

Land Management and Development

6



GOALS

- > 6 (A). Victoria has compact development patterns that use land efficiently.
- > 6 (B). Victoria's bustling downtown and harbour are a prominent centre for business, government, arts and culture on Vancouver Island.
- > 6 (C). Neighbourhoods include centres of economic activity that serve the needs of residents within walking, wheeling or cycling distance.
- > 6 (D). Victoria's land use patterns reinforce values related to equity, diversity and inclusion.

OVERVIEW

Victoria is a harbour city largely developed before the use of automobiles was commonplace. Many communities that developed after the Second World War, are broadly separated into single use industrial, commercial and residential districts accessed primarily by private automobile. Victoria, on the other hand, exhibits a more complex pattern of uses and building forms with comparatively higher population densities. Victoria's development patterns give the city character and enable people to meet many daily needs close to home.

Many North American cities try to emulate Victoria's walkable urban pattern of a compact downtown, village centres, corner stores, and small apartments in

residential areas. This pattern provides opportunities to live close to places of work and supports a more sustainable and livable city.

In today's planning context, management of urban development tends to focus on building coherent, livable places of character, where a mix of uses and activities is the norm, where the goods and services people need are close to home, and where a range of housing choice is broadly available across the city. For Victoria, this means building on the advantages afforded by its traditional urban pattern as the city grows in the future.

In the Capital Region, Victoria occupies the urban centre of the region, where walking, cycling and transit are most viable, where opportunities for face-to-face human interaction and exchange are greatest, and where climate and energy outcomes are best optimized. However, as a built-out city, a key challenge is to balance the accommodation of new development and population and employment growth with other values such as the retention of heritage resources, the provision of open space and the enhancement of the urban forest, all within a limited land base and in a manner that reinforces values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE GROWTH

The Capital Regional District (CRD) provides data and growth projections for the region and municipalities. As of 2019, an estimated 93,600 people, or 22.4% of the regional population, resided within Victoria. Projections anticipate regional growth will continue at a rate of about 1% annually. With a growing proportion of

growth anticipated to occur in communities on the West Shore, Victoria's share of the regional population is expected to drop slightly to 21.8% by 2038.

Carrying these projections out to the following Census year, the City estimates Victoria's population will reach 111,300 by 2041. The projected population growth would result in the formation of approximately 11,300 additional households between 2016 and 2041 – this includes people living here today who will come of age and form households, as well as those who move to the city from elsewhere. This plan must provide adequate capacity to accommodate anticipated household growth through the Urban Place Designations that envision future land use. Additional capacity is required to accommodate the estimated latent demand that exists in the housing market today, reflected in trends and indicators like historically low rental vacancy rates and overcrowding in households. The forms of housing that the City chooses to enable and encourage may influence who can and chooses to live in Victoria in the future. For example, family-friendly housing may support more families to stay in the city, while more rental housing can support people with a diversity of jobs and incomes.

Ensuring the city has adequate capacity to meet current and future housing need is crucial for both local and regional livability and sustainability. Aligned with the 30-year Growth Management Framework, this plan seeks to focus anticipated future population and employment growth to support development of a strong downtown core that retains its predominant role in the regional economy, enhance and expand the network of Urban Villages and Town Centres, link thriving employment districts with high capacity and frequent public transit service, enhancing quality of place and housing choice in traditional residential areas. Complementary to the management of land, the plan also seeks to manage the harbour as a strategic resource by strengthening the Working Harbour, enhancing linkages between land and water uses, and improving waterfront access and vitality.

BROAD OBJECTIVES

The land management and development policies of this plan collectively address eight broad objectives:

- 6 (a) That the housing needed for current and future populations over the timeframe of this plan is accommodated across the city 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.
- 6 (b) That new employment growth is focused in the Urban Core, Town Centres, employment districts, and along corridors served by rapid and frequent transit with new office development concentrated downtown.
- 6 (c) That the Downtown Core Area remains the Capital Region's primary economic, social, arts, cultural, and entertainment centre and where government employment and supporting services are retained and expanded.
- 6 (d) That Town Centres, Large Urban Villages and employment and Industrial districts develop to densities capable of supporting economically viable renewable district energy systems, community and commercial services and civic amenities appropriate to their different scales and roles in the city.
- 6 (e) That Rock Bay develops as an area of intensive employment specialized in the incubation, growth and retention of advanced technology and green enterprise, as outlined in related City economic policies and local area plans.
- 6 (f) That Town Centres and Urban Villages become progressively more complete so that over time residents who are able can reach goods and services to meet daily needs within a 15 minute walk of home.
- 6 (g) That all city neighbourhoods contain a range of housing types suitable to people with a mix of incomes, living in a variety of household types, throughout their lives.
- 6 (h) That the Harbour is strengthened as an area of significant economic, transportation, recreational and cultural activity and the Working Harbour and associated marine industries are retained [SEE ALSO SECTION 7 – TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY, SECTION 8 – PLACEMAKING, AND SECTION 14 – ECONOMY].

PLACE-BASED LAND USE MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Urban place designations are established and identified on Map 2, followed by related policies and general Urban Place Guidance for built form, **place character**, land use and density characteristics, to represent present and proposed conditions and to support the development of a diversity of places across the city.
- 6.2 To advance the place-based land use management vision described in policy 6.1, the City's local area plans and land use and development regulations, when updated, will consider the general guidance for form, place character, use and density and may provide finer grained policy and regulatory guidance in response to local context and development opportunity.
- 6.3 While the Urban Place Designations described in this plan establish a general pattern of land use, zoning bylaws regulate the specific uses and density of development that are permitted to occur on the land.
- 6.4 Within each designation, there will be a range of uses, densities and built forms that may be proposed or approved. Decisions about the use, density and scale of building for an individual site will be based on site-specific evaluations of proposed developments in relation to the existing and envisioned context of the site, block and local area which may be informed by several factors, including but not limited to:
- 6.4.1 Consistency of proposal with all relevant policies within the Official Community Plan;
- 6.4.2 Consistency of proposal with all other relevant city policies and development and design guidance;
- 6.4.3 Consistency of proposal with all relevant local area plans; and.
- 6.4.4 Impact on the ability of adjacent sites to realize the envisioned context of the area.
- 6.5 Place Character Features should inform the character of new development. Character features may be identified and detailed in local area plans, design guidelines or for select designations in policies of this plan. Common Place Character Features are identified in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Common Place Character Features

Areas	Character Features
Most areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Regularly spaced boulevard and street tree planting. › Accessible sidewalks.
Primarily residential areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Buildings typically oriented to the street with primary doorways that reinforce the sidewalk. › Landscaped setbacks, variable in size. › On-street parking and collective driveway access to underground parking, or rear yard parking in limited instances.
Primarily commercial and mixed use areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › A continuity of active commercial or community serving uses that reinforce the sidewalk. › Building facades define the street wall at one to three storeys in low to medium density areas and three to five storeys in medium to high density areas, or as otherwise specified in the City's design guidance. › Public squares and open spaces. › Off-street parking underground, at the rear or otherwise screened. › Well-designed through-block walkways and mid-block crossings, especially in higher density areas and larger blocks. › Underground utility lines, especially in higher density areas.
Primarily employment and industrial areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Ground-oriented buildings set close to the sidewalk with active uses at grade where appropriate. › Off-street parking to the rear or side-yard, with landscape screening for service and parking areas. › General Employment may include large lots with on-site outdoor circulation, storage, and materials handling space. › General Employment may include institutional and industrial buildings defining open grounds.

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

- 6.6 Parks, schools, public facilities and utilities, public assembly, community services, pathways, open space, urban food production, institutional, and recreational uses are permitted in all designations as determined in accordance with zoning.
- 6.7 As a fully urbanized city, there are no sand and gravel deposits suitable for future sand and gravel extraction defined in this plan [SEE ALSO SECTION 8 – PLACEMAKING].
- 6.8 Where a site or area is providing primarily non-market housing, achieving heritage conservation objectives, or other significant public benefit, development can depart from the guidance established for Urban Place Designations, if the development is consistent with City policies, good urban design principles, and the objectives of this plan, and is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area [SEE ALSO SECTION 13 – HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS].
- 6.9 Site specific development can depart from the guidance established for Urban Place Designations if the development goes through a rezoning, is supported by the local area plan, is consistent with City policies, good urban design principles, and the objectives of this plan, and is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area [SEE ALSO SECTION 20 – LOCAL AREA PLANNING].
- 6.10 Give consideration to minimum development densities necessary to support renewable technology and district energy systems in development decisions respecting major projects and in local area planning for the Urban Core, Town Centres, Large Urban Villages, and industrial and employment designations.
- 6.11 Encourage the logical assembly of development sites that enable the best realization of permitted development potential for the area, including creation of suitable space for the envisioned scale of development and ability of neighbouring sites to also develop as envisioned.
- 6.12 Give consideration to site-specific amendments to this plan that are consistent with the intent of the Urban Place Designations and that further the broad objectives and policies of the plan, as appropriate to the site context.
- 6.13 All development should adhere to good urban design principles, consistent with the City's design guidance, and should be responsive to the existing and envisioned context of the surrounding area.
- 6.14 Public benefits, including community amenity contributions may be realized in new development consistent with the City's density bonusing policies and/or local area plans; where applicable, approximate base and max densities are indicated in the Urban Place Designation Guidance [SEE ALSO SECTION 6 – LAND MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AND SECTION 20 – LOCAL AREA PLANNING].

URBAN PLACE DESIGNATIONS

Understanding Urban Place Designations

The general guidance in this section and the associated designations on Map 2 are intended to reflect and support the goals, broad objectives and policies throughout this plan. When used as guidance for land use, policy or regulatory decisions, the plan should be considered in its entirety [SEE ALSO POLICIES 6.3 AND 6.4].

Interpreting Density and Height Guidance in this Plan

Floor Space Ratio (FSR) is provided as a general guide for envisioned density and in some cases building heights are provided to help illustrate the envisioned form and character. As noted in policy 6.3, this section of the plan establishes a general pattern of envisioned land use and guidance for height and density.

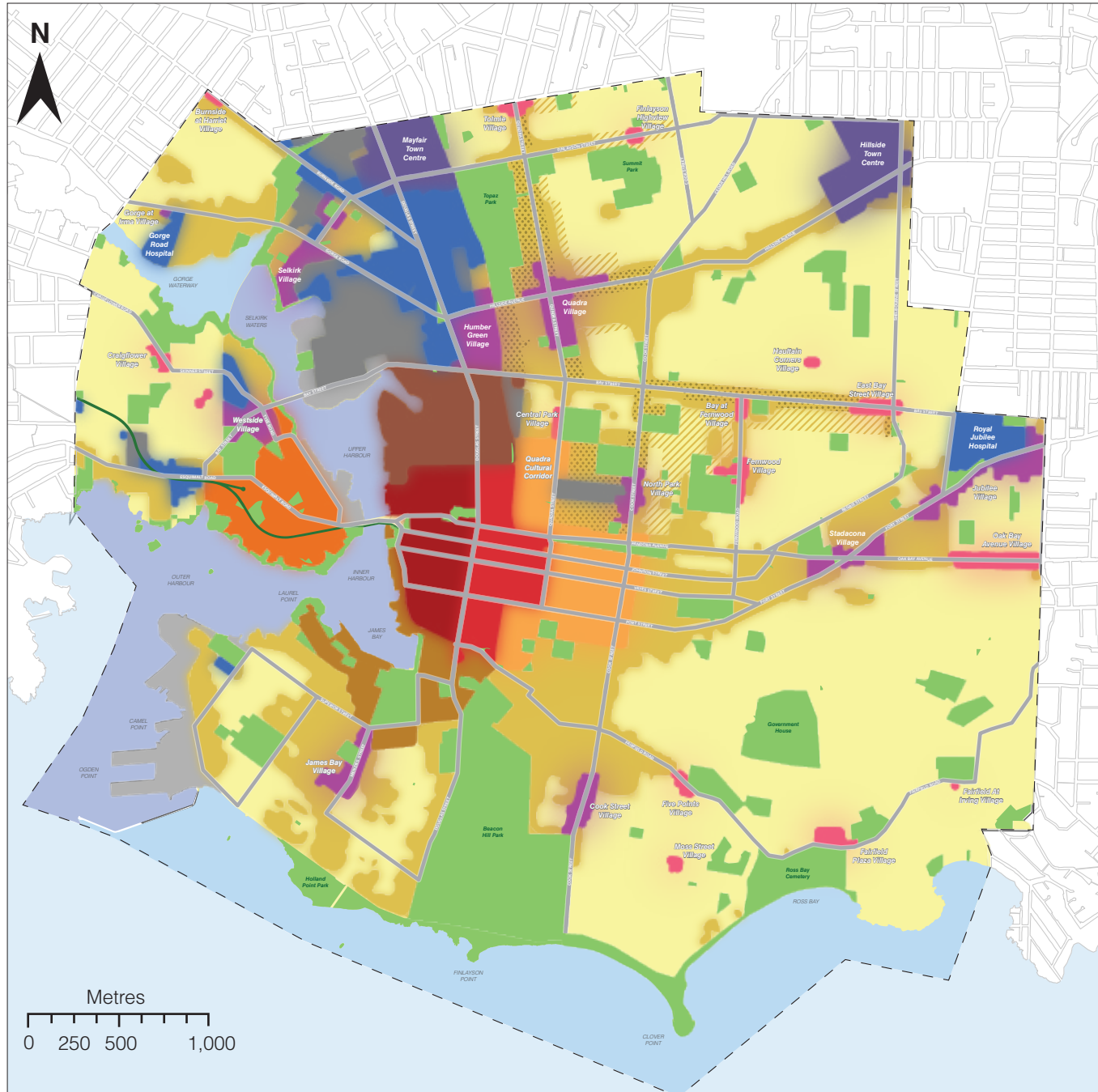
Urban Place Designations do not create development regulations, rights, or entitlements, which are determined by the City's zoning bylaws.

Caution Against Land Speculation

A property may require a zoning bylaw amendment (rezoning) or other City approval to realize the density, height, or use envisioned by the Urban Place Designation. Such approvals are subject to formal processes, and potentially also a Council decision. The City is not obligated to approve any such application, even if it aligns with the Urban Place Designation.

Redevelopment potential may be further constrained by a variety of factors, including but not limited to heritage status, rental replacement requirements, parameters set out in design guidelines and zoning, and impacts the proposal may have on the ability of the overall area to realize the envisioned land use patterns described in this plan.

The required public process, potential redevelopment constraints, as well as the broader goals and objectives of this plan, should be considered in tandem with the general guidance in this section when contemplating land acquisition or development within Victoria.



MAP 2 Urban Place Designations

- Core Historic
- Core Business
- Core Employment
- Core Inner Harbour / Legislative
- Core Songhees
- Core Residential
- General Employment
- Urban Industrial
- Marine Industrial
- Town Centre
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village
- Housing Opportunity
- Urban Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Traditional Residential
- Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space
- Rail Corridor
- Working Harbour
- Marine

Areas adjacent to a different designation should consider transitional scales, which may depart from the guidance in this plan.

TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL

- 6.15 **Traditional Residential** consists primarily of residential and **accessory uses** in a wide range of primarily **ground-oriented** building forms including single, duplexes, townhouses and **row-houses** and **house conversions**. **Low-rise** multi-unit residential and **mixed-use** buildings in select locations as described in this plan or other City policy.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Traditional Residential

A. Built Form

Missing middle housing and other ground-oriented buildings, including attached, duplex, and single detached dwellings. Low-rise multi-unit buildings and freestanding commercial as supported by City policy, including local area plans.

Heights may generally range from two to three storeys, depending on site conditions and the existing and envisioned context of the area and as supported by City policy.

B. Uses

- Residential, including missing middle housing, ground-oriented multi-unit, attached, duplex, and single detached dwelling buildings.
- Accessory residential, such as **secondary suites**, **lock-off suites**, and **garden suites**.
- Low-rise multi-unit residential and mixed-use may be considered in areas that support the growth management concept and mobility objectives in this plan, such as along transit priority corridors, or as otherwise identified in City policy, including local area plans.
- Freestanding commercial at the intersection of major roads, and as identified in City policy including local area plans.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

Low density residential (approximately 1.1:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered where appropriate in certain limited areas, as identified in City policy including local area plans.

MIXED RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- 6.16 **Mixed Residential** consists of multi-unit residential in both ground-oriented and low-rise apartment forms, serving as a transition between Traditional Residential and Urban Residential areas. Mixed Residential areas are envisioned to be diverse in housing type and tenure. Incentives and flexibility in height and density may be considered to encourage tenures beyond market strata. Commercial and mixed use in select locations as described in this plan or other City policy.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Mixed Residential

A. Built Form

A mix of missing middle housing, ground-oriented and low-rise multi-unit buildings, envisioned to provide a transition between lower and higher residential densities with diverse building forms.

Heights may generally range from three to five storeys, depending on site conditions and the existing and envisioned context of the area.

B. Uses

- Primarily residential and accessory residential.
- Mixed-use residential-commercial, or small scale retail may be considered in areas that support the growth management concept and mobility objectives in this plan, such as along transit priority corridors, or as otherwise identified in City policy, including local area plans.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

Low to medium density residential (approximately 1.6:1 FSR).

Flexibility in height and density may be considered to encourage diverse housing types and tenures.

URBAN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- 6.17 **Urban Residential** consists primarily of multi-unit residential in a wide range of detached and attached building forms, including townhouses and row-houses, low and **mid-rise** apartments, with a residential character **public realm** featuring landscaping and street tree planting, and mixed-uses in select locations as described in this plan or other City policy.



Urban Place Designation Guidance **Urban Residential**

A. Built Form

Low- and mid-rise multi-unit buildings.

Heights may generally range from three to six storeys depending on site conditions and the existing and envisioned context of the area.

B. Uses

- Primarily residential and accessory residential.
- Mixed-use residential-commercial may be considered in areas that support the growth management concept and mobility objectives in this plan, such as along transit priority corridors, or as otherwise identified in City policy, including local area plans.
- Visitor accommodation in pre-existing locations or as identified in local area plans.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

Low to medium residential (base of approximately 1.2:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered in locations that support the growth management concept in this plan, such as in proximity to Urban Villages, Town Centres and Transit Priority Corridors, where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans (max of approximately 2:1 FSR).

SEE SECTION 3: VISION, VALUES, AND GOALS FOR MORE ABOUT THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY AREAS

- 6.18 **Housing Opportunity** consists primarily of multi-unit residential in low and mid-rise apartment forms, with a public realm character similar to Urban Residential. At higher densities, Housing Opportunity areas are envisioned to accommodate primarily **secured rental** housing and provide public benefit, including through amenity contribution and on-site, non-market and affordable rental where possible. **Mixed uses** in select locations as described in this plan or other City policy.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Housing Opportunity

A. Built Form

Low- and mid-rise multi-unit buildings.

Heights may generally range from three to six storeys depending on site conditions and the existing and envisioned context of the area.

B. Uses

- Primarily residential and accessory residential.
- Mixed-use residential-commercial may be considered in areas that support the growth management concept and mobility objectives in this plan, such as along transit priority corridors, or as otherwise identified in City policy, including local area plans.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

Low to medium residential (base of approximately 1.2:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans (of approximately 2:1 FSR).

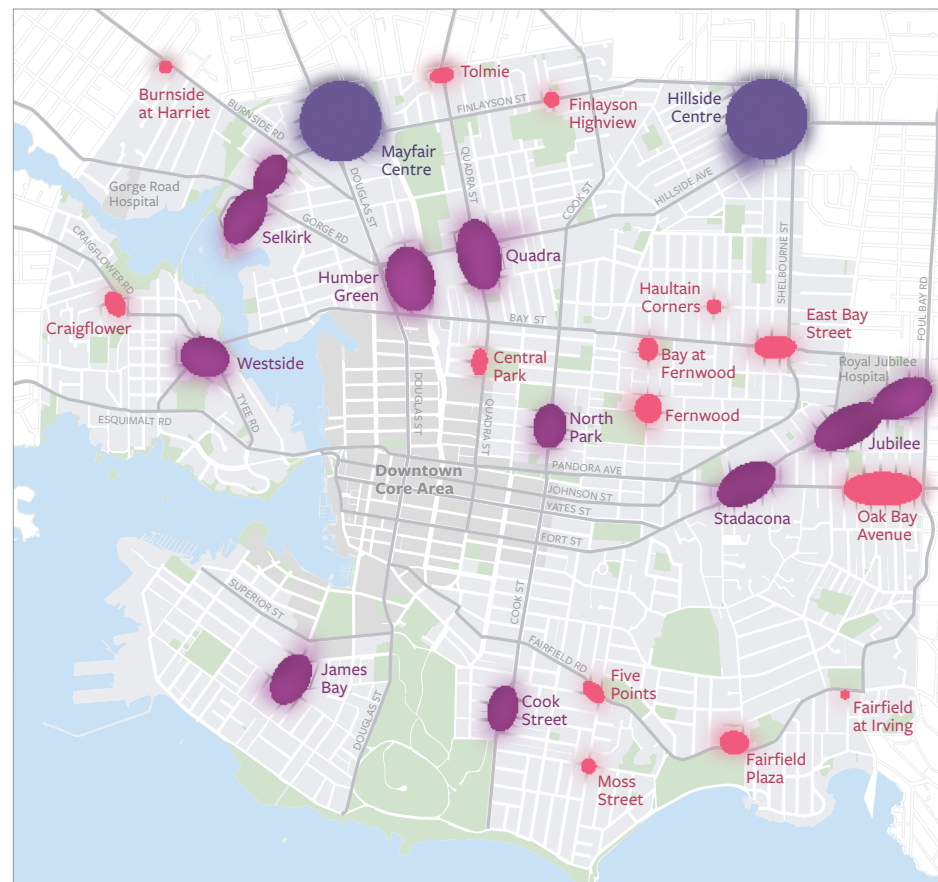
Additional density above 2:1 FSR may be considered for projects where substantial public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, such as secured rental projects with additional public benefit (max of approximately 2.5:1 FSR).

TOWN CENTRES AND URBAN VILLAGES

A network of **Urban Villages and Town Centres** connected by sustainable transportation options is a foundational part of this plan's growth management concept [SEE ALSO SECTION 3 – VISION, VALUES AND GOALS].

- 6.19 Town Centres and Urban Villages should progress towards, as a result of new development and local area planning, a complement of community and commercial services and public amenities appropriate to each level of the hierarchy of villages and centres described in the guidelines shown in Figure 9, where each higher level centre includes the services and amenities identified for the prior lower level centre, except as otherwise indicated. It is recognized that different urban villages have different geographic sizes, and the services and amenities that are desired would vary as appropriate to that size.
- 6.20 Consider expanding or establishing Development Permit Areas and Heritage Conservation Areas in and around Town Centres and Urban Villages to achieve a unique character and sense of place in the design of each centre and village, and a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design.
- 6.21 Consider the use of design and **traffic calming** techniques in Town Centres and Urban Villages to reduce vehicle travel speed, provide safe access and passage for other road users, balance business and residential parking needs, and permit the temporary closure of streets for community activities or special events.
- 6.22 Consider residential and commercial land forecasts and City priorities when phasing and scoping local area planning for Town Centres and Urban Villages.
- 6.23 Prepare local area plans for Large and Small Urban Villages consistent with the broad objectives of this plan.
- 6.24 Consider objective 6 (f) and the guidelines in Figure 9 in any proposals to establish new Town Centres and Urban Villages through local area plans or amendments to this plan, giving further consideration to locations which have, or will have, sufficient residential densities to support the range of services and amenities appropriate to an Urban Village or Town Centre [SEE ALSO SECTION 8 – PLACEMAKING, SECTION 20 – LOCAL AREA PLANNING AND SECTION 21 – NEIGHBOURHOOD DIRECTIONS].

MAP 3: Urban Village and Town Centre Network



- Town Centre
- Large Urban Village
- Small Urban Village

For reference only; please see Map 2.

Figure 9: Guidelines for Complete Town Centres and Urban Villages

Element	Small Urban Village*	Large Urban Village*	Town Centre
Commercial and Community Services	<p>Café, convenience food and retail.</p> <p>Full service restaurant.</p> <p>Personal services (e.g. hairdresser).</p> <p>Professional services (e.g. lawyer's office).</p> <p>Small scale health care services.</p> <p>Social services.</p> <p>Daycare.</p> <p>Public meeting and gathering space.</p> <p>Community composting and recycling.</p> <p>Public elementary school within 400 metres.</p>	<p>Plus:</p> <p>Small grocery store or equivalent food retail.</p> <p>Liquor store.</p> <p>Financial institution</p> <p>Health care services. (e.g. medical clinic)</p> <p>Full service pub.</p> <p>Farmer's market.</p> <p>Community recreation, education and cultural facilities.</p>	<p>Plus:</p> <p>City-wide destination retail.</p> <p>Large grocery store or equivalent food retail.</p> <p>City-wide recreation, education or cultural facilities.</p>
Parks and Open Space	Public park and playground within 400 metres.	<p>Plus:</p> <p>Public square or green.</p>	<p>Plus:</p> <p>Large formal, central public square with green and paved elements and public art.</p>
Pedestrian and Bicycle Network	Located in area with comfortable, convenient, and accessible connections to pedestrian and cycling networks.	Located in area with comfortable, convenient, and accessible connections to pedestrian and cycling networks.	Located in area with comfortable, convenient, and accessible connections to pedestrian and cycling networks.
Public Transportation	Local transit stop or within 200 metres of a frequent transit stop	Frequent transit stop.	Rapid or frequent transit station.
Conceptual Illustrations	SEE FIGURE 9A	SEE FIGURE 9A	SEE FIGURE 9A

* It is recognized that different urban villages have different geographic sizes, and the services and amenities that are desired would vary as appropriate to that size.

SMALL URBAN VILLAGE

- 6.25 **Small Urban Village** consists of a mix of commercial and **community services** primarily serving the surrounding residential area, in low-rise, ground-oriented multi-unit residential and mixed-use buildings. They may be a **local transit service** hub.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Small Urban Village

A. Built Form

Low-rise multi-unit, mixed use, and freestanding commercial buildings.

Heights may generally range from two to four storeys depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area. Taller buildings are generally envisioned to be located in mixed-use forms in areas that support the growth management concept of this plan, such as along existing or envisioned transit priority corridors.

B. Uses

- Residential and mixed use.
- Commercial.
- Home occupations.
- Live/work.

C. Density Guidance

Low to medium density residential, mixed use, and commercial (base of approximately 1.5:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered in locations that support the growth management concept in this plan and where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans (max of approximately 2:1 FSR).

SEE SECTION 3: VISION, VALUES, AND GOALS FOR MORE ABOUT THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

LARGE URBAN VILLAGES

- 6.26 **Large Urban Village** consists of low to mid-rise mixed-use buildings that accommodate ground-level commercial, offices, community services, **visitor accommodation**, and multi-unit residential apartments, with a public realm characterized by wide sidewalks, regularly spaced street tree planting and buildings set close to the street frontage, anchored by a full service grocery store or equivalent combination of food retail uses, serving either as a local, rapid or **frequent transit service hub**.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Large Urban Village

A. Built Form

Low- and mid-rise multi-unit, mixed use, and freestanding commercial buildings.

Heights may generally range from four to six storeys depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area.

B. Uses

- Residential and mixed use.
- Commercial, including visitor accommodation.
- Live/work.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

Low to medium density residential, mixed use, and commercial (base of approximately 1.5:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans (max of approximately 2.5:1 FSR)

TOWN CENTRES

- 6.27 **Town Centre** consists of mixed-use, mid-rise building types that accommodate ground-level commercial, offices, community services, visitor accommodation, and multi-unit residential apartments, with a well-defined public realm characterized by wide sidewalks, regularly spaced street tree planting and buildings set close to the street frontage, anchored by a full service grocery store or equivalent combination of food retail uses and **destination retail**, serving either as a frequent or **rapid transit service** hub.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Town Centre

A. Built Form

Low- and mid-rise multi-unit, mixed use, and freestanding commercial buildings.

Heights may generally range from four to ten storeys, unless otherwise specified and depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area or as guided by local area plans or master plans.

B. Uses

- Residential and mixed use.
- Commercial, including office, destination retail, and visitor accommodation.
- Live/work.
- Home occupations..

C. Density Guidance

Low to high density residential, commercial, and mixed use (base of approximately 1.5:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans (max of approximately 3:1 FSR)

URBAN CORE

6.28 **Urban Core** consists of the highest density and greatest mix of uses in the city, including civic and institutional facilities of regional and provincial importance, primary retail, entertainment, office and other commercial uses, **high-rise** multi-unit residential apartment and office buildings, visitor accommodation and services, and intensive employment, marine-oriented industrial and transportation uses. The Urban Core is served by frequent transit, **local circulating transit**, and inter-regional rail, air, marine and bus transport. It is characterized by a well-defined public realm with wide sidewalks, public squares and open spaces, regularly spaced tree planting, and buildings set close to the street frontage, where walking, cycling, and public transit are preferred travel modes.

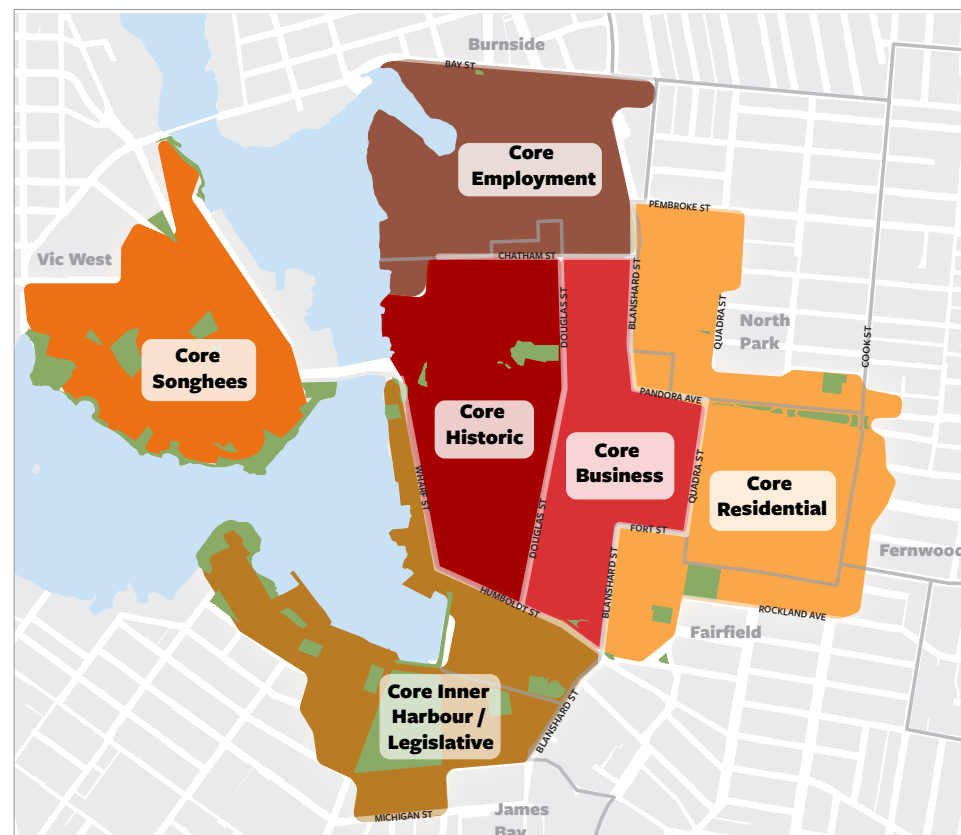
The Urban Core includes six designations:

- › Core Business;
- › Core Historic;
- › Core Inner Harbour/Legislative;
- › Core Residential;
- › Core Songhees; and,
- › Core Employment.

6.29 Maintain and implement a detailed local area plan that supports the development of the Downtown Core Area (generally including those lands east and south of Victoria Harbour with an Urban Core Designation as shown approximately on Map 4) as an economically vital, socially vibrant, and attractive mixed-use urban centre for the Capital Region by:

- 6.29.1 Providing a framework for land use, building height and density that balances employment and residential development and concentrates higher density along the Douglas Street / Blanshard Street corridor to relieve development pressure within the historic Old Town area, Chinatown and Victoria Harbour;
- 6.29.2 Maintaining and enhancing the Core Business area as the primary location for offices and other forms of commercial development;

MAP 4: Urban Core



- Core Historic
- Core Business
- Core Employment
- Core Inner Harbour / Legislative
- Core Songhees
- Core Residential

For reference only; please see Map 2.

Core designations are largely within the Downtown Core Area, but may also fall into other neighbourhood or local area plan boundaries.

- 6.29.3 Providing a density framework that balances the need for increased density in some areas with the need to maintain livable communities through the provision of community amenities and affordable housing;
- 6.29.4 Enabling and fostering a greater range of housing options throughout the Downtown Core Area, including non-market housing;
- 6.29.5 Identifying strategies to acquire and develop key public amenities, including urban plazas, park spaces, Government Street Mall extension and the [Harbour Pathway](#);
- 6.29.6 Introducing additional financial incentives to support and encourage the seismic upgrading of heritage buildings within the Downtown;
- 6.29.7 Supporting the use of alternative modes of travel through the integration of infrastructure and public realm improvements, and the concentration of higher density, transit-supportive development within walking distance of the Douglas Street corridor;
- 6.29.8 Strengthening Rock Bay as a key employment centre within an attractive urban setting as guided by the City's economic and local area plans;
- 6.29.9 Supporting the economic function and role of the Working Harbour, while recognizing opportunities to improve public access to the waterfront as guided by the City's economic and local area plans;
- 6.29.10 Improving vitality and livability within the Downtown Core Area through initiatives and strategies that guide and create an attractive and functional public realm, well-designed and diverse built forms, a range of amenities to serve the daily needs of residents, businesses and visitors and an improved local economy; and,
- 6.29.11 Providing a careful transition of use intensity, development density and building height to adjacent areas.
- 6.30 Maintain density bonus provisions to ensure that as the Downtown Core Area develops, community amenities are secured in the development process through either in-kind or monetary contributions to City funds with a focus on public realm improvements in the Downtown Core Area or the conservation and seismic upgrading of heritage properties, and as otherwise guided by City policy and local area plans for the provision of community amenities and affordable housing [SEE ALSO SECTION 19 – PLAN ADMINISTRATION].
- 6.31 Continue to secure and develop through-block walkways, plazas, squares and parks, through mechanisms such as dedication at subdivision, rezoning, density bonusing for amenities, and the application of Development Permit and Heritage Conservation Area guidelines, and other available mechanisms.
- 6.32 Prepare and implement a master plan for an arts and innovation district in the Rock Bay area, guided by the land use policies in this plan, the City's economic plans and policies and local area plans, giving consideration to the guidelines for local area plan development for industrial and employment in policy 20.7 [SEE ALSO SECTION 14 – ECONOMY, SECTION 20 – LOCAL AREA PLANNING].
- 6.33 Implement local area plans for the Vic West neighbourhood to support the completion of its transition into a mixed-use, urban residential area with a focus on elements of placemaking that support pedestrian activity, public realm animation, and harmonize urban design and economic relationships between the Songhees Peninsula, established areas of the Victoria West neighbourhood and the Downtown Core Area . [SEE ALSO SECTION 20 – LOCAL AREA PLANNING AND SECTION 21 – NEIGHBOURHOOD DIRECTIONS].

URBAN CORE

Urban Place Designation Guidance
Core Historic
A. Built Form

Mix of historic buildings and compatible forms and materials in new development, with a continuity of commercial uses at grade.

Heights may generally range from one to five storeys, depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area and the ability to retain its historic character.

B. Unique Place Character Features

- Buildings set close to the sidewalk with high sight coverage.
- Historic building forms and materials and compatible new construction.
- Public art and civic buildings sited in prominent locations.
- Comfortable sidewalks with street tree planting in appropriate locations.
- Through-block walkways, **mid-block crossings**, and formal squares and plazas.

C. Uses

- Residential and mixed-use.
- Continuous commercial at grade, including retail, office, and visitor accommodation.
- Home occupations.

D. Density Guidance

Medium density commercial and mixed use (approximately 3:1 FSR).

Urban Place Designation Guidance
Core Inner Harbour / Legislative
A. Built Form

Mix of building forms suitable to the diverse uses listed below.

Heights may generally range from one to five storeys near the harbour, while taller buildings, ranging to 10 storeys or more, may be realized away from the harbour, depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area and as guided by local area plans.

B. Unique Place Character Features

- Formal arrangement of buildings and their grounds deployed to respect the form and character of signature landmarks, including the Empress Hotel and the Provincial Parliament Buildings.
- Formal public realm comprised of comfortable sidewalks, pedestrian promenades, and regularly spaced street tree planting.
- Formal squares and greens, pathways along the harbour, and prominently placed public art.
- Site of major festivals, celebrations, and special events.
- Active marine transportation including ferry staging and moorage.

C. Uses

- Public institutional and assembly.
- Commercial, including retail, office, and visitor accommodation.
- Marine water and air transportation.
- Recreation and tourism-related uses.
- Residential and mixed-use.
- Home occupations.

D. Density Guidance

A mix of low to high density diverse uses (base of approximately 1:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered where public benefit is provided and as is otherwise consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans. A range of suitable densities may be considered where aligned with the height guidance provided.

URBAN CORE

Urban Place Designation Guidance Core Residential

A. Built Form

Mix of low-, mid-, and high-rise multi-unit, mixed use, and large floor plate commercial and institutional buildings.

Heights range depending on existing and envisioned context of the area. Generally envisioned to be 4 or 5 storeys at the lowest end and may range from 10 to 20 storeys in select areas as detailed in local area plans. Heights are generally envisioned to be taller in the central area of the Downtown Core and taper outward.

B. Uses

- Residential and mixed-use.
- Commercial, including office and visitor accommodation.
- Institutional and complementary uses.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

A mix of medium to high density, diverse uses (base of approximately 3:1 FSR unless otherwise noted in this plan or other City plans and policies; commercial space limits may also be noted).

Additional density may be considered where public benefit is provided and as is consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies (max of approximately 5.5:1 FSR unless otherwise noted in this plan or other City plans and policies; commercial space limits may also be noted).

As parts of the Core Residential designation serve as a transitional area between the downtown core and other neighbourhoods, and a wide range of heights and densities may be appropriate depending on site and area context, additional guidance may be provided in local area plans and other sections of this plan.

[SEE ALSO SECTION 21 – NEIGHBOURHOOD DIRECTIONS]

Urban Place Designation Guidance Core Songhees

A. Built Form

A mix of low-, mid-, and high-rise multi-unit, mixed use, and large floor plate commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings.

Heights range depending on existing and envisioned context of the area. Generally envisioned to range from 3 to 8 storeys in most areas, but may range from 10 to 20 storeys or more in select areas as detailed in local area plans. Heights are generally envisioned to be tallest near the centre of the Songhees Peninsula along Esquimalt Road.

B. Uses

- Residential and mixed-use.
- Commercial, including office, retail, and visitor accommodation.
- Institutional.
- Light industrial and complementary uses.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

A mix of low to high density, diverse uses, depending on location. (approximately 2.5:1 FSR).

Density above existing zoning entitlements or an otherwise identified base may be considered where public benefit is provided and as consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans.

URBAN CORE

Urban Place Designation Guidance
Core Employment**A. Built Form**

Buildings designed to accommodate and retain light industrial uses on the ground floor and support commercial or light industrial uses above, reflecting the employment character of these areas. Building forms with at-grade retail uses or mixed residential uses above may be considered in select areas as outlined below.

Heights range depending on existing and envisioned context of the area. Generally envisioned to be five storeys west of Douglas Street and may generally range from eight to 15 storeys between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street as detailed in local area plans.

B. Unique Place Character Features

- Large parcels / lots.
- Where appropriate, common courtyard open grounds internal to the site.
- Green infrastructure.

C. Uses

- Mix of predominantly industrial, light industrial, high technology, marine industrial, research and development, commercial, office and complementary retail.
- Residential uses on upper floors in buildings containing light industrial and commercial uses are supported in the half-block on the north side of Chatham Street between Store Street and Government Street.
- Residential mixed-use, work/ live, and commercial, including office, hotels, and other visitor accommodation, located between Douglas Street and Blanshard Street.

D. Density Guidance

Medium to high density industrial, commercial, and mixed-use (approximately 3:1 FSR).

Density above existing zoning entitlements or an otherwise identified base may be considered where public benefit is provided and as consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans.

Urban Place Designation Guidance
Core Business**A. Built Form**

Commercial, institutional, and mixed-use buildings, with a continuity of commercial uses at grade.

Heights range depending on existing and envisioned context of the site and area. Generally envisioned to range from 10 to 15 stories in most locations, or 24 storeys in select areas with high site coverage, as detailed in local area plans.

B. Uses

- Continuous commercial at grade, including office and retail along with complementary uses including residential, hotels, and other visitor accommodation, with an emphasis on retail and restaurants.
- Civic and public facilities.
- Home occupations.

C. Density Guidance

Medium to high density commercial and mixed-use (approximately 4:1 mixed use FSR, of which approximately 3:1 FSR may be residential).

Additional commercial density may be considered where public benefit is provided consistent with the objectives of this plan and City policies, including but not limited to public amenity contributions, non-market or affordable housing, or heritage conservation (approximately 6:1 mixed use FSR, of which approximately 3:1 FSR may be residential).

GENERAL EMPLOYMENT

6.34 **General Employment** consists of primarily employment-generating uses and accessory mixed-uses including light industrial, commercial, and institutional uses contained within a wide range of low to medium-rise building forms, including those with large floor plates on lots with space suitable for vehicle circulation, shipping and delivery.

In limited locations, as specified in local area plans, generally adjacent to residential areas, upper levels may include residential uses while the lower levels continue to be maintained for employment uses.



Urban Place Designation Guidance General Employment

A. Built Form

Large floor-plate buildings.

Heights range depending on existing and envisioned context of the area. Generally envisioned to be one to four storeys in most locations and six storeys along certain areas of Douglas Street as detailed in local area plans. In locations where a limited residential component is supported by a local area plan, heights may generally range to five storeys.

Royal Jubilee Hospital, envisioned as a key employment district and [transit exchange study area](#), may accommodate nine or ten storeys in select interior locations.

C. Uses

- Commercial, including office and retail.
- Light industrial.
- Industrial work/live.
- Education, research and development, health services.
- Residential uses supported in limited locations on upper floors, as identified in local area plans.

D. Density Guidance

Low to medium density commercial and industrial (approximately 2:1 FSR).

In limited locations where residential uses are supported, as identified in local area plans, additional density be considered (approximately 2.5:1). In these locations, the share of density allocated to any residential, upper-floor use should be limited (to approximately 1.5:1 FSR) to encourage the long-term retention of employment space.

URBAN INDUSTRIAL

6.35 **Urban Industrial** consists of **light industrial** areas where a range of manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution and repair activities occur. The designation is intended to support the preservation of the city's industrial land supply. Ground floors include spaces appropriate for light to medium industry along with ancillary offices and retail sales. Upper floors may contain a range of light industrial or commercial uses, creating a mix of uses without displacing valuable space for industries.

In limited locations, as specified in local area plans, generally adjacent to residential areas, upper levels may include residential uses while the lower levels continue to be maintained for compatible light industrial uses.



Urban Place Designation Guidance Urban Industrial

A. Built Form

Light industrial or mixed-use buildings designed to support light industrial uses on the ground floor (e.g. with sufficient floor-to-ceiling heights, and loading bays).

Heights may generally range from one to four storeys, depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area and as guided by local area plans. In locations where a limited residential component is supported by a local area plan, heights may range to five storeys.

B. Uses

- Predominantly light industrial uses including manufacturing, processing, warehousing, distribution, and repair, as well as accessory retail or office uses, on the ground floor.
- Commercial (including limited retail) or light industrial uses on upper floors.
- Residential uses supported in limited locations on upper floors, as identified in local area plans.

C. Density Guidance

Low to medium density industrial and limited commercial mixed-use (approximately 2:1 FSR).

Share of density allocated to any non-industrial, upper-floor use should be limited (to approximately 1.5:1 FSR) to encourage the long-term retention of industrial space.

Additional density envisioned in the industrial area of Burnside Gorge west of Bridge Street, as detailed in local area plans (approximately 3:1 FSR).

Additional density may be considered where residential is supported for projects that advance both housing affordability and industrial land objectives on-site and are consistent with the objectives of this plan and other City policies, including local area plans (approximately 2.5:1 FSR).

MARINE INDUSTRIAL, WORKING HARBOUR AND MARINE

Working Harbour, Marine, and Marine Industrial designations reflect the important economic, natural, and social aspects of Victoria's strengths as a harbour-centred city.

- 6.36 Support marine-related industry, water-borne transport, marine air transportation, and tourism activities in Victoria Harbour by:
 - 6.36.1 Limiting new residential development on lands immediately adjacent to the Upper Harbour south of the Point Ellice Street Bridge and north of Swift Street;
 - 6.36.2 Encouraging a mix of active shoreline uses including public recreation, small craft launching and moorage, marine restaurants, pubs and float homes, in locations that do not conflict with the safe operation of ferries and float planes; and,
 - 6.36.3 Seeking to retain circulation space and limited parking necessary to serve adjacent marine and marine transport uses when considering any proposals to develop the lands adjacent to the Inner Harbour west of Wharf Street.
- 6.37 Changes to density levels within the Working Harbour designation must be considered through a rezoning process that considers the policies of this plan, relevant context and other relevant plans, policies and design guidelines.
- 6.38 Maintain and update the Harbour Plan in partnership with the senior levels of government, property owners, including the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority, residents, and business and community partners.
- 6.39 Seek to protect the biophysical, visual and recreational attributes of the Marine waters of Juan de Fuca Strait east of the Ogden Point Breakwater and the Gorge Waters north of the Selkirk Trestle, as identified on Map 2. [See also Section 10 – ENVIRONMENT].

- 6.40 **Marine Industrial** consists of marine-dependent uses including shipping, manufacturing, processing, transportation, warehousing, accessory office uses, and other marine industrial uses fronting the Working Harbour.

Urban Place Designation Guidance

Marine Industrial

A. Built Form

Industrial buildings and structures.

Heights may generally range from one to four storeys, depending on the existing and envisioned context of the area and as guided by local area plans.

B. Unique Place Character Features

- Large lots with large structures including on-site circulation, storage, parking, and materials handling and processing.

C. Uses

- Primary processing, marine industrial, marine transportation, warehousing, shipping, bulk materials handling, and other marine industrial uses and accessory offices.

D. Density Guidance

Low to medium density industrial, (approximately 3:1 FSR).

MARINE INDUSTRIAL, WORKING HARBOUR AND MARINE

6.41 **Working Harbour** consists of a mixed-use harbour that supports a variety of water-dependent industrial, marine and air transport, commercial, institutional, marine residential and recreational uses.

Urban Place Designation Guidance

Working Harbour**A. Built Form**

Port structures, including wharfs, piers, navigational structures, cargo and passenger handling, and staging areas.

B. Unique Place Character Features

- Mixed-use harbour environment characterized by marine traffic, marine industry, open water areas, moorage, and water-oriented recreation.

C. Uses

- Marine industrial.
- Water borne and marine air transportation.
- Shipping, cargo handling, port facilities, and navigation structures.
- Marinas and marine commercial services.
- Marine residential.
- Public foreshore areas, moorage, and recreation.

D. Density Guidance

Range of densities determined on a site-specific basis (SEE POLICY 6.39).

6.42 **Marine** consists of sheltered or open marine waters that provide wildlife habitat and support recreational activities and marine transport, moorage, and harvesting except in those waters formally designated by senior government for habitat protection purposes.

Urban Place Designation Guidance

Marine**A. Built Form**

Moorage and navigational structures in open marine waters and public foreshore areas.

B. Uses

- Marine transportation, recreation, moorage, and harvesting.

C. Density Guidance

Not applicable.

PUBLIC AND TRANSPORTATION LANDS

6.43 **Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space** consists of public and private open space, recreational facilities, public parks, schools, public and private institutions, and community facilities including government buildings and their grounds.

Urban Place Designation Guidance

Public Facilities, Institutions, Parks and Open Space

A. Built Form

Public buildings and structures prominently sited in landscaped open space and formal grounds.

Heights range depending on existing and envisioned context of the area and as guided by local area plans.

B. Unique Place Character Features

Landmark buildings and open spaces across the city, serving as local, city-wide, regional, or provincial destinations.

C. Uses

- Government office, administration, and ceremonial uses.
- Recreational uses.
- Institutional uses including education, health and research, culture, and assembly.
- Accessory residential uses.
- Accessory commercial services.

D. Density Guidance

Typically low density buildings and structures to support use (approximately 0.5:1 FSR).

Total floor space ratios of a residential component for non-market housing may range up to approximately 2.5:1, as indicated in local area plans.

6.44 **Rail Corridor** consists of linear rights of way exclusively intended for rail-based passenger and freight transport, cycling and pedestrian trails and linear recreation uses, underground or overhead utility lines, and structures and buildings accessory to these uses, including stations and platforms.

Urban Place Designation Guidance

Rail Corridor

A. Built Form

Structures and buildings accessory to primary transportation uses such as switching sheds, bicycle shelters, and transport stations and shelters, generally one storey.

B. Uses

- Rail-based freight and passenger transport and stations.
- Cycling and walking trails.
- Linear recreation uses.
- Open space.
- Utility lines.

C. Density Guidance

Minimal density buildings and structures to support use (approximately 0.1:1 FSR).

LOCAL AREA, CORRIDOR AND MASTER PLANNING

- 6.45 Give consideration to future employment intensification opportunities at Royal Jubilee Hospital and Gorge Road Hospital through the preparation of site-specific master plans undertaken in partnership with the Health Authority.
- 6.46 Through the preparation of place-based local area plans, establish detailed policies, regulations, and guidelines for the design and development of transit-oriented Town Centres, Urban Villages and mobility corridors, specifically including:
 - 6.46.1 Mayfair Town Centre, Humber Green Village and areas along and surrounding the Douglas Street Corridor, generally from Caledonia Avenue north to the municipal boundary.
 - 6.46.2 Stadacona Village and Jubilee Village, and areas along and surrounding the Fort Street Corridor from Cook Street to the municipal boundary at Foul Bay Road.
 - 6.46.3 Hillside Town Centre, and areas along and surrounding the Hillside Avenue Corridor, from Blanshard Street to the municipal boundary at North Dairy Road.

[SEE ALSO SECTION 7 – TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY].
- 6.47 Consider residential and commercial land forecasts and City priorities when phasing and scoping local area planning for villages, corridors and employment areas [SEE ALSO SECTION 19 – PLAN ADMINISTRATION, SECTION 20 – LOCAL AREA PLANNING, AND SECTION 21 – NEIGHBOURHOOD DIRECTIONS].

MEASURING PROGRESS

- 6.48 The following targets should be considered in measuring progress towards the plan's land management and development objectives:
 - 6.48.1 Victoria accommodates a minimum of 20% of the region's cumulative new dwelling units to 2041;
 - 6.48.2 The Urban Core accommodates a minimum of 10% of the region's cumulative new dwelling units to 2041; and,
 - 6.48.3 A minimum 90% of all dwelling units are within 400 metres either of the Urban Core, a Town Centre or an Urban Village by 2041.