

# OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN Annual Review 2021

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# Introduction



The purpose of the Official Community Plan (OCP) Annual Review is to provide an annual snapshot of progress towards achieving the OCP, which Council approved in July 2012. The OCP Annual Review 2021 is the tenth annual review and presents key indicators related to the OCP for the 2021 calendar year. Data collected in future years will allow progress to be measured as the indicators show trends over time.

The preparation of the Annual Review is guided by the OCP, which establishes a regular cycle of plan implementation, monitoring and adjustment as part of an adaptive management approach. More details regarding the OCP monitoring program were outlined in the Annual Review 2012 (previously called OCP Annual Review 2013), approved by Council in December 2013.

The Annual Review will be used to help identify emerging trends and issues that may have an impact on the OCP and to inform potential changes to the OCP and other policies, plans or practices.

The Annual Review indicators are focused primarily on land management and development, and are limited to those where data is available on an annual basis. A more comprehensive monitoring report will be produced approximately every five years, as resources allow, and provide a more complete review of progress towards achieving the OCP. These reports will feature an extensive list of indicators, covering all topics in the OCP.

## KEY MONITORING FINDINGS

Overall, the indicators for the 2021 calendar year show that targets are mostly being met or exceeded, with several indicators experiencing changes that are worth noting. These include:

- › A net total of 1289 new housing units were created in 2021 based on building permits issued. This is a significantly higher number than in the previous year (614), and the second most active year since 2012.
- › Over time, the city continues to see less residential development in and within walking distance of Town Centres and Large Urban Villages than envisioned in the OCP, with higher proportions of development in the Urban Core and in Small Urban Villages and the remainder of residential areas.

- › 93.3% of all new units were apartments. This is a significantly higher proportion than in 2020 (79%), reflecting the prominence of higher density developments within the urban core. The ongoing Missing Middle Housing Initiative is one of several actions the City is taking to increase housing diversity in traditional residential areas, including areas around urban villages.
- › Of the 1365 gross new units created in Victoria in 2021, 61.1% were identified as rental units, 36.5% as strata ownership, and 2.4% as fee simple ownership. The high proportion of purpose built rental units is similar to the year before, however the absolute number (835) is by far the highest observed since the 2012 baseline.
- › The primary rental market vacancy rate was very low at 1.0% in the fourth quarter of 2021, signalling a low inventory and high demand for purpose-built rentals.
- › In 2021, Victoria accommodated 27% of the region's new housing units, while the Urban Core accommodated 18%. This is on par with the general trend since the OCP was adopted in 2012.
- › In total, between 2012-2021, 27% of new units in the region have been located within the City of Victoria and 17% of new units within Victoria's Urban Core. If this pattern continues, the 2041 target will be exceeded.
- › A total of 3850 metres of the greenways network was implemented or upgraded in 2021, which represents some of the biggest improvements since the 2012 baseline. 4.5 km of the Cycling Network was improved or added in 2021.
- › The total amount of permits issued for tracked activities in public spaces saw an increase in 2021, compared to the year before which was a record low since the 2012 baseline.
- › Industrial space continues to be in shortage, with an all time low of 0.1% in Greater Victoria and 0.2% within the City of Victoria.

# Victoria's *Official Community Plan*

## BACKGROUND

An *Official Community Plan* (OCP) is one of the most important guiding bylaws for a community. Victoria's current OCP was adopted by Council in July 2012 after two and a half years of public consultation with more than 6,000 people.

Guided by the *Local Government Act*, an OCP is a set of high-level objectives and policies that guide land use planning; social, economic and environmental policies; and civic infrastructure investments. Victoria's OCP provides direction for growth and change over the next 30 years, guiding Victoria to become a more sustainable community. Victoria's OCP encourages a strong downtown core and a network of vibrant walkable villages and town centres. It also emphasizes sustainable transportation and a greater range of housing options.

## RELATIONSHIP TO THE OCP IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The *OCP Implementation Strategy*, approved by City Council in September 2013, identifies 174 different actions to achieve the OCP. For each action, the *OCP Implementation Strategy* lists the responsibility, funding status, time frame and how it supports other priorities of the organization. At the time the OCP Implementation Strategy was created, it was intended that the status of implementation actions be reported as part of future OCP Annual Reviews. In future OCP Annual Reviews, particularly at milestone years (i.e. approximately every five years as resources allow), staff can highlight outstanding or upcoming OCP implementation items to inform priority setting by Council in following years.



# Targets

The following list presents those targets identified in the OCP, along with the frequency with which their progress can be measured:

## LAND MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

› Victoria accommodates a minimum of 20,000 additional residents from 2011 to 2041	Measured every 5 years
› The Urban Core accommodates a minimum of 10,000 additional residents from 2011 to 2041	Measured every 5 years
› Victoria accommodates a minimum of 20% of the region's cumulative new housing units to 2041	Measured annually
› The Urban Core accommodates a minimum of 10% of the region's cumulative new housing units to 2041	Measured annually
› A minimum 90% of all housing units are within 400 metres of either the Urban Core, a Town Centre or an Urban Village by 2041	Measured every 5 years

## TRANSPORTATION

› At least 70% of journey to work trips by Victoria residents take place by walking, cycling and public transit by 2041	Measured every 5 years
› A minimum of 60% of all trips by Victoria residents take place by walking, cycling and public transit by 2041	Measured every 5 years
› A minimum of 99% of Victoria residents live within 400 metres of a transit stop by 2041	Measured every 5 years

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

› Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by a minimum of 33% below the 2007 levels by 2020	Measured every 5 years
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## ECONOMY

› Victoria accommodates a minimum of 20% of the region's new employment by 2041	Measured every 5 years
› Victoria's employment has increased by a minimum of 10,000 jobs by 2041	Measured every 5 years

## FOOD SYSTEMS

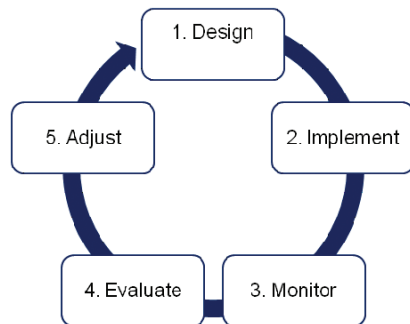
› A minimum of 90% of residents are within 400 metres of a full service grocery store by 2041	Measured every 5 years
› All organic food waste generated within Victoria is diverted from the regional landfill by 2041	Measured every 5 years

# Monitoring the *Official Community Plan*

## OVERVIEW

A community's ability to prepare and respond to change is an indication of its resiliency and sustainability. The OCP is based on an adaptive management approach, where an institution learns from implementation successes and failures in order to improve subsequent policies and actions over time. A regular system of review, monitoring and adjustment will measure progress towards achieving the OCP's long-term goals and objectives and ensure that the OCP responds to emerging trends, issues, and opportunities.

## OCP ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



Source: Policy 22.1, City of Victoria *Official Community Plan*, 2012

## MONITORING REPORTS

The OCP Monitoring Program will produce two different reports\*:

1. An Annual Review, presenting a snapshot of implementation progress and reporting on key annual indicators
2. A Five-Year Monitoring Report containing a comprehensive set of indicators and evaluation of implementation progress

## INDICATOR CRITERIA

The OCP monitoring program collects data for 17 indicators on an annual basis, with additional indicators tracked approximately every five years. The list of indicators will be reviewed regularly. New indicators may be added and others may be adjusted or removed.

The indicators were selected with close attention to existing City monitoring initiatives. The final indicators were chosen based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Description
Meaningful	Does the indicator provide useful and relevant information about reaching OCP goals and objectives?
Readily available	Is the data needed to measure the indicator readily available? If not, can a new system to measure the indicator be easily set up? Is the indicator reported on a regular basis?
Outcome-oriented	Does the indicator measure results and not just the resources invested?
Reliable	Are the methods used to measure the indicator standardized and reliable? Is the data of a good quality?
Accepted	Is the indicator seen by other municipalities as a valid, reliable and verifiable measure?
Spatial	If possible, is the indicator spatially-oriented and able to be mapped?

\*OCP policies 22.3, 22.7, 22.9, 23.1 – 23.8 provide more detailed guidance for the OCP Monitoring Program and reporting.



**ANNUAL INDICATORS**

The following indicators are measured on an annual basis and reported in the OCP Annual Review:

OCP Section	Annual OCP Indicators
Land Management and Development	1. New housing units 2. Share of new housing units in growth target areas 3. Regional share of new housing units 4. New commercial and industrial space in target areas
Transportation and Mobility	5. Improvements to greenways network 6. Improvements to sidewalk network 7. Improvements to cycling network
Infrastructure	8. Improvements to underground infrastructure
Placemaking	9. Activities in public spaces
Parks and Recreation	10. New trees on City lands
Housing and Homelessness	11. New housing units by tenure 12. New housing units by type 13. Rental housing vacancy rate 14. Emergency shelter use
Economy	15. Retail, office and industrial vacancies
Plan Administration	16. <i>Official Community Plan</i> amendments 17. Contributions from development

**FIVE-YEAR INDICATORS**

The OCP monitoring program includes both annual and five-year reporting. The Five-Year Monitoring Report was envisioned to feature a comprehensive set of indicators and a more detailed evaluation of the plan progress (OCP Policy 22.11), prepared approximately every five years as resources allow.

The first five-year report was completed in connection with the OCP Annual Review 2017, and focused on growth and change in Victoria’s population, housing and employment since the OCP was adopted. A key component in preparing the next five-year report (2022) will be the Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation (DOME) project, which is currently in progress.

The DOME project will explore the feasibility of capturing new data streams or improved data quality about new development, in order to identify development trends, support research, planning and policy initiatives across city departments and more accurately measure progress towards the objectives in the Official Community Plan.

## Trends and Issues

One of the objectives of the Annual Review is to identify observable trends from the findings of the monitoring program. The Annual Review also aims to recognize other emerging issues, new knowledge and information that may be relevant to the implementation of the OCP. This information will be used to review and update relevant policies and practices in a coordinated and timely manner.

### KEY MONITORING FINDINGS

This report presents data from the 2021 calendar year, which can be compared to the data from 2012 to 2020 to begin to understand if trends are developing. However, many of the OCP indicators do not yet show conclusive trends within this limited time frame. Additional data added in future years will allow more thorough analysis of trends as they develop.

Several indicators have experienced changes worth noting in the 2021 calendar year. The following is a high level summary of several targets:

- › A net total of 1289 new housing units were created in 2021, based on building permits issued. This is a significantly higher number than in the previous year (614), and the second most active year since 2012. The vast majority of this development was located in and near the urban core, with Victoria West, Burnside, Downtown and Harris Green seeing the highest numbers. No neighbourhood saw a net loss of units in 2021.
- › Over time, the city continues to see less residential development in and within walking distance of Town Centres and Large Urban Villages than envisioned in the OCP, with higher proportions of development in the Urban Core and in Small Urban Villages and the remainder of residential areas. In 2021, 69% of residential development occurred in the Urban Core, 22% fell within walking distance of Town Centres and Large Urban Villages, and 9% in Small Urban Villages and the remainder of residential areas.
- › 93.3% of all new units were apartments. This is a significantly higher proportion than in 2020 (79%), reflecting the prominence of higher density developments within the urban core. In absolute numbers, the amount of single family dwellings, duplex units and garden suites created was similar to the year before, while fewer townhouse units and secondary suites were observed. No triplex or fourplexes (i.e., houseplexes) received building permits in 2021. The ongoing Missing Middle Housing Initiative is one of several actions the City is taking to increase housing diversity in traditional residential areas, including areas around urban villages.

- › Of the 1365 gross new units created in Victoria in 2021, 61.1% were identified as rental units, 36.5% as strata ownership, and 2.4% as fee simple ownership. The high proportion of purpose built rental units is similar to the year before, however the absolute number (835) is by far the highest observed since 2012. The recent strong interest in rental development can partly be attributed to low interest rates, creating favourable borrowing conditions and enhancing the viability of rental housing.
- › The primary rental market vacancy rate was very low at 1.0% in the fourth quarter of 2021, signalling a low inventory and high demand for purpose-built rentals. The strong demand for rental is also resulting in higher monthly rents. Greater Victoria vacancy rates followed the same pattern, also decreasing to 1.0% from 2.2% the year before.
- › In 2021, Victoria accommodated 27% of the region's new housing units, while the Urban Core accommodated 18%. In total, between 2012-2021, 28% of new units in the region have been located within the City of Victoria and 17% of new units within Victoria's Urban Core. If this pattern continues, the 2041 target will be exceeded.
- › A total of 3850 metres of the greenways network was implemented or upgraded in 2021, which represents some of the biggest improvements since the 2012 baseline. 4.5 km of the Cycling Network was improved or added in 2021.
- › The total amount of permits issued for tracked activities in public spaces saw an increase in 2021, compared to the year before which was a record low since the 2012 baseline. The increase in permits reflects the gradual easing of the Covid-19 related restrictions on public gathering.
- › Industrial space continues to be in shortage, with an all time low of 0.1% in Greater Victoria and 0.2% within the City of Victoria. The downtown office space vacancy rate was at 6.6%, which is on par with the last few years' average. The downtown street front vacancy rate continued to rise in 2021, to 7.9%. The city-wide vacancy rate for shopping centres decreased to 3.5%.

### EMERGING TRENDS AND ISSUES

As more data is collected over the next few years, this section will provide a summary of any emerging trends, issues or new information that may have an impact on the implementation and success of the OCP.



# OCP Indicators

The indicators presented in this report are based on data for the 2021 calendar year, except where noted. Results from earlier years were included for indicators where the data was available. In some cases, this data was not available and it will be several years before conclusive trends can be determined.

Most of the OCP indicators in this report were first measured for the 2012 baseline year. This has meant finding reliable data sources and developing standard methods to collect and analyze the data. The monitoring methods for some indicators are still being improved, and these results will be reported in future OCP Annual Reviews. Those annual indicators are shown in the table at right.

**Note:** Unless otherwise noted, all data is provided by the City of Victoria.

Annual Indicators Under Development	
Indicator	Details
1. New housing units	Will be expanded to include new housing units completed, through Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).
2. Share new housing units located within target areas	Will be expanded to include new housing units completed, through Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).
3. Regional share of new housing units	Will be expanded to include new housing units completed, through Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).
4. New commercial and industrial space in target areas	Under development, as part of Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).
5. Greenways network	Will be expanded in the future to measure the percentage of the Greenways network that is complete.
11. New housing units by tenure	Will be expanded to include new housing units completed, through Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).
12. New housing units by structure type	Will be expanded to include new housing units completed, through Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).
14. Emergency Shelter Use	This indicator will be reviewed again for the 2022 OCP Annual Review, in collaboration with the City's partners.
17. Contributions from development	Some data is currently reported, but this indicator is under development, as part of Development Outcomes Monitoring and Evaluation project (in progress).

# 1 New Housing Units

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the number and geographic distribution of net new housing units in the City of Victoria. Net new housing units are calculated from building permits issued in the calendar year. The number of housing units that will be lost (through demolition) are subtracted from the number of housing units that will be gained.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Victoria is anticipated to grow by a minimum of 20,000 people over the next 30 years. This indicator measures how well the new housing supply is meeting the projected demand.

**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

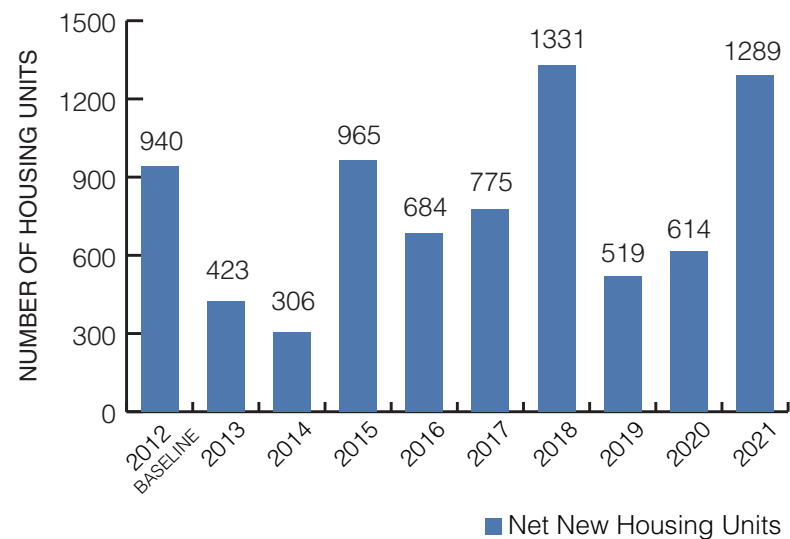
## HOW ARE WE DOING?

A net total of 1289 new housing units were created in 2021, based on building permits issued. This is a significantly higher number than in the previous year (614), and the second most active year since the 2012 baseline. This net total is the sum of all new units in projects that received a building permit throughout the calendar year, minus the number of units lost through permits for demolitions and deconversions in the same period. 76 units were lost in 2021, 69 of those were demolitions.

The highest number of net new units created in 2021 were in the Vic West neighbourhood (370), followed by Burnside (276). Harris Green saw 259 new units created and Downtown saw 245 new units created. No neighbourhood saw a net loss of units in 2021.

**Please note:** The data below is based on building permits issued and does NOT include homes approved through the provincial paramountcy process or temporary housing units.

Net New Housing Units in the City of Victoria





MAP 1:

### Net New Housing Units by Neighbourhood

2021 Total Net New Housing Units in Victoria = 1289

**Note:** Net new housing units are calculated from building permits issued. The number of housing units that will be lost (through demolition or conversion) are subtracted from the number of housing units that will be gained.

SOURCE: CITY OF VICTORIA





# Share of New Housing Units in Growth Target Areas

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the annual share of new housing units located in the OCP's growth target areas. Housing growth is measured in three different target areas:

- 1) the Urban Core
- 2) located in or within walking distance (400m) of a Town Centre or Large Urban Village
- 3) Small Urban Villages and the remainder of residential areas

Housing units are calculated from building permits issued, and categorized by OCP target growth areas.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

The OCP designates certain areas of the city for accommodating new population and associated housing growth. The Urban Core should accommodate 50% of the population growth, and areas in and near Town Centres and Large Urban Villages should accommodate 40% of the growth. Remaining growth is targeted for Small Urban Villages and other residential areas (10%). Concentrating housing and population growth in certain areas can provide the critical population mass to support better transit, local businesses, more efficient use of infrastructure, and better use of cycling and pedestrian facilities. A large share of Victoria's housing growth will be concentrated downtown to support the development of a strong urban core that retains its predominant role in the regional economy.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

- › To accommodate at least 20,000 new residents and associated housing growth over the next 30 years in the following approximate proportions: 50% in the Urban Core; 40% in or within close walking distance of Town Centres and Large Urban Villages; and 10% in Small Urban Villages and the remainder of residential areas

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

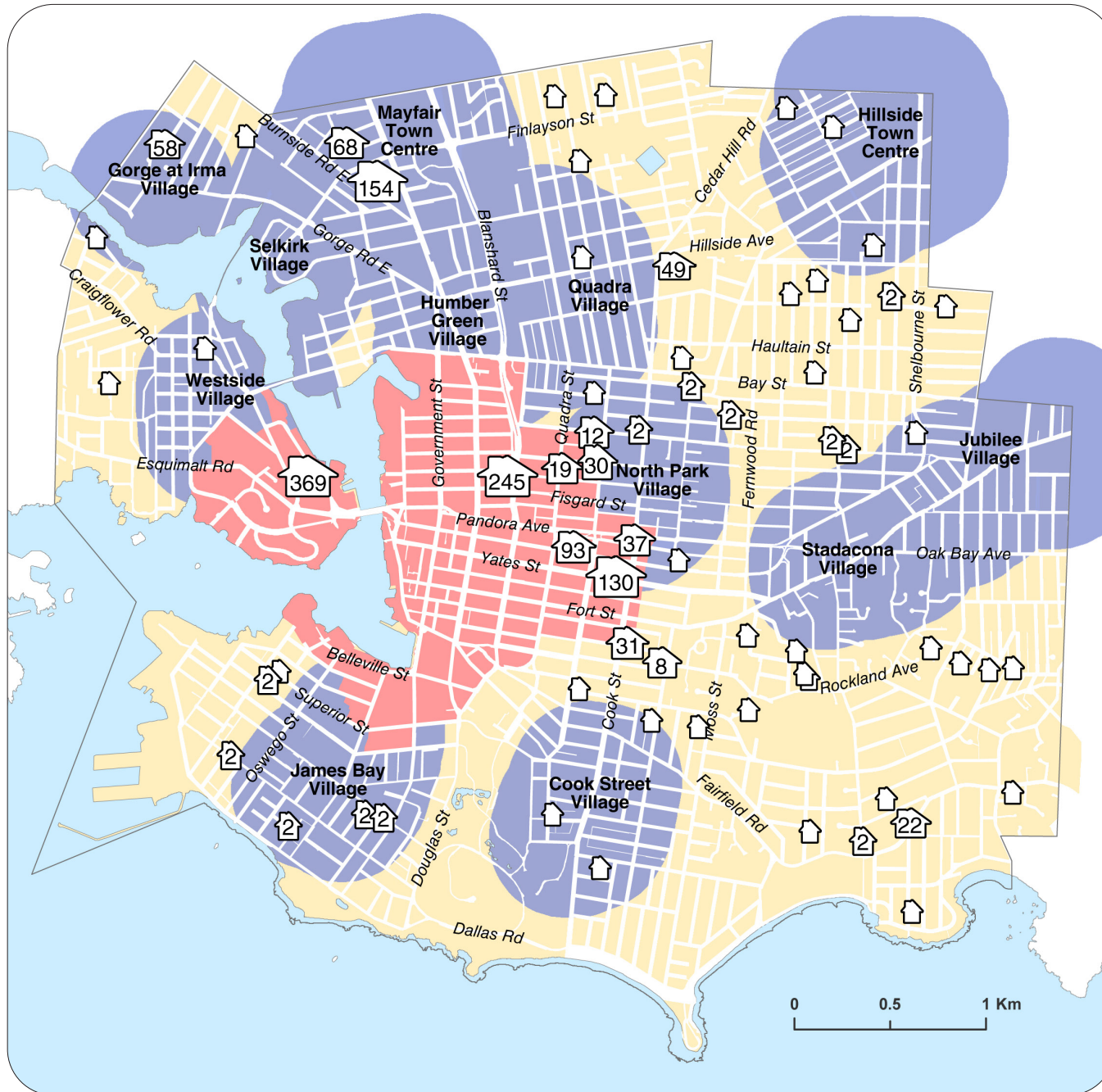
In 2021, 69% of residential development occurred in the Urban Core, with 22% of development within walking distance of Town Centres and Large Urban Villages and 9% in Small Urban Villages or the remainder of residential areas (MAP 2). The relatively large proportion in the Urban Core is significant compared to the last couple of years, but similar numbers were noted between 2015-2017 as well.

As seen in the table below, the distribution has varied from year to year, and looking at the cumulative percentages since 2012 gives the best idea of how we are doing so far. Of the new units between 2012-2021, 62% were in the Urban Core; 22% were in or within walking distance of a Town Centre or Large Urban Villages; and 16% were located in a Small Urban Village or the remainder of the residential areas.

The trend over time continues to show a higher proportion in the Urban Core and in Small Urban Villages and remainder of residential areas than the targets stated in the OCP. Areas in and around Town Centres and Large Urban Villages are so far seeing a smaller part of all residential development than desired.

Share of New Housing Units in Growth Target Areas												
Growth Area	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2012-2021 Cumulative	Target for 2041
Urban Core	73%	33%	33%	81%	67%	78%	62%	53%	22%	69%	62%	50%
In or within walking distance of a Town Centre or Large Urban Village	17%	28%	48%	12%	22%	14%	15%	13%	55%	22%	22%	40%
Small Urban Village or the remainder of the residential areas	10%	39%	19%	7%	11%	8%	23%	34%	23%	9%	16%	10%

SOURCE: CITY OF VICTORIA

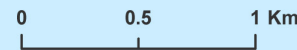


MAP 2:

### New Housing Units in Growth Target Areas

- New Housing Unit (single unit)
- New Housing Unit (# of units)
- Urban Core - 966 units (69%)
- 400 m walking distance from Town Centres/Large Urban Villages - 307 units (22%)
- Small Urban Villages and remainder of residential areas - 122 units (9%)

**Note:** New housing units are calculated based on building permits issued.



## 3 Regional Share of New Housing Units

### WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the annual share of new housing units throughout the Capital Regional District that are located in the City of Victoria. It shows the share of the regional total that was in: 1) the City of Victoria as a whole, and 2) Victoria's Urban Core. New units are calculated from building permits issued in the calendar year.

### WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

An increased share of new housing units within Victoria's Urban Core has potential impacts for the whole region: more efficient use of infrastructure and facilities, better access to transit services, decreased air pollution, less reliance on car travel, and less development pressure on agricultural and other rural lands. Within Victoria, encouraging new housing growth within the Urban Core will support the economic vibrancy of downtown and ensure that it retains its predominant role in the regional economy.

### TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

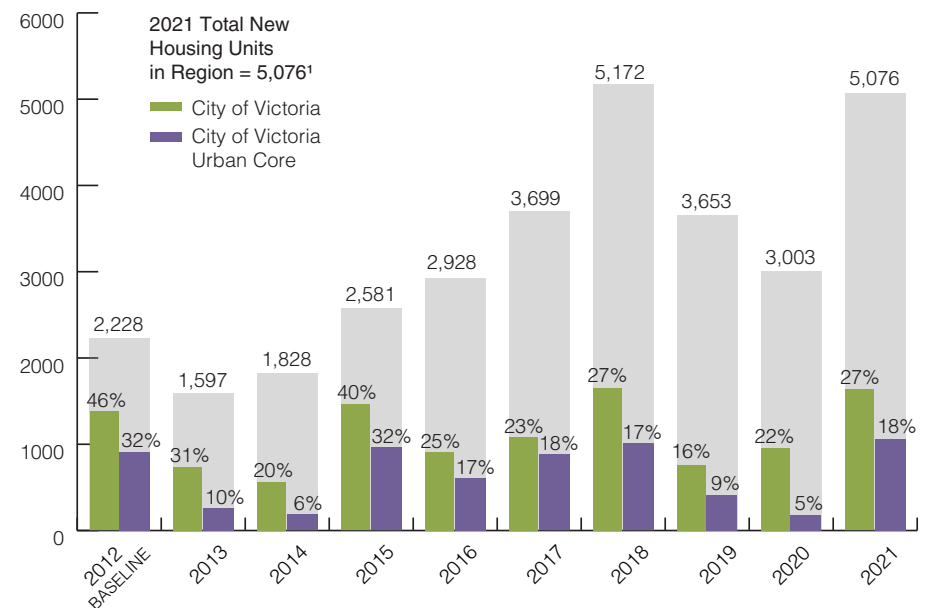
- › Victoria accommodates a minimum of 20% of the region's cumulative new housing units to 2041
- › The Urban Core accommodates a minimum of 10% of the region's cumulative new housing units to 2041

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

In 2021, Victoria accommodated 27% of the region's new housing units, while the Urban Core accommodated 18%. This is on par with the general trend since the OCP was adopted in 2012.

In total, between 2012-2021, 27% of new units in the region have been located within the City of Victoria and 17% of new units within Victoria's Urban Core. If this pattern continues, the 2041 target will be exceeded.

City of Victoria's Regional Share of New Housing Units



<sup>1</sup> SOURCE: CRD MONTHLY PERMIT REPORTING TOOL, 2010-2021

## 4 New Commercial and Industrial Space

### WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator will measure the amount of new commercial and industrial floor area that is approved on an annual basis.

### WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

A strong economic base is an essential component of a complete community. A diverse economy, including industrial, commercial and office sectors, not only provides increased stability, but also offers citizens the opportunity to access goods and services locally. The OCP focuses new employment growth in the Urban Core, Town Centres, in employment districts and along corridors served by frequent and rapid transit. New office development will be concentrated downtown to support the development of a strong downtown core that retains its predominant role in the regional economy. Outside of downtown, the concentration of employment growth in certain areas will maximize the use of municipal infrastructure, develop densities that allow for district energy, reduce commercial traffic, as well as increase the use of public transit by employees. Concentrating new employment growth in certain areas will also preserve the residential character of other parts of the city.

**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

### HOW ARE WE DOING?

Data collection methods for this indicator are under development.



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## 5 Greenways Network

### WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the length of the Greenways network that has received major upgrades on an annual basis. It also measures the total length of Greenways that have been added or upgraded since the inception of the *Greenways Plan* in 2004. The Greenways network consists of routes on streets, lanes, pathways and trails and with varying levels of service for different road users.

### WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Victoria's Greenways network encourages active transportation, recreation, and the restoration of native and aquatic habitat and places of cultural importance. The OCP and *Go Victoria*, the City's Sustainable Mobility Strategy, encourage investments such as street trees, wayfinding and placemaking on these routes and investments to support barrier removal for people with disabilities. The OCP also supports using the Greenways network, in addition to the city's bicycle and sidewalk network, to link the Urban Core, Town Centres and Urban Villages with common destinations such as major parks, places of employment, schools, and recreational and cultural attractions.

**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

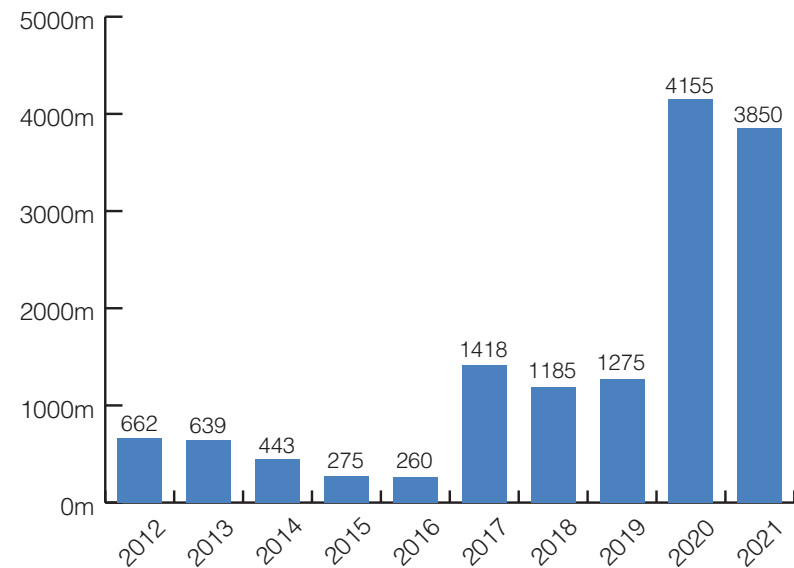
### HOW ARE WE DOING?

The total length of the identified Greenways network measures 99.6 kilometres (MAP 3). A total of 3850 metres of the network was implemented or upgraded in 2021, which represents some of the biggest improvements since the 2012 baseline.

Several projects were delivered through the City's traffic calming program and in coordination with the priority AAA network (also counted in indicator no. 7 Cycling Network). Greenways were upgraded on Vancouver St, Graham St. and Rockland Ave. along with several noteworthy spot improvements such as intersection upgrades, new sidewalks and crosswalk improvements in Fairfield, Burnside Gorge, and Hillside Quadra.

Since 2012, a total of 14.1 kilometres of enhancements and upgrades have been delivered on Greenways.

Annual Greenway Network Improvements





**MAP 3:**  
**Improvements to  
 Greenways Network  
 (2004 – 2020)**

- █ Greenway Improvements (2021)
- █ Greenway Improvements (2004 - 2020)
- █ Designated Greenway

Length of new or major upgrades to Greenways network (since 2012) – 14.1 km  
 Total length of designated Greenways network (2021) – 99.6km

SOURCE: CITY OF VICTORIA

# 6 Sidewalk Network

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the length of the sidewalk network that is added or receives major upgrades on an annual basis. It also measures the total length of sidewalks that have been added or upgraded since the inception of the *Pedestrian Master Plan* in 2009. New sidewalks are added where no sidewalk existed previously; a major upgrade includes work such as widening the sidewalk or making other improvements for pedestrians.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

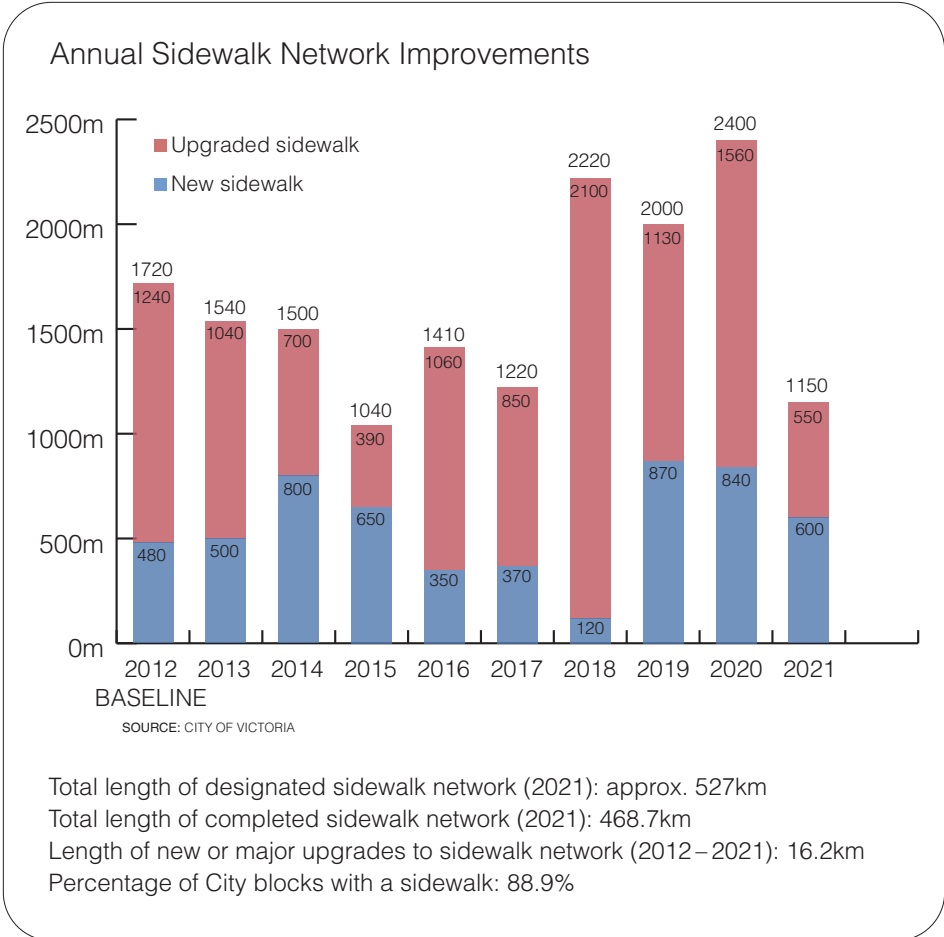
Creating walkable, pedestrian-friendly neighbourhoods is a central focus of Victoria's OCP. Walkability has many benefits for air quality, the reduction of greenhouse gases, public health and the life and vitality of neighbourhoods. Accelerating active and accessible transportation is also a key initiative identified in *Go Victoria*, the City's Sustainable Mobility Strategy. A continuous, high quality sidewalk network is important in making a street comfortable, safe and inviting for pedestrians and people with disabilities.

**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The total length of the designated sidewalk network is approximately 527 linear kilometres. In 2021, 0.6 kilometres of new sidewalk was added and 0.55 kilometres were upgraded along the sidewalk network, for a total of 1.15 linear kilometres.

The percentage of City blocks that have a sidewalk was 88.9% at 2021 year end.



# 7 Cycling Network

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the length of the cycling infrastructure that is added or receives major upgrades on an annual basis. It also measures the total length of cycling infrastructure that has been added or upgraded since 1995. Cycling investments includes various types of infrastructure including off-street multi-user trails, on-street painted cycling lanes, on-street separated cycling lanes, on-street signed cycling routes and combined bus/bike lanes.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

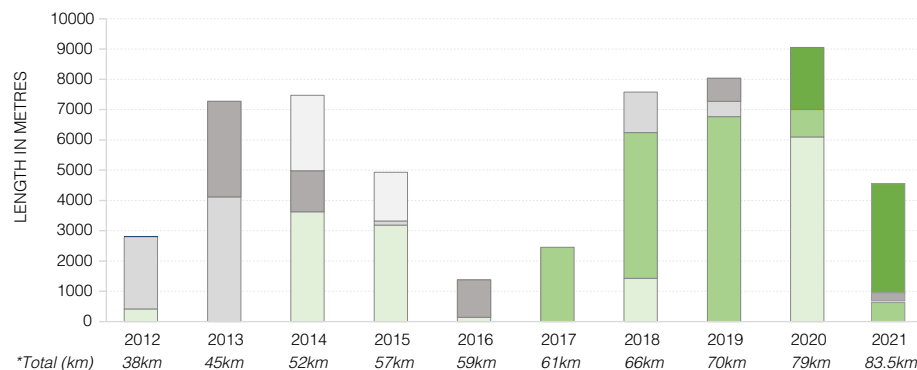
Victoria's compact size and mild climate make it well-suited for cycling, a cost efficient, low-carbon mode of transportation. The OCP encourages the expansion of cycling infrastructure in order to manage population growth and limited roadway capacity, reduce parking demand, and provide affordable, safe and convenient ways to travel. Accelerating active and accessible transportation is also a key initiative identified in *Go Victoria*, the City's Sustainable Mobility Strategy. Cycling routes that connect to shops, services, schools and workplaces is an important way to support multi modal transportation options for residents and businesses.

**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

In 2021, the City added or improved a total of 4.5km of the Cycling Network. The majority of the improvements consisted of new shared bikeways on Vancouver, Graham and Jackson Streets, and 630 m of one-way protected bike lanes on Vancouver St.

Annual Cycling Network Improvements



\*Total network kilometres account for cycling network improvements starting in 1995 and exclude signed bike routes

- Off-street (AAA)
- Protected (AAA)
- Shared use (AAA)
- Painted bike lanes
- Buffered bike lanes
- Bus / bike lanes

**Total length of cycling facility types:**

- Off-street pathways (AAA) - includes multi-use and bike only pathways = 19.3 km
- Protected bike lanes (AAA) - includes one-way and two-way protected bike lanes = 8.57 km
- Shared use bikeways (AAA) - includes neighbourhood bikeways and advisory bike lanes = 5.5 km
- Conventional bike lanes - includes painted, buffered, and bus/bike combined lanes = 49.73 km
- Signed bike routes - includes limited wayfinding = 30 km





**MAP 4:**  
**City of Victoria's Cycling Network, 2020**

- AAA off street pathway
- AAA protected bike lane (on-street)
- AAA shared use bike route
- Buffered bike lane (on-street)
- Conventional bike lane (on-street)
- Bus and bike lane combined
- 2020 - New bike infrastructure

AAA Bike Facility Type*	New or Upgraded in 2021	Total to date
Protected bike lanes (AAA)	670 m	8.57 km
Shared use bikeways (AAA)	3,600 m	5.5 km
Off-street pathways (AAA)	0 m	19.5 km
Conventional Bike Facility		
Painted bike lanes	0m	38.9km
Buffered bike lanes	230 m	6.73 km
Combined bus / bike lane	0m	4.1 km
Signed Bike Route	0m	30 km
<b>Total cycling infrastructure (excludes 30 km of signed bike routes)</b>		<b>113.3 km</b>

SOURCE: CITY OF VICTORIA

\*Starting in 2020, reporting of AAA infrastructure lengths has been revised to be more consistent with the CRD reporting.

# 8 Underground Infrastructure

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the length of water, stormwater and sanitary sewer mains that are replaced or rehabilitated on an annual basis. It also measures the total length of each network. Rehabilitation includes physical improvements such as the relining of pipes in order to extend the life of the infrastructure.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Underground infrastructure for drinking water, stormwater and sanitary sewers are vital to the economic, environmental and public health of a community. The location, condition and capacity used in these systems can influence development patterns. Like many municipalities across the country, Victoria is challenged with repairing and replacing aging infrastructure, while meeting new population and employment growth over the next 30 years. The OCP encourages improvements to water, stormwater and sanitary sewer systems and services to meet current and future demand. At the same time, it identifies the need to continue to make physical improvements to existing infrastructure. The OCP focuses population and employment growth in the Urban Core, Town Centres and Urban Villages in order to make use of existing infrastructure, and minimize the need for new infrastructure.

**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought\*

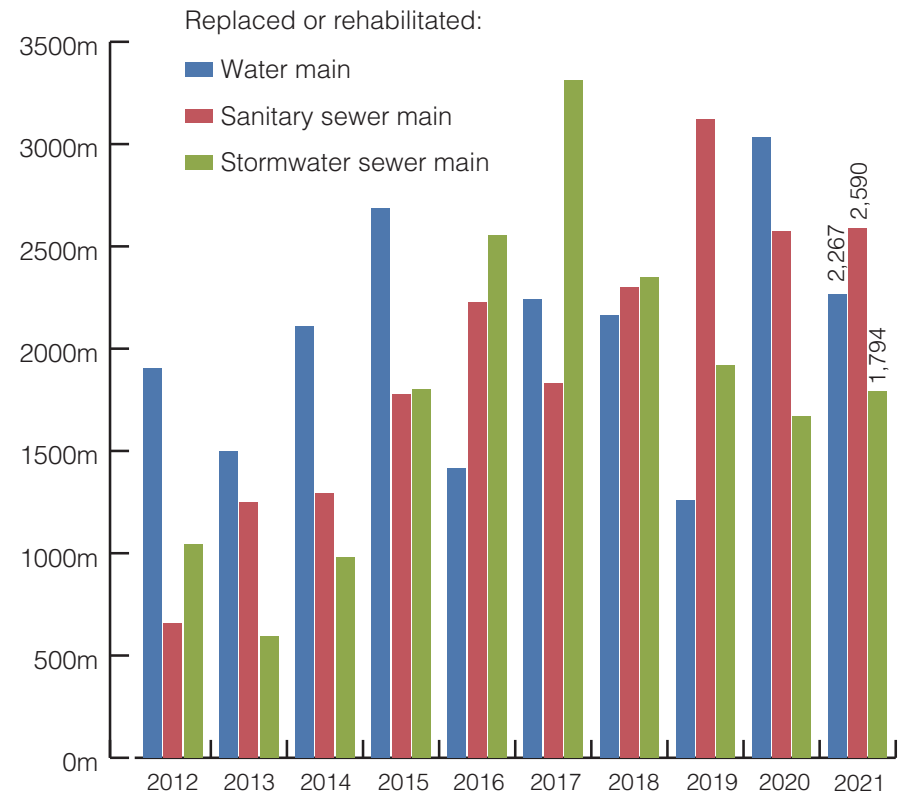
## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The total length of the water main network is 334 kilometres, the total length of the sanitary sewer network is 238 kilometres, and the total length of the stormwater sewer network is 259 kilometres.

2,267 metres of the water main network were replaced or rehabilitated in 2021. The amount of replaced or rehabilitated sanitary sewer (2,590 metres) was similar to the previous year, and the amount of replaced or rehabilitated stormwater sewer (1,794 metres) was slightly higher than in 2020.

\*An increase is sought in the length of mains that are added or upgraded on an annual basis but, in keeping with OCP direction, not to the total length of the overall network.

Improvements to Water, Stormwater and Sanitary Sewer Mains



Total length of water main network (2021): 334 km  
 Total length of sanitary sewer network (2021): 238 km  
 Total length of stormwater sewer network (2021): 259 km

SOURCE: CITY OF VICTORIA

# 9 Activities in Public Spaces

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the number of permits issued for a variety of activities that happen in outdoor and public spaces: markets, block parties, mobile food carts, sidewalk cafes, special events and street entertainers. Special events include festivals, sporting events, rallies and a variety of other public gatherings.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Activities such as markets, festivals and street vending help make streets and neighbourhoods lively and vibrant. They also generate economic activity, contribute to the city's arts and cultural life, reflect Victoria's unique identity, and help local residents feel more connected to each other. The OCP encourages more outdoor festivals, celebrations, concerts and special events to continue to animate the city's public spaces, streets and parks.

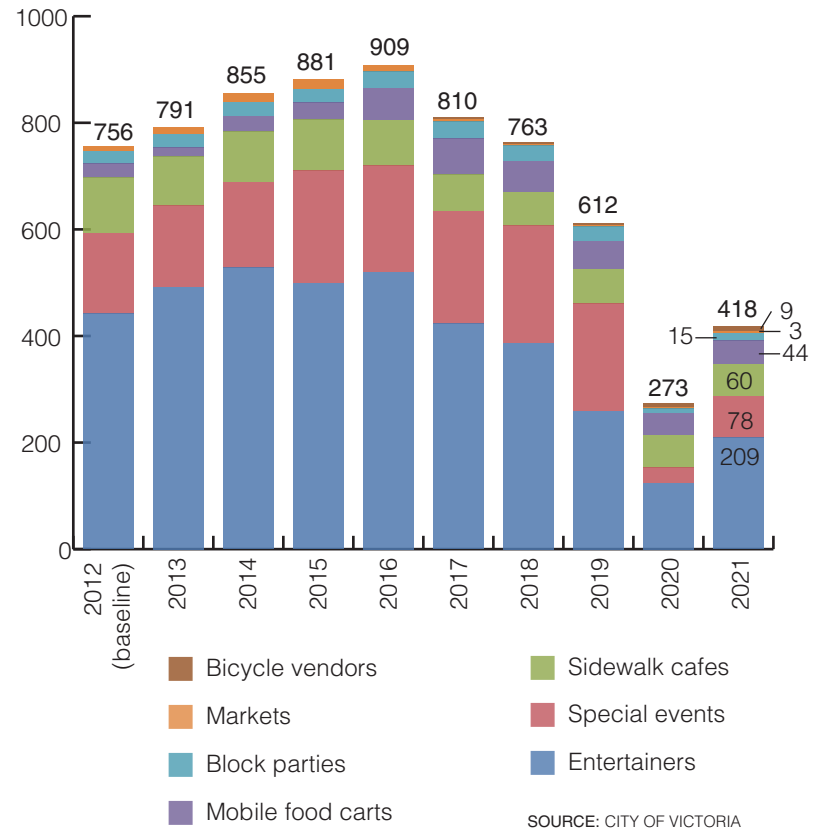
**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The total amount of permits issued for different activities in public spaces saw an increase in 2021, compared to the year before which was a record low since the 2012 baseline. This development has gone hand in hand with the gradual easing of the Covid-19 related restrictions on public gathering.

In total, 418 permits were issued for the categories listed on the right. The increase from 2020 mostly consisted of the number of special events more than doubling and both entertainers and block parties increasing by over 65% each. Sidewalk cafes, food carts and markets were virtually unchanged. The number of bicycle vendors increased from 6 to 9.

Permits Issued for Activities in Public Space



# 10 New Trees on City Land

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the number of net new trees planted on City lands on an annual basis (trees planted minus trees removed). City lands include parks, boulevards and other City-owned public spaces.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

The urban forest provides many ecological and community benefits. Trees reduce stormwater runoff, filter air and water pollution, and provide important habitat for birds, insects and other wildlife. In addition to their beauty, trees protect people from weather, provide privacy and buffer sound. Trees add beauty to public spaces and along roads and sidewalks, making walking and cycling more enjoyable. The OCP aims to enhance the urban forest to continue to support the many benefits that an urban forest provides.

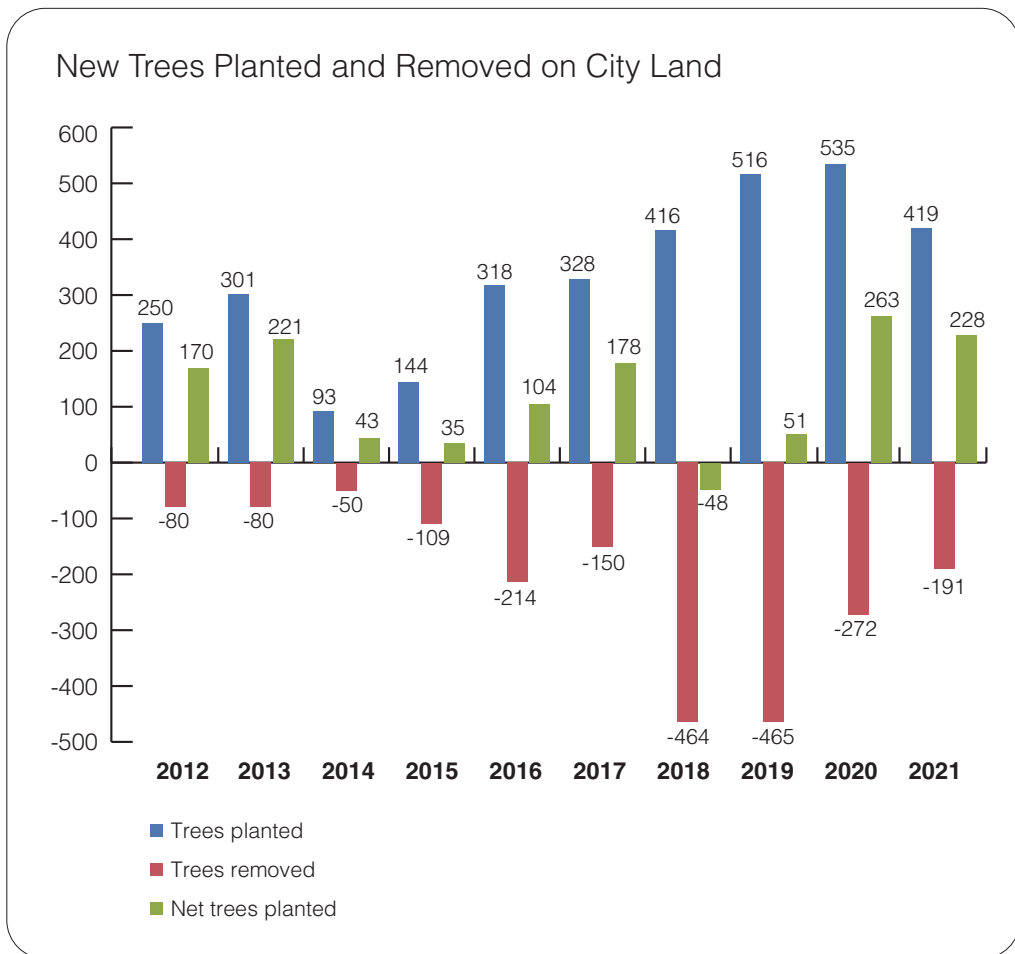
**TARGET/DESIRED TREND:**  increase sought

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

In 2021, 419 trees were planted and 191 trees were removed, for a net total of 228 trees added to the inventory. While the number planted was than the record year of 2020, where the City committed to planting 500 trees as part of the Trees in Cities Challenge, the number of trees planted in 2021 was above the average since 2012 (124.5). The number of trees planted each year is generally increasing, while the number of trees removed has been decreasing in the last two years after peaking in 2019.

There is estimated to be 150,000 trees that make up Victoria’s Urban Forest, and ¼ of the urban forest (approximately 33,000 trees) grow on public land in parks, open spaces and on boulevards. The City plants, maintains and cares for these trees to grow the urban forest sustainably over time, including monitoring and safely tending to trees nearing the end of their life cycle until removal and replacement is necessary.

In July 2021, Victoria adopted a new Tree Protection Bylaw which implements several recommendations in the Urban Forest Masterplan. The bylaw applies to trees on private property, including those that are undergoing development.



# 11 New Housing Units by Tenure

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the total number of new rental<sup>1</sup>, strata<sup>2</sup> and fee simple<sup>3</sup> housing units through building permits issued on an annual basis. It also measures the new housing units gained by tenure for each neighbourhood.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Providing a mix of rental and ownership (strata and fee simple) housing is important for building a diverse community. Providing options for rental and ownership housing within the same neighbourhood can accommodate people at a variety of life stages and income levels. The OCP encourages a wide range of housing types, tenures and prices in each neighbourhood. It also aims to maintain and expand Victoria's supply of aging rental housing through upgrades and regeneration.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

No target

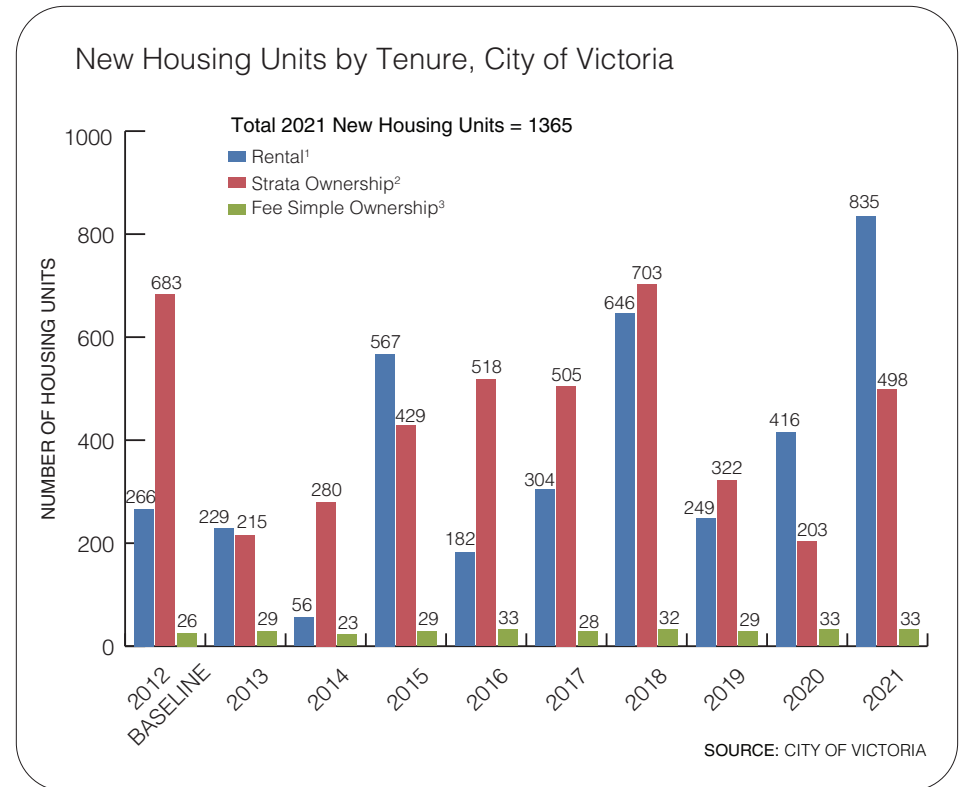
## HOW ARE WE DOING?

Of the 1365 gross new units created in Victoria in 2021, 61.1% were identified as rental units, 36.5% as strata ownership, and 2.4% as fee simple ownership. The high proportion of purpose built rental units is similar to the year before, however the absolute number (835) is by far the highest observed since the 2012 baseline.

The absolute number of new units created in the fee simple category continues to be stable, although as a proportion of all development it was lower than average in 2021.

In July 2019, Council adopted *Phase Two: Victoria Housing Strategy 2019 – 2022*, which builds on Phase One of the Strategy and the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan. Phase Two of the Strategy included updated housing targets to align with the City's growth targets and current needs. The targets are monitored in the Housing Strategy Annual Review.

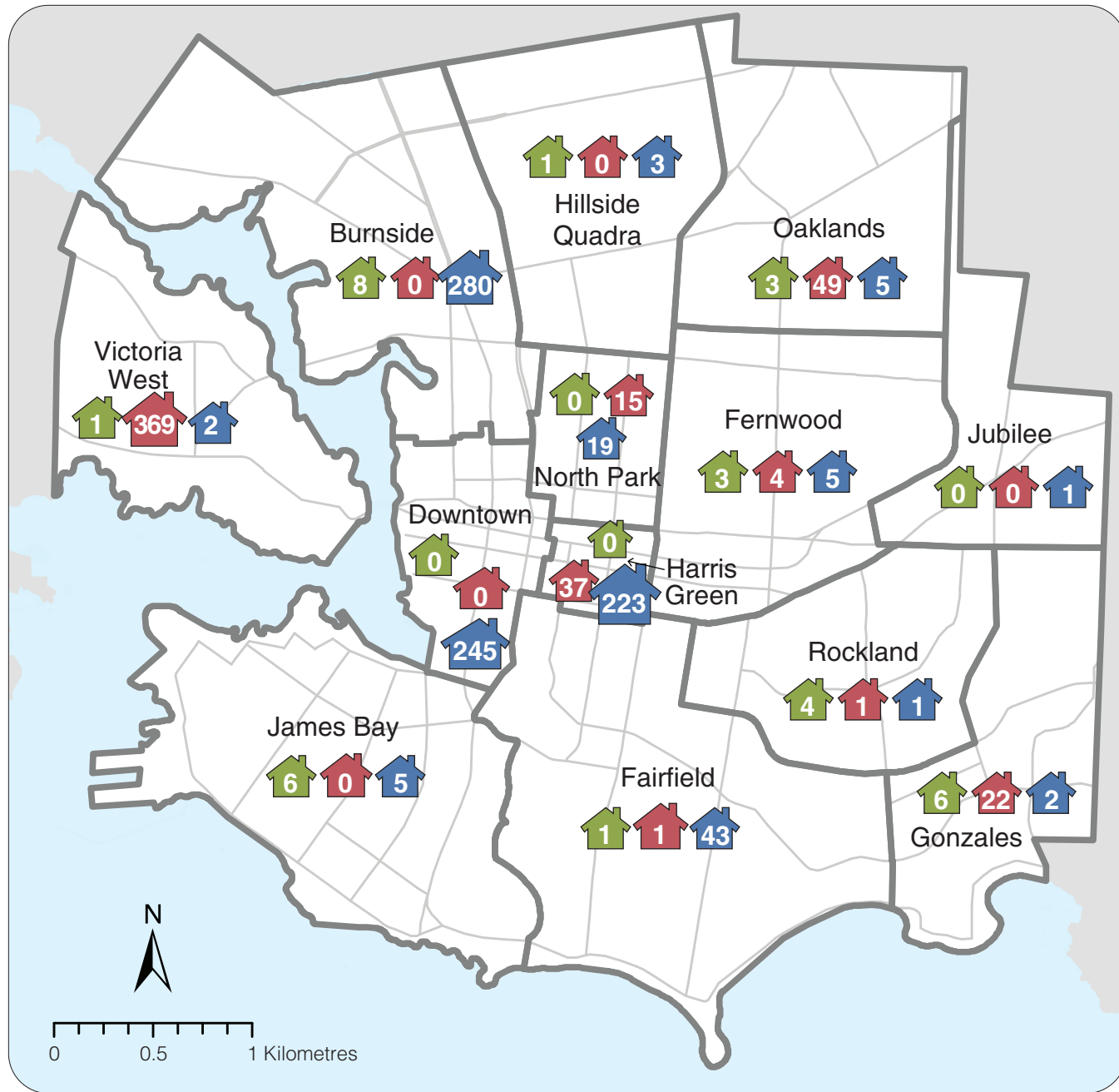
**Please note:** The data below is based on building permits issued and does NOT include homes approved through the provincial paramountcy process or temporary housing units.



<sup>1</sup> Rental: includes purpose-built rental apartments, secondary suites, garden suites

<sup>2</sup> Strata: includes strata duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes; strata townhouses; strata units in apartment, mixed-used and other multi-unit buildings

<sup>3</sup> Fee Simple: includes single family dwellings and non-strata attached houses





# 12 New Housing Units by Type

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the total number of new housing units by type of housing (townhouse, duplex, secondary suites, etc.) on an annual basis. It also measures the number of new housing units by type of housing in each neighbourhood. New housing units are calculated from building permits issued in the calendar year.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

The OCP encourages a wide range of housing types to support a diverse, inclusive and multigenerational community. Neighbourhoods with a wide range of housing types – such as townhouses, duplexes, single family dwellings, apartment buildings, special needs housing and secondary suites – can support a diverse population that includes students, families, seniors, group housing, singles or couples. This mix reinforces neighbourhood stability by allowing people to stay in the same neighbourhood throughout different stages of their life. It can also encourage social and economic diversity and different levels of affordability.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

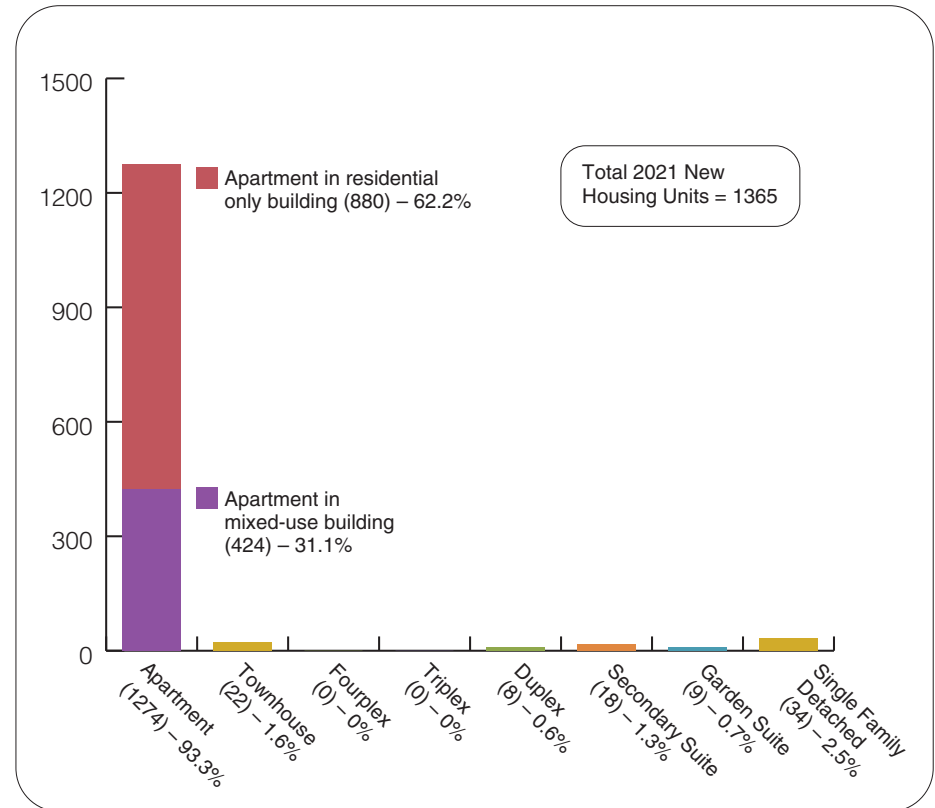
No target

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

Out of all units created in 2021, 93.3% were apartments. This is a significantly higher proportion than in 2020 (79%). All other housing forms saw decreasing proportions of the total residential development (all based on permits issued). In absolute numbers, the amount of single family dwellings, duplex units and garden suites created was similar to the year before, while fewer townhouse units and secondary suites were observed. No tri- or fourplexes received building permits in 2021.

The table on the following page shows that Victoria West saw the highest number of apartments created (369), followed by Burnside (280), Harris Green (260) and Downtown (245). Single family dwellings were added in 9 out of 13 neighbourhoods, while either secondary or garden suites were added in all neighbourhoods except those in or adjacent to the core. Duplex units were created in Fairfield, Fernwood and North Park, and the only townhouse development receiving a building permit in 2021 was located in Gonzales (22 units).

## 2021 New Housing Units Created by Type



Note: New housing units are based on building permits issued.

2021 New Housing Units by Type of Housing										
	Apartment	Mixed-use* (sub-category of Apartments)	Single Family Dwelling	Duplex	Triplex	Fourplex	Townhouse	Secondary Suite**	Garden Suite	New Units
Burnside	280		8							<b>288</b>
Downtown	245	245								<b>245</b>
Fairfield	39		1	1				4		<b>45</b>
Fernwood	1		3	4				3	1	<b>12</b>
Gonzales			6				22	1	1	<b>30</b>
Harris Green	260	130								<b>260</b>
Hillside Quadra			1					2	1	<b>4</b>
James Bay			6					5		<b>11</b>
Jubilee									1	<b>1</b>
North Park	31			3						<b>34</b>
Oaklands	49	49	3					2	3	<b>57</b>
Rockland			5					1		<b>6</b>
Victoria West	369		1						2	<b>372</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>8</b>			<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1365</b>

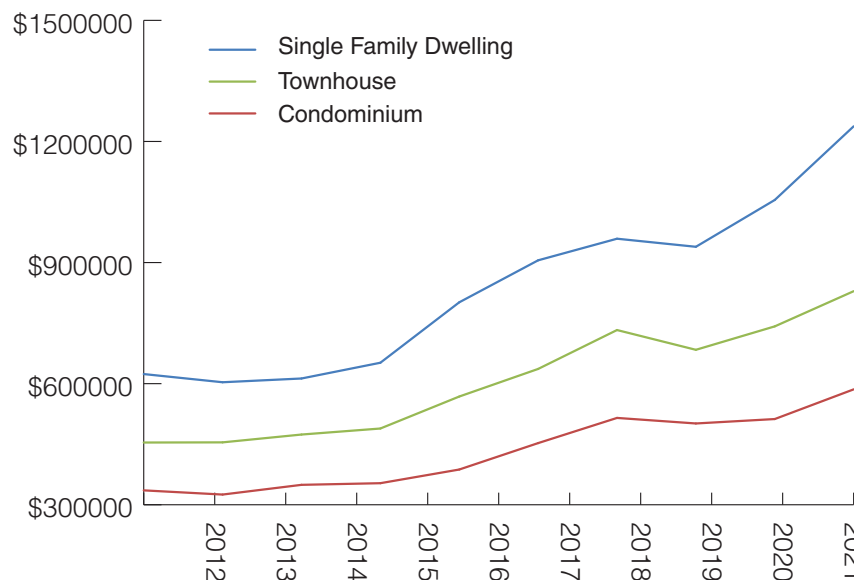
SOURCE: CITY OF VICTORIA

\* Mixed-use: Building that includes both residential and commercial units

\*\*Secondary Suite: A legal suite, located within a single family detached house

**Note:** New housing units are based on building permits issued.

2001 - 2021 Average Sale Prices			
	SFD	Condominium	Townhouse
2012	\$623,775	\$335,629	\$454,150
2013	\$603,477	\$325,260	\$454,556
2014	\$612,784	\$349,324	\$473,938
2015	\$651,810	\$353,409	\$488,861
2016	\$801,513	\$387,262	\$568,094
2017	\$905,556	\$452,732	\$636,456
2018	\$959,059	\$515,107	\$732,831
2019	\$939,066	\$501,352	\$683,849
2020	\$1,055,057	\$512,320	\$740,902
2021	\$1,237,458	\$585,840	\$829,031



The average sale prices for both single family dwellings, condominiums and townhouses rose in 2021.

Between 2020-2021, the average price of a single family home in the city of Victoria increased by 17.2%, the average price of a condominium increased by 14.3%, and the average prices for a townhouse increased by 11.8%.

The average price is the total dollar value of all properties sold divided by the number of sales.

(SOURCE: VICTORIA REAL ESTATE BOARD MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE)

# 13 Rental Housing Vacancy Rate

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the average annual vacancy rate for purpose-built rental housing buildings with three or more units. It does not include the secondary rental market (secondary suites, private condominiums, or other private housing that is rented) which forms an important part of Victoria's rental housing market.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

The demand for rental housing is affected by the combination of employment growth, income levels and migration levels (people moving in and out of the city). In Victoria, the demand for rental housing is also influenced by the high cost of home ownership in the region. The OCP encourages an increase in the city's supply of rental housing through upgrades and re-investment, and specifically states that conversions of rental units to stratified units (in multi-unit buildings) are generally not supported when the rental vacancy rate in Greater Victoria is below 4% for two consecutive years. Furthermore, the OCP acknowledges that a wide variety of housing types, tenures and prices gives residents choice.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

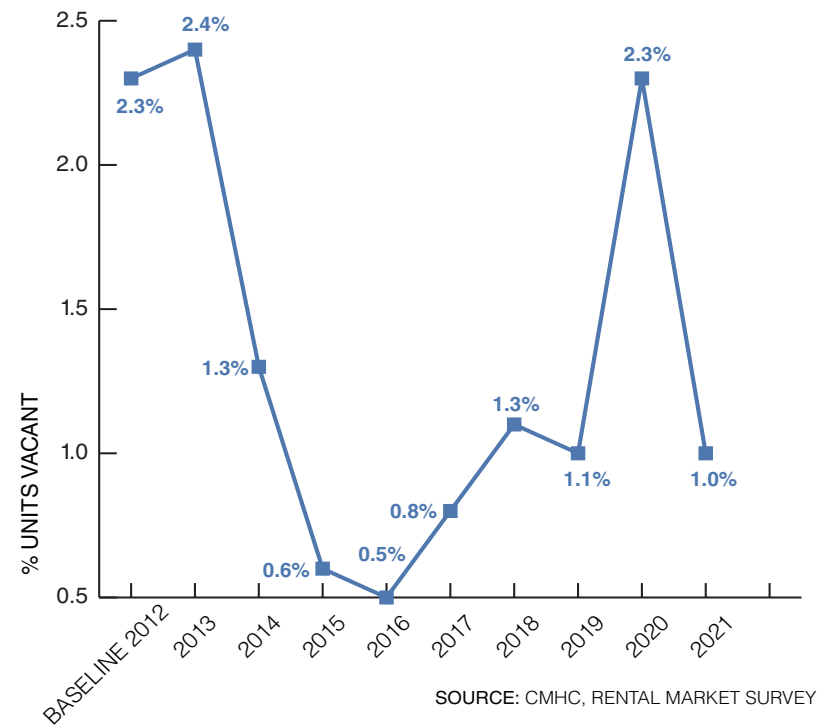
A balanced rental market would have affordable prices for a diversity of household incomes and a vacancy rate between 3-5%.

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

After a temporary increase in 2020, the vacancy rate for the primary rental market in the city went down again to 1.0% in 2021. Greater Victoria vacancy rates followed the same pattern, also decreasing to 1.0% from 2.2% the year before, signaling a low inventory and high demand for purpose built rental units in the city and the region. The national vacancy rate was at 3.2% at the end of 2021.

Compared to 2020, year-to-year average rents in the City of Victoria increased by 1.5% for a bachelor unit, 1.8% for a one-bedroom unit and 3.4% for a two-bedroom unit. Overall, average rent was 2.6% higher for all rental units in 2021 compared to 2020.

Overall Vacancy Rates for Purpose-built Rental Housing Units



# 14 Emergency Shelter Use

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the number of people who have used one or more emergency shelters in Greater Victoria at least one time over the preceding year. The indicator does not show how many times people stayed in the shelters over the year, nor how long they stayed. The numbers are measured from April to March of the next year.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

One of the core principles of the OCP is that housing is a basic human need: all people deserve access to housing that is safe, stable and affordable, and supports personal health. Homelessness results from a complex set of circumstances such as the high cost of housing, unstable or inadequate income, and other factors such as illness or violence. Emergency shelter use presents only one dimension of homelessness, which includes a combination of people who are living on the street, living in a shelter, and those who live in insecure or inadequate housing. The OCP recommends that the City work with other community partners to enable stable housing for all people and to increase the supply of affordable crisis, transitional, supported and non-market rental housing so that people who are homeless have more options for stable housing.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

No target

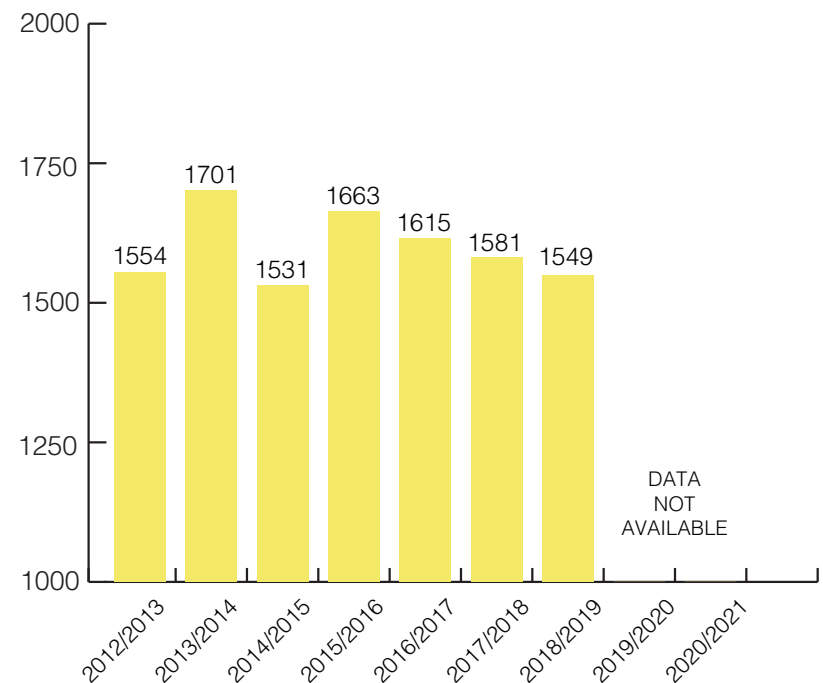
## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The landscape of the temporary housing and sheltering supply in the region has changed significantly as a result of various responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, and for that reason there was still no comparable shelter use metric available for the 2020/2021 period.

Significant actions taken within Victoria in 2021 to help house those experiencing homelessness included 30 temporary housing units on City land in North Park and 184 net new supportive housing units to be administered by the Province of British Columbia (bypassing municipal Council approval through its authority).

This indicator will be reviewed again for the 2022 OCP Annual Review, in collaboration with the City's partners.

Number of Unique Individuals Using Greater Victoria Emergency Shelters



Source: Victoria Cool Aid Society

# 15 Retail, Office and Industrial Vacancies

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the vacancy rate for industrial, retail shopping centres<sup>1</sup>, and downtown office properties. It also measures the vacancy rate for downtown streetfront retail properties.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

The availability of office, retail and industrial space is important for fostering a dynamic and competitive economy. The office, retail and industrial vacancy rate is a measure of Victoria's market strength and economic performance, showing the current balance between demand and supply. The OCP encourages Victoria to attract a reasonable share of regional growth in employment and new commercial and industrial development, to enhance the city's retail sector, and to increase the supply of downtown office space.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

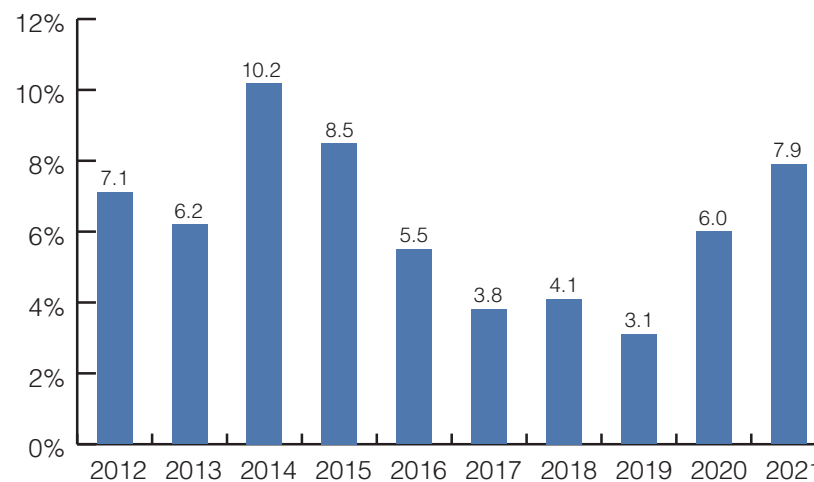
No target

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The streetfront vacancy rate in Victoria's downtown continued to increase in 2021, to 7.9% in the fourth quarter. Colliers International noted that nearly all the new vacancy in 2021 is directly related to redevelopment of properties where only short-term rental contracts would be offered. The city-wide vacancy rate for shopping centres decreased to 3.5%, likely due to a lack of new supply in combination with a rising population and increased activity after pandemic restrictions started to lift.

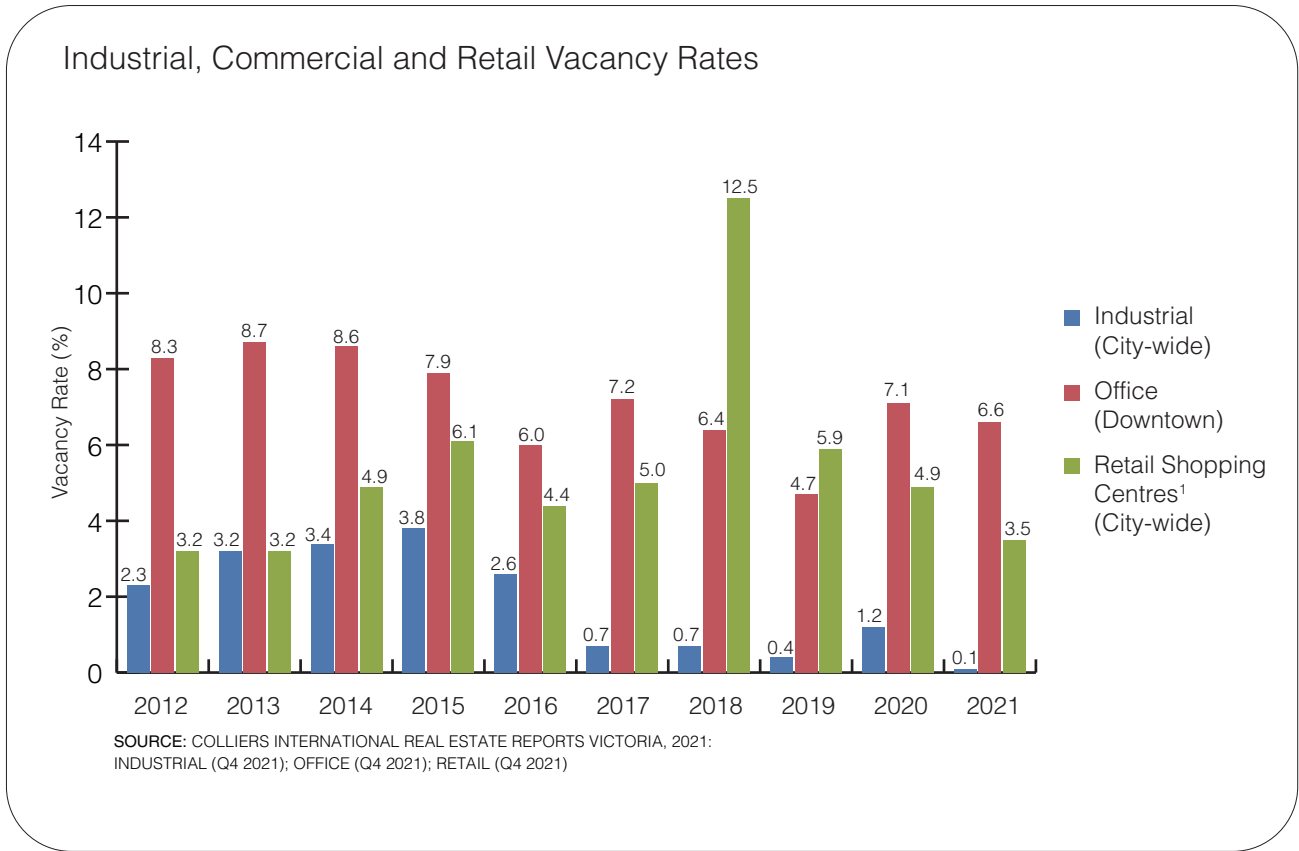
Industrial space continues to be in shortage, with an all time low of 0.1% in Greater Victoria and 0.2% within the city. The downtown Victoria office space vacancy rate was 6.6% in the fourth quarter of 2021, which is on par with the last few years' average.

Downtown Streetfront Vacancy Rate



SOURCE: COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE REPORTS VICTORIA, RETAIL (Q4 2021)

<sup>1</sup>Retail Shopping Centres: a group of retail and commercial establishments that is planned, developed, owned and managed as a single property (International Council of Shopping Centres, 2010)



<sup>1</sup>Retail Shopping Centres: a group of retail and commercial establishments that is planned, developed, owned and managed as a single property (International Council of Shopping Centres, 2010)



# 16 OCP Amendments

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator measures the number of amendments to the OCP approved by Council. The amendments are categorized by the type of amendment.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

The OCP provides direction on how Victoria should grow and change over the next 30 years. While all City policy, projects, and spending should be broadly consistent with the OCP, the OCP is intended to be flexible and adaptable. The number of OCP amendments measures when Council has approved a change to the OCP policy or land use framework.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

No target

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

Two land use amendment to the OCP were approved by City Council in 2021.

<b>Official Community Plan Amendments – Administrative</b>		
Bylaw Number and Location	Date	Purpose of Amendment
n/a	n/a	n/a

<b>Official Community Plan Amendments – Land Use</b>		
Bylaw Number and Location	Date	Purpose of Amendment
#21-065	October 28, 2021	To change the urban place designations from Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space to Urban Residential for the properties at 1218, 1219, 1220 and 1226 North Park Street, 1230 Grant Street, 1219 Vining Street, and 1235 Caledonia Avenue, and from Traditional Residential to Urban Residential for the properties at 1211 Gladstone Avenue and 1209-1215 North Park Street.
#21-106	December 16, 2021	To change the urban place designation for 749-767 Douglas Street from Core Inner Harbour/Legislative to Core Business.



# Contributions from Development

## WHAT IS BEING MEASURED?

This indicator will report the total value of community benefits contributed through new development.

## WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Physical features such as greenways, pedestrian improvements, and public spaces contribute to the livability of a community. New development can play an important role in funding these and other features to serve new residents and employees, and in off-setting some of the impacts of growth.

## TARGET/DESIRED TREND:

No target

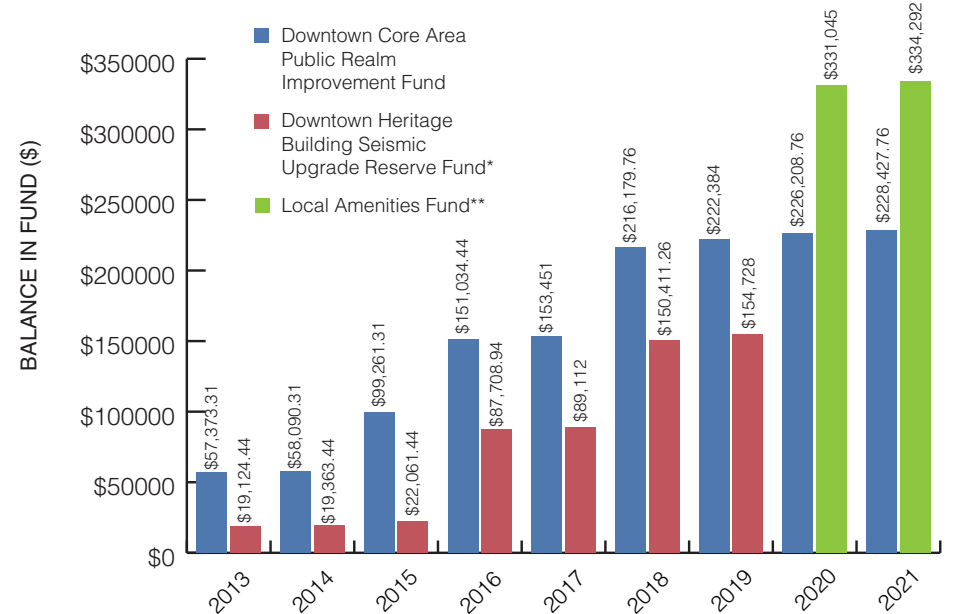
## HOW ARE WE DOING?

The scope of this indicator is under development. As an interim indicator, the balances in the Downtown Core Area Public Realm Improvement Fund, the Downtown Heritage Building Seismic Upgrade Reserve Fund, and the Local Amenities Fund are presented in the adjacent chart.

As of the year ended December 31, 2021, there was a total of \$228,427.76 in the Downtown Core Area Public Realm Improvement Fund, and there was \$334,292.00 in the Local Amenities Fund. These figures consist of contributions from development projects and interest allocations, less funding allocations. In January of 2020, Council directed the balance of the Heritage Seismic Fund to be transferred to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust for improved seismic upgrading of heritage buildings, and since then no new contributions have been made to the fund.

The Victoria Housing Fund, which receives contributions from multiple streams including the City and developers, had a balance of \$3,888,667.50 in available funds as of the year ended December 31, 2021. No contributions from development were made to the fund in 2021. For more information on the Victoria Housing Fund activity, please see the 2021 Housing Strategy Annual Review.

Contributions from Development



\*On January 23, 2020 directed the balance of the Heritage Seismic Fund to be transferred to the Victoria Civic Heritage Trust

\*\*As per the City's Inclusionary Housing Policy, monetary amenity contributions for projects outside of the Downtown Core Area will be directed to the Local Amenities Fund and earmarked for the neighbourhood or local area where the density is realized. Decisions on what community amenities the funds will support will be at Council's discretion and guided by local area or neighbourhood plans.



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