

Placemaking

Neighbourhood centres and urban design



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW? - FACT SHEET SERIES

Placemaking and neighbourhood centres

Neighbourhood centres are small “nodes” that often act as the “heart” of a community or neighbourhood, and a destination for residents and visitors. They function as social hubs, gathering places, and offer basic commercial services. Larger centres typically contain a mix of public facilities, multi-modal transportation options, office and commercial uses, and a range of nearby housing opportunities (e.g., townhouses, condos) and tenures (e.g., rental, owned) for residents of all life stages.

Where's the heart in View Royal?

While View Royal does have distinct neighbourhoods with some smaller commercial activity, it doesn't have a strong and identifiable town core or neighbourhood nodes. Several challenges exist.

- As the bridge between the core and the western communities, View Royal is like some of its neighbours in that it is largely a residential community for those who work elsewhere in the Greater Victoria region. However, this is beginning to change.
- Commercial uses in View Royal are largely limited to more-auto oriented locations along the Island Highway, Admirals Road, and at major intersections. However, there are some small pockets of neighbourhood services of which offer good opportunities to build upon and corridor commercial uses with potential for further development and infill.
- Currently, there is a limited mix of housing options like apartments or condos in and

around existing commercial nodes to attract a broader range of residents and local businesses.

Town centre and neighbourhood centres

The current OCP outlines a desire to create a single town centre supported by a network of smaller neighbourhood centres. This has been supported by actions in our Strategic Plan 2019-2022 and a 2021 land economics study. Key actions include:

- Support for local business and additional mixed-use (residential, office, commercial) development in and adjacent to existing commercial areas and transportation corridors.
- Exploring ways to further develop existing commercial areas to help reinforce, strengthen, and diversify these areas.
- Supporting smaller neighbourhood centres offering amenities and connected to a larger town centre, in a hierarchy of “places” within the Town.



Our current OCP identifies a future town centre on the current Fort Victoria RV Park Site (should it become available for redevelopment). This site is imagined as a central community gathering place to be the civic and cultural heart of View Royal. While this site has many great attributes (large land area; central location; and excellent proximity to transportation infrastructure, etc.), the land economics study suggested its present use is viable, while the financial sustainability of its future development as a town centre may be challenging.

What's your view?

- *Where do you see the "heart" of View Royal?*
- *Should this OCP update help identify a town centre for View Royal that, in time, could provide a better mix of housing options, commercial uses, and office uses?*
- *What existing neighbourhood centres or commercial areas should we prioritizing to help create more diversified and active places (e.g., Eagle Creek, Helmken Road and Island Hwy. or Admirals Rd)?*

Watch for opportunities this fall to provide feedback on these questions and others. To learn about other OCP update issues visit the OCP project website or send us an email.

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

We are updating our Official Community Plan (OCP). Last updated in 2011, the Plan provides a long-term vision for the community and provides guidance on future planning and development.

The current OCP has served the Town of View Royal well, so this work will be an update and not a major re-write. Still, there are some important issues and topics that require attention, feedback from the community, and focus in the updated OCP. Some of the key areas that Council and staff identified for additional review include:



Housing Matters. View Royal housing needs, diversity, and options



Placemaking. Neighbourhood centres and urban design



Preparing for Change. Climate change and resilience



Moving Around. Transportation and the ways we get around



A Healthy Local Economy. A more resilient and diverse local economy



Our Natural Connections. Parks, protected areas, and shorelines

The OCP update process is an opportunity to explore these areas (and others) in more detail and to get community feedback on how we can best direct and prepare for change. While this fact sheet provides an overview of just one area, we know that the six additional topics listed above are interconnected and will require a coordinated and integrated approach in the updated OCP.

Want more information?

Please visit our OCP Update web page: www.viewroyal.ca

Send us an email: planning@viewroyal.ca

