

# Plan Overview

# 1



## A NEW PLAN FOR A NEW CENTURY

The City of Victoria is located in the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt people. It is in an area that is well-suited to human settlement with its mild climate, natural beauty and harbour location. The year 2012, when this plan was originally adopted, marked the 150th anniversary of Victoria's incorporation as a city. In that century and a half, Victoria grew from a colonial outpost of the British Empire and the Hudson's Bay Company into the capital city of British Columbia, widely recognized for its high quality of life, heritage, physical beauty, character and charm. The early decades of the 21st century in Victoria were marked by challenges, including declaration of a climate emergency, a housing crisis, daylighting of social and cultural inequities, infrastructure deficits and an aging population. This Official Community Plan (OCP), which looks forward to 2041, provides an opportunity to directly address observable challenges and to continue to work towards the City's long-term equity and sustainability goals.

Citywide plans in Victoria have been developed and updated roughly on a 10-year basis, generally to guide land development, provide alignment with regional plans, and respond to current issues. Victoria's first citywide plan was the 1965 Overall Plan, prepared by the Capital Region Planning Board in response to the regional objectives outlined in the 1959 Capital Region Development Policy. The Overall Plan aimed to balance urban renewal and redevelopment with the conservation of heritage. This was followed by the 1977 Community Plan created

### Modernizing the Official Community Plan

In 2023, the Official Community Plan was updated to reflect key citywide policies that had been approved in the decade since the plan was originally adopted. It was also updated to reflect new data, statistics, and lessons learned over years of implementation. While not a comprehensive update, several sections were amended to:

- Align with the City's new mobility strategy, climate plan, economic plan, and various other strategies and frameworks approved in that time.
- Reflect the City's approved values related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Clarify and improve interpretation of policies related to land management.

Per the Adaptive Management framework in Section 22, this plan will continue to be monitored and updated to respond to emerging issues, opportunities and risks.

in response to the 1974 Official Regional Plan, and in 1986 by Victoria's first OCP, which established citywide goals and policies respecting land use, transportation, parks and open space, with a particular emphasis on stable neighbourhoods and a developing core. In 1995, the City reviewed and updated the OCP adding new policy direction respecting social planning, preservation of environmental quality, and recognition of the role that arts and culture play in the city. In 2005 the OCP was amended to include a Regional Context Statement outlining Victoria's commitments to the Capital Regional District Regional Growth Strategy.

Map 1 shows Victoria in relation to the broader metropolitan area. The plan area is the entirety of land and water within the City's municipal boundary.

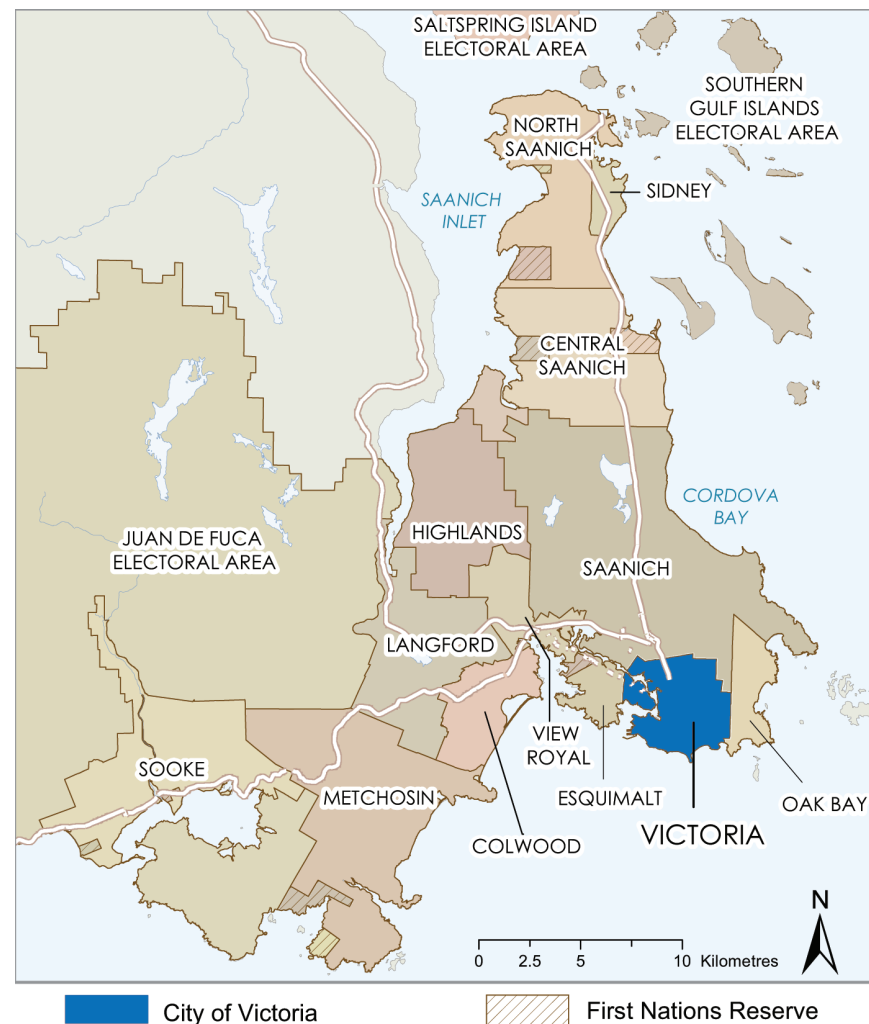
Council's approved project charter for the original development of this plan directed that it:

- › Meet the legislative requirements for an OCP;
- › Refine the Victoria Sustainability Framework goals related to community planning and develop policies to achieve them;
- › Establish an approach to local area planning grounded in a consideration of the city wide context;
- › Establish a future land use management pattern for the city; and,
- › Develop courses of action for a more sustainable Victoria.

This plan strives to fulfill this mandate through policies that support Victoria continuing to develop as a city that is a great place and the heart of the region, composed of vibrant urban villages, with well-integrated land use and transportation and sustainable community infrastructure; a greener, more resilient and healthy city, that takes a comprehensive approach to housing.

In 2022, this plan was modernized through a series of updates as described on page 11.

## MAP 1 Victoria Metropolitan Area



## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The plan is divided into four parts:

**Part 1 – Introduction** (Sections 1 – 5) sets the context for the plan, including its purpose and scope, and linkages to other City plans; identifies the general vision and goals of the plan; summarizes the trends and issues facing Victoria; and, outlines how the plan responds to the Regional Growth Strategy policy context.

**Part 2 – Policy Directions** (Sections 6 – 18) establishes the plan policies in 13 topic areas, including Land Management and Development; Transportation and Mobility; Placemaking; Parks and Recreation; Environment; Infrastructure; Housing and Homelessness; Economy; Arts and Culture; and, Community Well-Being. Part 2 also includes policies related to Climate Change and Energy, Food Systems, and Emergency Management. Each section begins with a brief statement of the topic context, challenges faced, and broad approach articulated through the objectives and policy statements that follow. Targets are included in some core sections, with a comprehensive set of targets to be included in the implementation strategy.

**Part 3 – Implementation** (Sections 19 – 23) defines the policies respecting plan administration, outlines an approach to local area planning in the context of city-wide policy, summarizes general directions for local area plan preparation by neighbourhood, and describes a framework for adaptive management and ongoing performance monitoring.

**Part 4 – Appendices**, includes Development Permit Area and Heritage Conservation Areas and a Glossary of Terms.

A number of terms used in this plan are defined in the Glossary of Terms (Appendix B). The first time a defined term is used in the plan it appears in blue.

