with fixed, nearly-flush windows.



Along with the courtyards, a network of pathways linking them together shall be incorporated. For example, two subspaces at the northeast and southeast corner of LP1 are linked to the main courtyard on the site by paths which vary in their dimension, surface treatment, and landscaping along their length. In conjunction with variations in adjacent building massing these routes will provide a complex and sensual pedestrian experience. A second major path system is to run east/west connecting the two main courtyards on the South Block, passing through buildings and crossing the Parry and Powell St. corridor extensions, which are in themselves important open space elements within the overall scheme.

The Parry and Powell St. pathways are to be maintained across the South Block zone as pedestrian routes, with surface and edge treatments and landscaping similar to those envisioned for the courtyards. They will literally be pedestrian streets for traffic amongst office, commercial and residential uses within the sites, as well as providing vistas from surrounding areas to the Legislature buildings.

Routes for cycling are to be identified and carefully integrated with most pedestrian routes, or provided as isolated bicycle paths wherever site conditions may prove dangerous for pedestrian and cyclist juxtaposition.



Precinct Open Space map

- pedestrian paths
- - - - - main City-designated bicycle route

Streets

Streets and the open spaces adjacent to them represent a substantial portion of the urban public domain, not uncommonly representing 30% of the entire area of the city. In the urban design of the Legislative Precinct, the street is considered as more than simply a thoroughfare for automobiles. Extensive research, analysis and negotiations are on-going to program and design a street system and right-of-way configurations to respond to and enhance a comprehensive range of public uses.

The ability of the streets to accommodate vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle movement, as well as to allow social interaction (meeting, talking, playing, etc) is widely acknowledged. While not replacing dedicated park space, the streets, with their trees, planting, lighting, sitting places, and general activity should be interesting and lively public places, contributing to the positive life of a neighbourhood by providing a thread of sunlit open space as an extension of the park network, and, wherever possible, frame views.

It is for these reasons that streets and their adjacent open spaces are considered a valuable part of the public amenities of the Legislative Precinct project. Many aspects of the urban design have and shall continue to be influenced by the desire to foster a street life rather than allow streets to divide or sever the life of the neighbourhood.

Parking

Strategies outlined in the Traffic Demand Management report should be implemented as soon as possible.

--Guideline 4.4,
Project Review Group
Report

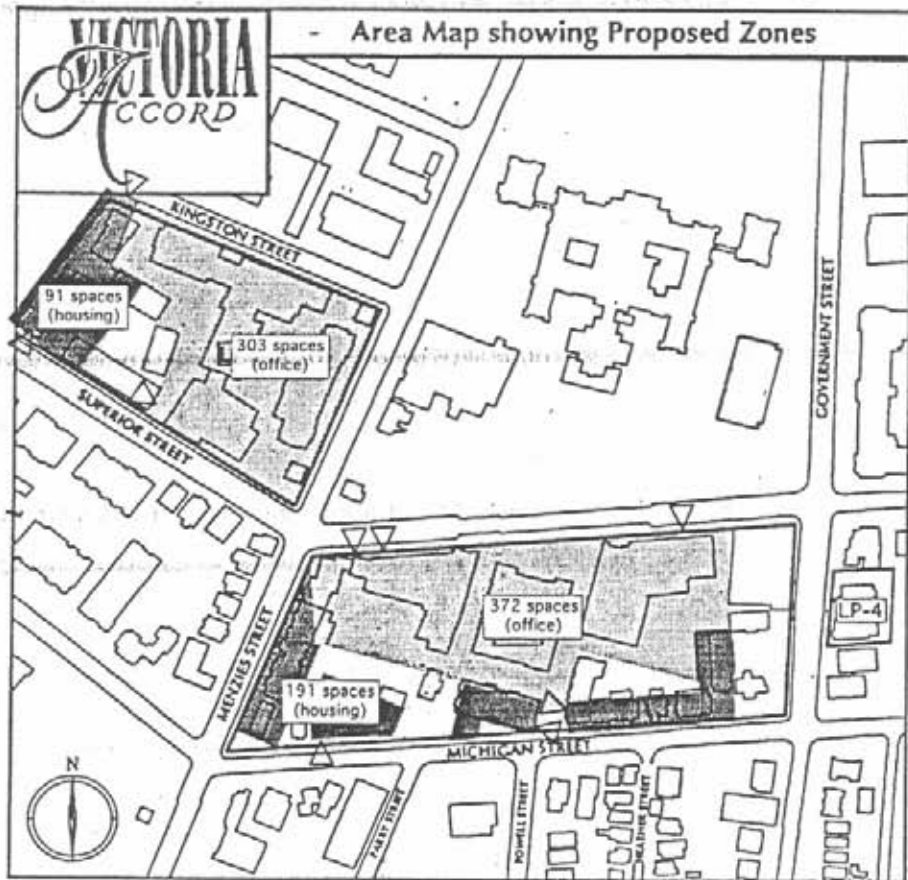
Solving parking issues for this development will mean finding a compromise between the parking requirements of increased site density and a more pedestrian-oriented urban environment. Priority will be given throughout the project to creating a high-quality pedestrian environment with safe, easy and enjoyable access to all areas of the Precinct. Quality of the pedestrian environment should not be diminished by auto storage considerations.

Residential parking requirements shall be determined using the City of Victoria zoning by-law Schedule 'C' as a guideline. Parking requirements may be modified for seniors housing or other special uses.

Except for residential parking, all parking shall be provided as user-pay public parking.

Large areas of parking are currently available in the immediate vicinity of the Precinct. Generally, existing off-site parking garages are underutilized by the current local residents of the area in favour of on-street parking. This implies the availability of a substantial number of parking spaces on a rental basis if required.

In order to maintain the integrity of the urban design, the total parking for all uses in all zones shall not exceed the current existing surface-parked total for all zones. This total is 930 spaces.



Below-grade Parking Map

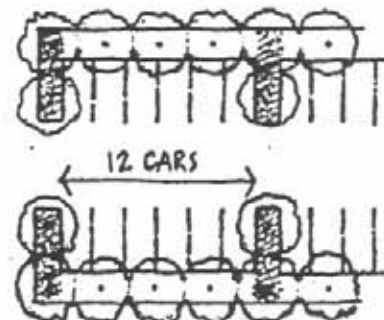
- △ Residential parking entrance
- △ Office/temporary parking entrance

Parking shall be accommodated principally under buildings below grade. Commercial vehicle parking, loading areas, and utility access are to be accommodated in the internal areas of commercial blocks or designed in an attractive manner sympathetic to the designed environment. Most parking in the residential areas will also be below grade, excepting limited visitor parking.

All parking shall be designed with a high regard for security issues such as lighting levels, places of refuge, and non-threatening spaces.

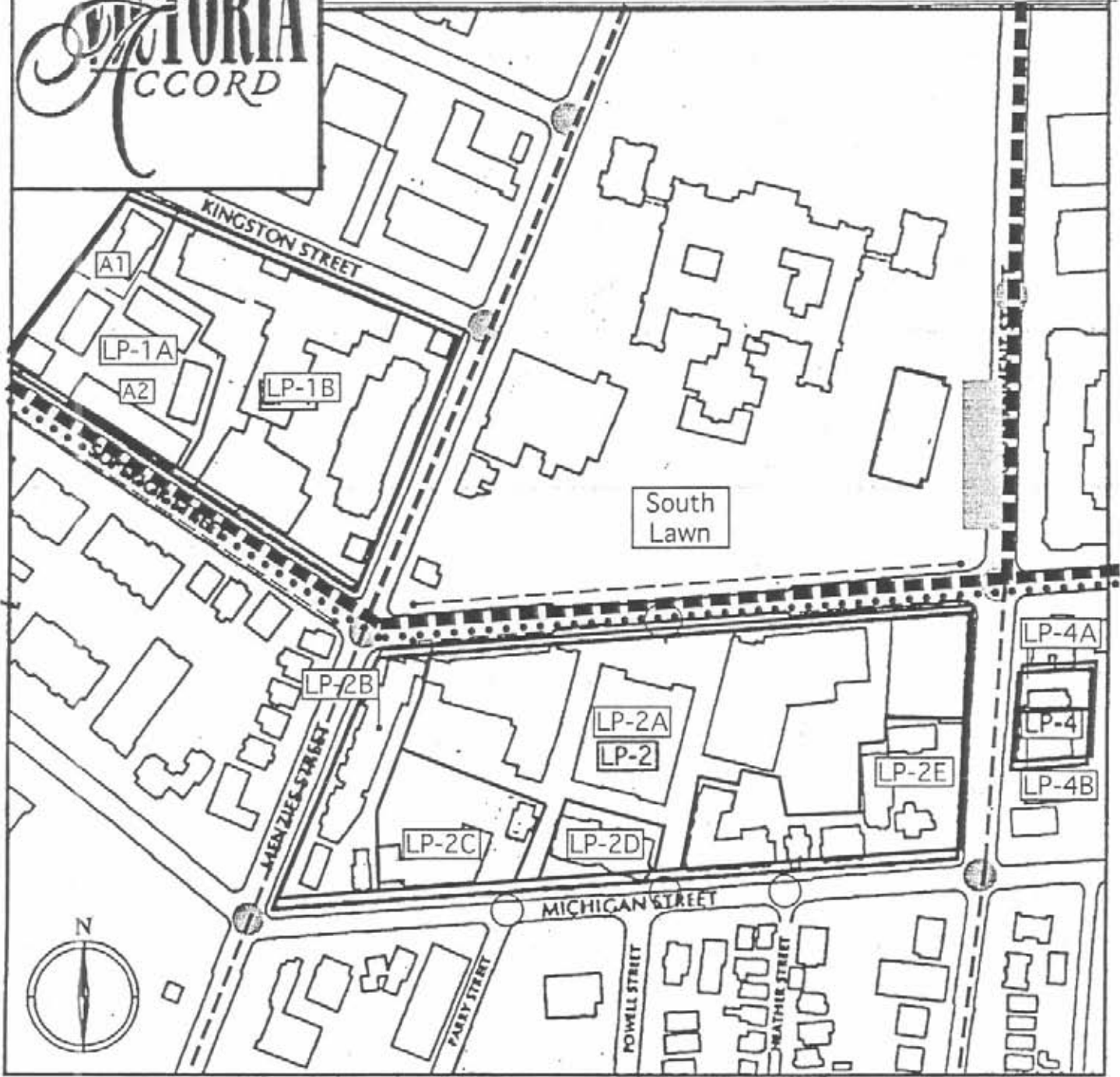
Short-term parking may be permitted on the street frontages in commercial areas, for instance along Menzies St. south of Superior St., to assist the commercial viability of the small shops in this area. On-street parking for transient users is important because in addition to bringing activity to the street front, it provides a buffering effect against passing traffic. The Traffic Demand Management Plan is an integral part of the parking and planning strategy for the Legislative Precinct. Please refer to Appendix IV for details.

Where surface parking may be provided on an interim basis on undeveloped parcels within the zones, it shall be divided into several small lots instead of a large single asphalt expanse by means of sensitive landscaping treatments. Tree planting, special lighting, and screening devices such as hedges and walls, will be used to minimize the visual presence of these parking areas (refer to sketch at right).





Area Map showing Development Areas



Traffic management techniques, including 'traffic calming', should be considered for roads in and around the Precinct.

--Guideline 4.1, Project Review Group Report

Planning development in the Precinct should be integrated with planning for the Downtown Streetcars and other transit initiatives which evolve.

--Guideline 4.2, Project Review Group Report

- Secondary Arterial Road
- Collector
- Secondary Collector
- Bus Zone
- Bicycle Route
- Line of Future Road Widening
- Intersection Crosswalk (existing)
- Crosswalk (proposed)

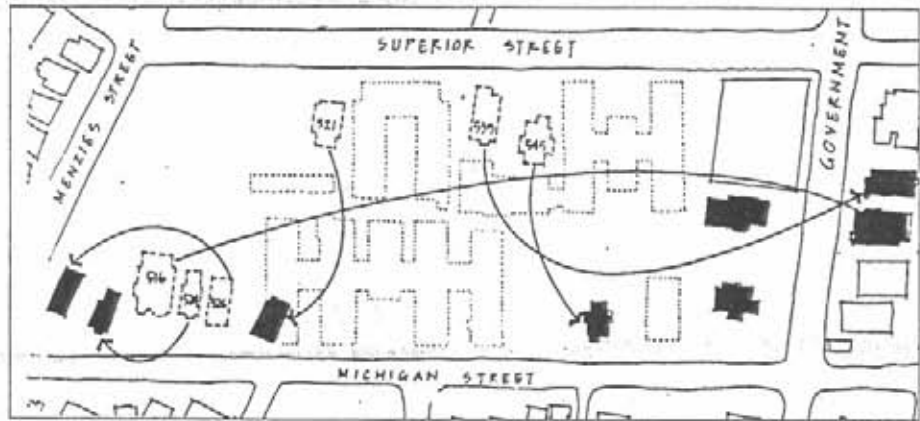
Heritage Houses

Heritage and character buildings should remain where they are except where they are isolated or would become isolated due to the new developments.

--Guideline 5.2,
Project Review Group
Report

A total of eight heritage houses, all registered by the City of Victoria, are currently among the buildings which occupy the South Block (LP2). As a part of the redevelopment process for Parcels LP2B, LP2C, LP2E and LP4, specific houses must be relocated as indicated in the Development Area Guidelines, and their exteriors restored to reflect their outstanding quality as historic buildings within the built fabric of the Precinct.

Heritage registry and heritage-designated properties are both listed in the Heritage Inventory. A heritage-registry property is officially listed in the Inventory because it may have sufficient heritage value to warrant preservation actions by the City in the future. Heritage-registry status does not give any formal protection and is not the same as Heritage Designation. It is a system to ensure the review and monitoring of proposed changes to properties with heritage value.



Heritage House Relocation Map



The John Robson House, 506 Government St., circa 1890, and today.

Relocation of heritage houses has been carefully considered in relation to on- and off-site views and proposed new building massing. For example, 545 Superior St. will be relocated to terminate a vista looking northwards on Heather St.

In general, relocation of heritage houses along the north side of Michigan St. will help establish the scale of new housing planned for this edge and set a standard for the residential architectural quality in the Precinct.

The existing heritage houses on the South Block on the west side of Government St. will not be relocated, but will be used to frame a forecourt for proposed multiple-dwelling housing on Development Area LP2E (refer to the Development Area Guidelines for details). The development in Area LP4 will consist entirely of the relocation and restoration of two heritage houses, presently located at 539 Superior St. and 516 Michigan St.

It is intended that all of the relocated houses will eventually be converted to provide multiple dwelling units or to accommodate other special uses, including senior citizens' housing, for example, on LP4, or specific amenities, such as daycare.

In the short term, some houses may continue their present use as government office space at the discretion of BCBC.

Zoning/Implementation

Each development in the project should stand on its own merits, but be contextual.

--Guideline 6.1,
Project Review Group
Report

Development phasing could be linked through a development variance permit to the provision of community benefits, amenities and the provision of transportation and affordable housing.

--Guideline 8.1,
Project Review Group
Report

Zoning by-laws are the mechanism by which land use and urban form are regulated. In the past, single use zoning divided and distributed land uses according to their relative compatibility and location within the City. This use-segregating approach is suited to situations where a particular land use would negatively affect another or have a negative impact on local infrastructure (ie. roads, utilities, etc.)

More recently, an integrated approach to land use zoning has emerged. In some respects, this "mixed-use" or "comprehensive" zoning recognizes an historic precedent. It allows different but compatible uses to co-exist in reasonably close proximity. As in old towns and cities, where the ground or street level is "zoned" for commercial or retail activity, the upper floors may contain offices and dwellings. To achieve this healthy mixing and variability of zoned uses, while retaining sufficient controls, the City intends to put in place a Comprehensive Development Zoning By-law.



One zones, eight development areas

The comprehensive development zoning approach (in concert with the Development Permit process) creates an overall zoning framework for the coordinated development of all of the available Legislative Precinct sites. The Development Area Guidelines are designed to provide the City with long-term certainty about the form, character and type of land uses, while allowing some flexibility for the design of buildings, the exact location of land uses, while allowing some flexibility for the design of buildings, the exact location of land uses and the size and timing of subdivisions.

The CD-LP Comprehensive Development Zoning is written as a brief set of definitions and a table outlining maximum floor space allocations for each permitted use in each of eight Development Areas (map above). It includes recommendations for site coverage, height of buildings, build-to-lines, vehicle and bicycle parking, and the provision of open space. This type of zoning is supported by other legal mechanisms (OCP, Master Servicing Agreement, restrictive covenants, etc) to form an adaptable, yet orderly, development process.

Design Guidelines

Author's Note

The author wishes to acknowledge the master format document upon which the preceding section was based. The Selkirk Waterfront Urban Design Manual, prepared for the City of Victoria by de Hoog d'Ambrosio Rowe Architects, was recommended as exemplary by the City in both form and content prior to the preparation of the present volume. The present volume therefore makes extensive use of the form and general content of this document, modified as required for the present purpose.