



A strong economy is vital to the quality of life enjoyed by View Royal's residents, labour force and visitors. How this economy changes in the coming years will affect many facets of the community, such as the types of jobs available for residents, local business and shopping opportunities, municipal revenues and services, the ability to move people and goods throughout the community, and the form and character of the built environment.

Sustainability is one of the overarching themes of View Royal's Vision Statement, as set out in the Town's Strategic Plan, 2009 - 2011:

The Town of View Royal is determined to be one of the best places to call home: liveable, green and sustainable.

The Town of View Royal, working with its various partners, has an important role to play in helping guide this change, ensuring that the type of economic development that is encouraged is based on sustainable practices. In doing so, it must be with the recognition that the traditional division of sustainability into economic, environmental and social spheres often leads to a discussion of trade-offs and balances between these three elements. Yet the key to sustainability is not balance, which suggests that gains in one sphere come at the expense of another, but integration, so that gains in one sphere support gains in the other spheres.

Local Employment Opportunities

Creating more jobs locally benefits View Royal by providing more choices for residents to work in their own community rather than having to commute elsewhere in the region. It also keeps more income in the community to support local businesses.



As of 2006, there were 3,950 jobs in View Royal, which was 2.3% of the jobs in the Capital Regional District.

The CRD's Regional Growth Strategy has set a jobs-to-population ratio target of 0.35 by 2026 for the Western Communities. As of 2006, View Royal's ratio was 0.45, meaning that it is well ahead of the target ratio for its western neighbours. However, as population grows, it will have to find ways to add employment to ensure that its jobs-to-population ratio remains strong. The challenge will not be just to increase the number of jobs, but to ensure that the types of employment opportunities available are suited to the skills of View Royal's resident labour force.



As indicated in the table below, there is only one occupational category – health – where there are significantly more jobs in View Royal than there are View Royal residents employed in that occupation. The vast majority of these jobs are at Victoria General Hospital.

Creating more jobs also means that an appropriate supply of land must be made available for employment generating uses. View Royal does not have an industrial land base, so there will be a heavy reliance on commercial activities, such as retail, business and personal services, and institutional activities, such as health and education, to generate many of the new jobs.

The first priority from an economic development perspective should be on encouraging existing View Royal businesses that are able to create quality jobs to grow and prosper. This will make the most efficient use of the community's limited land base.

There are several ways in which the Town's commercial and mixed commercial/residential growth might occur. The OCP could focus on the development of a number of smaller nodes throughout the town that can also act as community gathering places and might including certain public amenities. Alternatively, View Royal could encourage the development of a larger central node that can serve as a Town Centre if an appropriate location can be found. Or, perhaps a combination of the two concepts could be explored.

Figure 1: Occupational Match of View Royal Jobs and View Royal

Occupations	Jobs in View Royal	Share (%)	View Royal Resident Labour Force	Share (%)	Difference
Management	355	9	640	13	-285
Business, finance and administrative	635	16	1055	21	-420
Natural and applied sciences and related	135	3	375	7	-240
Health	1315	34	385	8	930
Social science, education, government service and religion	205	5	400	8	-195
Art, culture, recreation and sport	55	1	185	4	-130
Sales and service	970	25	1270	25	-300
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related	155	4	590	12	-435
Occupations unique to primary industry	30	1	35	1	-5
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	90	2	75	1	15
Total	3,950	100%	5,025	100%	-1,075

Sources: Statistics Canada, 2006

The Tax Base

View Royal has identified diversifying and strengthening the tax base as one of its sustainability objectives. As indicated in the table below, the residential sector currently accounts for 74% of the Town's property tax billings, a share that has increased slightly over the past five years.

Figure 2: Municipal Tax Billings by Property Class

	2004		2008	
	Amount	Share	Amount	Share
Residential	\$2,087,779	72%	\$2,973,083	74%
Utilities	\$16,341	1%	\$8,567	<1%
Industrial - Light	\$8,615	<1%	-	-
Business	\$776,311	27%	\$1,008,405	25%
Recreation / Non Profit	-	-	\$48,370	1%
Farm	\$3,513	<1%	\$1,135	<1%
Total	\$2,892,579	100%	\$4,039,561	100%

Source: Tax Base, Town of View Royal, 2008 Annual Report

View Royal is in the middle of the pack when compared with nearby municipalities in terms of the share of taxes paid by the residential sector. Highlands, Esquimalt and Saanich are notably higher, at 86%, 80% and 80%, while Langford and Colwood are lower, at 62% and 69%. By way of contrast, the City of Victoria's figure is 47%.

If View Royal residents want to have the types of amenities and services typically associated with a growing urban area, the Town may need to attract significantly more commercial development. or consider other measures to increase increase municipal revenues.



Development Trends

With the exception of 2008, the residential sector has dominated development in View Royal over the past five years in terms of the value of construction, as indicated in the table below. It accounted for 57% of the total value of the permits issued.

Comparing just residential versus commercial (since much of the institutional development does not pay property taxes), the residential sector accounted for 69% – over two-thirds – of the total value of the permits

Figure 3: View Royal Building Permits (\$ 000s)

	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$	#	\$
Commercial	12	\$1,276	6	\$62	8	\$734	1	\$50	2	\$31,500
Industrial	1	\$10	1	\$4,500	0	\$0	1	\$90	0	\$0
Institutional	9	\$3,109	2	\$2,282	4	\$1,665	5	\$1,291	4	\$10,086
Residential	157	\$18,614	96	\$13,622	70	\$14,173	61	\$21,721	67	\$8,200
Total	179	\$23,009	105	\$20,466	82	\$16,572	68	\$23,152	73	\$49,787

Source: Building Permits, Capital Regional District, Quarterly Building Permit Reports

issued.

This underscores the importance of the Town securing more commercial development opportunities to keep pace with residential development so that View Royal's citizens are not carrying a high proportion of the property tax load.



PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- What kinds of jobs and businesses should View Royal be attracting?
- Where should commercial development be located and what should it look like?
- Should the OCP encourage a series of smaller commercial nodes spread throughout the community, focus efforts on creating a Town Centre or some combination of the two?
- What share of property taxes should be borne by the residential sector versus other sectors?

For more information:

www.viewroyalocp.ca

Lindsay Chase,
Director of Development Services

(250) 479-6800

lchase@town.viewroyal.bc.ca

