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# DISTRICT OF OAK BAY

## Official Community Plan

**Includes Amendments:**

4620.001 September 19, 2016  
4620.002 November 25, 2019  
4620.003 February 24, 2020

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# Acknowledgements

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## In Appreciation

**We sincerely thank the many Oak Bay Commission and Committee members, community members, Council and staff who attended countless meetings and provided valuable input to the process.**

## Consultants

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Photo Credit: Gloria Back



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction to Oak Bay

The District of Oak Bay (“the District” or “Oak Bay”) is a compact, seaside community of just over 18,000 residents located at the southern tip of Vancouver Island. Incorporated in 1906, the municipality is one of 13 local governments in the Capital Regional District (CRD) and participates in regional planning activities. The City of Victoria (Victoria) borders Oak Bay’s west boundary, and the District of Saanich (Saanich) lies to the north (Figure 1.1). The District acknowledges and respects that it lies within the traditional territory of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations of the Coast Salish.

Oak Bay is defined by its attractive residential neighbourhoods, strong sense of community, mature tree canopy, scenic shoreline to the east and south, natural environment, and historic character. The municipality includes Oak Bay Village, a vibrant hub of arts, culture, and business, and other smaller villages and commercial areas within neighbourhoods. The community has excellent parks and recreation facilities that contribute to a high quality of life.

The University of Victoria is partially located in Oak Bay, as is a small portion of Camosun College. Other public and independent schools, two golf courses, a marina, yacht club and hotel are also community landmarks.

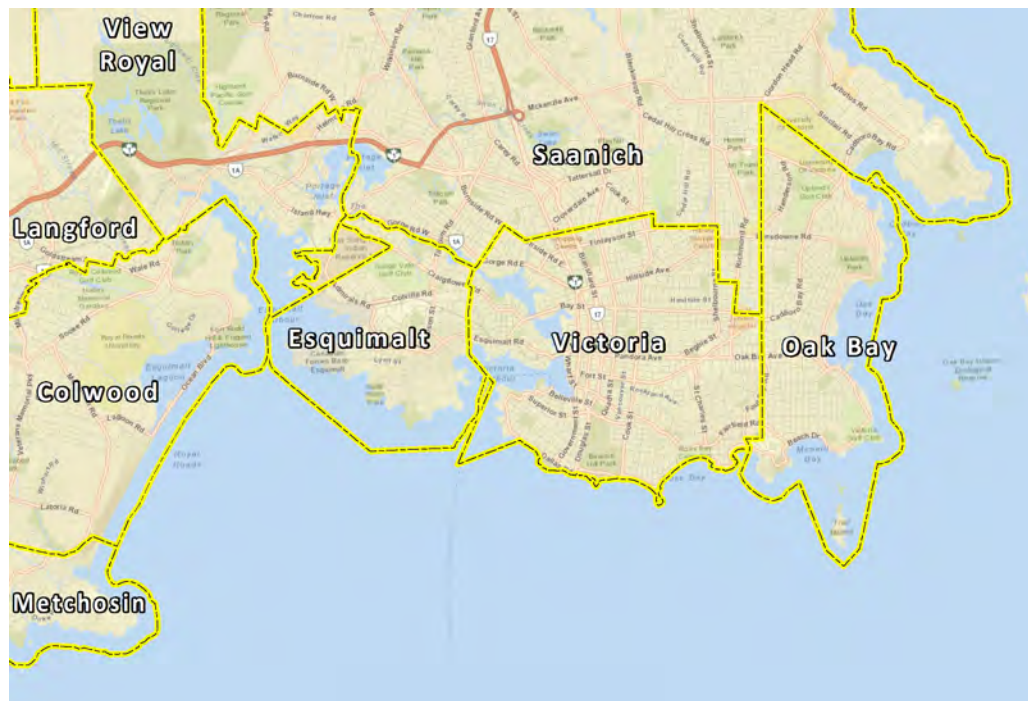


Figure 1.1 Location Map

## 1.2 Purpose of an Official Community Plan

### What is an OCP?

An Official Community Plan (OCP) represents a community's vision for the future and provides a framework to guide growth and decisions about the use and management of land and water resources in the municipality. The OCP describes how and where residential, commercial and other types of development will occur; it guides the provision of necessary road, water, sewer and other infrastructure; and it provides policies concerning environmental, economic and community health and well-being.

An OCP is a bylaw of local government. In British Columbia, the requirements of an OCP are defined by the *Local Government Act*, which requires the following content in an OCP:

- approximate location, type and density of residential development to meet anticipated housing needs for at least five years
- approximate location, amount and type of commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreation and public utility land uses
- location of sand and gravel deposits
- restrictions on land subject to hazardous conditions or environmentally sensitive to development
- approximate location and phasing of major road, sewer and water systems
- proposed public facilities, including schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites
- policies for affordable, rental and special needs housing
- targets, policies and actions for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and policies and actions of the local government to achieve those targets
- a regional context statement where there is a Regional Growth Strategy



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

*An OCP may also include the following:*

- social policies
- environmental policies
- Development permit area (DPA) designations and associated guidelines





*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

Where the municipality does not have jurisdiction, the OCP may only state broad objectives related to the topic. This typically includes matters within provincial or federal jurisdictions, and it may also include areas regulated by organizations such as the school district, universities, or BC Transit.

After the adoption of an OCP, all bylaws enacted and works undertaken by the local government must be consistent with the OCP, unless it is amended. Whereas the OCP indicates the existing and desired future land uses and services, the Zoning Bylaw regulates existing and permitted land uses. The Zoning Bylaw also establishes regulations such as setbacks, building heights, and parking requirements associated with permitted land uses.

This OCP draws extensively from 2011 census data and community engagement conducted in 2013 and 2014. Communities are not static; change is always occurring. An OCP that reflects the community therefore must be a “living document” that is amended from time to time. This can be initiated by Council or as the result of an approved OCP amendment application. Review of an OCP is recommended every five to ten years to ensure that it appropriately reflects community trends, needs and desires. While ten years is the primary planning time frame for the OCP, many of the goals, objectives and policies have broader implications for a much longer term. For example, climate mitigation and adaptation strategies address changes anticipated over an undefined time frame.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## Why do we need an OCP?

Oak Bay's OCP will help the community in the following ways:

- it will proactively define and guide the community towards a healthy and resilient future
- it will guide decisions by Council when considering applications for development
- it will guide the decisions of private landowners, developers, and other authorities
- it will provide a foundation for the municipality's financial planning, especially for infrastructure

An OCP provides multiple benefits. Preparing an OCP involves a process through which a community can identify and address emerging issues and challenges that affect community well-being. These issues typically involve topics such as the impacts of development on community character; the changing needs of residents; housing affordability; economic health; public health and safety; heritage conservation; condition of habitat and biodiversity; rising energy costs; and changing climatic conditions. An OCP that introduces a clear planning and decision-making framework to guide development and redevelopment provides certainty for residents, business owners, developers and other stakeholders regarding the future use and management of land and water resources within the community. An OCP also increases the efficiency of local government through defining future objectives, policies and actions.

# 1.3 Guide to the OCP

Sections 1.0 and 2.0 provide the context, background, vision and broad framework for the OCP.

Sections 3.0 through 5.0 cover the key OCP topics. Each subsection contains the following information:

- an overview and information on existing conditions, as well as opportunities and challenges
- objectives related to the topic
- policies related to the topic

Section 6.0 describes the implementation actions required of the District.

Section 7.0 includes the Development Approval Information Required with applications.

Section 8.0 includes the Development Permit Areas and associated guidelines.

Throughout the Plan, there are call-out boxes that include the following:



Acronyms and additional definitions are located at the back of this Plan, with cross-referencing to the page number of the definition where necessary.

Generally, the objectives, policies, implementation steps, Development Permit Areas and map Schedules have force and effect as part of this bylaw. The other sections and map figures are provided for information only.

The District is already involved in work related to many of the goals, objectives and policies to varying degrees. Rather than repeat “continue to” in front of these statements, “continue to” is implied where there is work under way.





*Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd*



## 1.4 Vision

The vision statement is expressed in the present tense, as it represents the community's aspirations for how Oak Bay will be described in the future.

*Oak Bay is a vibrant and safe community located in a spectacular natural setting. Residents are passionate and proud of the many qualities that make Oak Bay one-of-a-kind. These include its sense of community, streetscapes, village charm, residential character, natural coastal environment, parks, recreation facilities and opportunities, enviable quality of life, vibrant arts and culture scene, high quality education opportunities, heritage values, mixed architectural styles, and well-conserved historic architecture.*

*Oak Bay is a dynamic community that respects and enhances the existing community structure and core characteristics that make it distinct from adjacent communities, while supporting the changes necessary to meet current and future needs. These features are central to Oak Bay's resilience and sustainability; protecting the best of what we have and adapting to embrace the future.*

*Oak Bay is a community that values and supports diversity in its population. It offers a broad range of residential, social, and cultural opportunities as well as commercial activities for its residents, and strives to be economically, environmentally and socially sustainable in its practices. Oak Bay's residents are active contributors in local decision-making, working collaboratively with municipal Council and staff to ensure that Oak Bay will continue to thrive for years to come.*

# 1.5 Goals

The goals are presented in a similar order to the sections of the OCP. In order to advance community resilience and sustainability, the goals, as well as the objectives and policies, must be treated as an integrated whole.



**Climate Change and Energy** – Work towards climate change mitigation and adaptation to address the diverse impacts of climate change, including water and energy conservation, reduction of greenhouse gases, and effective management of environmental resources, land and infrastructure.

**Natural Environment** – Protect and enhance the natural features that make the community environmentally and socially healthy and resilient, including the terrestrial and marine ecosystems, foreshore habitats, creeks, and tree canopy.

**Neighbourhoods** – Sustain the characteristics of Oak Bay’s neighbourhoods that contribute to a sense of place and attachment to the community.

**Built Environment** – Conserve the community’s architectural, streetscape and garden heritage while also embracing creative new design approaches that complement the community’s character and reflect changing needs.

**Housing** – Encourage and support the development of diverse and inclusive housing options that accommodate residents of all ages, incomes, and family situations, including those with special needs.

**Business and Commerce** – Support the improvement of Oak Bay’s economy through strategic opportunities that enhance the villages and other commercial centres and encourage new businesses to establish and flourish.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back



**Heritage** – Maintain, conserve and enhance Oak Bay’s built heritage to retain and renew this legacy for future generations.

**Community and Social Well-being** – Encourage and support community and social facilities and services that benefit residents of all ages and needs, foster interaction across generations and cultures, and strengthen community networks and services in recreation, education, and health and well-being.

**Arts and Culture** – Encourage and support arts and culture in Oak Bay for the benefit of residents, tourists, and economic development.



**Parks and Open Space** – Maintain and enhance parks and open space, including trails and walkways, and provide opportunities for residents to enjoy the natural beauty of the municipality and to pursue active and healthy outdoor lifestyles.

**Transportation** – Offer a diverse range of transportation options, and encourage and establish infrastructure for active modes of transportation to enhance safety, mobility, connectivity and access within Oak Bay and to surrounding communities.

**Utilities and Services** – Provide effective and reliable utility infrastructure and services to meet current and future needs.



**Emergency Management** – Engage in emergency management to protect lives, property and the environment.

*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

# 1.6 Broad Strategies for Managing Growth

## Overview

Throughout the OCP renewal process, residents talked about the importance of being a sustainable community.

*A **sustainable community** is one that is economically, environmentally, and socially healthy and resilient. It meets challenges through integrated solutions rather than through fragmented approaches that meet one of those goals at the expense of the others. And it takes a long-term perspective—one that’s focused on the present and future, well beyond the next budget or election cycle. As a result, a sustainable community manages its human, natural, and financial resources to meet current needs while ensuring that adequate resources are equitably available for future generations. It seeks a better quality of life for the whole community without compromising the well-being of other communities.*

Extracted from the President’s Council on Sustainable Development, ISC’s Elements of a Sustainable Community, *Sustainable Communities Task Force Report 1997*<sup>1</sup>

In this OCP, we capture the essence of this concept with the following phrase and icon:

### Community Health and Resilience



For each section in the OCP, we identify the key relationships between the topic and Community Health and Resilience. In this way, we emphasize the cohesion and integration among all of the OCP sections, and Oak Bay’s over-riding commitment to economic, environmental and social (including cultural) sustainability.

The following are the broad objectives and strategies that establish a framework for the other objectives and policies in the OCP.

*This section includes objectives and policies that are specifically related to managing growth in the community, which is required by the Local Government Act.*

<sup>1</sup> President’s Council was established by Bill Clinton, 1993 to 1997.



## 1.6.1 Broad Objectives

The broad objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Consider increases in density while respecting the values that make Oak Bay an attractive and environmentally rich community.
2. Follow the existing patterns of land use in general, considering some expansions of higher density uses in areas set out in this plan.
3. Support limited and well managed increases in commercial use to support the needs of residents and visitors to the community.
4. Plan for well managed growth that adapts to changing population characteristics and lifestyles.

## 1.6.2 Broad Policies

The broad policies of the OCP are as follows:

- BP1. Encourage modest population growth, anticipating an annual growth rate up to 0.5 percent, with the recognition that actual growth fluctuates over time and is based on many external factors.

*A 0.5 percent annual growth would mean about 90 new residents or 36 new housing units per year.*

- BP2. Consider infill development as a tool for allowing more density to fit within neighbourhoods while respecting and conserving neighbourhood character.
- BP3. Accommodate future growth, in general, in areas that are already developed in order to retain Oak Bay's natural environment, parks and open space.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

- BP4. Encourage mixed use development, integrating commercial and residential uses, in villages and other commercial areas to increase the vibrancy and economic vitality of these areas.
- BP5. Implement design guidelines, within Development Permit Areas for form and character, to provide more guidance to new development.

***Infill Residential Development*** is a term used to describe new housing development that is constructed in an already developed area. Infill can come in different forms, scale and character. Placing additional housing units on a residential lot, dividing detached homes into multiple units, building on a vacant lot, redeveloping a surface parking area, and rebuilding an apartment with more units are all forms of infill. Because Oak Bay is an urban community that has already been developed, infill is a way to create more housing and achieve higher densities.

*Infill makes use of existing infrastructure and already disturbed land, reduces development pressure on natural areas, and can support increased walking, biking and transit use. In Oak Bay, infill has the added benefit of bringing more people closer to existing and planned mixed use and commercial centres, increasing the viability and vitality of these important activity hubs.*

*Successful infill housing is carefully planned to minimize potential impacts on adjacent properties. Neighbourhood character, traffic safety, parking, trees/landscape, overshadowing and property values are concerns that are often raised by existing residents.*



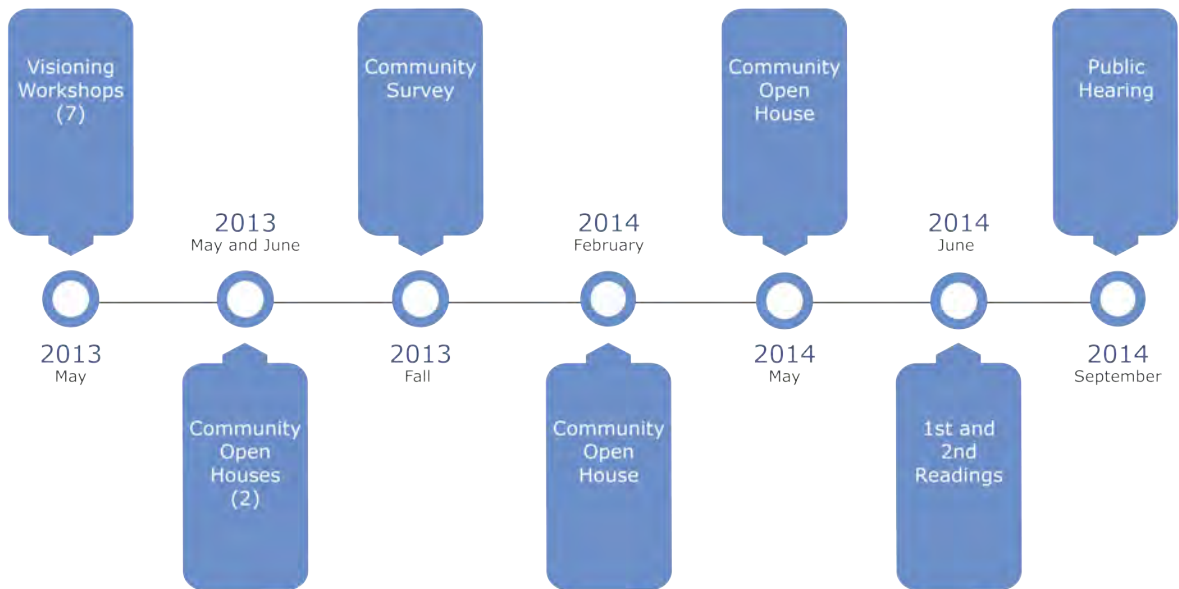
Photo Credit: Catherine Berris

## 2.0 Setting the Stage

### 2.1 Planning Process

#### 1.6.1 Broad Objectives

This OCP is based on the community's values, concerns and wishes, and a robust engagement process was used to identify those. An Official Community Plan Project Advisory Committee (OPAC), composed of three Councillors and six residents, guided the process and provided input to draft materials. This group met every two weeks throughout most of the OCP preparation process. There was an extensive public engagement process that included the following tasks (Figure 2.1):



**Figure 2.1 OCP Engagement Process**

- **May 2013** – 8 visioning workshops, 111 participants, with topics/participants as follows:
  - Parks, Recreation and Environment
  - Arts and Culture
  - Community and Social Services
  - Business and Commerce
  - Education
  - Oak Bay Council, staff, commissions, working committees
  - Planners and community visionaries
  - Youth
- **May and June 2013** – two community open houses
  - #1 – over 100 participants
  - #2 – over 50 participants
- **Fall 2013** - Community survey sent to all 7,947 households in Oak Bay
  - 2,650 responses, 33.3% participation rate
- **February 15, 2014** – Community open house to review draft goals and objectives
  - 125 participants
- **May 2 - 12, 2014** – Circulation of complete draft of OCP text to Oak Bay Committees





Invitation letters from the Mayor were sent to all households in the District. Each household was assigned a unique identifier and was invited to participate in the survey on the internet, by hard copy mail, or by telephone. The response rate of one-third of households provides a relatively high degree of reliability.

The community survey covered the major topics typically addressed in OCPs. These included the following:

- Housing
- Natural Environment
- Parks and Recreation
- Built Environment
- Business and Commerce
- Community and Social Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Utilities and Services

For most of the topics of the survey shown above, the goal was to identify the strategies that Oak Bay residents feel should be important to consider in the renewed OCP. The approach to these topics was “high level” and general in most instances, but with ample opportunity given to respondents to explain and qualify choices, voice concerns, etc.

The approach to housing options in this survey was more detailed than is typical for the early stage of an OCP survey. OPAC requested more detailed questions on housing due to the high level of community interest in this topic. Given that the OCP renewal process included only one opportunity to solicit opinions from the entire community through a statistically reliable survey, OPAC wanted the questionnaire to address some of the challenging and controversial issues facing the community. For that reason, the survey explores Housing, and Business and Commerce to some degree, in more detail than the questions on other topics.

The full community survey report is available from the District. Summaries of community input are provided throughout the OCP where applicable; these are highlighted in orange boxes.

## Supported by a Majority of Survey Respondents

Strategies and options that were selected as important or agreed to by more than half of the total sample can be regarded as having the support of a majority of the community. The following numbers indicate the percent of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the strategy, or the percent who selected the option as a top priority from a list of potential strategies.

- 84% Allow live / work units above businesses in designated commercial areas
- 84% Encourage maintenance, upgrading, and retrofitting of older and heritage homes
- 78% Regulate secondary suites and set standards related to health and safety, fees, parking, owner occupancy, etc.
- 77% Link increases in density with the provision of community amenities by developers such as public parking, public green space, etc.
- 76% Repair and replace water and sewer lines as a high priority
- 74% Allow existing retail and service businesses to expand at existing locations, e.g., more seating for cafes
- 73% Encourage more housing for seniors and those with disabilities in areas with existing multi-family housing
- 70% Expand and upgrade the trail / path system, including public trails along the shoreline
- 69% Regulate secondary suites in existing homes
- 68% Encourage more long-term care units / beds
- 64% Inclusion of duplexes (2 units in one building) in existing single-family residential areas
- 63% Update policies for home-based businesses to increase options
- 61% Allow more “street corner” neighbourhood commercial establishments
- 61% Allow Bed and Breakfasts
- 60% Protect and manage the shoreline
- 60% Expand community facilities, programs and services for older adults, seniors and people with disabilities
- 59% Design and operate roads as “complete streets” with all users in mind, including cyclists, transit, motor scooters, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities



- 57% Inclusion of townhouses / row houses in existing single-family residential areas
- 56% (If multi-family housing units were increased) expand the extent of multi-family areas in locations such as along arterial roads, near transit, and near commercial and recreation services
- 56% Reconsider parking requirements where there is good access to public transit and where residents tend to use alternative modes such as walking, biking and public transit
- 56% Inclusion of laneway / carriage homes / garden suites (detached, ground-oriented homes located in the backyard of a property with a single-family home as its primary use) in existing single-family residential areas
- 55% Begin the long-term process of moving utility wires underground
- 54% Include affordable and mixed income housing in multi-family developments
- 54% Encourage green building technologies such as solar panels, solar hot water, rainwater collection, recycling of materials from demolished buildings
- 53% Integrate environmental considerations into planning and design
- 53% Distribute festivals, events and street closures throughout Oak Bay
- 52% Improve sidewalks for better accessibility, e.g., smoother and wider sidewalks, more ramps



Photo Credit: Gloria Back



## Least Acceptable Options to Survey Respondents

Because of its importance to the community, the survey explored housing options in more detail than other topics. The following list of housing options received the largest disagreement percentages, indicating those who disagreed or strongly disagreed with each option. To produce this list, the cut-off criterion was 40% or more in disagreement.

- 62% Allow building height increases for new homes in single family residential areas
- 49% Allow very small units (such as 300 square feet) to allow for more units in a building
- 46% Inclusion of fourplexes (4 units in one building) in existing single-family residential areas
- 43% Larger one-level accessible homes on smaller lots
- 40% Inclusion of triplexes (3 units in one building) in existing single-family residential areas



### Community Survey Input

*The community survey identified several fundamental themes that underlie, connect, or subsume all of the other themes expressed in the survey. The fundamental themes, which are the shared values of people who live in Oak Bay, are as follows:*

- *a passion for Oak Bay*
- *kinship with / living in nature*
- *an action theme - do it right*

*The community's major concerns and priorities were also expressed in the survey, and these include the following:*

- *floods and threats of future flooding*
- *replacement and repair of aging infrastructure*
- *high or higher taxes*
- *high real estate prices*
- *an absence of sufficient housing choices for seniors who are downsizing, small households, young families, and those with modest incomes*

## 2.3 Oak Bay's Previous Community Plans

Oak Bay's first plan was prepared by the Capital Region Planning Board of BC in 1967. That plan identified Oak Bay as "a community within a community". The Plan sets a bold vision of commercial centres, with large "apartment areas" surrounding Oak Bay Village, portions of the east shoreline, and north of the high school (Figure 2.2). The District's major parks are included in this plan, as are "greenways", which are pedestrian routes along most of the shoreline connecting to the major parks. Many of the land use patterns set out in the 1967 plan are still very much in evidence today.

Oak Bay's first actual OCP was adopted in 1981 and it was updated in 1997. The 1997 OCP focuses on retaining the character of single detached neighbourhoods and streetscapes, allowing a very slight increase in multi-unit housing, preserving and enhancing the natural environment, protecting and enhancing parks and recreation for their contribution to Oak Bay's high quality of life, enhancing pedestrian and automobile mobility and safety, increasing transit services, supporting the development of cycling infrastructure, upgrading utilities and services, reducing street light energy consumption, and moving utility wires underground.

There have been some significant changes in Oak Bay and throughout the region since 1997. The population is aging, environmental impacts are increasing, and community values have shifted to a focus on social, economic and environmental sustainability. There are particular concerns related to housing. The primary concern in Oak Bay is that a lack of housing options is limiting the ability of many people to live or remain living in Oak Bay. There are also concerns that some of the new development is compounding the situation and further increasing housing costs while also changing the character of Oak Bay's valued neighbourhoods and streetscapes.

Consistent with the OCPs of its day, the 1997 OCP says very little about many issues that are important to people today. These include affordable and inclusive housing, design of development projects, environmental protection and enhancement, emergency management, adaptation to climate change, and energy use. The renewed OCP provides an opportunity to establish a vision, and to adopt goals, objectives and policies that are relevant to today and the community's aspirations for the future.



# THE GENERAL PLAN

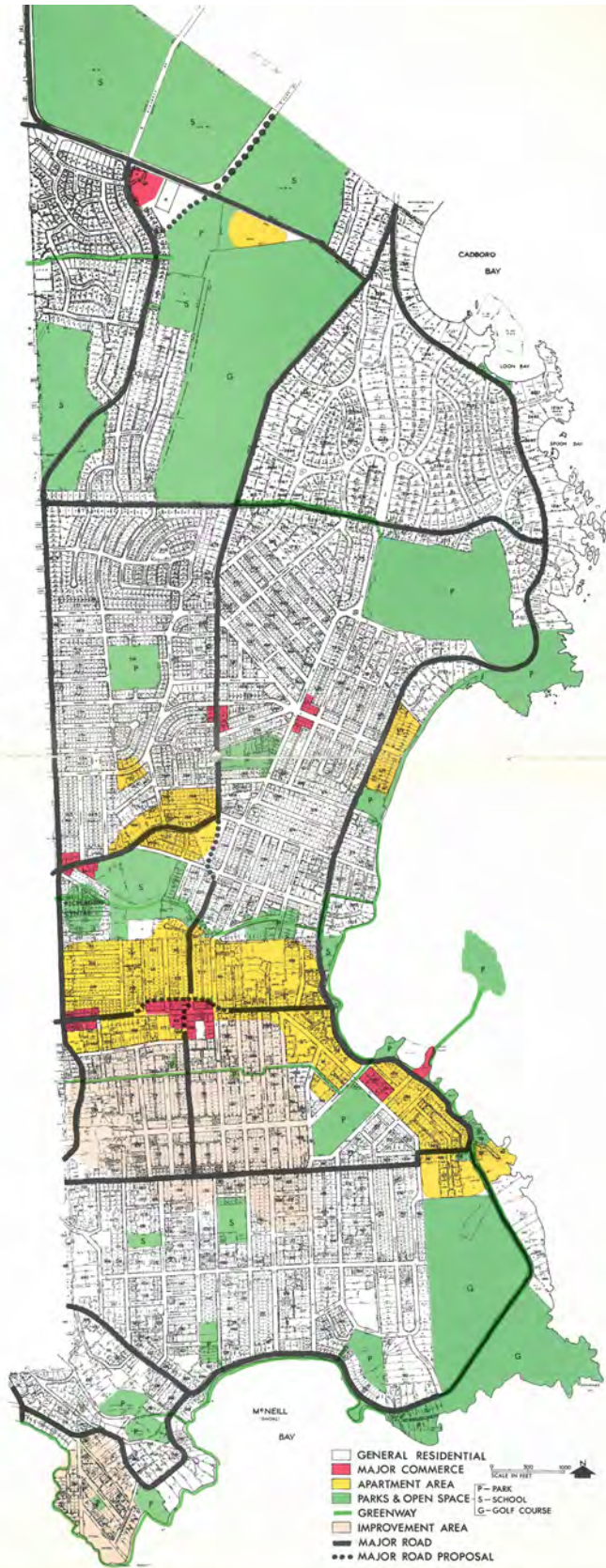


Figure 2.2 The General Plan, 1967

## 2.4 Demographics

### Existing Population

The number of people living in Oak Bay has changed very little in the past 20 to 30 years. When the first OCP was prepared in 1981, the population was 17,815; in 2011 it was 18,015. The housing mix has also been fairly stable, with about 64% of the population living in single detached houses and 36% in multi-unit buildings.

The age distribution of the population, however, is changing. Increasing numbers of residents are 55 or older. The school-aged population is slightly less than it was 20 years ago (17% of residents in 1991 and 15% in 2011), and this contributed to the closure of Uplands Elementary School.

The population is becoming ever more stable; in 2011, 66% of residents had lived in the same home for over five years compared to 55% in 1991. While it is positive that people want to live in Oak Bay for extended periods, the length of residency is one factor that makes it difficult for those who may want to relocate into Oak Bay. There are not many houses or apartments available that meet the needs of potential buyers or renters.

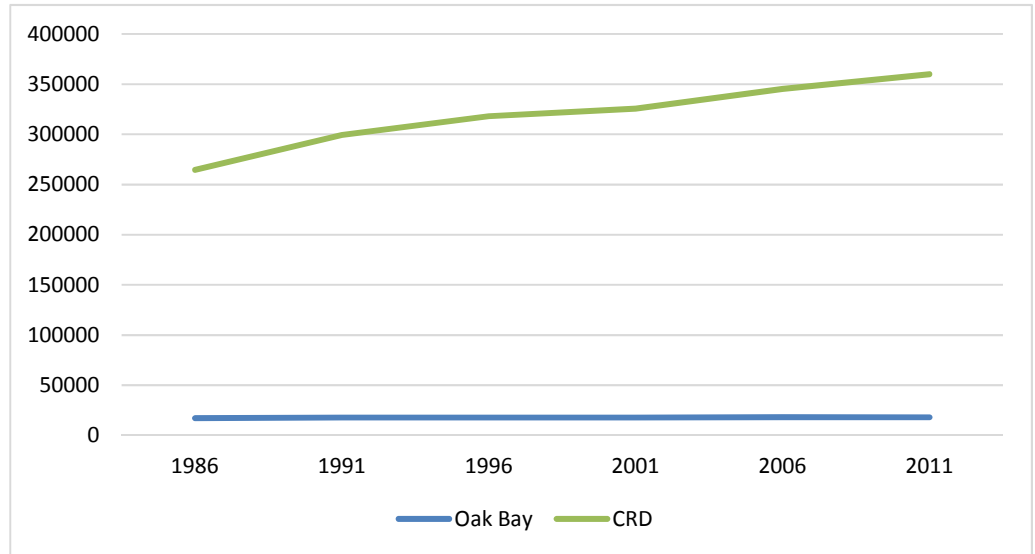
A comparison of Oak Bay with the rest of the Capital Regional District (CRD) shows some distinctions in Oak Bay's demographics:

- Oak Bay's population growth is significantly less than that in the region as a whole (Figures 2.3 and 2.4)
- The age distribution in Oak Bay is significantly different from that in the CRD and BC; Oak Bay has many more people over 55 and many less between 20 and 40 proportional to the population (Figure 2.5)
- Compared to the CRD, Oak Bay has had a consistently higher proportion of those over 55 for many years (Figure 2.6)



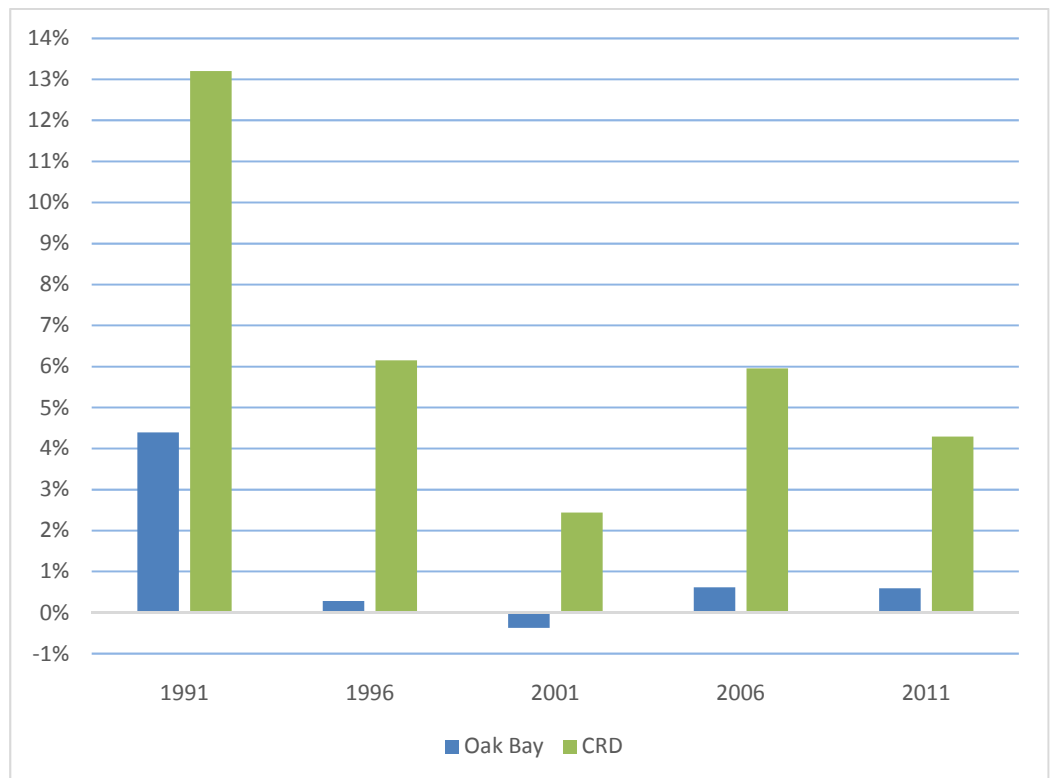
Photo Credit: Gloria Back

- Oak Bay’s average family income is significantly more than the average income in the region, and it is increasing at a faster rate (Figure 2.7)
- Oak Bay’s average housing values are also significantly more and increasing faster than the average housing values in the region, according to the average values for owner-occupied housing, which includes houses and condominiums, but not rented dwellings (Figure 2.8)



**Figure 2.3 Oak Bay and CRD Population 1986 - 2011**

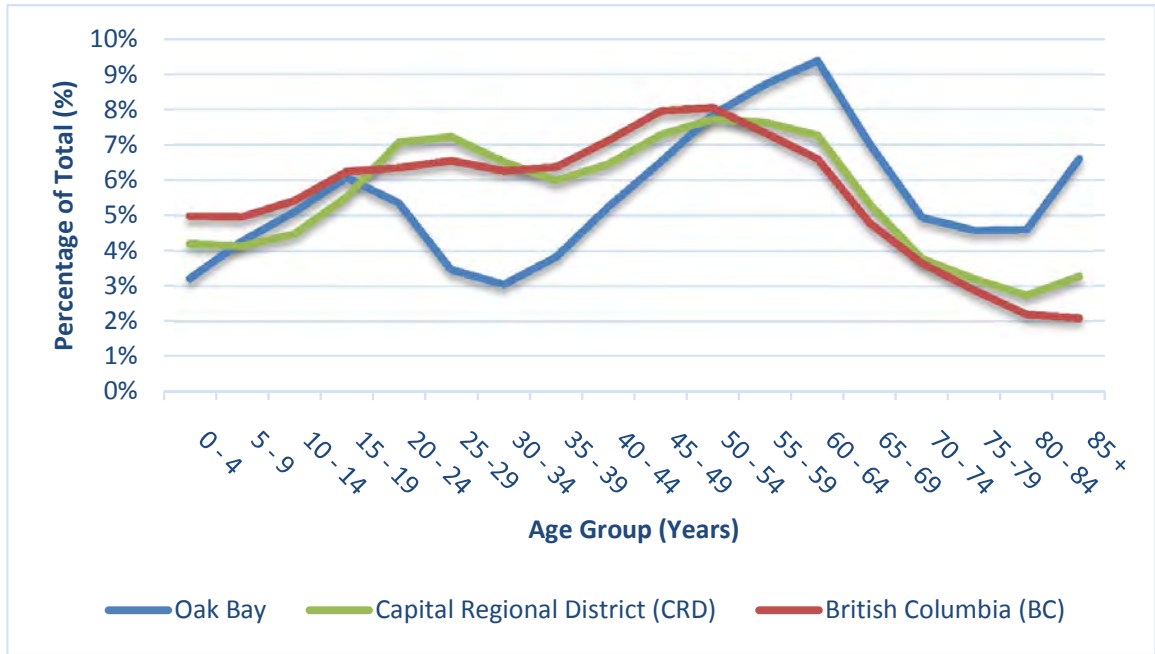
*Source: Statistics Canada*



**Figure 2.4 Oak Bay and CRD Population Growth Rates 1991 - 2011**

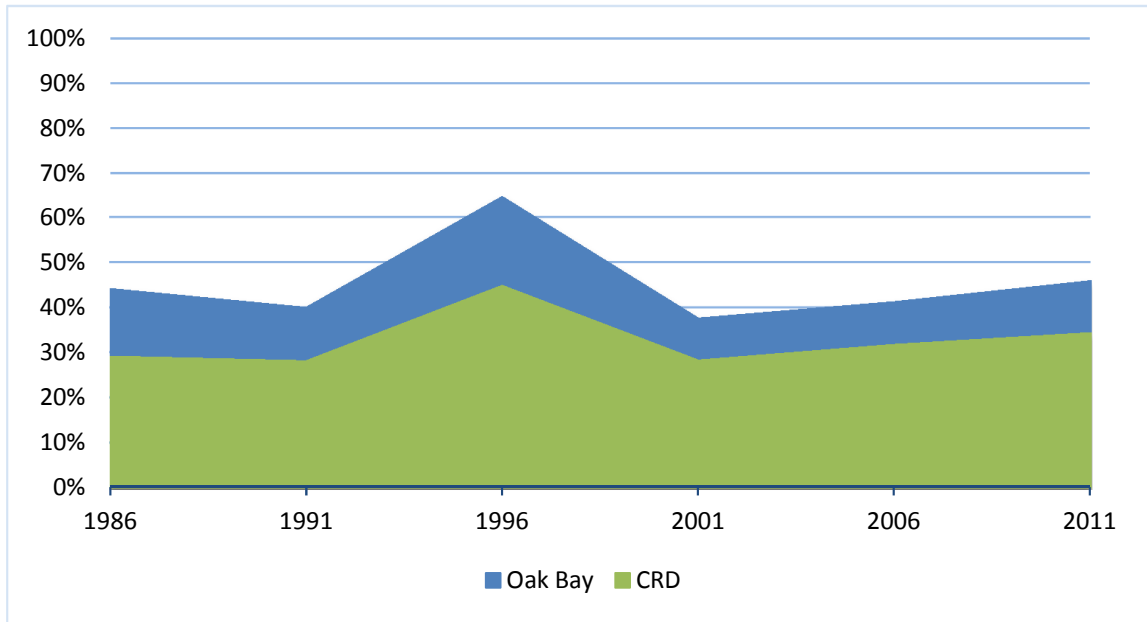
*Source: Statistics Canada*





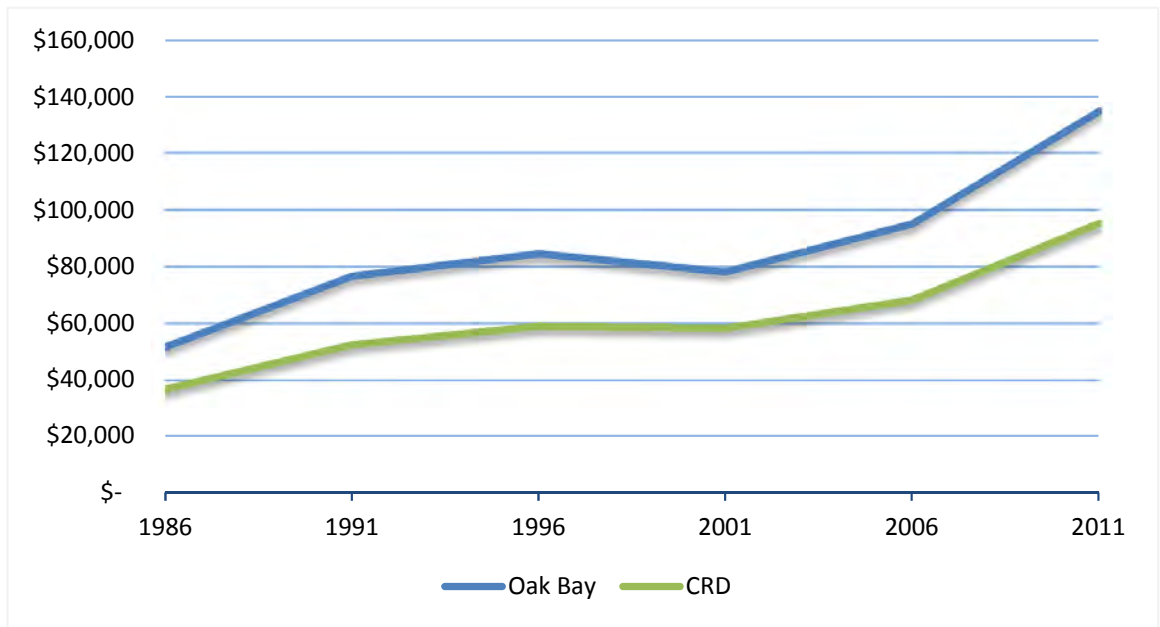
**Figure 2.5 Population by Age Group in Oak Bay, CRD and BC 2011**

Source: Statistics Canada



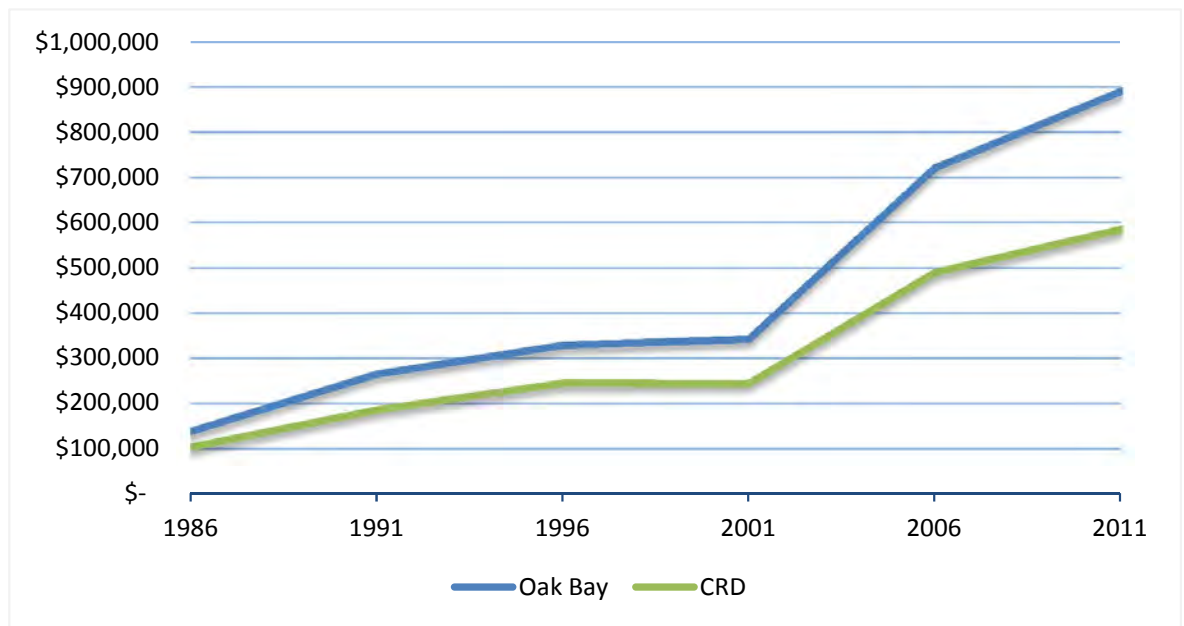
**Figure 2.6 Oak Bay and CRD Population Over 55 1986 - 2011**

Source: Statistics Canada



**Figure 2.7 Oak Bay and CRD Family Income**

*Source: Statistics Canada*



**Figure 2.8 Oak Bay and CRD Owner-occupied Housing Values**

*Source: Statistics Canada*



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## Employment and Finances

The tax base in Oak Bay is primarily residential. In 2013, the residential sector accounted for 95% of the municipal tax base, and the business sector accounted for 5%.<sup>2</sup> As in most communities in North America, taxes are stretched particularly due to demands such as renewal of aging infrastructure.

Oak Bay's employment sector is comprised of a mix of home-based workers (14% of Oak Bay's population worked at home in 2011), local businesses, and major institutions. As of 2008, according to a report by Urban Futures, Oak Bay was home to approximately 8,000 jobs, with a projected increase of up to approximately 9,600 by 2038. At the time of the report, major employment sectors in the area around Oak Bay (including Oak Bay, Victoria, Saanich, Esquimalt, and View Royal) were: management, business, finance and administration (29%); commercial sales and services (28%); and public services, arts and humanities (13%). These industries are anticipated to remain the primary employment sectors over the next 20 plus years.<sup>3</sup>

The University of Victoria accounts for the most jobs (around 2,000), and the second largest employer, which is closing in around two years, is the Oak Bay Lodge, which currently has about 260 employees. The third largest employer is the District of Oak Bay; the hotel, golf courses, and other businesses all contribute smaller staffing levels. Despite the high number of jobs in Oak Bay, relatively few people (7.5% of the population) live and work in the District. This means that most of the working population commutes to other municipalities for their jobs.

2 Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development; *Local Government Tax Rates and Assessments 2013; Tax Burden – Schedule 707 2013*

3 <https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/regional-planning-pdf/RGS/crdrgs-final.pdf?sfvrsn=0>



## Projections and Trends

The CRD's *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS) forecasts Oak Bay's growth by 2038 to include 680 more dwellings, a population increase of about 2,000. This is an average increase of about 28 new housing units annually. The RGS projection of less than 0.5 percent growth annually is based largely on Oak Bay's existing OCP. Given the overall growth in the region, the CRD would likely be amenable to increasing Oak Bay's population projections as part of the renewed *Regional Sustainability Strategy* (RSS) that is currently being prepared to replace the RGS.

Oak Bay's changing demographic make-up is going to continue following existing trends if no changes are made. The groups who have traditionally looked for single detached housing – families with young children in particular – are on the decline, likely due to the rapidly rising cost of real estate relative to other communities in the area. The population of young people without families is also on the decline because there are few affordable housing options that would allow them to remain in the community. Many of the multi-unit buildings in Oak Bay exclude people under 55 years of age. Similarly, very little suitable housing has been developed for people with physical challenges or developmental disabilities. The only growing segment of the population is those over 65, the demographic least likely to be looking for the large, two storey single detached houses that make up much of the community. So there is a growing mismatch between the people in the community and the available housing stock.

*In the long term, if nothing is done to provide a wider range of housing options, Oak Bay will continue its shift toward an older and wealthier population as the growing wave of baby boomers retires. That shift could lead to some unsettling consequences. Already many houses near the water sit empty as second homes; as one Beach Drive resident stated, "I'm alone in my house; all the neighbouring houses belong to people from elsewhere". Many older houses are being torn down and replaced with larger, new houses by affluent people coming into the community; these residents do not want to nor do they have to live in cramped and draughty bungalows from the last century.*

This replacement process makes Oak Bay incrementally less affordable. As the community loses the diversity of different age and income groups because there is no suitable housing for them, Oak Bay will look and feel less and less like the Oak Bay of the past. In other words, without change in the housing stock, the community will change in many other fundamental ways.

The size and characteristics of Oak Bay's future population will be influenced by District policies, particularly this OCP. The District could continue to choose a very limited approach to growth per the existing OCP, or it could consider some growth as a tool for meeting the vision, goals and objectives expressed by the community.

## 2.5 Regional Context Statement

As a municipality within the Capital Regional District (CRD), Oak Bay works collaboratively with the other 12 partner municipalities to achieve regional objectives. The CRD's *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS), adopted in 2018, sets out the vision, objectives, principles and policies for the region. The Regional Context Statement, as required under Part 13 of the *Local Government Act*, specifically identifies the relationship of, and how the Official Community Plan is consistent with the RGS. It sets out how the municipality is responsible for supporting the objectives and policies of the RGS through its own Community Plan.

The following indicates how this OCP is consistent with the objectives of the RGS. These objectives and policies are discussed in more detail within the OCP.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## 2.5.1 Regional Context Statement

### Regional Growth Strategy Objectives

#### *Objective 1 Managing and Balancing Growth*

##### Keep Urban Settlement Compact

Considered one of the core municipalities, Oak Bay is located within the Urban Containment Area and plays a role in accommodating some of the 95% of new dwelling units within the Containment Area. It is a compact community with relatively slow population growth. The OCP provides for an anticipated annual growth rate of up to 0.5 percent as the community considers opportunities for residential infill, which aligns with the proposed RGS subregional core area population projections. As noted in section 1.6, the OCP plans for Oak Bay to become a more compact complete community, offering opportunities for residential, commercial and economic growth (see also 4.1.2, 4.4.2). For example, Oak Bay Village acts as a node to support residential, commercial, employment and community services for local residents.

Opportunities for increased residential density are directed not only to existing villages, commercial areas, and multifamily residential areas, but also to infill opportunities within neighbourhoods, ensuring the provision of community amenities to keep services close to residents. Future growth will increase the number of people living in complete communities and contributes to the Core area jobs to population ratio in the RGS. The Plan encourages increases in the number of units in new multifamily housing projects and a slight expansion in multifamily housing areas as transitions between mixed use areas and established neighbourhoods (see 4.3.2), for example in the area of Cadboro Bay Road and Foul Bay Road, along the arterial road adjacent to the village area. The forms of infill proposed in established neighbourhoods include a variety of housing options where they achieve a contextual fit, infrastructure is available, and they contribute to economic viability; for example,

- secondary suites permitted subject to regulations contained in the Zoning Bylaw (see 4.3.2 H10, H16) and
- duplexes, triplexes, laneway houses and garden suites - for example, amending the Zoning Bylaw to permit both existing and new duplexes (see 4.3.2 H12, H14 - H16).

##### Protect the Integrity of Rural Communities

Oak Bay is an urban community with no rural areas, and the rural policies of the Regional Growth Strategy do not apply.





Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## **Objective 2 Environment and Infrastructure**

### **Protect, Conserve and Manage Ecosystem Health**

Oak Bay is characterized by a spectacular setting and a natural environment that includes ocean shoreline, creeks and Garry oak ecosystems. Major parks, or the RGS Capital Green Lands, are identified as Uplands Park and Anderson Hill Park, which the OCP designates as Parks & Open Space. Since these areas are already protected from development, the Plan seeks to protect existing natural areas through education and stewardship. General policies (see 3.0.2 NE1 - NE4) encourage initiatives and activities that promote public awareness and address environmental restoration and enhancement. For example, the District works closely with the Friends of Uplands Park, a volunteer group that is actively involved in restoration of the Park's Garry oak ecosystem, and who provide a series of educational activities.

Given the geographical location of the municipality, the community would not contribute to the sea-to-sea green/blue belt, which runs from the Saanich Inlet in the east to the Juan de Fuca Strait in the west.

The urban forest is also an important environmental feature in Oak Bay, and the Plan focuses on protection and enhancement of the urban forest, increasing vegetation and tree canopy cover (see 3.0.2 NE5 - NE8, 4.6.2 PR4, PR5).

Bowker Creek is an important regional watercourse that has been the subject of extensive study within the CRD, and a small portion of Hobbs Creek also flows through Oak Bay. Watercourses and shorelines are protected through development permit areas and policies that encourage a Green Shores approach and return shorelines to their natural state (see 3.0.2 NE10 - NE13), 8.2.1, 8.2.2). This, in addition to a rainwater management plan, serves to support the RGS target of reducing contaminants in fresh and marine water bodies.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

OCP policies speak to a number of other initiatives, including

- preparing a network plan of trails to support active transportation and highlight greenways (see 4.6.2 PR1, PR11, PR12), and which also supports the RGS target to complete a Regional Trail Network that is located outside of the municipality
- preparing a rainwater management plan (see 3.0.2 NE9, 4.2.2 BE6, 5.2.2 US8) to achieve low impact development practices and increase onsite retention and infiltration
- continuing to promote stewardship activities (see 3.0.2), and
- giving consideration to marine areas where shoreline protection and restoring the shoreline to a natural state is balanced against use of the boating community and providing for boat access (see 3.0.2 NE11 - NE13, 4.6.2 PR18, 8.2.2).

## Manage Regional Infrastructure Services Sustainably

The District is responsible for providing utility services to the community, including water, sewer and garbage collection. The District is also continuously looking at ways to reduce energy use and lower greenhouse gas emissions in the delivery of those services. For example, with an aging infrastructure, water pipes are being replaced or repaired, resulting in water conservation where water leaks are being reduced.

The OCP land use designations support a development pattern to direct growth to village and multifamily areas along arterial roads (see Schedules B and C). Villages consist of mixed use, low to mid rise buildings along arterial or collector roads, and multi unit residential areas follow a similar pattern along arterial or collector roads (see 4.1.2 CF1, 4.3.2 H18, H19). The pattern of development better utilizes existing and replacement infrastructure as outlined in RGS principles.

Any increases to the Oak Bay population will have an impact on the infrastructure. Policies that support this growth and accommodate infrastructure include repairing and replacing water and sewer lines on an ongoing basis, separating combined sewer systems where applicable, and expanding the solid waste collection program (see 5.2.2 US2, US7, US10). Demand for water is addressed through the asset management program, specifically the water master plan and water conservation program (see 5.2.2 US7).

Specific policies and actions that support sustainable services and protect the natural environment include

- regular messaging to the community on waste reduction, and water and energy conservation (see 2.6.2 CCE5)
- development permit area guidelines that protect the natural environment and specify sustainable building practices that promote water and energy conservation, waste reduction, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (see 8.2.1, 8.2.2, 8.2.3, 8.3.1.6, 8.3.2.6, 8.3.3.6).

### **Objective 3 Housing and Community**

#### **Create Safe and Complete Communities**

From the perspective of aligning with the RGS all of Oak Bay can be considered a complete community, with commercial areas and recreation centres within walking distance for most residents, and the OCP seeks to enhance this further. The Plan encourages mixed use in villages and other commercial areas, including the Oak Bay Village and Secondary Villages (see 4.1.2 CF1, 4.4.2 MUC6 - MUC10). The OCP directs increased densities to existing villages, commercial areas, and multifamily residential areas, along with the provision of community amenities, while respecting the unique characteristics of each neighbourhood (see 4.2.2 BE1, BE2). The OCP also encourages improvements to parks and recreation, and community facilities and services including arts and culture, education, health, festivals and events (see 4.5.2 CIS1 - CIS22, 4.6.2 PR6, PR15 - PR17) by not only expanding and offering a wider diversity of services, but also ensuring these services are offered throughout the community. The Plan supports the expansion of existing commercial areas and businesses, more housing units and housing forms including duplexes, triplexes and townhomes, as part of mixed use redevelopment projects, and expansion of opportunities for home based businesses. The District continues to work with the Capital Regional District and other levels of government in efforts to mitigate or adapt to climate change (see 2.6.2 CCE8, CCE9), and continues to develop an asset management program to maintain a sustainable infrastructure for the community (see 5.2.2 US7).

#### **Improve Housing Affordability**

A major goal of the OCP is to increase housing options to improve affordability and access to housing. This begins with supporting an annual growth rate up to 0.5 percent and using infill development to increase density (see 4.3.2 H12, H14 - H16). A subsection of the OCP focuses on affordable and inclusive housing. The Plan promotes a coordinated approach to addressing housing issues, through collaboration with other levels of government and community groups, by

- supporting innovative approaches to creating affordable and inclusive housing, for example housing agreements, shared ownership, mixed market and non market projects, rental housing and secondary suites (see 4.3.2 H4, H8, H10)



- including affordable and inclusive rental, market, and non-market housing units as a community amenity contribution and considering incentives to lower housing costs (see 4.1.2 CF6, CF7, 4.3.2 H6)
- considering second dwelling units on larger parcels and supporting conversion of existing heritage and character homes (see 4.2.2 BE5, 4.3.2 H7, 4.7.2 HR1), and
- preparing a housing strategy to specifically identify opportunities for affordable and special needs housing (see 4.3.2 H2).

These actions lead to an increase in the supply of more affordable housing, and reducing both the number of people in core housing need and those who are homeless.

## **Objective 4 Transportation**

### **Improve Multi-Modal Connectivity and Mobility**

The Regional Growth Strategy includes a target of 42% of all trips within the regional transportation system as made by walking, cycling and transit. Oak Bay's compact nature and topography make it easily accessible for walking and biking. An OCP goal is to support a diverse range of transportation options and encourage active modes of transportation; and the Road Network and Active Transportation Network reflects the OCP's land use plan and supports and connects with the Regional Multi-Modal Network. While supporting major trip generators such as educational facilities and work trips in and out of the municipality, the Plan addresses

- “complete streets” in villages through completion of urban design plans and implementing new street standards (see 4.4.2 MUC11, 5.1.2 T1)
- universal design of transportation infrastructure, in concert with adjacent municipalities and institutions, to ensure people of all mobility levels have access to sidewalks, bike routes and transit (see 5.1.2 T2, T3)
- encouraging more environmentally friendly vehicular alternatives to single occupancy vehicles and private car ownership such as ride shares and clean energy vehicles (see 5.1.2 T7, T8)
- encouraging the development of Oak Bay's pedestrian and cycling networks (for example, construction of Cadboro Bay Road bike lanes that link with the City of Victoria bike lanes), upgrading sidewalks, and improving infrastructure for cycling (see 5.1.2 T9 - T11)
- advocating for increased transit service through BC Transit and exploring options for local modes of public transportation (see 5.1.2 T14 - T16)
- encouraging Transportation Demand Management by requiring transportation studies for new developments (see 5.1.2 T17), and
- encouraging infrastructure to support multiple forms of transportation in new developments, for example bicycle storage, showers and vehicle charging stations and potentially reducing parking requirements in new development projects (see 5.1.2 T18, T19).

The OCP also proposes improving off-road trails and paths through the development of a network plan, to address, for example, the sidewalk network, greenway corridors, and wayfinding systems (see 4.6.2 PR11 - PR13, 5.1.2 T12).

## **Objective 5 Economic Development**

### **Realize the Region's Economic Potential**

While the business sector accounts for a small portion of the Oak Bay tax base, approximately five percent, it is a vital part of the community. The OCP supports the improvement of Oak Bay's economy through strategic opportunities that enhance the villages and other commercial centres, and encourage new businesses to establish and flourish. OCP policies speak to expansion of existing commercial uses and developing strategies that encourage and support small and locally owned businesses to establish and thrive (see 4.4.2 MUC2, MUC3), considering new mixed use buildings in existing villages, near existing corner commercial and in locations lacking commercial areas (see 4.4.2 MUC6, MUC7); and increasing the number of housing units on mixed use redevelopment projects. Tourism is encouraged and supported through Oak Bay Tourism by marketing Oak Bay as a destination (see 4.4.2 MUC13, MUC14), and policies support expanding opportunities for home based businesses by permitting additional uses (see 4.4.2 MUC15).

The Regional Growth Strategy establishes a target of 0.6 for the jobs to population ratio within the Core Area. Approximately 30% of Oak Bay's population is aged 65 and over, and more than 50% of the population is employed in Oak Bay or elsewhere. Over time, OCP policies will continue to contribute to the RGS target as commercial activities within the villages expand, home based businesses are supported, and tourism continues to be promoted (see 4.4.2 MUC2, MUC6, MUC13 - MUC15).

## **Objective 6 Food Systems**

### **Foster a Resilient Food and Agriculture System**

The District of Oak Bay is home to lands that are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve. These lands have historically been used as the Victoria Golf Club and the Uplands Golf Club, and so provide limited opportunity to contribute to food security through increased crop production.

While these lands are not used for agriculture, OCP policy does recognize the importance of food security and can support the Regional Growth Strategy crop production target through smaller urban agriculture opportunities within the community (see 4.1.2 CF4, 4.4.2 MUC15, 4.6.2 PR9). Recognizing the importance of food security, food initiatives include

- establishing a matching system between homeowners and "urban farmers" who need space to grow food (see 4.6.2 PR9)
- organic food growing on boulevards (see 4.6.2 PR9)
- building communal food gardens in planting beds on public land (see 4.6.2 PR9).

Commercial areas support the retail sale and consumption of food, and OCP social wellbeing objectives support the popular local festivals, providing opportunity for the sale of local fresh and prepared foods. Waste management policies identify the possible expansion of solid waste collection, including green waste pick up.

## Objective 7 Climate Action

### Significantly Reduce Community-Based Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Regional Growth Strategy sets a target of reducing community greenhouse gas emissions by 33% (from 2007 levels) by 2020, and by 61% by 2038. The Oak Bay Official Community Plan is based upon a series of goals supporting community resilience and sustainability, and which will help accomplish the RGS target. These goals are then supported through a series of objectives and policies that address climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.

Policies and actions to be undertaken include

- reviewing and assessing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change mitigation measures on a regular basis (see 2.6.2 CCE1 - CCE3, CCE6)
- manage community energy generation and consumption, and provide regular messaging to the community, for example, implementation of the BC Energy Step Code and upgrades to municipal buildings (see 2.6.2 CCE4, CCE5)
- work with the CRD and other agencies to consider climate change mitigation measures and adaptation planning, for example, determining the extent of, and developing an action plan to address sea level rise (see 2.6.2 CCE8, CCE9).

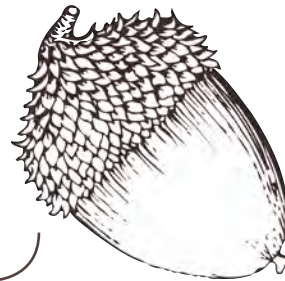
The District of Oak Bay has declared a climate emergency, supported through strategic priorities and OCP policy. Climate change, greenhouse gas emissions (see 2.6.2 CCE1 for the targeted emissions reduction as mandated by the *Local Government Act*), and energy measures are incorporated through multiple sections of the OCP, from the Natural Environment and Parks and Open Space, to the Built Environment, Utilities and Services, and Development Permit Areas.

Natural areas with ecosystem values continue to be protected, and actions to increase vegetation and tree canopy cover are identified. Contributing to climate mitigation, protection of the natural environment is an integral component of the Official Community Plan (see 2.6.1.4, 3.0.2 NE1 - NE5).

## 2.6 Climate Change and Energy

### *Community Health and Resilience → Climate Change and Energy*

- Enhancing health and well-being
- Improving air quality and reducing GHGs
- Reducing energy and infrastructure costs
- Reducing risks to lives and property



### Overview

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) prepared its fifth assessment report in 2014<sup>4</sup>. According to that report, global anthropogenic (human-made) greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions grew by 2.2% annually (on average) between 2000 and 2010, despite increasing mitigation efforts. Total emissions during this period were the highest in human history. The primary drivers of the increase in GHGs during this period were CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, which accounted for approximately 78% of this increase. Energy supply (47%), industry (30%), and transportation (11%) were the largest contributing sectors.<sup>5</sup>

To address this increasingly acute challenge, the IPCC calls on policymakers to take action by connecting GHG reduction to broader goals such as sustainable development, equity, and ethics. The IPCC notes that reducing GHGs is a complex task that will require collective action, including a reassessment of the criteria and values used in decision-making.

Since 2006, the Province of British Columbia has recognized that local governments are vital partners in reducing GHG emissions. The BC *Climate Action Charter*, adopted in September 2007, called for BC municipalities to voluntarily address climate change by reducing GHG emissions. Goals included achieving carbon neutrality by 2012; actively measuring and reporting GHG emissions; and creating compact, energy efficient communities.<sup>6</sup> Oak Bay signed the Charter.

In 2007, the Province also passed the *Greenhouse Gas Reductions Target Act*. The Act established the following targets for the province as a whole: reduce GHG emissions by at least 33% below 2007 levels by 2020, and reduce GHG emissions by 80% in relation to 2007 by 2050.

4 IPCC was established by the [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) and the [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#) in 1988.

5 [http://report.mitigation2014.org/spm/ipcc\\_wg3\\_ar5\\_summary-for-policymakers\\_approved.pdf](http://report.mitigation2014.org/spm/ipcc_wg3_ar5_summary-for-policymakers_approved.pdf)

6 <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=60E1E7810BC145C6B6FC00EE31F41EC5&title=Climate%20Action%20Legislation#charter>





Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch

BC's *Local Government Act* was amended in 2008 to require all OCPs to set targets for GHG reduction, as well as policies and actions to achieve the targets. The document, *Preparing for Climate Change: An Implementation Guide for Local Governments* (West Coast Environmental Law, Governments of Canada and BC, and Fraser Basin Council, October 2012), and the *Plan2Adapt* interactive planning tool website ([pacificclimate.org](http://pacificclimate.org)) provide information and tools for incorporating climate change considerations into municipal planning.

Climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions) are related, and both are important for local government. However, they serve different ends; climate change adaptation is about dealing with the problems created by climate change, and climate change mitigation is about not making the problem worse. The goal of adaptation, much of which can be addressed through environmental policy, is to reduce vulnerability and risk associated with climate change. Many approaches to adaptation increase overall community resiliency and have multiple benefits.

Oak Bay is committed to addressing climate change and energy in its quest to be a more sustainable community. In 2007, a section on greenhouse gas emission reduction (GHG) was added to the OCP through Bylaw 4319. This bylaw includes the following provisions:

- Adopt the aspirational target of 33% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 as compared to 2007
- Encourage energy efficient land use planning
- Encourage efficient modes of transportation
- Improve the energy efficiency of buildings
- Educate and engage residents and businesses

In accordance with these provisions, the District hired a staff Energy Coordinator based at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre. This has resulted in annual upgrades to recreation centres, other municipal buildings and outdoor lighting to reduce energy use. These upgrades are reducing GHG emissions and resulting in significant annual cost savings.

*The upgrades Oak Bay completed in 2013 resulted in annual reductions of 53.84 tonnes in GHGs and \$23,767 in costs.*

Oak Bay recognizes the importance of working within the CRD, the South Island, and the rest of the province in planning for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Several Oak Bay committees have been working on programs related to climate change and energy. These include the Parks and Recreation Commission, Oak Bay Environmental Advisory Committee, and Active Transportation Advisory Committee. The CRD has also been working on regional strategies to address climate change in collaboration with the member municipalities.

Climate change will bring significant challenges, but it will also bring opportunities. Some examples include the following:

- Savings from green infrastructure development
- Opportunities to establish a reputation for District planners and citizens as experts in creating leadership in climate change amelioration and mitigation, e.g., expertise in running zero waste public events, efforts to increase food security
- Business opportunities from increasing Oak Bay's profile as a sustainable community, e.g., as a "green destination" based on initiatives such as shoreline management, electric car infrastructure
- A competitive advantage in obtaining limited provincial funding due to the inclusion of climate change adaptation and mitigation policies within the OCP



Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch

## Climate Change Adaptation

*The most widely used definition for climate change adaptation is “adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.”*

*Source: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*

The following are the potential manifestations of climate change in Oak Bay, according to the Plan2Adapt website, supplemented with local knowledge:

- increased climate variation
- more frequent and intense storms
- increased temperatures
- longer dry season
- sea level rise and flooding

These changes have the potential to affect biodiversity, hydrology, infrastructure, public safety and land uses, resulting in environmental, social and economic impacts. Some examples of potential climate change impacts in Oak Bay include the following:

- damage to property, including residential and commercial buildings, infrastructure, parks, and the urban forest, from strong winds, flooding and/or erosion (some specific examples include foreshore erosion, road damage, and sewage back-up)
- decrease in biodiversity and ecosystem functions due to warmer, drier summer weather and/or scouring of watercourses from intense rains
- seasonal water shortages
- adverse health impacts in vulnerable populations due to increased incidence and intensity of heat waves
- increased risk of wildfire
- Some of the primary climate change adaptation strategies that can address the potential impacts include the following:
  - protecting the quantity and quality (ecological health and biodiversity) of natural areas
  - rainwater management to slow runoff, decrease erosion and mitigate reductions in creek base flows
  - protecting and enhancing the tree canopy
  - conserving water and energy



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## Climate Change Mitigation

There are two primary methods through which municipalities can reduce GHG emissions – through land use planning that results in less community energy consumption, and through reducing GHGs associated with corporate operations.

In 2007, the Ministry of Environment launched a GHG reporting system called the Community Energy and Emissions Inventory (CEEI). This tool provides inventories of municipal energy consumption and GHG emissions estimates for three key sectors: on-road transportation, buildings and solid waste. In 2010, Oak Bay's GHG emissions sources were as follows:

- on-road transportation 59%
- buildings 33%
- solid waste 8%

This is similar to the overall 2010 provincial breakdown for these three sources.

According to the 2010 reporting, Oak Bay produced 60,228 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from transportation, buildings, and solid waste, down from 61,668 tonnes in 2007. Although this reduction is only 2.3%, it is a step in the right direction as most municipalities continue to have increasing GHG emissions. In 2010, Oak Bay's output equalled approximately 3.34 tonnes per capita, compared to 4.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per capita in 2007.<sup>7</sup>

In general, Oak Bay has a relatively energy efficient land use form due to the compactness of the community. The District is fairly walkable with commercial centres available to meet most everyday needs. Transportation emissions for those living within the community are also likely less on average than for most communities. What skews Oak Bay's result is the Foul Bay – Henderson corridor, where heavy vehicular traffic flows between the University of Victoria and the City of Victoria. There is also high transit and cycling traffic along this corridor, however, so in terms of mode share, the corridor is relatively balanced.

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7 [http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cas/mitigation/ceei/RegionalDistricts/Capital/ceei\\_2010\\_oak\\_bay\\_district\\_municipality.pdf](http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/cas/mitigation/ceei/RegionalDistricts/Capital/ceei_2010_oak_bay_district_municipality.pdf)



## OCP Climate Change and Energy Measures

The objectives and policies in this section provide high-level direction on climate change and energy, focusing on District operations and collaboration with other jurisdictions. Objectives and policies throughout this OCP pertain to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures. Figure 2.9 lists the key related topics and policies with references to the OCP section.

Topic	OCP Section
Protection and enhancement of nature and environmental resources, biodiversity	Natural Environment
Urban forest	Natural Environment, Built Environment
Parks and green space for residents	Parks and Open Space
Clean air and water	Natural Environment, Transportation, Utilities and Services
Low impact development – stormwater/ rainwater management	Built Environment, Utilities and Services
Sustainable buildings, energy conservation, reduction in energy costs	Built Environment, DPAs
Shopping and services close to home	Commerce
Recreation amenities close to home	Recreation
Property risk management, sea level rise	Watercourses and Shorelines DPAs, Hazards DPA
Active transportation and transit	Transportation
Urban food production	Parks and Open Space
Shoreline management	Utilities and Services
Waste management and waste reduction	Utilities and Services
Water conservation	Built Environment, Utilities and Services
Wildfire protection	Built Environment

**Figure 2.9 Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation OCP Sections**

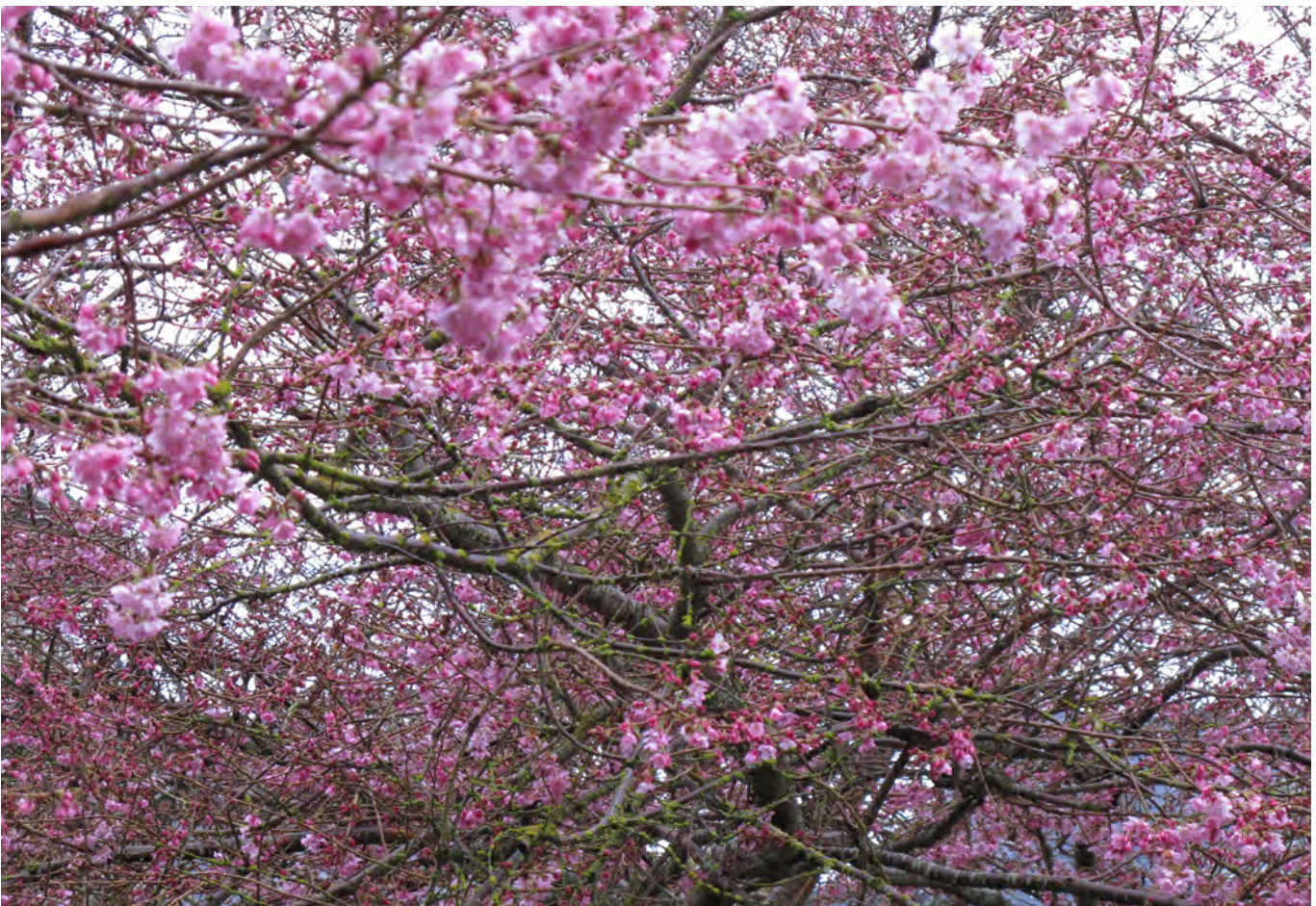


*Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd*

## 2.6.1 Climate Change and Energy Objectives

The climate change and energy objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Continue to work towards the established target for greenhouse gas emissions.
2. Integrate considerations related to climate change and energy into relevant municipal procedures and decision-making.
3. Monitor and manage community energy consumption and generation to minimize greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Conduct climate change adaptation planning to reduce future impacts on public health, property and the natural environment.
5. Make property owners aware of the risks of climate change where applicable and encourage measures to reduce risks.
6. Participate in planning, education and community engagement related to climate change and energy, encouraging conservation of water and energy, and reduction of GHGs.



*Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch*



## 2.6.2 Climate Change and Energy Policies and Actions

The climate change and energy policies and actions of the OCP are as follows:

- CCE1. Continue to work towards a target of 33% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 as compared to 2007. Consider reviewing and setting different targets for the three main areas – transportation, buildings, and solid waste.
- CCE2. Review municipal policies and procedures, and integrate considerations related to climate change and energy where applicable.
- CCE3. Review and assess the District’s greenhouse gas emissions and climate change mitigation measures on a regular basis, and make changes as needed to improve results.
- CCE4. Manage community energy generation and consumption, and encourage conservation and efficiency, diversification of supply, renewable energy and low carbon fuels.
- CCE5. Provide regular messaging to the community on waste reduction, water and energy conservation, and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Encourage the use of green building technologies such as solar panels, geothermal energy and other emerging systems.
- CCE6. Move towards carbon neutrality in District operations independent of any need to purchase carbon offsets.
- CCE7. Prepare sustainability checklists to be used in the review and consideration of all development applications and public capital works.
- CCE8. Enhance partnerships with federal, provincial, regional and local governments, other public agencies, Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, community organizations, and businesses for the efficient and effective coordination of climate change and energy resiliency plans, policies and initiatives including greenhouse gas reporting and risk and vulnerability assessment of local climate change impacts.
- CCE9. Work with the CRD as they assume a leadership role in the coordination and integration of regional and local climate change mitigation and adaptation planning. Encourage the CRD to provide information and tools to reduce redundancy and harness efficiencies among municipalities.
- CCE10. Encourage Multi Unit Residential and Mixed Use developments to undertake compost collection and soft plastics collection.
- CCE11. Continue to explore enhanced recycling options for currently exempt items such as styrofoam and soft plastics.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*



# 3.0 Natural Environment

## *Community Health and Resilience → Natural Environment*

- Protecting ecosystems and the urban forest
- Improving air, water and soil quality
- Reducing energy and infrastructure costs
- Enhancing health and well-being



## Overview

Oak Bay is characterized by a spectacular setting and rich natural environment that includes the ocean shoreline, creeks, the Garry Oak and associated ecosystems, other environmentally sensitive habitats, trees, parks, and green space (Figure 3.1). Such features offer many environmental benefits, including cleansing of air and water, support for fish and wildlife species, and provision of habitats for rare species, all of which are components of climate change adaptation.

Natural features also form the core of Oak Bay’s identity, and they are fundamental to the desirability of Oak Bay as a place to live and a destination to visit. The community places high values on the natural environment and recognizes that environmental conservation, with public and private stewardship, are core elements of community sustainability. Because of the wealth of environmental resources, there are excellent opportunities for environmental education, some of which have been achieved through interpretive signs, maps, brochures and the Native Plant Garden. Oak Bay has a committed community of volunteers who promote and participate in stewardship efforts such as management of invasive species.

Oak Bay’s topography is low lying (under 4 metres in elevation) along most of the shoreline and in the area between Oak Bay Marina and McNeill Bay (Figure 3.2). The terrain is punctuated with knoll-like formations in the southwest around Walbran Park, and at Anderson Hill. The northwest portion of Oak Bay is higher in elevation, rising to over 70 metres in the Henderson area.

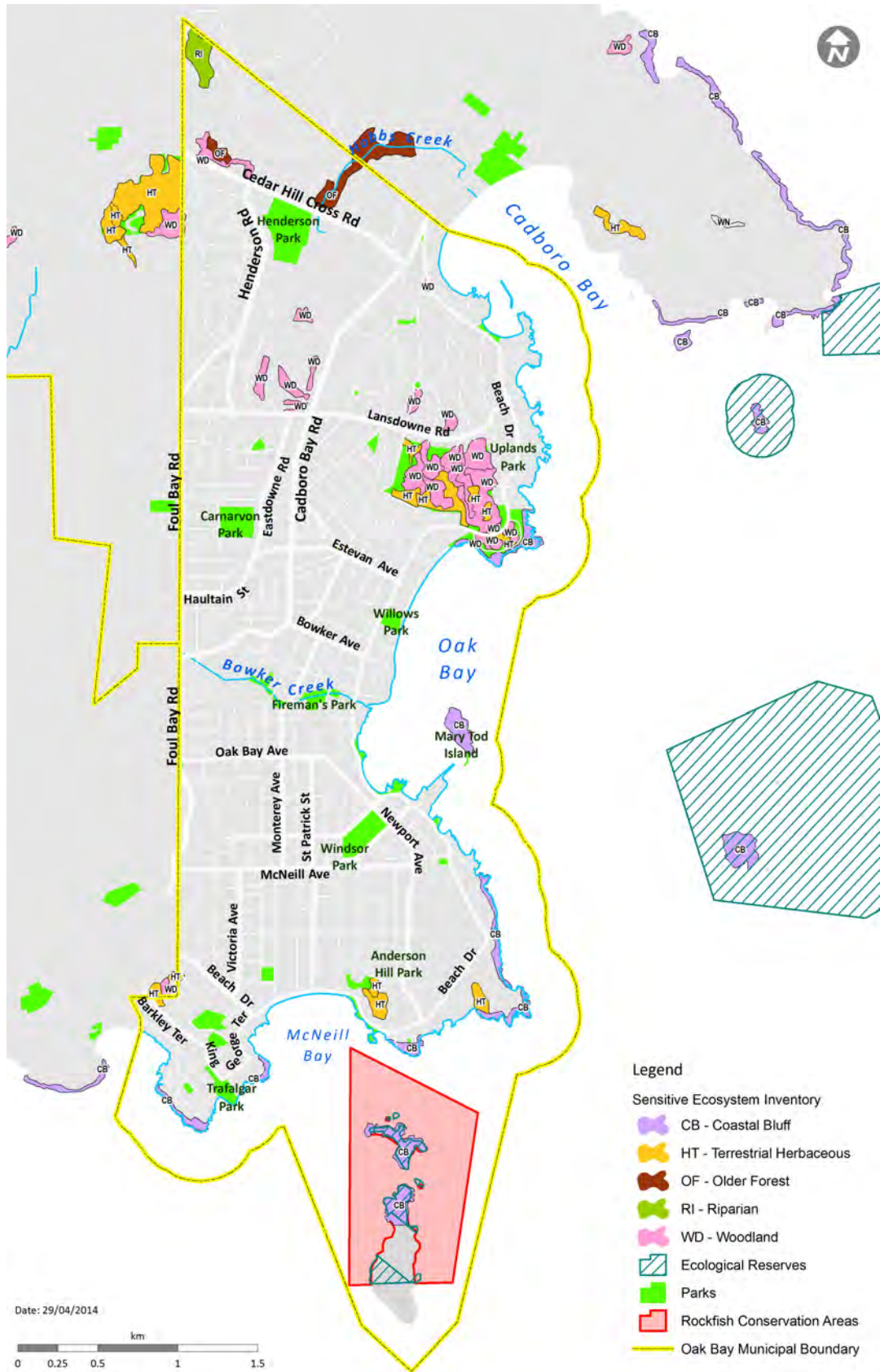


Figure 3.1: Natural Environment Map

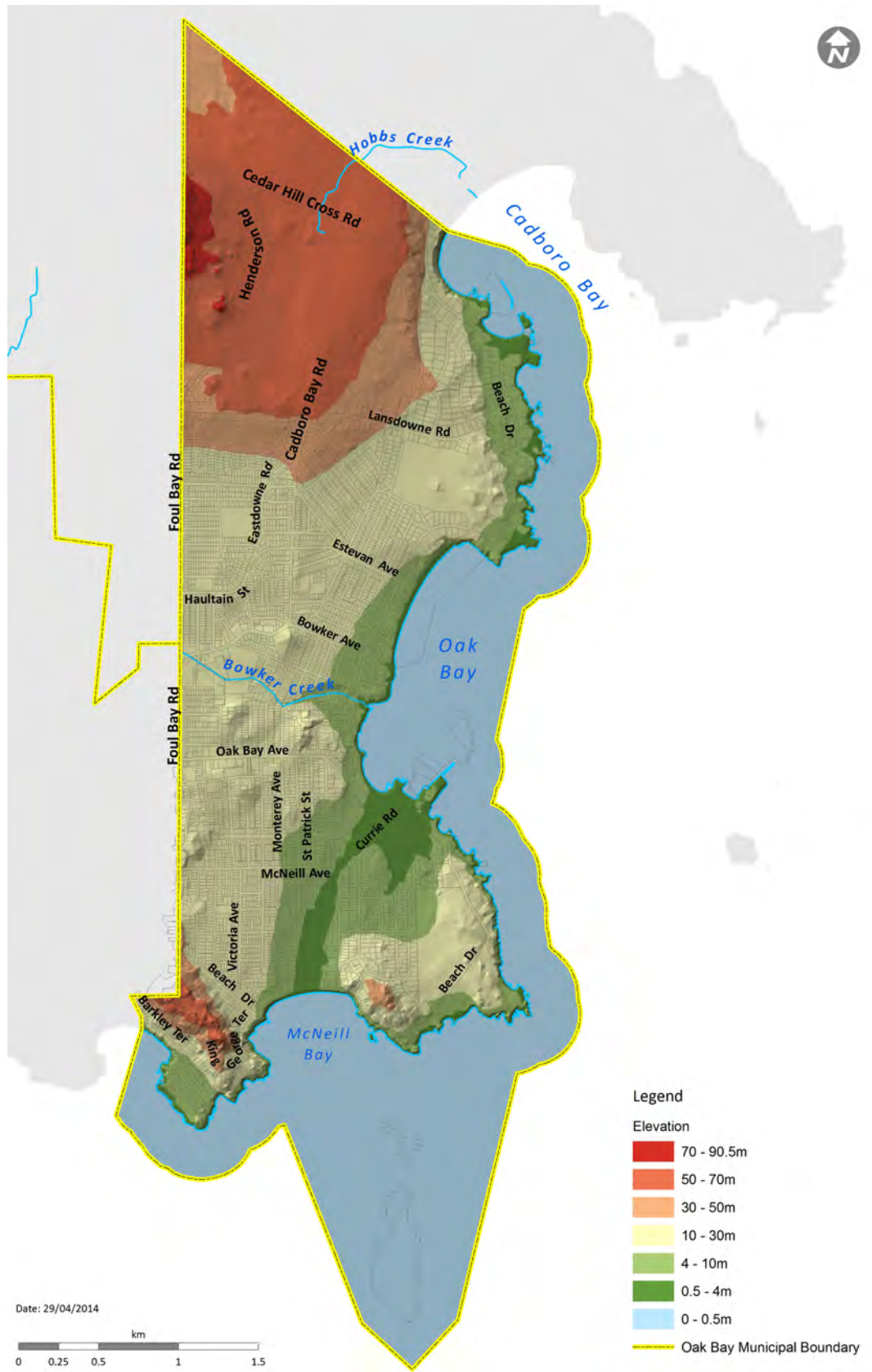


Figure 3.2: Elevation Map

Oak Bay is located within the Coastal Douglas-fir biogeoclimatic zone, which is the most at-risk biogeoclimatic zone in BC. As such, this biogeoclimatic zone contains many ecosystem types and species that have almost entirely disappeared, including Garry Oaks and their associated ecosystem. For example, even in the past decade, a population of one globally endangered species Victoria's Owl-clover (*Castilleja victoriae*), has been lost from Oak Bay (reducing the number of populations in the world from four to three). Oak Bay has the highest concentration of rare/endangered species in Canada, and it is important from an ecological perspective that Oak Bay protects the health of these ecosystems, the most outstanding of which are in Uplands Park.

The CRD is home to many distinct plant and animal species, almost 100 of which are classified as "red" status by the Province – extirpated, endangered, or threatened within BC. A large number of these species are found in Oak Bay. There is broad support for the conservation of rare species in the community, and the federal *Species at Risk Act* reinforces the importance of this.

The District's natural environment faces significant challenges. Concerns include invasive species, tree removal, inappropriate tree pruning, planting inappropriate species, increased impervious areas, foreshore erosion, and climate change. Sound planning, policies and practices are needed to protect and enhance a vibrant natural environment for current and future generations.

Oak Bay has taken significant strides to protect its natural environment. Some initiatives include the following:

- Tree Protection Bylaw amendments
- Operations work by staff on the urban forest
- Oak Bay Green Committee (2009) public forum on urban forests and watersheds
- Participation in the CRD Regional Sustainability Strategy, support of the Bowker Creek Blueprint, and partners in the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership, CRD's Integrated Watershed Management Program and Inter Municipal Group
- Oak Bay Heritage Plan (2013), in which the natural heritage of the community plays a key role
- Establishment of an Urban Forest Strategy Working Group to guide the development of an Urban Forest Strategy

During the OCP community engagement process, many participants made comments about annoyances due to deer, as well as other animals such as rabbits and rats. It can be challenging to balance wildlife with community needs in an urban setting. Some residents appreciate the opportunity to view wildlife as part of their lifestyle; many others are frustrated by the impacts of wildlife on their property and activities, with particular concerns relating to safety. Wildlife concerns are typically addressed by higher levels of government. Oak Bay is participating in the regional CRD Deer Management Strategy and is taking some steps to manage the deer population.



## Community Survey Input

*The residents of Oak Bay live in the midst of nature in ways that are not a common characteristic of other towns and cities. Public parks, private gardens and mature trees in the built environment are fundamental to Oak Bay's appeal, while nearby shoreline, beaches and ocean, natural parkland and nearby wild natural areas provide an ever present relationship with natural systems and forces that shape or influence residents' lives. Prized by residents are opportunities to observe wildlife and functioning natural ecosystems, walk along tree-lined streets and enjoy the beauty of private, well-tended gardens. The voices of avid gardeners, birders, and people who have a keen interest in and expertise in native plants and biological sciences can be heard throughout the survey comments.*

*Many respondents said they couldn't choose among the Natural Environment strategies of the survey, because all are important and should be thought of as integrated strategies. Concerns were expressed about a deteriorating environment, and some residents are working very hard to reduce human impact on natural systems. In general, Oak Bay residents want to live as harmoniously as possible within the natural world that encompasses Oak Bay and nurture and enjoy desirable plants and animals of the built environment. It could be said that protection and renewal of both natural areas and the green spaces of "cultivated nature" within the municipality is a core value of this community.*



Photo Credit: Jacques Sirois



Photo Credit: Marylou Wakefield



Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd

## The Urban Forest

Oak Bay has a spectacular urban forest that is a prominent feature of the community. In addition to including many Garry Oaks, a flagship species, the urban forest is extensive.

An analysis of Oak Bay's tree canopy conducted for this OCP indicated that the District has a tree canopy of 38%\*. American Forests, an organization that supports urban forestry, recommends a municipal tree canopy of 40% for this region (Pacific Northwest) to realize the multiple benefits offered by trees. Very few communities achieve that target. For example, Vancouver's tree canopy is 18% in 2014, and Surrey's was 30% in 2009. The relatively low density of development in Oak Bay has likely been a contributing factor, because in most municipalities the tree canopy decreases as urban density increases. The decline in other communities is also partly a result of minimal attention to the tree canopy during development processes.

*An urban **tree canopy** "is the layer of leaves, branches and stems of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above." Tree canopy studies have become a common method for measuring and managing the urban forest.*

*\*The tree canopy analysis of Oak Bay was conducted using iTree, by the US Forest Service (USFS). The analysis was based on a summer 2013 air photo, and as recommended by USFS, 1,000 data points were used to conduct the analysis, yielding a survey error of +/- 1.54%.*

The Habitat Acquisition Trust through its Urban Forest Stewardship Initiative conducted a Land Cover Mapping study of the entire region, looking at tree canopy changes from 1986 to 2011 (CRD, 2013). The study mapped areas in Oak Bay with over 50% tree cover, and found that these “highly covered” tree canopy areas declined by 5.2% in Oak Bay within that 25-year time frame. The greatest declines were in the northern one-third of the District.

A healthy urban forest offers many benefits, assisting with climate adaptation, temperature moderation, energy use, air quality, stormwater management, water quality, wildlife, biodiversity, real estate values, business viability, individual and community well-being, and human health. For example, trees sequester carbon, intercept stormwater runoff, and filter pollution from the air and water.

Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission have been working on preserving the urban forest. Both groups have representatives on the Urban Forest Strategy Working Group, which has compiled background information and prepared some recommendations for an Urban Forest Strategy in Oak Bay. An Urban Forest Strategy is a long-term, strategic plan to achieve a sustainable urban forest by conserving the tree canopy, enhancing the extent and the health of the urban forest, and increasing community understanding and support for the urban forest.

Oak Bay, like many other communities, has a Tree Protection Bylaw. The bylaw has some strong points, such as its focus on native trees and Garry Oaks, identification of “significant” trees, and the requirement for a security deposit to cover planting, care and maintenance of replacement trees. There are several ways in which the bylaw could be stronger, e.g., changing the definition of “protected” tree to include all trees over 10 centimetres dbh (diameter at breast height) rather than the current 60 centimetres for trees that are not native, increasing the size of replacement trees, and identifying the value of cash provided in lieu of replacement tree planting. The bylaw may also warrant review of the success of replacement trees and consideration of expanding the species list of replacement trees.

*During public consultation related to the Oak Bay Heritage Plan, Oak Bay’s most significant heritage values were identified as: established streetscapes and neighbourhoods (cited by 65.7% of survey respondents) and natural landscape features and ecological heritage (cited by 33.3% of survey respondents). The tree canopy and plantings are an integral part of the streetscapes, and they also support urban wildlife such as birds, mammals, insects and other living beings.*

**Streetscape** refers to the visual elements of a street, including the road, adjoining buildings, trees and vegetation, open spaces, lighting, and street furniture that combine to form the street’s character. In Oak Bay, the trees and landscape are the dominant elements of many of the streets.





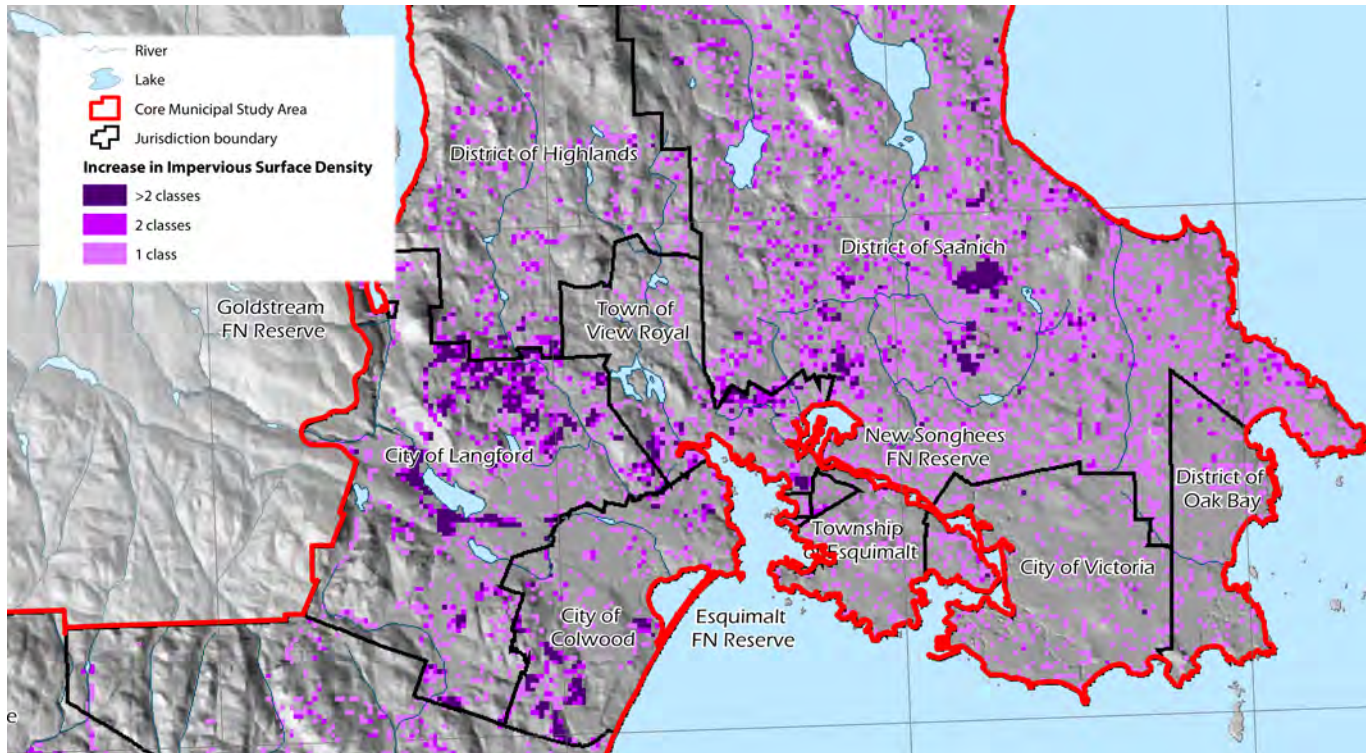
*Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd*

## Rainwater Management

The cumulative effects of increasing impervious area in a watershed, combined with loss of riparian corridor integrity, alter the natural hydrology and impact stream corridor ecology. The resulting increase in runoff volume causes watercourse erosion and progressive degradation of the channel cross-section. The decrease in infiltration (due to replacement of soil and vegetation with hard surfaces) can also have impacts on fish because it reduces the slow, constant groundwater supply that keeps streams flowing in dry weather. This can lead to water levels that are inadequate to provide fish with access to their spawning areas, and can even cause streams to dry up in the summer.

The CRD's Land Cover Mapping study of the entire region looked at changes to impervious surfaces from 1986 to 2011. The study mapped areas in Oak Bay with over 50% impervious surface, and found that these "highly impervious" areas increased from 66 hectares in 1986 to 100 hectares in 2011, an increase of 51.5%. Figure 3.3 from that study illustrates the locations where the increase in highly impervious areas occurred. In 2011, Oak Bay had 9.6% of land with highly impervious surfaces, compared to Saanich with 17%, Esquimalt with 35%, and Victoria with 45%.





**Figure 3.3: Impervious Surface Density Change, 1986 to 2011**

*Source: Urban Forest Canopy Mapping and Analysis in the CRD, prepared for Habitat Acquisition Trust by Caslys Consulting Ltd.*

Frequent light showers account for most of the annual rainfall volume. The term “rainwater management” was coined to differentiate the past practices that concentrated upon the drainage system response to storms, and current emphasis on the needs of the aquatic environment. The rainwater management approach allows one to directly connect rainwater runoff in the urban landscape with the impacts to a stream, and to identify the mitigation methods needed to restore the natural water balance in the stream.

“Low impact development” has been coined as the term for these mitigation methods. Low impact development involves landscape-based solutions that focus on rainwater infiltration, such as permeable landscapes with enhanced growing medium, rain gardens, bioswales, green roofs, and infiltration pits or tanks. Where possible, roof leaders are disconnected so that water falling on the roof is absorbed within the landscape rather than flowing directly into storm sewers. Low impact development helps to achieve a variety of objectives encompassing both the site and watershed scales in the urban environment.

*A model showed that rainwater management features such as rain gardens, green roofs, and enhanced topsoil could effectively address a projected 22% increase in precipitation due to climate change.*

*Source: Chris Jensen, Climate Change Adaptation, Using Low Impact Development to Mitigate Future Flooding, Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions Seminar, September 2010. See also Jensen - Rain to Resource Presentation October 2010 Kelowna BC*

## Creeks and Watersheds

Oak Bay has two creeks; Bowker Creek and Hobbs Creek. Creeks and their associated riparian areas are regulated in BC by the provincial *Riparian Areas Regulation*. Hobbs Creek is a relatively short creek, the headwaters of which flow through the UVic campus into Saanich. The following paragraphs describe Bowker Creek.

The Bowker Creek watershed is one of the most highly urbanized major watersheds in the CRD. From the headwaters near the University of Victoria to the outlet at Oak Bay, relatively little of the watershed remains undeveloped. Prior to agricultural and urban development, Bowker Creek was an open water feature, winding its way to the ocean. The main channels of Bowker Creek are eight kilometres in length, and today only 2.5 kilometres remain open. The rest of the creek flows underground through pipes and culverts.

Much of Bowker Creek flows as an open creek within Oak Bay, the main exceptions being where it flows under the tennis bubble at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre and under Fireman's Park. Some of the private properties along Bowker Creek extend into or across the creek. When the ownerships of these properties are transferred, there may be an opportunity for the District to acquire the creek bed.

*Daylighting a creek involves removal of culverts or pipes into which a stream was previously diverted, and reinstating the creek into an above-ground channel. Daylighting is intended to restore a creek to a more natural state and to improve the riparian environment.*

Because so much of the area has been developed, the watershed functions much differently from one in a natural, undisturbed setting. Although the watershed may never be restored to an entirely natural state, some natural characteristics remain that can be protected and enhanced. In the absence of a plan that identifies the possibilities and presents specific actions, the existing urban development and the pressure for redevelopment will continue without regard for the potential for Bowker Creek to become a cherished asset, linking communities across the three municipalities. The CRD's Bowker Creek Watershed Master Plan and Bowker Creek Blueprint establish a direction and strategies for this area, the latter including a 100-Year Action Plan for watershed restoration.





*Riparian areas are the areas bordering on streams, lakes, and wetlands that link water to land. The blend of streambed, water, trees, shrubs and grasses directly influences and provides fish habitat. Protecting this riparian fish habitat, while facilitating urban development that exhibits high standards of environmental stewardship, is a priority for the Government of British Columbia. Good quality streamside habitat is essential for ensuring healthy fish populations.*

*The Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR), enacted under Section 12 of the Fish Protection Act in July 2004, calls on local governments to protect riparian areas during residential, commercial, and industrial development by ensuring that proposed activities are subject to a science based assessment conducted by a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP).*



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back and Catherine Berris*





Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch



Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd

## Ocean Shoreline

Oak Bay's shoreline offers biologically rich and diverse habitat for species such as endangered Southern Resident Orcas, other marine mammals (seals, sea lions, otters), waterfowl (oyster catchers, cormorants, diverse ducks, Pacific Great Blue Heron), raptors (bald eagles), shellfish (clams), and smaller marine creatures (decorator crabs, lined chitons, tidepool sculpins, tidepool shrimp). All marine waters along the oceanfront are within the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary. There are also two Ecological Reserves (Oak Bay Islands, Trial Islands), three Rockfish Conservation Areas (two of which are east of the Plan illustrated), and Discovery Island Marine Provincial Park (Figure 3.2).

It is very important that the ocean shoreline remain stable and environmentally healthy. Instability can lead to erosion and subsidence, which can affect property values, vegetation, and water quality. Rising sea levels and flooding related to climate change are a potential threat to the stability and environmental values of the shoreline, and to residential properties and municipal infrastructure. A Development Permit Area to protect shorelines is included as part of this OCP.

Private docks are not currently allowed in Oak Bay. Despite this, some docks have been built within Uplands without District approval or foreshore leases. The availability of moorage in Oak Bay at one marina and a yacht club, combined with the environmental sensitivity of the shoreline and foreshore, make it difficult to justify any changes to this prohibition.

## Air Quality and Quiet Environment

Maintaining and enhancing the quality of air and managing noise levels associated with human activity are also considerations that relate to the natural environment, as noted in the community survey results. Policies related to air quality are included in Section 2.6 Climate Change and Energy. The District already has an Anti-Noise Bylaw.

### Community Survey Input

*Air pollution and noise pollution were mentioned many times in connection with increased vehicular traffic, tourist buses, transit buses, and delivery trucks. Noise in Oak Bay or in a particular neighbourhood was said to have increased over the years, and some people are advocating bans or restrictions on the use of leaf blowers and other noisy garden equipment. Heat pumps, the sirens of first responder vehicles, barking dogs, tenants in some secondary suites and apartment buildings, construction, chainsaws, and the Oak Bay Beach Hotel are other sources of noise complaints.*

### 3.0.1 Natural Environment Objectives

The natural environment objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Protect and restore native ecosystems, including terrestrial, riparian and aquatic habitats for wildlife, vegetation, and rare and endangered species, on public land and encourage similar initiatives on private land.
2. Integrate environmental considerations into planning and design processes to enhance community sustainability and environmental protection.
3. Encourage and support public awareness and education regarding the natural environment.
4. Protect and enhance the urban forest, including Garry Oaks.
5. Encourage and promote environmental stewardship on private property and public land.
6. Conserve and manage the shoreline to protect its environmental integrity and values.
7. Protect air quality and a relatively quiet urban environment.
8. Encourage and support environmental monitoring.
9. Encourage green space and gardens on private property.

### 3.0.2 Natural Environment Policies

The natural environment policies of the OCP are as follows:

#### General Policies

- NE1. Work with other organizations on initiatives that support public awareness and education regarding the characteristics, values and benefits of the natural environment and ways to protect it.
- NE2. Encourage and support stewardship activities that involve environmental restoration and enhancement.
- NE3. Encourage consideration of sensitive and rare ecosystems, and rare, threatened and endangered species, in parks and on private land.
- NE4. Collaborate with other government and community organizations on environmental monitoring in relation to climate change and other impacts on natural environments.

#### The Urban Forest

- NE5. Prepare an Urban Forest Strategy, including tree canopy targets for parks, road corridors (boulevards), and private land.
- NE6. Require development applications to provide information related to existing trees and trees to be retained (see Section 8.0 Development Permit Areas).
- NE7. Review and update the Tree Protection Bylaw.
- NE8. Manage the urban forest on all public lands to improve its health, including the following measures where applicable:
  - Care for trees, balancing risk management and danger tree and branch removal with the need for a healthy tree canopy.
  - Remove invasive species, with the assistance of stewardship groups.
  - Plant trees and shrubs, with a focus on native species where appropriate.
  - Naturalize portions of public lands where appropriate.

***Naturalizing** essentially means letting nature have more control. It involves letting native meadow species grow, allowing shrubs and trees to establish themselves, and restricting maintenance to activities such as removal of invasive species.*



## Rainwater Management

- NE9. Prepare a Rainwater Management Bylaw that requires low impact development practices to increase onsite retention and infiltration (absorption) of rainwater to reduce the effective impervious area in the watershed. Apply the Rainwater Management Bylaw to all development applications, including OCP amendment, rezoning, subdivision, and development permit and building permit applications. Consider the following provisions in the Rainwater Management Bylaw:
- Encourage the disconnection of roof leaders and the installation of infiltration areas that accommodate roof runoff where possible without posing risks of flooding homes or adjacent properties.
  - Maximize the extent of landscaped areas on site with absorbent soils (preferably a minimum of 20 centimetres deep) and minimize the amount of impervious surfaces to increase the natural infiltration of rainwater and to provide a more natural or landscaped character.
  - Use permeable materials for paved areas where possible, e.g., permeable pavers, permeable asphalt or concrete, decks, reinforced grass.
  - Consider the use of bioswales, rain gardens, and other design techniques that allow greater infiltration of water where possible, including within and around parking areas.
  - Regulate the maximum amount of impervious surfaces on a lot for different land uses.
  - Encourage the collection and storage of rainwater for irrigation.

## Creeks

- NE10. Explore opportunities for the District to acquire the Bowker Creek bed and adjacent slopes as options arise through changing ownership.



Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch

### Ocean Shoreline

- NE11. Work with senior agencies to discourage and remove privately owned walls and other built features along the shoreline, especially where they extend beyond private property onto the foreshore.
- NE12. Continue to disallow private docks and work with senior agencies to have unauthorized private docks removed.
- NE13. Provide information about the Green Shores program to the community, focusing on waterfront property owners.

*Green Shores is a BC initiative that promotes sustainable use of coastal ecosystems through planning and design that recognizes the ecological features and functions. Green Shores connects people with the shore environment, delivers triple bottom line (environment, social and economic) benefits, and recognizes that site specific, cost effective solutions can only be achieved by using an integrated design approach. The Green Shores project includes a rating and assessment tool to guide shoreline development (based on the Green Building model), design concepts for alternatives to seawalls and rip rap for a range of shore types and physical settings, support for planning initiatives such as OCPs, case studies and an outreach program.*

# 4.0 Community Framework

## 4.1 Land Use

### *Community Health and Resilience → Land Use Framework*

- Retaining and enhancing our unique character
- Supporting viable commercial areas
- Welcoming more residents and tourists
- Enhancing walkability



### Land Use History

Oak Bay is a community of neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods have evolved over time and what we see today is the legacy of a long history of change. Originally, the land was occupied and used in traditional ways by First Nations. The first subdivision of land involved the Hudson’s Bay Company and over 1,100 acres at the Uplands, extending to Camosun College. The first European settlers built farms and vacation cottages in the late 19th century. By the early 1900s, a housing boom was producing what are now known as the major heritage houses, built for wealthier people moving out of downtown Victoria.

Over the next 60 years, whole neighbourhoods appeared in succession as large tracts of land were developed – the farms of south and central Oak Bay, Willows Fairgrounds, Landsdowne slope, and Uplands, followed by the Henderson area in the north. Each of these areas was developed for unique reasons, at different times and with varied economic drivers. Neighbourhoods built before the Depression often included large and expensive houses in keeping with the relative affluence of the times. During the Depression and after the Second World War, smaller, simpler houses were built on more modest budgets and much of Oak Bay became a relatively inexpensive working class community, though it was still affluent compared to Greater Victoria as a whole.

Along with the residential neighbourhoods, commercial areas were developed to serve residents’ needs. Oak Bay’s primary commercial centre is known as “the Avenue”, “the Village”, or “Oak Bay Village”. Other tiers of commercial use take the form of secondary villages, street-corner establishments, and specialized commercial uses. Parks and open space and a variety of community institutional uses are also important contributors to Oak Bay’s Land Use Framework. These are described in more detail in other sections of the OCP.





Photo Credit: Oak Bay Archives

## Introduction to the Land Use Framework

This section outlines a proposed Land Use Framework to guide future land use in Oak Bay (Schedule B).

The experience of the built environment in the District is significantly affected by Victoria to the west and Saanich to the north. It is ideal for neighbouring municipalities to collaborate with each other to plan transitions between their boundaries.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act*, the following are noted:

- As a fully urbanized municipality, there are no sand and gravel deposits suitable for sand and gravel extraction defined in this OCP.
- An OCP may designate areas where temporary uses may be allowed, in which case they require a temporary use permit. In Oak Bay, no areas are designated or permitted for temporary use.

There are no present or proposed industrial use areas within Oak Bay.

### 4.1.1 Land Use Framework Objectives

The Land Use Framework objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Respect and enhance the character and identity of neighbourhoods, commercial areas, and other special locations within Oak Bay.
2. Encourage planning and investment in public and private land as described in this section.
3. Link increases in density with the provision of community amenities that contribute to community health and resilience.
4. Plan for smooth transitions in built form between municipal boundaries.

### 4.1.2 Land Use Framework Policies

The Land Use Framework policies of the OCP are as follows:

CF1. Use the Land Use Framework designations and definitions below, and Schedule B: Land Use Framework Map, to guide planning and management in Oak Bay:

1. The Oak Bay Village designation on Schedule B consists of mixed-use, low to mid-rise buildings that accommodate ground-level commercial uses such as shops and boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, and entertainment; with residential units, offices and possible visitor accommodations above. The Village has a well-defined public realm characterized by attractive sidewalks, street trees, and building facades close to the sidewalk, anchored by a full service grocery store and diverse retail uses, and served by multiple transportation modes including bike routes, paths, parking and frequent transit. Buildings from various decades contribute to the Village's identity. Oak Bay Village is the social centre of the community, a place where people meet and participate in many every-day and special purpose activities.

Oak Bay Village has two distinct areas. West of the municipal hall, there are taller multi-unit residential buildings and less commercial use, except near Foul Bay Road. East of the municipal hall is the village core, with lower buildings and continuous commercial use fronting sidewalks and a streetscape with a distinct village character.

2. The Secondary Village designation on Schedule B consists of mixed-use, low to mid-rise buildings that accommodate ground-level commercial uses such as shops and boutiques, art galleries, and restaurants; with residential units, offices and possible visitor accommodations above. These villages are located along arterial or collector roads, and served by bike routes, paths or sidewalks, parking and transit. Secondary Villages are social centres for the District on a smaller scale than Oak Bay Village.
3. The Corner Commercial designation on Schedule B consists of mixed-use, low-rise buildings that accommodate ground-level commercial uses such as shops and cafes; with residential units or offices above. These areas are

located within Established Neighbourhoods, and served by sidewalks and limited on-street or off-street parking. Corner Commercial areas are important social meeting places and hubs that can meet every-day needs within walking distance of many residents, as well as serving the broader community.

- 4.** The Specialized Commercial designation on Schedule B consists of the marina, yacht club, and golf courses that generate employment and serve residents and tourists in a variety of building forms, typically on larger sites with space for vehicle circulation, off-street parking, shipping and delivery.
  - 5.** The Resort Hotel designation on Schedule B consists of the Oak Bay Beach Hotel, a building complex that serves residents and tourists with accommodation, food services and recreation, with associated vehicle circulation, off-street parking, shipping and delivery.
  - 6.** The Established Neighbourhoods designation on Schedule B consists primarily of residential, home-based business, and accessory uses in a wide range of existing and infill ground-oriented buildings, including single detached, duplex, triplex, laneway houses, garden suites, and secondary suites.
  - 7.** The Multi Unit Residential designation on Schedule B consists of residential and accessory uses in a wide range of buildings, including townhouses, row houses, low and mid-rise apartments or condominiums, with a residential character along the streetscape featuring landscaping and trees, served by sidewalks and transit within 800 metres (a 10 minute walk).
  - 8.** The Uplands designation on Schedule B consists of a unique neighbourhood planned in 1908 and guided by its own design guidelines. The overall objectives include retaining the residential park setting, retaining sightlines and view corridors, preserving healthy trees and encouraging native species.
  - 9.** The Community Institutional designation on Schedule B consists of public and private institutions, including recreation centres, schools, faith-based facilities, and government buildings. These facilities offer unique services and social opportunities. Some have important landscapes that contribute to the community's character or recreation opportunities.
  - 10.** The Parks and Open Space designation on Schedule B consists of public parks and open spaces that include natural areas, outdoor recreation amenities and trails. Parks contribute to the environmental and social health of the community.
- CF2. Use the built form, characteristics, land uses and density in Figure 4.1 to guide land use planning and management in Oak Bay. The floor area ratios are based on the existing zoning.



Designation	Built Form	Characteristics	Land Uses to be Directed to this Designation	Density
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### Commercial and Mixed Use Designations

Oak Bay Village – Mixed Use	Current height limit: 2 to 3 storeys  Low-rise and mid-rise multi-unit buildings	Ground-oriented commercial uses with entries and glazing oriented to the sidewalk  One to two storey facades along the street wall  Regularly spaced street trees  Wide attractive sidewalks on Oak Bay Avenue with benches and plazas  Off-street parking below grade or underground, at the rear, or otherwise screened	Residential  Commercial including local and destination retail, services, entertainment and office  Live/work  Home occupation	Current floor area ratio: 1.0:1.0 to 1.5:1.0 depending on zone
Secondary Village – Mixed Use	Current height limit: 2 storeys  Low-rise and mid-rise multi-unit buildings	Ground-oriented commercial uses reinforce the sidewalk  One to two storey facades along the street wall  Varied landscaping, boulevards and street trees  Off-street parking for residents and business occupants underground, at the rear, or otherwise screened	Residential  Commercial including local retail, services, and office  Live/work  Home occupation	Current floor area ratio: 1.0:1.0
Corner Commercial – Mixed Use	Current height limit: 2 storeys  Low-rise multi-unit buildings	One to two storey facades along the street wall  Varied landscaping, boulevards and street trees  Off-street parking for residents and business occupants underground, at the rear, side, or otherwise screened	Residential  Commercial including local retail, services, and office  Live/work  Home occupation	Current floor area ratio: 0.5:1
Specialized Commercial	Current height limit: 3 storeys  Small to large floor-plate commercial buildings	Large lots with on-site circulation, storage, parking and materials delivery and handling  Varied landscaping, with landscape screening for service areas	Commercial including local and destination retail, services, recreation	Current floor area ratio: n/a or 0.4:1.0
Resort Hotel	Current height: 7 storeys	Designation recognizes Oak Bay Beach Hotel  Additional land uses of this type are not anticipated	Tourism, accommodation, hotel style condominiums	Current floor area ratio: 1.73:1.0

## Residential Designations

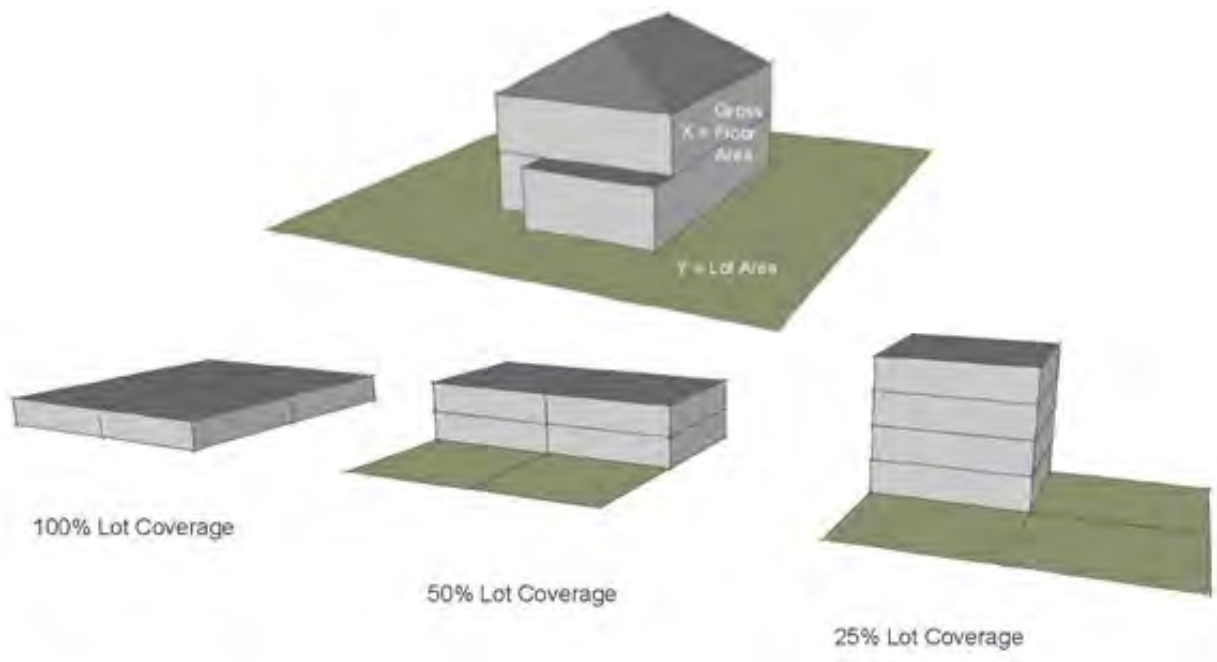
Established Neighbourhoods	Current height limit: 2 storeys  Ground-oriented housing including single detached, duplexes, laneway housing, carriage houses, garden suites and triplexes	Houses with front and rear yards  Houses oriented towards streets or lanes  Varied landscaping and trees  Off-street parking for building residents	Residential  Home occupation	Current floor area ratio: 0.4:1.0
Multi Unit Residential	Current height limit: 3 to 8 storeys  Low-rise to mid-rise multi-unit buildings	Varied landscaping and trees, with large landscaped setbacks in designated locations  Off-street parking for building residents and their guests underground, at the rear, or otherwise screened	Residential  Home occupation	Current floor area ratio: 0.75:1.0 to 1.5:1.0 depending on zone (1.9:1.0 for mixed commercial)
Uplands	Stately and architecturally unique houses in a landscaped “park” setting	Curved tree-lined streets, near and distant views, some historic and heritage houses, extensive landscaped areas	Residential  Home occupation	Current floor area ratio: 0.4:1.0  No increases in density will be considered

## Other Designations

Community Institutional	Current height limit: 3 storeys  Institutional buildings of various heights	Variable spaces and buildings, including landmark buildings that serve as local and regional destinations	Government offices and services  Recreation, education, health, culture, faith-based and assembly uses	Current floor area ratio: n/a or 1.0:1.0
Parks and Open Space	Small buildings and structures that support park uses	Natural and landscaped parks and open space with trails and recreation amenities	Recreation	n/a

**Figure 4.1: Land Use Framework Provisions**

Low-rise buildings are defined in Oak Bay as being up to 3 storeys high. Mid-rise buildings are defined as being 4 to 6 storeys high.



$$\text{FAR} = x/y$$

*Floor area ratio (FAR), also known in some communities as floor space ratio (FSR), is the ratio of a building's total floor area (Gross Floor Area) to the size of the piece of land upon which it is built.*

*The following are the FARs of selected Oak Bay and Victoria buildings, presented for comparison purposes:*

- *The Clive (as proposed and approved) 1.44:1*
- *Townhouses, 1522 Yale Street 0.7:1*
- *Oak Bay Beach Hotel 1.73:1*
- *Carleton House, 2080 Oak Bay Avenue 1.8:1*
- *Shannon Oaks, 2000 Goldsmith Street 1.9:1*
- *Mixed Use Building, 240 Cook Street, Victoria 2.0:1*
- *New building at Oak Bay Avenue and Foul Bay Road, Victoria 2.0:1*

**Home-based business**, also known in some communities as home occupation, is a business or occupation conducted for gain in a dwelling unit by the resident or residents. It involves the use of part of a dwelling



*or part of an accessory building for pursuits compatible with a domestic household and is typically subject to certain criteria such as: the use is clearly secondary to the use of the dwelling unit as a private residence; it does not change the external character of the dwelling unit as a private residence; it does not create or become a public nuisance with respect to noise, traffic or parking; there are no goods, wares or merchandise offered or exposed for sale.*

- CF3. Increases in height and density may be considered where they further the goals and objectives of this plan, and/or based on the provision of community amenities.
- CF4. Allow parks, public utilities, community services, paths/trails, open space, and urban agriculture in all Land Use Framework designations.

*Projects that involve increasing density, per policy CF5, will need to go through a rezoning process.*

- CF5. Consider variations to the provisions in the Land Use Framework, including built form and density, without requiring an OCP amendment, in circumstances including, but not limited to, the following:
- to achieve heritage conservation objectives
  - where significant community amenity contributions are being provided
- CF6. Use the following criteria in the consideration of potential community amenity contributions for a project:
- Size, location and character of the proposed development, projected population increase, and potential impacts on community infrastructure
  - Site characteristics including trees, natural features, heritage and recreation values
  - Affordable, rental or inclusive housing potential, need with respect to the project, and compatibility with the proposed development
  - Needs of the surrounding community for trails, bike routes, community gathering spaces or other amenities
- CF7. Consider the following as potential community amenity contributions:
- Rental, market or non-market affordable housing (subject to a Housing Agreement under S.905 of the *Local Government Act*)



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

- Housing suitable for seniors and/ or those with physical or developmental disabilities
- Dedication of land or building space for a community institutional use such as a day care, community meeting space, arts or culture space, health service, community garden, or transit shelter
- Protection of large trees or natural features
- Conservation of heritage property
- Public art
- Sidewalk, trail, path, road or bike route improvements
- Provision of a trail or walkway
- Attractive paving, street trees and site furniture
- Public parking spaces

*The Province of BC has published a Community Amenity Contribution guidebook for communities.*

- CF8. Prepare a community amenities policy to guide community amenity contributions to permit and enable density bonus and/or density transfer.
- CF9. Consider applying amenity zoning, per S.904 of the Local Government Act, whereby the land density, in the form of additional lots or dwelling units, may be increased relative to the affordable housing or community amenity provided.
- CF10. Collaborate with Victoria and Saanich regarding land use planning along the west and north municipal boundaries, respectively, and collaborate with the CRD, University of Victoria, Camosun College, School District 61 and other public institutions on land use planning and its interrelationship with transportation and other regional matters.

## 4.2 Built Environment

### *Community Health and Resilience → Built Environment*

- Retaining our unique character
- Supporting social gathering
- Green and sustainable buildings
- Respecting our neighbours



### Overview

Oak Bay is a unique and special place composed of locations and neighbourhoods with their own character and identity. Oak Bay Village, Estevan, Uplands, Willows Beach, and McNeill Bay are examples of identifiable places. One approach to retaining the character and identity of these neighbourhoods is based on respecting the context and a “sense of place”. Sense of place is a key concept in planning sustainable and resilient communities. It recognizes the role that built form and landscape play in defining our experience in and relationship to an urban environment. This in turn contributes to the social, economic and environmental health of the community.

***Sense of place** refers to those characteristics that make a place special or unique, as well as to those that foster a sense of authentic human attachment and belonging. Places that exhibit a strong sense of place have an identity and character recognized immediately by a visitor and valued deeply by residents*

Retaining a sense of place does not mean resisting change. Oak Bay’s buildings and structures, the “built environment” of the community, have changed considerably over time. Architecture evolves in response to community and residents’ needs, market demands, the evolution of design and building technology, and economics. Oak Bay has the opportunity to respect and celebrate the many characteristics that make it unique, while integrating new building forms that meet the needs of existing and future residents.

Significant changes in construction methods have occurred in recent years to increase the sustainability of buildings and infrastructure. It is now common practice to consider energy and resource use, waste, the health of living environments, and impacts on natural systems and resources as part of construction. The BC Building Code includes measures to address these topics.

Municipalities can regulate the built environment through Development Permit Areas (DPAs) that include guidelines for development form and character in the OCP, and through the *Zoning Bylaw*. DPA design guidelines can be provided for “intensive” residential development, including multi-unit and compact single detached housing (but not for low density single detached houses), and for commercial, mixed use, and industrial projects (see Section 8.3 Built Environment Development Permit Areas).

The regulatory framework for Oak Bay’s *Zoning Bylaw* was established in 1986 and the regulations related to the built environment have not been reviewed in a comprehensive manner since that time. The result is that these tools and regulations need revision to meet changing needs in the community.



## Community Survey Input

*Respondents of the OCP survey indicated that design that “fits in” with the neighbourhood is the gold standard for any new construction in this community. Some said that Oak Bay’s distinctive character derives from a traditional heritage look and feel, which is largely responsible for the community’s widespread appeal.*

*Many survey respondents stated that good design and architecture are more important than consistency in appearance. There is a widespread belief that quality architecture should prevail in any new or renovated buildings, whether single detached houses, townhouses, apartments, or commercial developments. Some people said they preferred to have a mixture of high quality building designs that reflect different architectural styles in neighbourhoods. A few residents pointed out that many architectural styles are represented in Oak Bay’s existing houses and a mix of styles is nothing new in Oak Bay. The main concerns of many residents are to do things well - the details of design, setbacks, landscaping, etc.*

### 4.2.1 Built Environment Objectives

The built environment objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Encourage all new development and redevelopment to respect and enhance Oak Bay’s unique “sense of place” through sensitive and innovative responses to existing form and character, and to promote residents’ health and well-being.



2. Foster and strengthen social interaction through the design of buildings, streetscapes and public spaces that are of human scale, comfortable, and conducive to gathering.
3. Retain existing trees, other vegetation, natural features and topography where possible as a reflection of Oak Bay's character and for the environmental values.
4. Encourage the conservation and stewardship of streetscapes and neighbourhood character, including historic buildings and structures, their gardens and significant landscape features.
5. Encourage new development to include sustainable building technologies.

#### 4.2.2 Built Environment Policies

The built environment policies of the OCP are as follows:

- BE1. Support development and redevelopment that responds to the unique social, cultural and environmental characteristics of each neighbourhood.
- BE2. Encourage the consideration of streetscape character and measures to protect and enhance it through development projects.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

- BE3. Encourage the development and redevelopment of public gathering places such as plazas and landscaped seating areas near activity-generating uses and mixed-use developments.
- BE4. Ensure universal design principles and guidelines are followed in public space design projects where practical.
- BE5. Support the conservation and rehabilitation of existing heritage and character buildings.
- BE6. Encourage the design and construction of sustainable and environmentally responsible structures, buildings and infrastructure that reduce demand for services, create less waste, make efficient use of energy and resources, create healthier living environments, and minimize adverse impacts on natural systems and resources. This can be accomplished through methods such as the following:
- innovative systems for heating and hot water
  - Smart meters
  - rainwater collection and infiltration systems
  - longer lasting construction methods and materials
  - recycling of materials from demolished buildings
- BE7. Consider providing information and incentives for building energy efficient houses and buildings, such as the following:
- Consider preparing an information sheet or webpage to assist residents in improving building and energy efficiency, and to promote federal or provincial incentive programs for energy efficient house renovations.
  - Consider incentives such as more efficient processing of applications.
- BE8. Examine the potential to establish DPA guidelines, and amendments to other bylaws as appropriate, to require light and noise mitigation to be incorporated into the design of new buildings along busy transportation corridors to prevent conflicts, discomfort and nuisance caused by traffic. BE9. Encourage the selection of lights for energy consumption and dark sky considerations on major development and redevelopment projects, especially in parking lots, without compromising light levels required for pedestrian safety.
- BE10. Encourage development near natural areas to consider BC FireSmart wildfire protection principles and management strategies.
- BE11. Require larger development projects to place utilities such as hydro and telephone underground, and to repair or replace water and sewer lines as needed, in the vicinity of the project.

## 4.3 Housing

### *Community Health and Resilience → Housing*

- Housing options to reflect changing needs of community members throughout their lives
- Retaining neighbourhood character
- Attracting more people and more diversity
- Lowering average housing costs



### Overview

The Land Use Framework section provides a brief history of the formation of Oak Bay's neighbourhoods and housing forms. The settlement that began in the 1850s is still reflected in Oak Bay. About 10 percent of the District's lots have housing that is over 90 years old and 30 percent of the lots have buildings that are more than 50 years old. The result is an extraordinary diversity of housing in existing neighbourhoods, with houses from multiple decades on most blocks. This contributes to the charm of Oak Bay's established neighbourhoods.

Until the 1960s, Oak Bay's neighbourhoods were predominantly made up of compact detached houses on small to medium-sized lots. In the 1960s, large tracts of land began to be developed in the northern parts of the community, attracting an increasingly affluent demographic to larger houses spread out over larger lots. A significant boom in multi-unit apartment construction was also underway and continued through the 1970s and 1980s.

By the 1990s, most of the land in Oak Bay had been built out and construction shifted to replacement of houses. Property values for single detached houses rose faster than in neighbouring municipalities. By the time the 1997 version of the OCP was written, Oak Bay had started to call itself a "single-family character" community despite the fact that almost a third of its residents were living in multi-unit buildings.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*





## Community Survey Input

*Those who advocate for higher density do so because they believe it is more sustainable for humans to live in compact urban areas; dense urban areas mean greener cities. They reason that dense living also prevents sprawl, preserves agriculture lands for growing food and protects natural environments. People in favour of increasing the population maintain that more people and more housing will create more tax revenue to make improvements and keep taxes from rising significantly, local businesses will have a much better chance of thriving, and a housing supply will be created for seniors, young adults, and families with young children. Others would like to live in a livelier community and believe that greater density will result in opportunities for people to connect through well-designed public spaces that draw people and are used by a cross-section of residents. There are many comments on the intrinsic value of ethnic and generational diversity and how it enriches community life for everyone's benefit. While some people primarily feel a need for everyone to do their part to absorb a population increase in Greater Victoria, provide more variety in housing options, or mitigate the damage of human impact on the environment, others simply want to live in a livelier community with a younger feel to it. For all of these reasons, a population increase in Oak Bay is regarded as a good thing.*

*For other residents, an increase in population and housing density is a bad thing. When someone loves their community and their way of life, it is only natural to want to preserve that which is liked best, and Oak Bay has many residents who dislike the changes they already see taking place and want to prevent further erosion of Oak Bay's character. They feel there are real or potential threats to their preferred lifestyle, the aesthetics of the built environment and enjoyment of large private gardens, and their real estate assets. They wish to preserve traditional Oak Bay, because it is a beautiful place to live and they think it works as a community - so why change it.*



## Affordable and Inclusive Housing

Oak Bay has both a need for affordable and inclusive housing, and a legal obligation to provide effective policy guidance in the OCP to facilitate such development. If the District is to become a more sustainable and resilient community, Oak Bay has to do much more than it has in the past to provide a policy environment that responds to this challenge. Being demanding in terms of good design and construction will help to offset concerns about “cheap” housing, but design standards must be balanced with the overall cost of the end product.

Oak Bay has some affordable and inclusive (or special needs) housing, mostly in the form of multi-unit buildings, some of which are focused on the needs of older adults. Unregulated secondary suites also contribute to the affordable housing stock. However, the availability of safe, affordable and inclusive housing is low and trending lower.

*Oak Bay defines **affordable housing** as housing that costs no more than 30 percent of gross household income.*

***Inclusive housing** is defined as housing that supports the specific needs of seniors and/ or those with developmental or physical disabilities.*

Oak Bay currently has some supportive housing and community care facilities for those who cannot live completely independently. The needs for this type of housing and facilities will likely increase as the population continues to age.

Meeting diverse housing needs in any community is a complex issue. Most urban communities in BC and elsewhere are faced with similar challenges. As property values continue to rise, it becomes ever more difficult to meet the housing needs of everyone who would like to live in a community.

## Established Neighbourhoods

Oak Bay’s established neighbourhoods are highly valued by residents (Schedule B). The primary challenge in these neighbourhoods, as noted previously, is that an increasingly small segment of the population is able to live there and the trend is towards further reductions to that select population. There are options for diversifying housing in established neighbourhoods while retaining the qualities that make these locations so attractive.

Many poignant comments were provided during the OCP process by older residents who would like to “age in place” and remain in their neighbourhoods, ideally on their properties. These residents fear an inevitable need to move elsewhere because there are no housing options that will be suitable for them in their later years in Oak Bay. These residents indicated that they no longer wish to live in large, family-sized houses as they age for a variety of reasons. Many also do not wish to move into multi-unit residential complexes, nor do they see duplexes, secondary suites, or putting an elevator in their existing house as suitable options.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

Residents indicated that they would ideally want smaller, one-level houses on a lot with a small private garden. These are rare in Oak Bay, and one-level houses at the upper size range are not possible under current zoning regulations.

*The interest in one-level houses suitable for aging in place was explored in the community survey as “larger, one-level accessible homes on smaller lots”. This option was unacceptable to 43% of those who responded. However, at open houses and through other feedback, OPAC realized that this question may have been misunderstood. Some residents assumed this option was meant to allow for larger houses in established neighbourhoods, rather than expanding the housing options that many people are requesting. This option is therefore included in the OCP as one way to meet the changing needs of Oak Bay’s population. It will require the need for rezoning in some cases, and it will include the need for flexible, creative and sensitive design and landscaping to meet the needs of the community, while retaining the qualities that make Oak Bay’s neighbourhoods so attractive.*

One option is to permit secondary suites in established neighbourhoods. Oak Bay already has many secondary suites even though they are not permitted or regulated. These suites likely provide housing to mainly post-secondary students and the suites help homeowners, particularly the elderly on fixed incomes, to bear the high cost of owning single detached houses. While secondary suites fill a significant housing gap, the absence of regulation means that many do not meet current standards for safe housing and there is some concern in the community over the impact of increased parking on streets and overuse of services and infrastructure.

The District initiated efforts to address secondary suites through its Secondary Suites Review Committee. The Committee's 2010 Final Report notes that secondary suites are an increasingly common housing form among BC municipalities, the report contains information on the policies and regulations used by other communities to manage secondary suites, and it recommends further consultation. The more recent 2013 OCP survey showed that a majority of residents are in favour of some form of regulation of secondary suites.

Other municipalities in the CRD have experienced the same challenges as Oak Bay regarding secondary suites. Most of these communities have regulated secondary suites, and their bylaws provide good examples for consideration. The key benefits of regulation to the District include increased safety of suites, income to the municipality to cover regulation costs, and a greater ability to address issues that arise.

Secondary suites satisfy the needs of only a small sector of the population who want rental housing. Many people, particularly older people, regard such suites as unsuitable for their needs, lifestyles or expectations.

Another housing option is duplexes. Oak Bay has about 300 duplexes in established neighbourhoods. Prior to the 1960s, duplexes were allowed on large lots. Although the underlying zoning was changed to prohibit duplexes as a permitted use, these duplexes are now considered a legal, non-conforming use. A number of applications have been received from owners wanting to rezone them, but this has not happened due to the lack of a duplex zone.

No new duplexes have been built since the 1960s, and some of those that were built have been replaced with single detached houses, decreasing the availability of duplexes. The fact is that duplexes have co-existed with detached houses in many parts of the community for decades and the OCP community survey suggests that they are among the more acceptable forms of multi-unit housing in established neighbourhoods. Triplexes were also considered acceptable and creative architecture can integrate smaller, affordable triplexes into many building forms.

There are a number of other options for creative infill. Oak Bay's wide range of lot sizes means that there may be the potential for subdivision of larger lots into multiple lots, while respecting the important role that these lots have in the character of the landscape and streetscape. Some of these lots back onto lanes or other streets that can provide access to laneway houses or garden suites. Oak Bay already has some unregulated secondary suites in detached garages, effectively making them laneway or infill houses. These could be permitted and regulated, and there may be potential to expand their number without changing the basic built form or streetscapes of the established neighbourhoods.

There are some challenges related to infill housing in established neighbourhoods. One of these is the potential loss of vegetation and tree canopy associated with additional housing on a property. Another challenge is related to Oak Bay's current infrastructure, especially in laneways, with regard to water supply and access for fire-fighting.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

The laneways in Oak Bay are significantly different from those in other areas of the province. In many other jurisdictions, laneways have been designed and maintained in order to provide municipal emergency services on a controlled basis. In Oak Bay, laneways are not designed for fire engine access and most have become pathways and green spaces. The Fire Department does not currently have access for fire-fighting purposes from the existing laneways in the municipality based on the fire-fighting access requirements pursuant to the British Columbia Building Code. In addition, current water supply infrastructure does not address nor provide for fire hydrants in laneways.

## Multi Unit Residential



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

Adding housing options in established neighbourhoods will only meet some of the changing demand. Many people, particularly the elderly, will be looking for other forms of housing such as apartments in multi-unit buildings where they have an opportunity to live on one level and conduct less property maintenance.

There are opportunities to increase the number of apartments and condominium units (Schedule B). As the villages and other commercial areas redevelop, buildings with residential units on the upper floors can enliven commercial areas and provide housing that is conveniently located near shops, transportation and amenities. Likewise, Multi Unit Residential uses can provide a transition between commercial mixed use areas and established neighbourhoods; townhouses are particularly suitable in these transition areas. Another key opportunity is that some of the multi-unit buildings constructed prior to the 1980s will be approaching the end of their lifespans. Redevelopment of these buildings may, in many cases, allow for expanding the number of units and meeting a broader array of housing needs.





Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## Uplands

A distinct and important neighbourhood in Oak Bay is Uplands (Schedule B). Uplands was planned in 1907 by the Olmsted Brothers, America's leading landscape architecture and town planning firm of the day. It was developed as a residential park to maintain the natural beauty and picturesque setting of a unique suburban landscape. This was achieved through the careful siting of houses, all set against a framework of curving streets and large lots, to take full advantage of ocean and mountain views. A system of deed restrictions was introduced to maintain single-family land use and to establish minimum standards of value, height, and setbacks.

The special character of Uplands has been further protected by provincial statute and municipal bylaws, especially the *Oak Bay Special Powers Act (1935)*. The intent of this Act is to protect the park-like design and development standards, and to sustain the environmental integrity of the neighbourhood. The trees in Uplands are an important contributor to Oak Bay's tree canopy and urban forest.

The *Special Powers Act* grants the District the authority to regulate many aspects of the neighbourhood that it is not allowed to regulate in other areas of the community (which are regulated by the *Local Government Act* and *Community Charter*). Uplands is the only single detached neighbourhood in which the District is currently allowed to review design features such as the architectural design of single detached houses, the design of fences and the height of hedges.

### 4.3.1 Housing Objectives

The housing objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Support a modest expansion of housing within Oak Bay while addressing concerns such as tree protection, parking, traffic, noise, effects on other properties, and neighbourhood character.
2. Recognize and communicate to the public that in a sustainable community, housing options should be available to meet housing needs.
3. Encourage and support more diverse housing options that respond to needs as they change over time, including affordable and inclusive housing.
4. Develop new housing that integrates with the character of existing neighbourhoods.
5. Improve the safety of housing by increasing the number of residential units that comply with building code requirements.
6. Reduce the number of unregulated residential units and increase the range of regulated housing options in established neighbourhoods.
7. Encourage and support the upgrading and retrofitting of older and heritage houses.
8. Support the development of supportive housing and community care facilities, preferably close to community services and public transit.
9. Support the development of housing forms that can be adapted to the changing needs of a household over its lifespan.

### 4.3.2 Housing Policies

The housing policies of the OCP are as follows:

#### General Policies

- H1. Encourage all residential development and redevelopment projects to minimize disturbance of existing trees, topographic features and landscaped areas that contribute character and quality to the streetscape. Where these areas are disturbed, encourage the installation of new features and landscaped areas that contribute to the streetscape and are consistent with other well developed landscapes in the neighbourhood.
- H2. Prepare a Housing Strategy, identifying opportunities to encourage and support affordable and special needs housing, including housing options for the community.

## Affordable and Inclusive Housing

- H3. Promote a coordinated approach to addressing housing issues and collaborate with other local and senior governments, Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, community groups, non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, and the private sector to plan, secure funding, and provide affordable and inclusive housing.
- H4. Support innovative approaches to creating affordable and inclusive housing including market rental housing agreements, co-housing, other forms of shared ownership, inclusion of affordable/special needs units in multi-unit developments, and mixed market and non-market projects.
- H5. Require universal design within housing units, and for access to housing units internally and from the street, for units intended for those with developmental or physical disabilities.
- H6. Consider incentives to lower housing costs, such as permissive revitalization tax exemptions (under Section 226 of the Community Charter), where affordable or inclusive housing will be provided.
- H7. Support second dwellings for affordable and inclusive housing on parcels large enough to support this, where the second dwelling is regulated through the *Zoning Bylaw* and density bonus or a Housing Agreement may be considered pursuant to Sections 904 (2) (b) and (c), respectively, of the *Local Government Act* (see Infill Residential policies and Development Permit Areas).
- H8. Encourage the development of rental housing, including identified units within multi unit housing, potentially in cooperation with the Capital Region Housing Corporation, as a means of providing affordable forms of housing, pursuant to section 877 (2) of the *Local Government Act*.
- H9. Revise development application procedures to request a statement from the applicant outlining what provisions have been made regarding notice and relocation assistance to existing tenants where a proposed development would result in the loss of rental affordable or inclusive housing, and encourage some of the new units to accommodate these residents.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

- H10. Develop a policy and regulatory framework to permit secondary suites as a way of providing affordable housing in the community, pursuant to section 877 (2) of the *Local Government Act*, subject to the requirements of the *BC Building Code*, recognizing that this will be a process requiring time and community engagement. Undertake the following tasks:
- Work with the community to identify criteria for the regulation of secondary suites in Oak Bay
  - Conduct an analysis to identify revenues, costs, and resources required to regulate secondary suites
  - Consider a pilot study of secondary suite regulation in a defined area
  - Amend the *Zoning Bylaw* to permit new homes to include secondary suites, where applicable, once secondary suites are regulated.
- H11. Encourage affordable and/or inclusive housing projects to include some adaptable housing.

**Adaptable Housing** refers to residential dwelling units that are designed to allow easy conversions or modifications that will ensure that the units are physically accessible to everyone and that occupants can age-in-place as their ability levels change. CMHC has guidebooks on this topic. [http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/acho/index.cfm#CP\\_JUMP\\_282988](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/acho/index.cfm#CP_JUMP_282988)

**Universal Design** involves designing products and spaces so that they can be used by the widest range of people possible. Universal Design evolved from Accessible Design, a design process that addresses the needs of people with disabilities. Universal Design goes further by recognizing that there is a wide spectrum of human abilities. Everyone, even the most able-bodied person, passes through childhood, periods of temporary illness, injury and old age. By designing for this human diversity, we can create things that will be easier for all people to use. Universal Design makes things safer, easier and more convenient for everyone.

### Infill Residential

- H12. Consider different forms of infill housing in areas designated as Established Neighbourhoods on Schedule B, including subdivision of larger lots, duplexes, triplexes, laneway houses, and garden suites. Prior to considering infill housing, the District will need to develop criteria and guidelines with which to review proposals and evaluate their contextual fit, in consultation with the public.



*There are various ways that the criteria and guidelines for infill housing can be implemented, e.g., as a separate set of guidelines, as requirements within the Zoning Bylaw, as the basis for new zones (in which case rezoning would not be required), or a combination of these.*

- H13. Establish an Infill Residential Development Permit Area to regulate the form and character of infill housing in areas designated Established Neighbourhoods to ensure that new infill housing fits into the character of neighbourhoods.
- H14. Prepare specific requirements for infill development to be implemented through the *Zoning Bylaw*, including the following topics:
- Revise the zoning requirements related to house sizes, relationships to adjacent houses and yards, access to units, off-street parking, and variations to setbacks from property lines to accommodate the forms of infill housing included in this OCP.
  - Consider laneway houses where there is access to the back of the lot from a street or lane.
  - Revise the zoning requirements related to subdivisions of lots to allow more opportunities for subdivision, including lots that are side by side, or front and back where access to the back is available on a street or lane.
  - Consider panhandle lots where they meet the objectives of this plan, and encourage the “small lot” property to occupy the street frontage.
  - Consider garden suites in back yards with walkway access from the street, laneway access, or side street access for corner lots. Consider allowing garden suites without additional parking spaces to what is required for the primary dwelling.
  - Consider the importance of retaining green space, the tree canopy, and inter-lot continuous green corridors.
- H15. Amend the *Zoning Bylaw* to allow duplexes to be considered in established neighbourhoods.
- H16. Consider laneway houses, garden suites and secondary suites in relation to public safety, critical infrastructure (including water supply, access for fire-fighting, and Fire Department structure), and property and economic viability.

***Infill housing** consists of duplexes, triplexes, laneway houses, and garden suites (the latter two being detached, ground-oriented homes located on a portion of a property where a single detached home is the primary use).*



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

### Multi Unit Residential

- H17. Establish a Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Area (Schedule H) to regulate the form and character of Multi Unit Residential Development.
- H18. Encourage increases in the number of housing units, potentially through smaller units, on Multi Unit Residential redevelopment projects.
- H19. Consider a limited expansion of Multi Unit Residential areas, beyond the areas designated as Multi Unit Residential on Schedule B of this OCP, considering locations such as along arterial and collector roads, near transit, and near other Multi Unit Residential buildings, existing commercial areas, and/or recreation facilities. Encourage townhouses as a transition in locations that are between mixed use areas and established neighbourhoods.
- H20. Consider the use of density bonus pursuant to Section 904 (2) (b) of the *Local Government Act*, in exchange for community amenities listed in policy CF6.
- H21. Place parking underground or below grade on larger projects with higher densities. For smaller projects where the parking is at grade, locate parking lots or parking garages behind buildings away from the primary street to the degree possible.

## Uplands

H22. Use the following list to clarify and provide support to the Uplands design guidelines in order to ensure that new or renovated houses are consistent with the design intent of Uplands:

- Respect and abide by the combination of sensitive siting, design and use of materials that creates a sense of harmony and neighbourliness in Uplands. This includes individual design solutions; significant landscaped areas between home, neighbour and street; and outdoor spaces with their own design and character.
- Use high quality materials that have a sense of timelessness, substantial structural qualities, an authentic appearance, qualities of workmanship or craft, and qualities of appropriateness or compatibility.
- Provide adequate vehicular circulation and parking areas on site screened from the street with landscape, walls and other enclosures, using narrow landscaped driveways, with parking structures sensitively sited, visually unobtrusive and complementary with the architecture of the house.
- Site new development as much as possible within the existing development footprint, with front yard setbacks consistent with other houses on the street, retaining as many mature trees and existing vegetation as possible, respecting adjacent private outdoor use areas, with massing comparable in scale and massing with other buildings on the street and partially screened from direct view from the street.
- Design the landscape to reflect the character of the neighbourhood including Garry Oaks and other large trees, enclosure of outdoor spaces with plants, screening, and layering of plants and features.
- Design the space leading to the main entrance of the house as a special landscaped space providing a transition from street to home.

H23. Consider revisions to the maximum lot coverage in Uplands.



*Photo Credit: Hope Burns*



## 4.4 Commercial and Mixed Use

### *Community Health and Resilience → Mixed Use and Commerce*

- Expanding business opportunities
- Increasing the vitality of commercial areas
- Bringing more people closer to shopping and services
- Attracting more tourists



### Overview

Business and commerce in Oak Bay is vibrant and varied. The District is home to approximately 570 licensed businesses in sectors including retail, services, restaurant, entertainment, tourism, arts, education, and home-based occupations. There are also new types of businesses that target emerging demographics and needs, such as the film industry. The following is a description of Oak Bay's Mixed Use and Commerce areas (Map 8).

### Commercial and Mixed Use Areas

Many residents value the easy access to Oak Bay's local shopping and eating establishments that are integrated within Oak Bay's neighbourhoods (Figure 4.2). Residents can obtain many goods and services within the boundaries of Oak Bay. This strengthens the social and economic vibrancy of the community and provides residents the enjoyment and convenience of shopping and obtaining services close to home in attractive outdoor settings. The economic viability of the District is valued as a component of community sustainability.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*



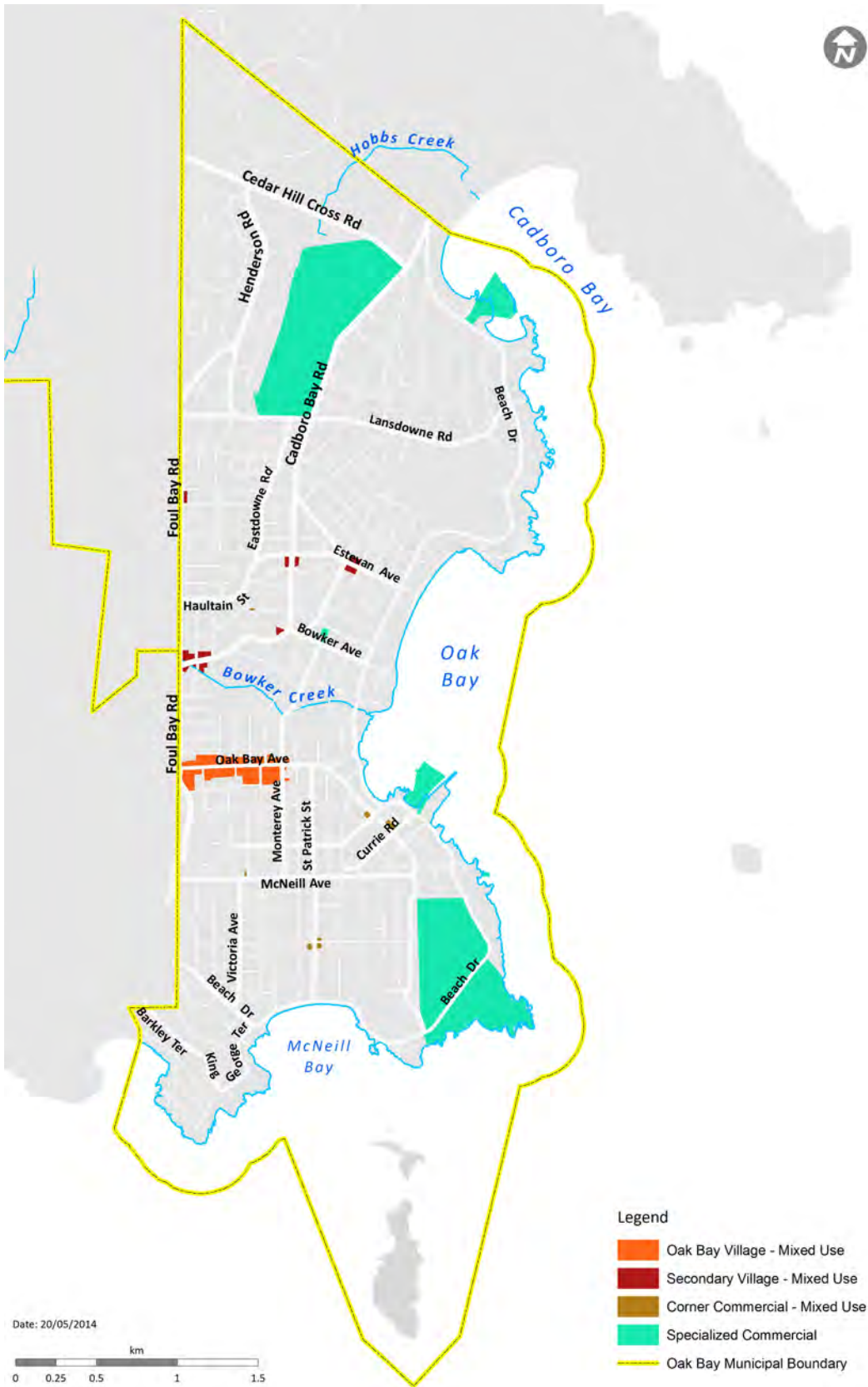


Figure 4.2 Commercial and Mixed Use Areas



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

Oak Bay's primary commercial centre, known as "the Avenue", "the Village", or "Oak Bay Village", is located along Oak Bay Avenue between Foul Bay Road and Monterey Avenue. The Village offers a classic "Main Street" experience and it is a destination for tourists and residents throughout the region because of its combination of walkability, charm, arts, and local food and shops.

There are also some secondary villages. "Estevan Village" on Estevan Avenue around Musgrave Street is the largest of these. There are three others in the north of Oak Bay, two on or near Foul Bay Road, and one on Cadboro Bay Road near Estevan. These villages are service-oriented and meet local needs.

A third level of commercial use takes the form of street-corner establishments with small variety stores, cafes, garden stores, and related uses. These "corner commercial" areas play an important role as local gathering places. Because of their popularity and the culture of walking/biking and coffee drinking with friends in Oak Bay, these establishments draw people from all over Oak Bay in addition to the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The villages and commercial areas described above include primarily local, unique, and neighbourly businesses offering a variety of shops and boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, and entertainment. These areas are all designated as Mixed Use in the OCP to recognize that commercial and residential uses complement each other in settings like this.

Residents indicated that they like having access to businesses within a short walk. Figure 4.3 illustrates locations that are a five and ten-minute walk from a commercial property. Only a few parts of Oak Bay lack such access; these include the north-west, south-west, and an area near the waterfront south of Bowker Avenue. It is in these locations that residents requested commercial uses, especially the north-west where a corner store could serve residents as well as students at the University of Victoria and Camosun College.

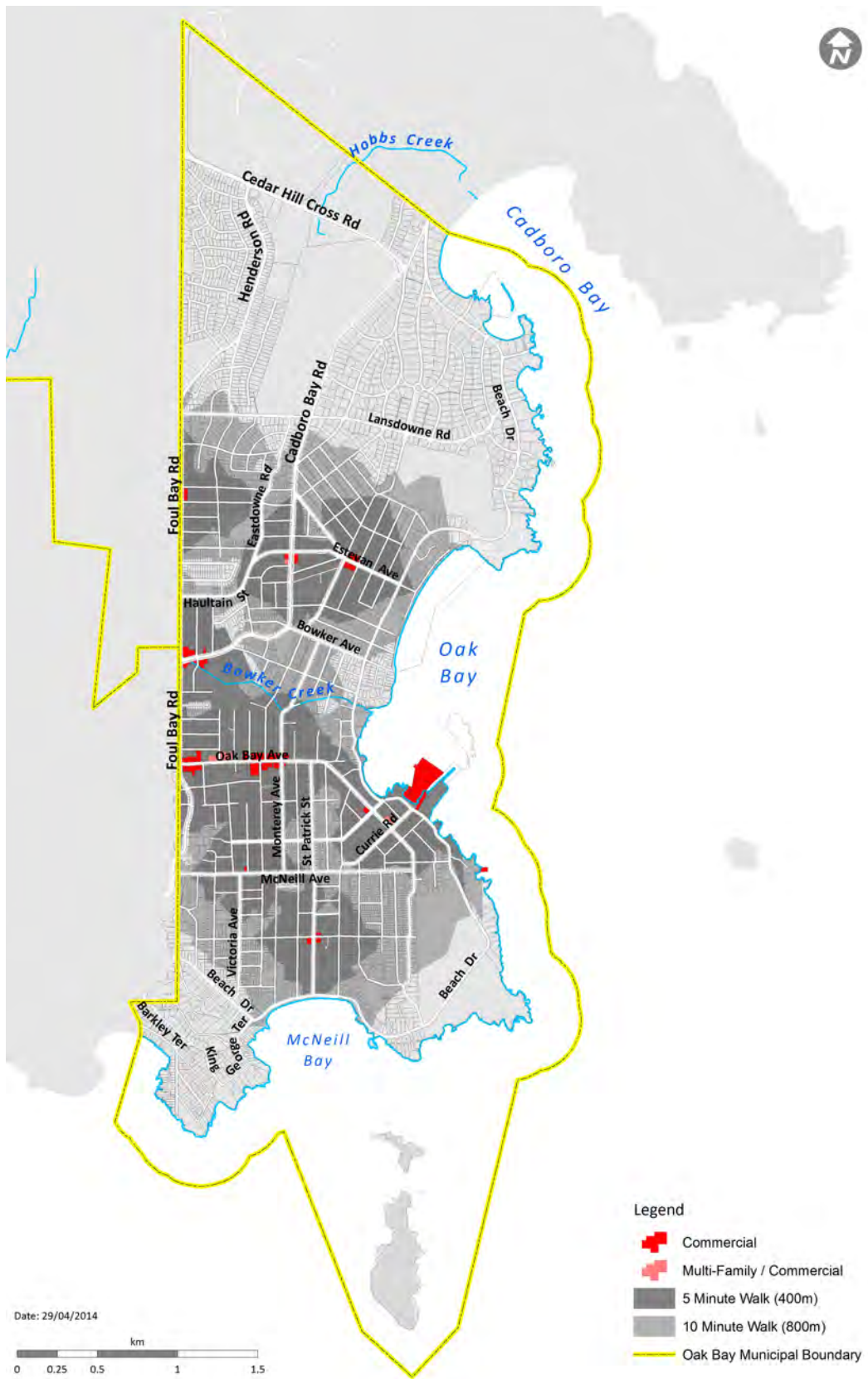


Figure 4.3 Walking Distances to Existing Commercial and Mixed Use Areas

Despite the vibrant commercial centres, there are challenges related to business in Oak Bay. The relatively small amount of commercial land restricts the District's tax base to primarily residential properties. Previous applications to expand commercial uses have been denied due to neighbourhood concerns such as traffic, parking, noise, and neighbourhood character. Changing patterns of consumerism such as online shopping are also a potential threat.

There are opportunities to further strengthen the business sector. Such opportunities may include encouraging commercial expansion to strengthen and enhance the character of the villages, and to provide commercial uses close to more residents. Shopping "experiences" that offer social and healthy living benefits may become increasingly unique, which will contribute to Oak Bay's value as a tourist destination. Improving the urban design of Oak Bay's villages is one tool for making these destinations more appealing to a wider market.

## Specialized Commercial Areas and Tourism

Other commercial areas in Oak Bay are based on specialized uses. For example, the Oak Bay Beach Hotel, Oak Bay Marina, golf courses and historic Oak Bay Guest House provide distinct recreation and accommodation options for residents and visitors to the District. Most of these businesses have a strong tourism component. The Oak Bay Beach Hotel contains the David Foster Foundation Theatre.

Tourism is an important business sector in Oak Bay. Oak Bay Tourism is an active group, funded by hotel taxes. Their objectives are as follows:

- Ensure visitors have access to a community welcome, information and other visitor services via a variety of sources.
- Increase visitors' ability to experience the destination as a whole, with a diverse choice of activities and opportunities to immerse in local life.
- Provide ease of way-finding that links commercial areas (villages), the waterfront and parks.
- Provide opportunities to support the trend of thematic events, places and "trail marketing" (nature, heritage, arts, culinary, etc.).
- Provide interpretation (via signage and guides) of the area's culture, heritage and natural assets to provide a memorable and interesting visitor experience.
- Offer a choice of accommodation that motivates more overnight stays and provides enough room nights as demand grows.
- Encourage innovation leading to sustainable tourism products and services.
- Recognize tourism as an economic generator for the community and also as a contributor to the social, cultural and environmental well-being and quality of life for residents.

Oak Bay Tourism notes that tourism development in the community can be beneficial to residents, beyond economic benefits, by providing high quality experiences and services that might not otherwise be available.



## Home-based Businesses

There are many home-based businesses in Oak Bay, representing 14% of the labour force. Oak Bay's current regulations set strict limits on home-based businesses, and prohibit bed and breakfasts. There are opportunities to provide more flexibility for home-based businesses in the *Zoning Bylaw*. This would help to enhance Oak Bay's business sector and allow some residents more flexibility in their lifestyles and more opportunities to generate income to support high property costs.

### Community Survey Input

*Both the quantitative results of the community survey and respondents' comments on commercial areas and business indicate that residents appreciate the businesses in Oak Bay and would like to see them thrive. These restaurants, cafes and small shops make the community more vibrant. They serve as local gathering places where residents connect with family and friends, and they encourage interactions that promote neighbourliness. The small commercial areas allow people the convenience of walking or cycling a few blocks to shop for items they need, businesses contribute to the tax base, and having a good mix of different types of goods available locally keeps residents' money benefitting the local economy.*

*A few people noted the "for lease" signs in the Village, the turnover of businesses in Oak Bay, or the loss of a hardware store, used book store, etc. A few think the viability of small unique local businesses is compromised by high commercial lease rates. Some noted gaps include a gas station and the lack of night-time cafes or restaurants.*

*There were a number of mentions of the dual benefits of mixed residential / commercial buildings; convenient shopping for residents and a nearby supply of shoppers for businesses. Some said mixed use buildings help to restore commercial viability, improve safety and reduce crime because there are more people on the streets. Potential locations for expanding commercial use in Oak Bay were identified as along main arterials, and some said very small commercial nodes or a few small grocery stores, bakeries and cafes scattered here and there in*

*neighbourhoods would improve liveability and walkability by enabling more people to use active transportation modes to pick up a few items that they need on a regular basis.*

*In terms of tourism, many survey respondents were interested in having some new businesses and amenities that would primarily serve residents' leisure and recreation interests. In the comments about tourists and Oak Bay as a tourist destination, residents were mostly concerned about tourist buses, and one resident suggested marketing Oak Bay as a cycling destination. Particular locations seen as having potential for resident and tourist amenities include outdoor recreation areas in general, Willows Beach, Cattle Point, McNeill Beach and Queen's Park adjacent to Oak Bay Marina. Oak Bay does not currently have a Tourist Information Centre. A creative suggestion from the public was a Tourist Information Centre on the oceanfront, stocked with information on Oak Bay and its rich cultural and natural heritage.*

#### **4.4.1 Commercial and Mixed Use Objectives**

The Commercial and Mixed Use objectives of the OCP are as follows:

Support a modest expansion of commercial uses within Oak Bay while addressing concerns such as tree protection, parking, traffic, noise, effects on other properties, and neighbourhood character.

Plan and design commercial centres to attract and meet the needs of local shoppers and clientele, and visitors to Oak Bay.

Enhance the physical environment of local shopping areas with a focus on providing adequate and safe space for pedestrians and other non-vehicular modes.

Encourage building designs that support activity and interest at street level within the villages.

Support mixed-use buildings that include commercial and residential uses.

Encourage and support home-based businesses that are respectful of other residents and neighbourhoods.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back



#### 4.4.2 Commercial and Mixed Use Policies

The Commercial and Mixed Use policies of the OCP are as follows:

##### General Policies

- MUC1. Establish a Commercial and Mixed Use Development Permit Area (Schedule I) to regulate the form and character of development and to ensure it fits into existing commercial and mixed use areas.
- MUC2. Consider limited expansions of existing commercial uses and new commercial uses within the commercial designations on Schedule B (see also Figure 4.4).
- MUC3. Develop strategies that encourage and support small and locally owned businesses to establish and thrive.
- MUC4. Consider updating policies and practices related to parking requirements for businesses, or cash in lieu.
- MUC5. Consider the use of density bonus pursuant to Section 904 (2) (b) of the *Local Government Act*, in exchange for community amenities listed in policy CF6.



## Mixed Use Areas

MUC6. Consider new mixed-use buildings adjacent to or on corners facing existing commercial or mixed use buildings, in areas near existing villages, and along arterial and collector roads where appropriate.

MUC7. Consider new retail and service uses in the areas identified as potential Corner Commercial areas on Schedule B, in the north, north-west and the south-west of Oak Bay, and south of Willows Park, ideally along transit routes and in locations that currently do not have a commercial use within a 10 minute walk (except within Uplands). Although the Corner Commercial designation is considered separately in the OCP, it is to be assumed by their role in the community and long history in Oak Bay that these local commercial uses will be strongly supported within Established Neighbourhoods.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back



MUC8. Encourage buildings with commercial space at street level in areas designated Mixed Use, with residential and/or commercial uses above.

MUC9. Support limited expansions of existing commercial uses within Oak Bay, e.g., more seats for cafes, provided that effects on neighbourhoods and streetscapes are addressed.

MUC10. Encourage increases in the number of housing units, potentially through smaller units, on mixed use redevelopment projects that are replacing existing Multi Unit Residential or Mixed Use projects.

MUC11. Prepare an Urban Design Plan for Oak Bay's villages that establishes consistent urban design and street standards to assist in building the villages' identity and sense of place. In the urban design plan, consider paving, lighting, street furniture, public art and gateway features.

MUC12. Place parking underground or below grade on larger projects with higher densities, and on projects within Oak Bay Village. For smaller projects where the parking is at grade, locate parking lots or parking garages behind buildings away from the primary street to the degree possible.

### **Specialized Commercial Areas and Tourism**

MUC13. Support Oak Bay Tourism in the marketing of Oak Bay as a tourist destination, with options including a kiosk in the Village, a community-wide digital application and a museum.

MUC14. Encourage accommodation properties with less than six rooms to voluntarily join Oak Bay Tourism and contribute to the destination marketing fee, even though they are not required to do so through the hotel tax.

### **Home-based Businesses**

MUC15. Review the *Zoning Bylaw* in relation to home-based businesses to expand opportunities while respecting the interests of neighbours, considering the following options:

- Review restrictions related to the type of business, placing more focus on the number of clients/customers
- Allow bed and breakfasts up to a maximum size where off-street parking is provided for guests
- Consider urban agriculture as a home-based business



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## 4.5 Community Institutional and Social Well-Being

*Community Health and Resilience →  
Community Institutional and Social Well-being*

- Serving the needs of all community members
- Supporting cultural enrichment and education
- Taking care of health
- Attracting residents and tourists



*The topic of Community Institutional and Social Well-being addresses the services, programmes, events, and social networks that support a community's well-being and help to form its identity. It also addresses the properties that support education, library, health care, and faith-based institutions, as well as heritage properties. Recreation/ community centres are also designated Community Institutional; they are described in section 4.6 Parks and Recreation.*

### Overview

Oak Bay's desirability as a place to live is based partly on its social and cultural fabric. The community has a wealth of leaders, volunteers, programs, and services in arts and culture, education, health and other social services. Oak Bay also has a rich heritage expressed in its buildings and landscapes. These initiatives and legacy that support community and social well-being are a major component of Oak Bay's sustainability as a community.

Community Institutional properties, which may be in public or private ownership, often have high community value, some for the social opportunities they provide and many for the character of the buildings and landscapes on the grounds.

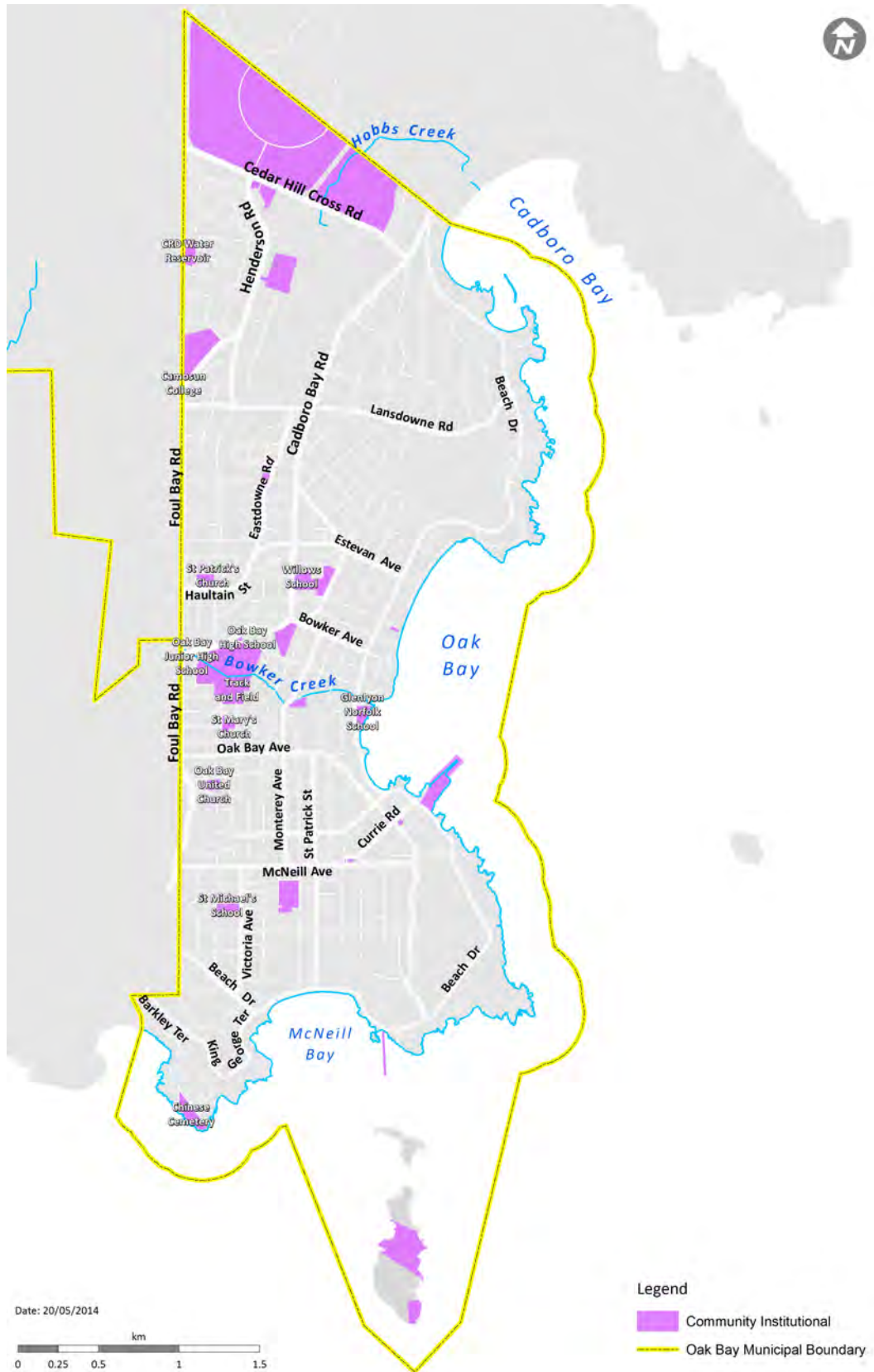


Figure 4.4 Community Institutional Areas

Oak Bay collaborates with the CRD, the Greater Victoria Public Library and other regional authorities and organizations on services related to arts and culture, library, and other social services. There is also effective engagement with other organizations such as School District 61, the University of Victoria and Island Health.

A diverse range of volunteer groups contributes to enhancing livability. Over 20 community groups are active in Oak Bay. These groups offer support and advice to District decision-makers, they provide direct services, and they host multiple events. The Oak Bay Volunteer Services Society (OBVSS) provides one-on-one assistance to all members of the community. The District's volunteer and faith-based groups also help to support vulnerable populations.



## Community Survey Input

*The community identified a number of challenges that, if addressed, will further strengthen Oak Bay's community and social well-being, including expanded services, programmes and facilities for seniors, families and people with physical and developmental challenges, additional support for arts and culture activities and education, and new initiatives that sustain volunteer activity.*

## Arts and Culture

There is a dynamic and diverse arts and culture scene flourishing in Oak Bay. This includes many artists, musicians, dancers, poets, playwrights and novelists who reside in Oak Bay, and the many cultural institutions such as the District's facilities, the David Foster Theatre, Oak Bay High School theatre, church halls, the Canadian College of Performing Arts, and the University of Victoria.

Many arts, culture and literacy programs are offered at Oak Bay's public facilities (see Section 4.6). In addition to programs at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre, there are popular programs at the library and Monterey Centre. Windsor Pavilion is also an important venue, used for meetings of arts and culture groups, as well as sports-related groups.

Oak Bay's arts and culture organizations and venues host a vibrant arts and culture scene. Many artists open their studios each year for the Oak Bay Artists Studio Tour and display their works during the annual Bowker Creek Brush Up.

The Oak Bay Branch Library, co-located with the Monterey Centre, in the Village, is operated by the Greater Victoria Public Library system. The complex was built in 1971, and library space was expanded and renovated to include the heritage Tonkin House in 1999. The branch offers print and digital collections, public computers, and a wide array of programming for all ages,





*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*



from family story times to one-on-one computer and e-book help. A very popular destination offering social, cultural and educational benefits to all community members, the library's use stretches the capacity of the space.

Oak Bay is home to the Canadian College of Performing Arts (CCPA), a private post-secondary institution with students from across Canada. CCPA has operated as a national training institution for close to 20 years, and is receiving operating funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage. Currently located in the hall of St. Mary's Church on Elgin Street, CCPA is seeking a new home as it has outgrown the space at the church hall. CCPA has just signed another three-year lease with the church, but is working actively with partners on relocation and funding logistics. CCPA is being courted by other municipalities in the CRD, but retaining this successful institution in Oak Bay would be a benefit to Oak Bay's arts and culture sector, as well the municipality's economic sector.

In the arts and culture focus group for the OCP, participants indicated that they lack coordinated efforts to support arts and culture in the community. However, as of 2014, Oak Bay has an Arts Laureate who will act as a good will ambassador to enhance the arts and culture within Oak Bay, and will serve as a catalyst to create synergies among the various arts and culture groups in the community. These groups are passionate proponents of the arts and culture scene in Oak Bay, and the synergy of new collaboration will establish a strong, unified force for the creation of Oak Bay as the arts district of Greater Victoria. To this end, the Arts Laureate organizes and coordinates events, and creates projects that enhance the arts and culture in Oak Bay, liaising with arts and culture organizations throughout the CRD. The focus group participants saw the potential opportunity to enhance the profile and depth of arts and culture in Oak Bay through strategic planning. As ambassador and catalyst, the Arts Laureate position will stimulate major strides in this area.

## Education

Oak Bay's broad array of public and independent schools offer a wide range of classes, programs and services from preschool through to advanced education at the University of Victoria, one of Canada's top universities. The larger educational buildings include the University of Victoria, Camosun College (the buildings are outside Oak Bay though the property extends into the District), Oak Bay High School, Monterey Middle School and Willows Elementary.

The University of Victoria (UVic) is located with about half of its campus in Oak Bay, and the remainder in Saanich. This regional facility with over 20,000 students and over 2,000 staff is one of the major employers on Vancouver Island and provides a vital employment anchor for current and future District residents. Many UVic students seek accommodation in Oak Bay; they live in shared rental houses, secondary suites and likely a small number live in apartments. Most of UVic's newer development is located on the Saanich portion of the campus.

Oak Bay High School serves 1,200 local and regional students, and 100 international students. The school is currently undergoing a major redevelopment and expansion. This includes a Neighbourhood Learning Centre that will host a day care and community programs for teens and others. The high school development also includes a performing arts theatre.

Public school sites, like parks, can serve as social and recreation hubs for neighbourhoods, especially at the elementary school level. Due to a decline in the school age population, Uplands Elementary School was closed several years ago and is being used as offices for the Victoria International High School Program which is run by School District 61. According to residents, the school closure has had a significant effect on the neighbourhood; the local gathering place is gone, and there are fewer families living and fewer people walking in the neighbourhood. School District 61 also converted Monterey Elementary from a neighbourhood elementary school to a middle school.

Willows Elementary is the last remaining public elementary school in the District. Most of the schools have catchments that extend beyond District boundaries. Likewise, some Oak Bay students attend schools in other jurisdictions. The cross-municipal attendance has increased for Oak Bay students as a result of the elementary school closures.

Oak Bay is home to various independent schools, such as the Glenlyon Norfolk Junior School and Saint Michaels University Junior School. There are also a number of thriving pre-schools.

Camosun College is located just west of Oak Bay, with a portion of its parking lot extending into the District. This proximity means that Oak Bay also accommodates some of its students.

The Greater Victoria Public Library, Oak Bay Branch, offers free learning and training opportunities tailored to the community's interests.

## Health Care

Oak Bay's residents have access to a variety of health services, including the 280-bed Oak Bay Lodge residential care centre, which provides health care and a variety of programs and services for older adults with chronic and complex conditions, including dementia. This facility, owned and operated by Island Health, is aging, and its programs and services are being relocated to Victoria. Island Health and the CRD have been exploring options for the future of the current Oak Bay Lodge site.

Greater Victoria, including Oak Bay, is served by two full service acute care facilities, the Royal Jubilee Hospital and the Victoria General Hospital that specialize in seniors and children's care. Other health care services also exist in Oak Bay, including family physicians and other health and wellness clinics.

Many of the diverse programs offered at the recreation and community centres, described in Section 4.6 Parks and Recreation, are also related to health and fitness.

## Faith-based Institutions

There are a number of churches in Oak Bay. Churches in the community have played an integral role in Oak Bay's history, providing most of the social infrastructure and support for the first 50 years or so, and continuing to provide such services today. They host many community events enjoyed by the broader public such as Easter Egg hunts, and churches provide community amenities such as meeting halls for other community groups, day cares, and more.

Some of the churches are facing declining memberships and are seeking alternative options for the land or space. Some of these institutions have built multi-unit residential developments on their properties. There could be more proposals for similar developments in the future.

## Festivals and Events

Oak Bay has excellent community spirit as demonstrated by the level of community participation in numerous festivals and special events. These include uniquely Oak Bay events such as the Oak Bay Tea Party, Garagellenium, Christmas Light-up, Summer Market on the Avenue, classic car shows, sail-pasts and the Oak Bay Half Marathon. Neighbourhood enthusiasm and cohesiveness are expressed through the numerous block parties, Block Watch and the Mayor's welcome activities for new residents.

Many of Oak Bay's festivals and public events are sponsored and supported by local merchants and the Oak Bay Business Improvement Association. These events attract participants from far and wide and are a key source of business and commercial activity in the District. For the most part, residents enjoy the community festivals and like them centrally located, but some say there are just too many races and marathons centred around





Photo Credit: Gloria Back



the Village, and suggest that some of these could be located elsewhere. Closing the streets for events can be a problem for residents living in these areas, so care needs to be taken to respect neighbourhood and business concerns such as traffic, parking, access and noise. The summer street market is also popular and there were multiple requests from residents to hold it weekly.

#### 4.5.1 Community Institutional and Social Well-Being Objectives

The community and social well-being objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Meet the social and cultural needs of all members of the community throughout their lives.
2. Enhance and expand public community institutional facilities where practical, including education, library, and health care facilities.
3. Encourage community institutional facilities to provide spaces that can be made available for use by the community.
4. Support the expansion and vitality of arts and culture in the community.
5. Reach out to those with physical and developmental disabilities and provide support services and opportunities for community inclusion.
6. Engage and build stronger relationships with local and regional partners, Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, education institutions, and other significant organizations.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

7. Support the planning and location of festivals, events and street closures in the District, while taking care to minimize impacts on residents and businesses.
8. Enhance public education opportunities that relate to arts and culture, nature interpretation, Songhees and Esquimalt Nations and heritage.
9. Reinforce Oak Bay's unique community identity by strengthening policies on heritage per the Oak Bay Heritage Plan.

## 4.5.2 Community Institutional and Social Well-Being Policies

The Community Institutional and Social Well-Being policies of the OCP are as follows:

### General Policies

- CIS1. Work collaboratively with local and regional partners, education institutions, Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, and other significant organizations to identify and address emerging issues related to community and social well-being, and on the planning of new, improved and expanded community institutional facilities in Oak Bay. Such organizations include, but are not limited to: Capital Regional District and member municipalities, School District 61, University of Victoria, Camosun College, Greater Victoria Public Library, Island Health, Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, local service clubs, non-profit organizations, faith-based institutions, and provincial and federal agencies.
- CIS2. Encourage community institutional facilities to provide opportunities for community use of their properties for walking at a minimum, and recreation uses where possible.
- CIS3. Consider Multi Unit Residential developments on institutional properties where this will not prevent or hinder the primary institutional use, and where this occurs, amend the OCP designation to Multi Unit Residential for this portion of the property, which will also designate the site as a Multi Unit Residential DPA.
- CIS4. Work with government and community organizations to provide a full spectrum of services to meet peoples' needs throughout their lives, such as the following:
- Local and regional health and wellness services, including residential, complex and dementia care services
  - Public library services
  - Faith-based and spiritual services
  - Arts and culture
  - Opportunities for lifelong learning and skills training
  - Opportunities for seniors and youth
  - Early childhood education
  - Opportunities to volunteer and provide community service

- CIS5. Support the provision of opportunities for those with physical and developmental disabilities, mostly through community organizations, including, but not limited to, the following:
- Reaching out to this population and working with them to identify their interests and needs
  - Providing economic opportunities, including direct and supported employment within the community in the public and private sectors
  - Providing education opportunities, including integration initiatives in K-12, design and participation in advanced education programs at UVic and Camosun, and specialized programming through Oak Bay Recreation
  - Supporting meaningful participation within volunteer organizations to facilitate community engagement
  - Promoting and encouraging awareness, accommodation and support initiatives within the community
  - Encouraging flexibility and diversity in housing and transportation / public realm design that address some of the challenges faced by this subset of the population, as noted elsewhere in this plan
- CIS6. Promote a culture of volunteerism and neighbourliness and recognize the important contributions of volunteers.
- CIS7. Support groups in acquiring grants or other types of funding from outside sources.
- CIS8. Encourage effective community engagement in District processes by providing information and opportunities for those affected by a decision to participate in a meaningful way.

## **Arts and Culture**

- CIS9. Prepare an Arts and Culture Master Plan that includes the following:
- a vision and objectives for arts and culture in Oak Bay
  - an inventory of arts and culture programs, services, groups and facilities in the community
  - an assessment of gaps relative to the vision and objectives
  - recommendations for improving programs, services, groups and facilities to achieve the arts and culture vision objectives
- CIS10. Work with regional partners on an arts and culture strategy for the region.
- CIS11. Develop partnerships to market Oak Bay as a creative community that attracts visitors, businesses, and new residents, and to increase participation in arts and culture.
- CIS12. Support artists, organizations and community partners through arts and culture planning and activities.

- CIS13. Pursue shared arts and culture opportunities with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.
- CIS14. Prepare and adopt a public art policy and consider undertaking the following tasks related to public art:
- Encourage the inclusion of public art in larger development projects, potentially as a community amenity per Section 4.1 Land Use Framework.
  - Encourage temporary public art through public events such as displays, exhibits and shows throughout the community, e.g., weekly street market in the summer promoting local artists.
- CIS15. Encourage and support the relocation of the Canadian College of Performing Arts within Oak Bay.

### **Education**

- CIS16. Work with the University of Victoria to explore how the District can support the university in implementing its development plans.
- CIS17. Partner with School District 61, post-secondary institutions, independent schools, preschools, and the Greater Victoria Public Library to expand community education opportunities.
- CIS18. Collaborate with education institutions and community groups to provide more public education opportunities that relate to arts and culture, nature interpretation, First Nations cultures, and heritage.

### **Health Care**

- CIS19. Encourage the development of a range of seniors' living facilities, from independent living to extended care, within the community.
- CIS20. Work with Island Health and other agencies on the future of Oak Bay Lodge to plan a facility at that location to serve community health care needs.

### **Festivals and Events**

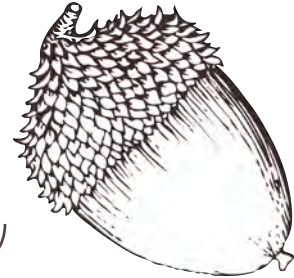
- CIS21. Consider dispersing the distribution of festivals, events and street closures within the District to a greater degree.
- CIS22. Consider developing a Special Events Policy requiring event planners to prepare a plan that addresses public transportation to events, alternate routes for vehicles when streets are closed, adequate notification to residents, access for residents to and from their homes, signs and volunteers on hand to guide visitors and residents.



## 4.6 Parks and Recreation

### *Community Health and Resilience → Parks and Recreation*

- Enhancing the condition of ecosystems in parks
- Providing opportunities for healthy, active lifestyles
- Increasing social connections and sense of belonging
- Attracting residents and tourists



### Overview

Parks and recreation are vital components of life in Oak Bay, and a source of pride and inspiration for residents. The community has outdoor and indoor spaces and facilities that offer a broad array of recreation opportunities to residents and visitors of all ages, interests, and abilities. The spaces and facilities include the District’s parkland, trails and paths, and recreation centres. Complementing these are public and private amenities such as the Victoria, Uplands and Henderson Golf Courses, Oak Bay Marina and Royal Victoria Yacht Club.

There are important connections between information in this section and Community and Social Well Being, which includes art, culture, heritage and education (see Section 4.5 Community Institutional and Social Well-Being). Parks and recreation amenities often serve as venues for arts and culture as well as sports and fitness programs.

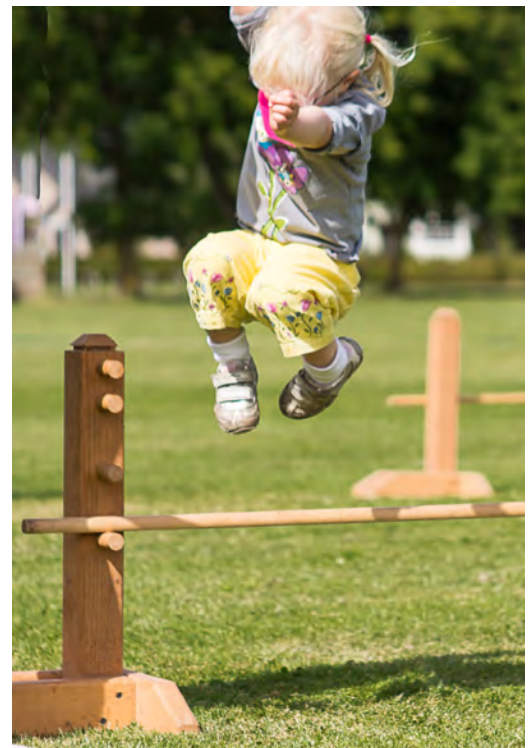
In addition to serving its residents, Oak Bay is a destination for tourists and visitors from throughout the region. The natural environment, especially the ocean shoreline, is a particular draw. People are also attracted to Oak Bay Village, the multiple festivals and events, the characteristic streetscapes, and the Oak Bay Recreation Centre.

Oak Bay has not undertaken the preparation of a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan that engages the community to understand their specific interests and needs. Given the passion for parks and recreation and the need for continued upgrading and maintenance of facilities, the District may want to consider this for the future.

Parks and recreation can also be a significant attraction for tourists (see Section 4.4). Oak Bay Tourism follows the principle that “tourists love what residents love”, noting that more linked trails (PR11) and information (PR7) are key interests of tourists.

## Parks and Outdoor Recreation

Parks have a strong inter-relationship with community sustainability. Most of Oak Bay's important habitats are located within parks, and environmental protection and enhancement is a key component of park management. Natural features such as shorelines, creeks, forests and Garry Oak uplands are cherished by the community, and they require careful planning and management to allow human access while protecting the environmental values. Parks staff are responsible for managing trees on public land, and these trees are a vital component of the urban forest that enhances the environmental values and livability of Oak Bay.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back and Kevin Murdoch and Marylou Wakefield*

*The Recreational Use of Oak Bay Parks and Open Spaces: Report of the Parks Vision Committee* study, published in 2005 and updated in 2011, serves as a key source for information regarding the character, uses, policies, and potential directions of Oak Bay's parks and open spaces. The District upgrades park amenities and conducts parks operations in keeping with that report.

The District is home to 26 parks, which are grouped into five types (Figure 4.5):

- Natural Parks, such as Uplands and Anderson Hill
- Multi-sports Parks, such as Carnarvon, Henderson and Windsor
- Neighbourhood Parks, such as Nottingham, Lafayette and Quimper
- Special Use Parks, such as Bowker Creek Walkway and Native Plant Garden
- Boulevard/Ocean Parks, such as Haynes and Loon Bay

There are also two Ecological Reserves as described in Section 3.0.

The total amount of parkland in Oak Bay is 71 hectares (175 acres). This equates to about 3.9 hectares (9.7 acres) of parkland per 1,000 population. This is very close to a traditional standard of 4 hectares (10 acres) per 1,000 population, a standard that many communities are less likely to achieve as population density increases. Parks, open spaces, recreation, and golf courses comprise the second largest land use in the District, at 18% of the land area, after single detached residential.

There are some active sports leagues in Oak Bay, mainly soccer and softball. There have been requests for an artificial turf field, but this is a challenging type of facility to integrate into a community where houses surround most of the sports fields. Artificial turf fields require lighting to maximize their use and it is difficult to add sport field lighting close to existing residents.

A primary opportunity exists at Carnarvon Park. With the development of the Neighbourhood Learning Centre at the new high school, the building in Carnarvon Park is up for redevelopment and new uses.

Other opportunities related to parks include urban agriculture, more management of invasive species in natural parks, and dog management. There is significant interest in urban agriculture in Oak Bay, partly as a component of food security, but less enthusiasm for community gardens taking up park space. The District could explore the potential for communal food gardens in existing planting beds on public land, essentially creating "edible landscapes". Another option is a system for matching gardeners with property owners who need help maintaining their gardens.

Residents provided extensive comments about dog management at every OCP open house and on the community survey. Regulations are in place for animal control, including dog access areas, leashing regulations and poop pick-up bylaws; and an animal control company provides education and enforcement services. Many residents requested an update of the existing dog management strategies, particularly in public parks and beaches. Oak Bay may want to undertake a comprehensive update of its dog management strategies, or to include that in a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



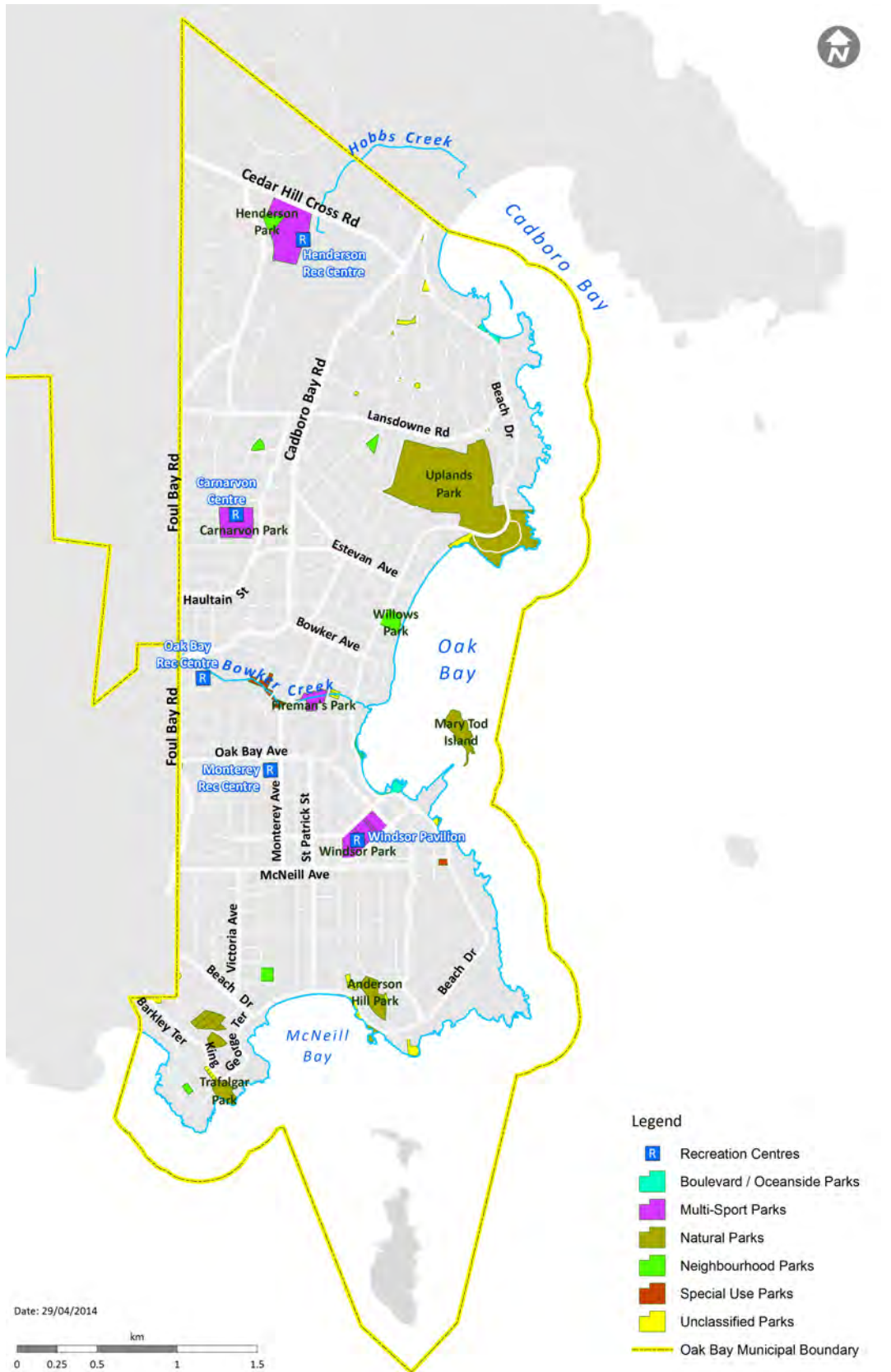


Figure 4.5: Parks and Recreation Facilities



## Trails and Paths

Oak Bay residents indicated that trails and paths are the most important recreation amenity, and this is consistent with municipalities across Canada. The District manages eight unique walking trails, described on the *Oak Bay Walking Trails* map, and in general, Oak Bay is a highly walkable community (Figure 4.6). Many community members indicated that walking and biking are their primary modes of transportation because it is relatively easy and pleasant to walk and bike within Oak Bay. The shoreline is a key attraction for walking and biking routes and there are numerous beach access paths; at this time access along the shoreline is not continuous.

The Oak Bay Active Transportation Strategy and CRD Pedestrian and Cycling Master Plan provide recommendations for pedestrian routes. The Strategy proposes two multi-use paths and some neighbourhood pathway and lane connections. The Active Transportation Advisory Committee encourages and promotes active forms of transportation and facilities to support it. This renewed OCP, in accordance with municipal department responsibilities, addresses off-road paths/trails in this section; on-road sidewalks, paths and bike lanes are discussed in Transportation (see Section 5.1).

The key opportunities related to trails and paths are to increase connectivity and improve public access to beaches and waterfront amenities, though this must be balanced with the need to protect the delicate shoreline ecosystem. There are a number of unopened road allowances that could play a role in achieving these opportunities. Bowker Creek is identified as a potential greenway corridor in the CRD Master Plan. A connected trail system offers many benefits to a community, and it is also a draw for tourists (Section 4.4).



Photo Credit: Marylou Wakefield, Gloria Back

Information on this map is based on District mapping, which may be updated from time to time.

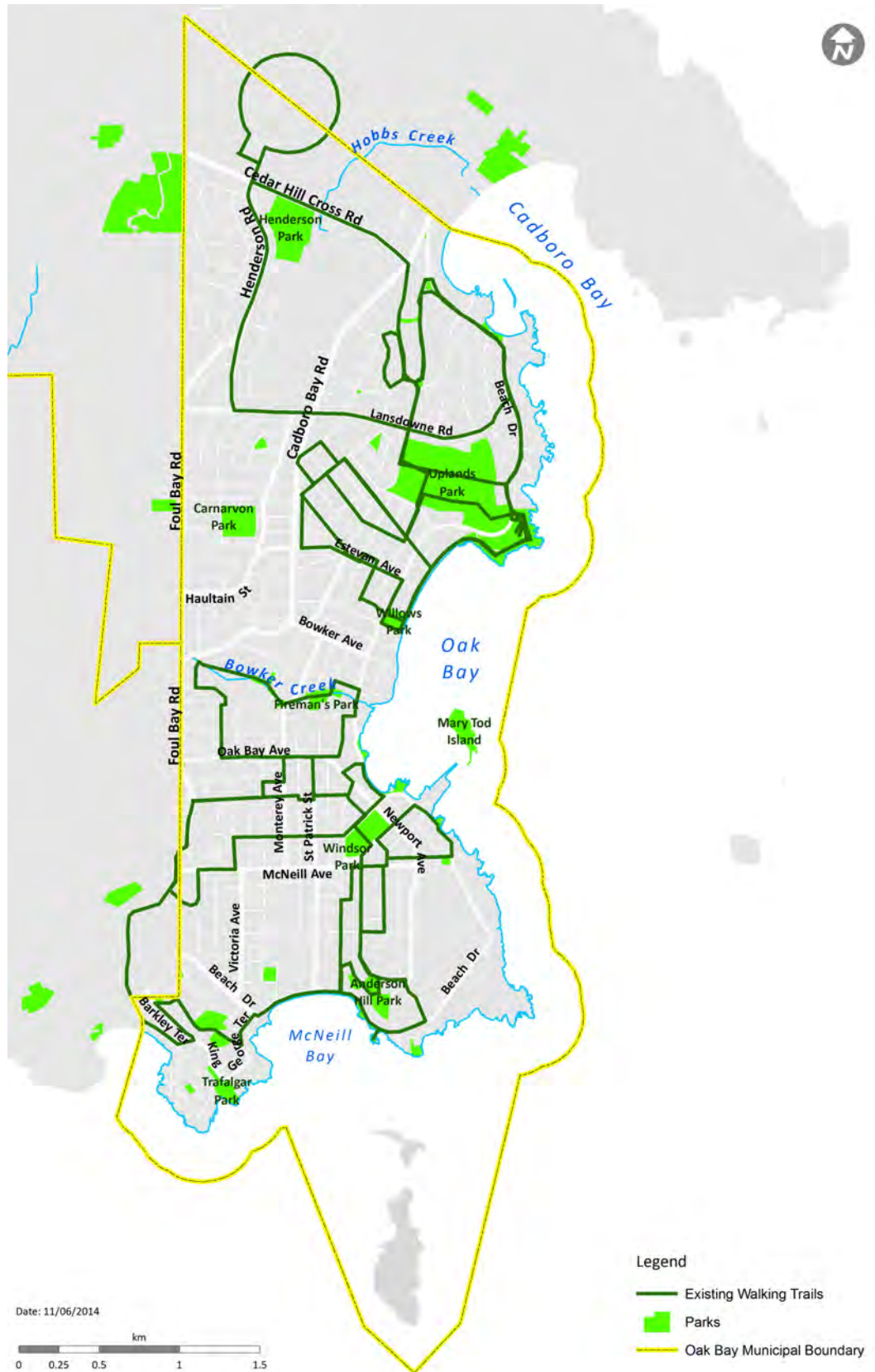


Figure 4.6: Existing Trails and Paths





*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

## Marinas and Boating

The shoreline itself functions as a form of natural recreation amenity that supports many activities such as beach visits, swimming, kayaking, fishing, nature appreciation and walking. Boating is an important recreation activity for some Oak Bay residents. There are boat ramps at Cattle Point and by Queens Park. Permanent moorage is provided at Oak Bay Marina and Royal Victoria Yacht Club. While the boat moorage spaces in the two facilities are usually fully occupied, any consideration for further expansion of moorage or associated parking would need to be considered in the context of the residential nature and character of the adjacent neighbourhoods and shoreline resources and values. Multiple jurisdictions, including the federal and provincial governments, as well as the private sector, property owners and the community, have responsibilities and interests related to the management of the shoreline and the marine environment.

## Indoor Recreation

Oak Bay's Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide range of opportunities in its five recreation centres as described below:

- Oak Bay Recreation Centre is a major hub of the community that includes an ice arena, two swimming pools, a fitness room, an indoor sports field, and dining area. Tennis courts in bubbles, the Teen Centre, and skateboard area are located adjacent to the Recreation Centre.
- Henderson Recreation Centre, located at the northern end of the District, offers a fitness centre, gymnasium, and par-three golf course.
- Monterey Recreation Centre, located in Oak Bay Village, is home to over 30 social clubs in addition to providing courses for adults and seniors "from yoga to cuisine and everything in-between."
- Carnarvon Centre has been home to the District's Paddington Station daycare facility and the Carnarvon Fun Factory after-school program.
- Windsor Pavilion is a unique and dynamic facility that hosts children's programs, community groups, and social functions in its main hall and various multi-purpose rooms.

An upcoming new facility is the Neighborhood Learning Centre that will be part of the new Oak Bay High School. This facility will host teens' and other community programs, including the daycare and after-school programs that will be relocated there from the Carnarvon Centre.

The recreation centres are highly popular facilities that contribute to the social and cultural life of the community. As some of them are aging, it will be important to plan for their upgrading and any changes required to address evolving community interests and needs.

Seven tennis courts are located in two bubbles directly behind Oak Bay Recreation Centre. Future consideration of the tennis bubbles is complicated by the fact that Bowker Creek flows under a portion of the structure. Planning for any improvements should include the potential to daylight portions of the creek.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*



## Community Survey Input

*The people of Oak Bay are very appreciative of their parks and recreation facilities (and library too). A prevalent attitude found in the comments is to maintain the parks and facilities that we have and make improvements slowly over time within existing budgets.*

*Expand and upgrade the trail / path system, including public trails along the shoreline, was a popular strategy among residents. The comments include suggestions for where paths and trails could be built, extended or improved. Some feel that the shoreline should be kept as natural as possible and don't want public trails built there. Others, for various reasons, doubted that trails along the shoreline were even possible.*

*The lack of a home playing field for soccer in Oak Bay was mentioned a number of times. Bays United was said to have many members and that an artificial turf field would be well used. New and updated playgrounds for young children were said to be needed, and play areas for older children and youth such as outdoor courts were also mentioned a few times.*

*Keeping parks available for all users was mentioned a number of times in different contexts including the possibility of converting space to urban agriculture. A suggestion that was mentioned several times was to organize or assist interested citizens in organizing a matching system between owners of single-family dwellings with large lots and "urban farmers" who need space to grow food.*

*Improving public access to beaches and waterfront amenities is a priority for some residents and concerns were expressed about increasing encroachment on public lands, pathways, and the marine environment by private homeowners. Strong objections were raised about landowners extending their property onto public beaches, thereby denying public access. Public washrooms were said to be needed at McNeill Bay Beach, Uplands Park, Cattle Point, Anderson Hill and Kitty Islet. Pleas for maintaining and protecting Uplands Park as a natural area were expressed in the comments.*



*Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd and Gloria Back*

#### **4.6.1 Parks and Recreation Objectives**

The parks and recreation objectives of the OCP are as follows:

- 1.** Maintain parks and recreation facilities, including the ecosystems and urban forest, in good condition.
- 2.** Expand and upgrade the trail/path system, including improvements to public access to and along the shoreline.
- 3.** Upgrade parks and recreation facilities, programs and services to meet community needs based on good fiscal management.
- 4.** Conduct master planning related to parks and recreation in the community to set directions for the next decade.
- 5.** Promote and provide information about trails/paths, parks, and recreation opportunities within the community to improve personal well-being and community sustainability.
- 6.** Recognize and enhance the role of parks and recreation in supporting tourism opportunities.
- 7.** Recognize the importance of marinas in supporting water-based recreation for residents and tourists, while protecting the shoreline and character of the residential neighbourhoods.
- 8.** Support the efforts of the committees, commissions and other volunteers who make major contributions to parks and recreation in the community.

## 4.6.2 Parks and Recreation Policies

The parks and recreation policies of the OCP are as follows:

### General Policies

PR1. Prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan and once it is complete, revise the policies in this section as needed to be consistent with the Master Plan. Consider including the following tasks in the Master Plan:

- Conduct a community survey to assess existing use patterns, satisfaction and needs in relation to parkland, sports fields, trails/paths, playgrounds, other park amenities, recreation centres, and recreation programs.
- Analyze existing and projected demographics and best practices to support the needs analysis.
- Identify existing and future community needs for different types and locations of parkland, park amenities, paths/trails, recreation facilities and recreation programs, considering the needs of people of all ages and abilities.
- Consider opportunities for commercial uses in parks, such as boot camps, mobile food trucks, private events and filming.
- Explore the potential use of unopened road allowance for park and outdoor recreation purposes.
- Consider the provision of an artificial turf sports field in one of Oak Bay's parks or at Oak Bay High School.
- Consider the need for upgrading the pool or other amenities at Oak Bay Recreation Centre, potentially in partnership with the School District, to satisfy the needs of students as well as all members of the community.
- Consider expanding the scope of the Parks and Recreation Department to include Arts and Culture, recognizing the department's support of cultural events and provision of arts and culture programs. If that is done, prepare one master plan for parks, recreation and culture.

PR2. Explore options for supporting economic development of tourism opportunities in parks and along the shoreline, balancing this with environmental protection, retaining community character and ensuring that parks remain available for the community. Consider the following opportunities:

- Work with other communities on a regional Scenic Marine Drive.
- Design infrastructure for and market "parks with purpose", highlighting activities such as bird-watching, picnicking, star-gazing, nature appreciation, native plants, marine experiences and heritage in relation to specific parks.





*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

- PR3. Support and acknowledge the significant work of the Parks and Recreation Commission, Environmental Advisory Committee, Active Transportation Advisory Committee, and the many other volunteers who make major contributions to parks and recreation in the community through park stewardship, sports leagues, and other activities.

### **Parks and Outdoor Recreation**

- PR4. Manage the natural environment in parks to improve its health, including tree care, removal of invasive species, and other associated activities. Limit high-impact uses in natural parks, such as festivals and events.
- PR5. Increase the amount of vegetation in parks and on public land as part of retaining the tree canopy and a healthy natural environment. Consider the following measures as ways of achieving this:
- Plant trees, including Garry Oaks, on public lands where possible as part of maintaining a healthy urban forest for the long term.
  - Add planting around buildings, structures and elsewhere, with a focus on native and flowering plants.



PR6. Upgrade park amenities on an ongoing basis and for major improvements, engage the surrounding community to identify their interests. Consider the following tasks as part of upgrading park amenities:

- Consider the recommendations of the *Recreational Use of Oak Bay Parks and Open Spaces: Report of the Parks Vision Committee*.
- Consider improvements and amenities requested by the community during the OCP process, including public washrooms in strategic locations, especially along shoreline walkways; additional and more diverse playgrounds, and outdoor sport courts.
- Maximize the use of active parks, including neighbourhood and multi-sports parks, recognizing that Oak Bay does not have the capacity to increase parkland by any significant amount.
- Upgrade playgrounds on an ongoing basis to meet community needs and safety standards.
- Improve the quality of parks with upgrades such as improved drainage and irrigation on sports fields.
- Provide more seating opportunities in parks based on the amount and types of park visitors.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

- PR7. Improve and expand park signage that includes identification, way-finding, regulatory and interpretive signs throughout the community, as well as smartphone “apps”.
- PR8. Prepare a Park Master Plan for Carnarvon Park because of its redevelopment opportunities, and include community engagement in the master planning process.
- PR9. Explore opportunities for urban agriculture in the community that do not restrict parkland to a single purpose use, considering the following options:
- Encourage and support a matching system between owners of single-family dwellings with large lots and “urban farmers” who need space to grow food. Older residents, especially, could benefit from participating in a backyard horticulture program and receive help with yard work and fresh fruits and vegetables in exchange for the use of their land.
  - Support food growing on boulevards, provided that it is organic, that residents agree to maintain plots in a tidy condition, and that boulevards are restored back to grass when residents stop seasonal growing or relocate elsewhere. This may include a system that involves a deposit to ensure the restoration.
  - Consider communal food gardens in planting beds on public land where residents can work together on growing food. This type of activity can have social and educational benefits.
- PR10. Work with dog owners, dog interest groups, the community at large, Oak Bay staff and Animal Control Services on refining dog management strategies, regulations, monitoring and enforcement on an ongoing basis, considering the impacts of dogs on natural areas. This work could be undertaken in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan or as a separate initiative.

## Trails and Paths

- PR11. Prepare a network plan of proposed trails/paths and trails/paths needing improvement, as a complement to the Active Transportation Strategy, in order to improve the connectivity of the trail/path system. The following are potential options:
- Consider sidewalks part of this system because of Oak Bay's many attractive and walkable streets. Explore opportunities for a multi-use greenway corridor along Bowker Creek, in accordance with the proposed regional greenway system, ideally outside of the riparian setback area.
- PR12. Improve and expand the network of trails and paths as opportunities arise through private development contributions or grants for active transportation.
- PR13. Maintain and enhance public access to and along the waterfront, balanced with an objective of retaining the shoreline as natural as possible. The following are potential strategies:
- Work with property owners, and the Province if necessary, to remove barriers to public access that extend beyond private property onto the foreshore or onto shoreline access corridors.
  - Work with property owners to remove barriers to public access on access corridors between lots or unopened road ends that provide access from roads to the foreshore.
  - Increase the connectivity of a shoreline route for the trail/path system.
  - Improve access points to the waterfront with signage, paths, and clearing vegetation as required to improve visibility.
- PR14. Provide more amenities along high-use trails/paths, including benches, water fountains, garbage/recycling bins and curb drops.

## Indoor Recreation

- PR15. Upgrade recreation centres on an ongoing basis to meet community needs.
- PR16. Improve services for older adults at the Oak Bay Recreation Centre, e.g., exercise equipment that is easier and safer for older people to use.
- PR17. Improve and continually modify inclusive, affordable recreation, arts and culture programs for all age groups to meet evolving trends and needs.



## Marinas and Boating

PR18. Work with other levels of government, the private sector, property owners, and the community on plans that balance the needs of boaters in the community with interests in protecting the shoreline and the character of residential neighbourhoods. Consider the following tasks:

- Improve access for small boats to the water.
- Improve the boat ramps and storage areas used by day boaters and sailors at Cattle Point, potentially charging fees for the use of these facilities.
- Encourage the marina and yacht club to increase opportunities for use of facilities by community groups such as Sea Scouts, Oak Bay Sea Rescue, and community sailing lessons.



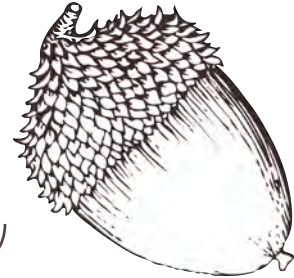
*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*



## 4.7 Heritage

### *Community Health and Resilience → Heritage*

- Protecting the natural heritage landscape
- Conservation and rehabilitation of historic built environment
- Social values of retaining history
- Attraction of residents and tourists who appreciate heritage



There is a strong cultural heritage in Oak Bay, which is greatly valued by its residents. Key heritage aspects of Oak Bay include the streetscapes and neighbourhoods, historic buildings and structures, cultural and natural landscape features, and history.

There is an integral relationship between conservation of heritage resources in a community and land use planning and development. A key thrust of the provincial amendments to heritage legislation in 1994 was to encourage a better integration of heritage and land use planning at the local government level and to provide tools for local governments to work with land owners to conserve important heritage resources.

The District is becoming more proactive in conserving its community heritage through the work of its municipal volunteer bodies such as the Heritage Commission, the Heritage Foundation and Municipal Archives. The Oak Bay Heritage Plan (2013) provides a detailed framework for retaining Oak Bay's heritage and special character for years to come; this strategy has helped to inform various policy directions within this OCP.



*Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch*



*Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch and Gloria Back*

Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs) have been discussed as a heritage tool and are of interest to many members of the community. Oak Bay has many heritage and character buildings and streetscapes that contribute to the community's values, and some of these could be candidates for heritage conservation.

## Archaeology and Traditional Use Sites

Archaeological artifacts and traditional use sites indicate that Oak Bay was the home to First Nations communities. Some archaeological and traditional use sites are located within parks, and archaeological remains and artifacts have been located during construction projects. It is critical to treat archaeological and cultural resources such as traditional use sites with the utmost respect. Provincial legislation and regulations put the onus on a land owner to identify and protect possible archaeological resources; the municipality includes this consideration in its own capital works and in the review of development applications. At the community level, there are opportunities to work with the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations to integrate awareness of their arts and culture into the social fabric of Oak Bay.

### 4.7.1 Heritage Objectives

The heritage objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Conserve Oak Bay's history and heritage.
2. Conserve established neighbourhoods and streetscapes.
3. Conserve natural landscapes.
4. Celebrate Oak Bay's unique history.
5. Support the recommendations of the 2013 Oak Bay Heritage Plan.





Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## 4.7.2 Heritage Policies

The heritage policies of the OCP are as follows:

HR1. Support the retention of heritage and character houses and other buildings through the following measures:

- Use the authorities enabled under the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* as appropriate to protect and conserve heritage property including, but not limited to, heritage revitalization agreements, density bonusing, maintenance standards, development of a community heritage register, and designation of heritage property
- Consider incentives to lower housing costs, such as permissive heritage tax exemptions (under Section 225 of the Community Charter), where heritage buildings or properties are used for housing.
- Consider conversions and retrofitting to a range of uses to support the conservation of heritage and character buildings, such as secondary suites, bed and breakfasts, and home-based businesses.
- Promote heritage conservation grants provided by the Oak Bay Heritage Foundation and others.



- HR2. Work with the Oak Bay Heritage Commission, Oak Bay Archives, Oak Bay Heritage Foundation, and others to evaluate, register, and protect heritage assets through systematic inventory, research and heritage conservation practices and policies, and to promote and provide education on heritage values and resources.
- HR3. Identify neighbourhoods and streetscapes that warrant protection, and identify tools to protect these as redevelopment takes place.
- HR4. Implement stewardship policies and practices for municipally owned heritage resources and significant sites, consistent with provincial standards and legislation.
- HR5. Explore opportunities to establish Heritage Conservation Areas, as set out in section 9.0 of this Official Community Plan, as a tool to conserve the character of significant clusters of heritage buildings and their associated landscapes, while ensuring development is appropriate to the heritage character of the neighbourhood.
- HR6. Collaborate with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations on items of mutual interest related to arts, culture, interpretation and education. The following are potential opportunities:
- Work with Songhees and Esquimalt Nations on ways to provide interpretation and education related to traditional aboriginal uses, archaeological sites and ways that First Nations perceived of and managed the natural environment, respecting the importance, integrity and potential need for confidentiality related to some sites.
  - Integrate Songhees and Esquimalt Nations arts and culture into community events, buildings, programs, and parks and public spaces.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*





Photo Credit: Gloria Back

# 5.0 Servicing our Community

## 5.1 Transportation

*Community Health and Resilience →  
Transportation*

- Supporting healthy and active transportation
- Accommodating a wide range of mobility needs
- Reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions
- Improving the vitality of villages



### Overview

Oak Bay is a walkable community with interesting streets, laneways and trails. There are also increasing numbers of vehicles and competing interests for use of the roads. As the population ages and becomes more diverse, and in order to become a more sustainable community, there is an opportunity to reinforce a varied, multi-modal transportation network. Providing the necessary infrastructure is key to encouraging more active modes of transportation among residents and visitors.

The majority of Oak Bay’s working residents are employed outside the District. As a result, there is a significant outflow/inflow of residents during peak commuting times. Although efforts have been made to increase active transportation modes, car travel remains the predominant mode of transportation for commuters, those enjoying retirement, and others moving through the community. In comparison with the rest of the CRD, however, Oak Bay residents drive less and walk more (Figure 5.1).

Transportation Mode	Oak Bay Daily Mode Share	CRD Daily Mode Share
Auto - driver	49%	64%
Auto - passenger	12%	13%
Pedestrian	29%	13%
Public transit	5%	6%
Bicycle	4%	3%
Other modes	1%	1%

**Figure 5.1 Origin and Destination Studies, 2011**

Source: Capital Regional District



UVic has been fairly successful in shifting transportation modes. The 2012 Campus Traffic Survey (Bunt and Associates) found that the combined percentage of transit, pedestrian, bicycle, skateboard and rollerblade modes account for over 50% of the trips made to UVic.

Another study, the Oak Bay Motivations and Barriers to Active Transportation Survey, conducted between February and March 2014, received input from 101 online surveys and 45 intercept surveys. Active modes of transportation were indicated to be the most frequent modes by over half of the respondents; however, this does not necessarily represent actual modal share as the survey was designed to gather input on motivations and barriers.



*Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch*

Oak Bay Council adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2012. The policy includes the following:

*Major and local roads, sidewalks and pathways within the municipality of Oak Bay are a community resource for the benefit of all to use. They increase opportunities for personal communication and interaction among residents and businesses.*

*Therefore, all streets, sidewalks, pathways, and other transit networks including design, planning, reconstruction, rehabilitation, maintenance, or operations by the municipality of Oak Bay shall be designed and executed in a responsible and financially reasonable way to accommodate and encourage safe access and use by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.*

*As the municipality rebuilds or improves roads, pedestrians' and cyclists' needs along with neighborhood amenities will be taken into consideration in designing road improvements and maintaining road safety. Decisions regarding transportation priorities and infrastructure improvements and spending should be guided by the following hierarchy of transportation and accessibility priorities:*

- *Walking*
- *Cycling*
- *Transit*
- *High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs) and movement of goods*
- *Single Occupant Vehicles (SOVs)*

In busy, commercial locations, successful examples of complete streets include urban design features and pedestrian and cycling amenities such as street trees, landscaping, wide sidewalks with universal design, street furnishings, pedestrian scale lighting, windows at street level with transparent glazing, bike racks, and weather protection.

**Complete Streets** *are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access and movement for all users. Pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, scooter riders, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to feel safe and to reach their destinations. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and cycle to work. Adapted from National Complete Streets Coalition*

As the major owner of public lands in Oak Bay, the District takes responsibility for the health, safety and well-being of its residents and employees, and the effective use of its public parking facilities, and related transportation networks. The District shows leadership by example, and asks businesses, schools, public institutions, and private developers of land to join the District in comprehensive programs of Transportation Demand Management (TDM). Oak Bay considers the following TDM options within District planning of transportation networks:

- collaboration with business associations to increase all types of parking options for customers, visitors, and employees across the District
- collaboration with private condominium owners, landlords and other building operators to ensure efficient access to off-street parking, and to increase revenue to offset costs of “shut-in” parking, ensuring parking turnover and space availability occurs at optimal levels
- flex parking passes for all employees who use alternate modes of transportation, but occasionally drive
- designated car pool stalls
- building programs that include showers and end-of-trip facilities in all new buildings, and in major public building renovation projects
- improving pedestrian-oriented design
- creating cycling-friendly facilities
- offering commuting options
- requiring paid parking
- subsidized employee bus pass programs
- mandatory bus pass programs for students
- parking fees that increase annually to discourage vehicle trips and to recognize the cost for employers of supplying and operating parking spaces
- sidewalk, pathway and multiple use trails to improve pedestrian and cycling use
- collaboration with other public institutions, churches, and government agencies to share parking costs, and to promote effective use of available parking stalls

**Transportation Demand Management (TDM)** is a tool used to encourage new transportation patterns. TDM plans and strategies include education, incentives and disincentives, and travel options to support walking, cycling, ride-sharing and transit. This can help to achieve multiple goals, such as reducing the reliance on carbon-based fuels in support of GHG reductions, meeting the changing needs of the population, increasing the efficiency of transportation infrastructure, and providing measurable health improvements. TDM can be a cost-effective alternative to increasing capacity.





*Photo Credit: Catherine Berris*

Significant funding for transportation networks is provided by the Capital Regional District, the Province of BC, and by the Federal government. Different criteria apply in each funding program, but most municipalities on lower Vancouver Island are successful in obtaining external funding annually for new or improved transportation infrastructure. Funding success largely depends upon submitted proposals that advocate and promote complete streets or alternate transportation. The government funding programs do not encourage proposals seen as increasing automobile traffic. Examples of these funding programs are Gas Tax Dollars (CRD), ICBC (support for improvements to “dangerous intersections”), CIPP and Local Motion Programs (BC Government), and Building Canada (Federal).

## Road Network

District roads are divided into four types, which are defined as follows:

- **Arterial** roads are the largest that occur in Oak Bay. These connect the major activity centres and carry large volumes of traffic entering and leaving Oak Bay.
- **Collector** is the next level of road. The name derives from the fact that they collect traffic from the local roads and channel it to the arterials. This type of road may still maintain most of the characteristics of a local road. In established communities such as Oak Bay, collectors are designated based on historical use.
- **Special** roads do not fit easily into any categories because they perform a number of roles. In addition to being important vehicle routes, they have other functions that may be environmental or recreational.
- **Local** are the most common roads within Oak Bay. Their primary purpose is to serve the houses that directly abut them.

Schedule C illustrates the current road classifications. The District is planning to update some of the roads to different classes in the future.

The road network contains a mix of traditional grid, modified grid, and cul-de-sacs/non-grid roads. Most streets are quiet; however, as the number of vehicles has increased in Oak Bay and throughout the CRD, traffic and parking on some roads has changed so that the condition, traffic, and speed are of concern to residents.



*Photo Credit: Catherine Berris*





Photo Credit: Gloria Back



As in many other Canadian municipalities, parking of automobiles on streets and in public parking lots takes up significant amounts of land. The District is the largest “parking” landlord in Oak Bay with 493 off-street parking stalls owned and operated on municipal land. Comparatively, the District is a bigger parking landlord than the City of Victoria. Victoria, with a population of 80,000 and 1,900 city parking spaces has one space for each 42.1 residents. Oak Bay, with a population of just over 18,000 and 493 municipal parking spaces, has one space for each 36.5 residents

The municipal parking lots are subsidized by the District, with minimal revenues arising from them. In this sense, such parking is not “free”. The District pays for construction, maintenance, operation, and enforcement of these 493 parking stalls.

The District’s parking lots are located throughout the community. Several locations including the villages, the Oak Bay Recreation Centre, Monterey Centre, and a multi-unit residential area on Haultain Street sometimes experience significant parking demands. While some residents request additional parking, a more sustainable approach may be to provide alternate forms of transportation to these key destinations. Parking on residential streets is also a concern to some residents; there is a perception that parking congestion on streets is associated with unregulated secondary suites.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

There are several parking areas located off rear lanes and one parking lot under a building in the Village, but the street parking continues to be congested at peak times. For some new developments in the Village, the District collected fees for an off-site parking lot, but this has not yet been constructed.

*All of the 13 municipalities in the Capital Regional District have approved policies that embrace the complete streets concept. While various terms are used, such as multi-modal transportation, active transportation, alternative transportation, etc., the concepts are the same. These municipalities include Saanich, Victoria, Esquimalt, View Royal, Colwood and Langford. The City of Vancouver and the City of Calgary follow similar policies.*

## Active Transportation

Residents have expressed an interest in improving the options for active modes of transportation, including transit and safe pedestrian and cycling routes throughout Oak Bay. An Active Transportation Plan (Boulevard Transportation Group, 2011) identifies proposed commuter bike routes, three new neighbourhood bikeways, and pedestrian network improvements (Figure 5.2). The District is well-suited to these forms of transportation due to its gentle topography, compact nature, and short distance to downtown Victoria.

Neighbourhood bike routes have the most significant opportunity to increase cycling mode share among residents, including families with children, according to the study on motivations and barriers. Neighbourhood bike routes can also improve the walkability and liveability of a street, encouraging more social interaction.

Bike lanes have been built on some roads, but the network lacks continuity and needs improvements to increase safety and encourage new cyclists. Skateboards and longboards are another form of transportation for younger residents and are used by some students and other youth in the community. Longboarding is prohibited on several streets due to safety risks.

There is a need to repair many of the District's sidewalks due to their age and the effects of tree roots. Oak Bay's residents would also benefit from more accessible and versatile pedestrian infrastructure such as ramps, longer walk signals, and wider sidewalks to accommodate motorized scooters.

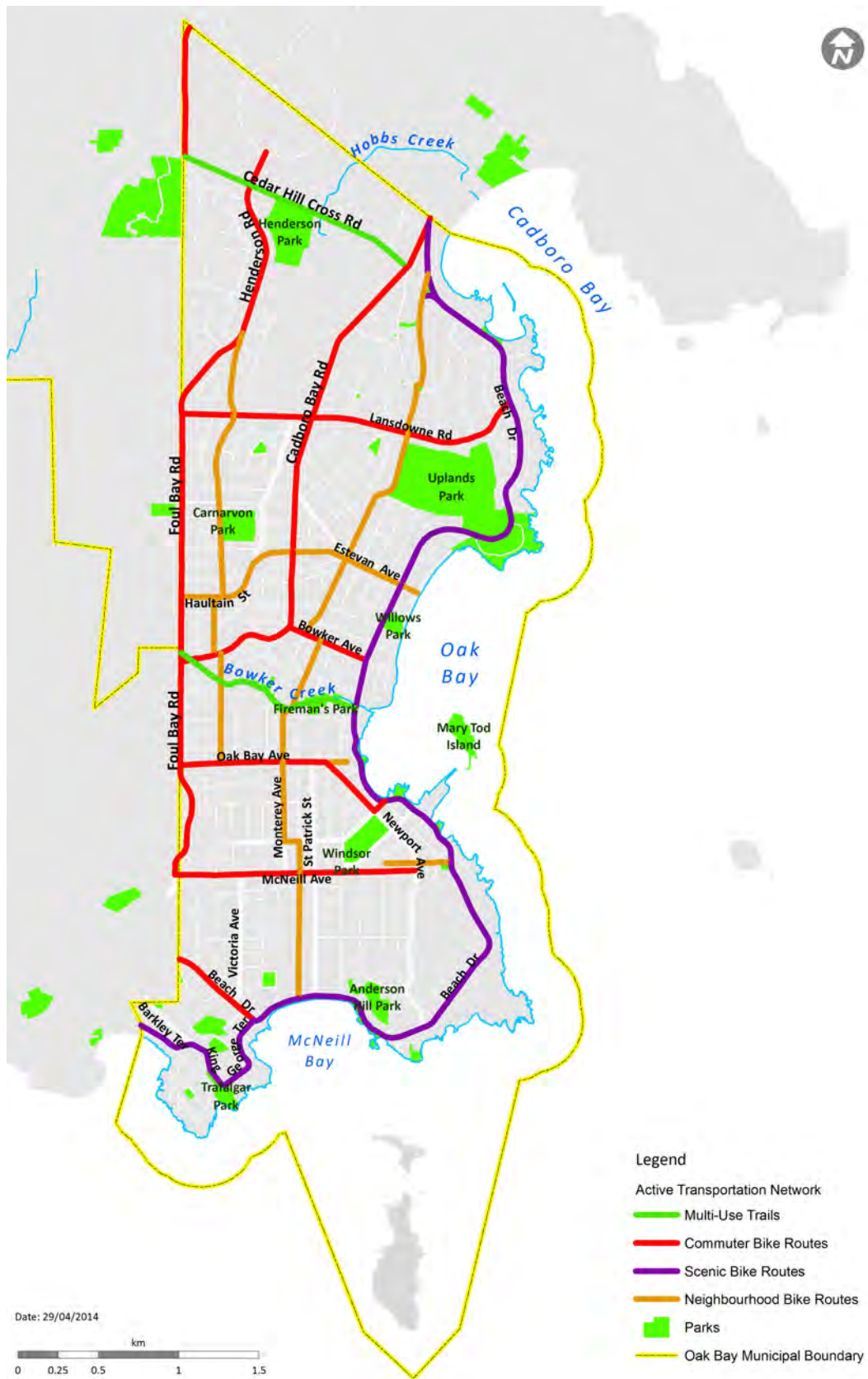


Figure 5.2 Active Transportation Network





## Transit

Public transit in Oak Bay is provided by BC Transit, a regional authority (Figure 5.3). Public transit has been reduced recently due to low ridership. Transit currently focuses on connections between Oak Bay, the University of Victoria, and the City of Victoria and not on routes within the community. Oak Bay has limited ability to change the services offered by BC Transit, but there could be opportunities to supplement the bus service with some local solutions.



*Photo Credits: Gloria Back*

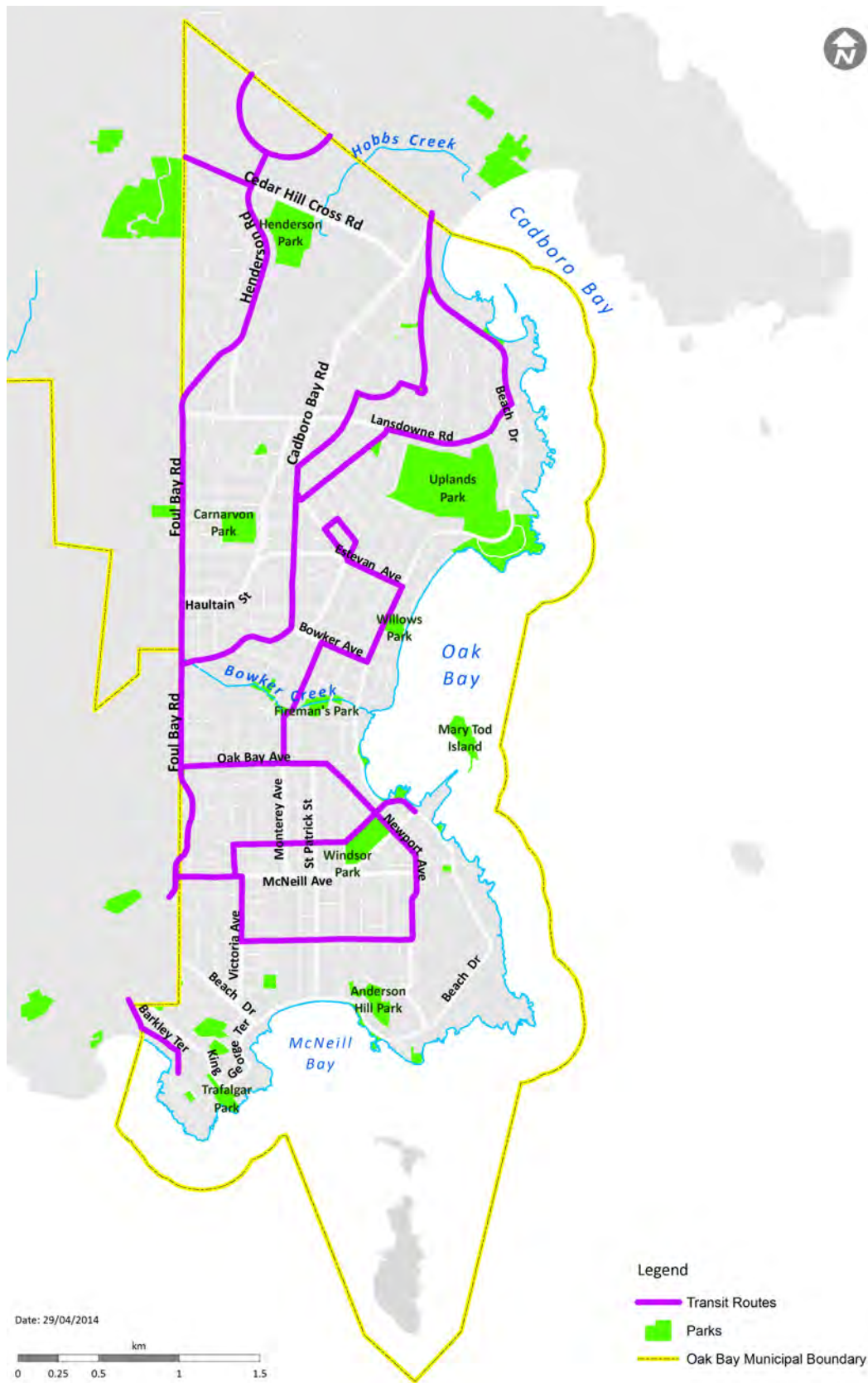


Figure 5.3 Transit Network

## Transportation in Development Planning

There are opportunities to support active transportation through new development projects. Some options to consider include provision of bicycle parking amenities, reductions in parking stalls where other transportation options and/or multiple services and amenities exist, and charging stations for electric or hybrid vehicles.

### Community Survey Input

*There were many comments in the community survey about pedestrian safety and the need for sidewalk improvements and clearing vegetation and obstructions from sidewalks; however, not all roads require sidewalks. Sidewalks are said to require surface repair, more and better curb cuts, railings, benches, and in the Village there were requests for wider sidewalks and more crosswalks with flashing lights and audible signals.*

*On-street parking is a concern, especially in relation to secondary suites and the potential for more multi-unit apartments. Road repair is a priority for some, though others feel that sidewalk repair is a higher priority.*

*Traffic calming measures and adjustments to speed limits are controversial, and some residents are adamantly opposed to traffic calming, which they say irritates drivers. There were, however, many comments about speeding cars and streets were identified where vehicles regularly exceed the speed limit. The safety of school children walking and cycling to school or being dropped off and picked up was a concern to some parents and people who live near schools.*

*Some comments identified very busy intersections where drivers have difficulties making left turns because, as one resident put it, “traffic signals such as advance left turns have not kept pace with increasing traffic”. Replacing four-way stops with roundabouts/traffic circles was recommended quite a few times as a way to improve traffic flow, reduce the speed of vehicles, and increase safety, and as a “greener” alternative than stop and go traffic that results from stop signs and traffic lights.*



*Bicycle lanes or routes were commented on many times, and some thought bicycle lanes are an important strategy while others, including cyclists, thought they weren't necessary. Bicycle routes on less busy streets were preferred by some over designated lanes on streets that are shared with heavy vehicular traffic. Bike routes through residential areas to schools were also suggested to improve safety for children on their way to and from school and to encourage walking and cycling to school instead of being driven. Commuter bike lanes were said to be needed to the University of Victoria and downtown Victoria.*

*Recent reductions in transit service were mentioned by bus riders. The comments contain requests for new routes, more frequent service, better service to the hospital and nearby medical offices, routes and stops that are the same in both directions, and better coordination of night routes linking with buses to downtown so residents aren't left stranded. There were quite a few mentions of having smaller transit buses in Oak Bay and a few said the tourist buses should be shuttle-sized, hybrid or electric. An idea of a local shuttle was to have "small community buses running frequently to the Village", Estevan, and "core areas", a "shopping shuttle in effect". These could be very small buses, hop-on hop-off buses, or streetcars that would be used by locals and tourists, bringing customers to businesses.*

*Tourist buses are unpopular in Oak Bay because of their noise and diesel exhaust, and residential streets adjacent to commercial areas were described as "de facto truck routes" for delivery trucks trying to avoid the heavier traffic on Oak Bay Avenue.*

### 5.1.1 Transportation Objectives

The transportation objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Design and operate roads in villages as "complete streets", as adopted by Council policy, with all users in mind, including pedestrians of all ages and abilities, vehicles, cyclists, transit, and motor scooters.
2. Improve sidewalks for better accessibility, especially in commercial and high-use locations.
3. Address the safety of the road network through management of speed and road improvements.
4. Provide more and safer options for commuter and recreational bike routes and infrastructure.

5. Advocate for improved transit services.
6. Address needs for access to the Village, Estevan Village, other commercial areas, and recreation centres, balancing business interests with the move towards additional and diverse transportation modes.
7. Reduce noise and air quality impacts from commercial vehicles and buses on residents.

### 5.1.2 Transportation Policies

The transportation policies of the OCP are as follows:

#### General Policies

- T1. Apply the design concepts of “complete streets” in the Villages, per the Urban Design Plan (see MUC11), and amend District bylaws as needed to accommodate any new street standards.
- T2. Adopt and implement Transportation Demand Management strategies and tools in parallel with the CRD, other municipalities, and public institutions such as Camosun College and University of Victoria.
- T3. Apply transportation design and servicing standards based on universal design to enable people of all mobility levels to use sidewalks, bike routes and transit. Prioritize improvements in locations with higher concentrations of young children, seniors and people with disabilities, and places where residents go to access essential goods and services.
- T4. Incorporate techniques and controls in road design to ensure safe and non-congested roadways, while facilitating ease of movement for pedestrians, vehicles and bicycles, e.g., roundabouts/traffic circles, pedestrian crossings, signals. Monitor these to ensure effectiveness over time.
- T5. Monitor ‘resident-only’ parking regulations, and work with residents to revise these over time as needed.
- T6. Engage Oak Bay Village businesses on strategies for reducing the impacts of delivery trucks on residents of adjacent neighbourhoods.
- T7. Collaborate with other municipalities and businesses on ways to accommodate tourist buses while minimizing conflicts and impacts on the community, e.g., use of low-emission vehicles.
- T8. Encourage more environmentally friendly vehicular alternatives to single occupancy vehicles and private car ownership, e.g., vanpooling, carpooling / ride-sharing, car co-ops, and high efficiency or clean energy vehicles.

## Active Transportation

- T9. Support and encourage the development of Oak Bay's pedestrian and cycling networks as part of an interconnected multi-modal transportation system within Oak Bay and to adjacent jurisdictions, consistent with the District's Active Transportation Plan.
- T10. Prepare a sidewalk upgrading plan to support those with physical challenges being mobile and safe in the community, e.g., more ramps, smoother and wider sidewalks in commercial areas and on community walking routes such as Beach Drive and the Esplanade.
- T11. Promote cycling for commuting, personal transport and recreation purposes through improvements to infrastructure and facilities, including bike racks and signs on bike routes, as identified in the Active Transportation Plan.
- T12. Improve way-finding systems (signage and other methods) to encourage use of Oak Bay's trails and paths.
- T13. Encourage the school district and parent associations to develop and periodically update safe route-to-school plans in consultation with the District.



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*





Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## Transit

- T14. Advocate for and collaborate with BC Transit on increased transit service and options to meet the diverse needs of the community, including youth, working adults, seniors and people with mobility challenges. Encourage better service on higher-demand routes, including those connecting to the University of Victoria, Oak Bay Village, Oak Bay Recreation Centre, downtown Victoria, and hospital and medical services.
- T15. Encourage BC Transit to continue and expand programs to schools, businesses and organizations to encourage increased transit use by students, employees and seniors.
- T16. Encourage and explore options for other modes of public transportation to improve connections within the community, e.g., local mini-bus loop, village shuttle, potentially operated by a community or business group.

## Transportation in Development Planning

- T17. Require Transportation Demand Management (TDM) studies and measures for new developments, including public projects.
- T18. Encourage the inclusion of bicycle parking areas and facilities such as showers, lockers, and change rooms, and electric and hybrid vehicle charging stations, within Mixed Use, Specialized Commercial, Community Institutional, and Multi Unit Residential development projects. Consider including this as a requirement in the revised Zoning Bylaw.
- T19. Consider allowing reductions to parking requirements for Mixed Use, Specialized Commercial, Community Institutional, and Multi Unit Residential projects that can demonstrate a decrease in the demand for car travel and an increase in the use of other travel options, especially if the parking will be replaced with other community amenities. This could pertain to locations with good access to public transit, projects with site-specific TDM strategies, or housing where residents primarily walk, bike, or use public transit.

## 5.2 Utilities and Services

### *Community Health and Resilience → Utilities and Services*

- Improving infrastructure efficiency and sustainability
- Reducing waste and water and energy use
- Supporting long term needs
- Reducing operational costs



### Overview

The District’s Engineering and Public Works Department designs, builds, maintains and is responsible for the District’s physical infrastructure assets. These include water mains, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, roads, street lights, sidewalks, public amenities, vehicle fleets, and solid waste collection infrastructure.

The District has been working towards reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in its delivery of services. For example, the District is using trenchless technology where possible to replace pipes, which reduces carbon emissions.

**Trenchless technology** involves methods, materials, and equipment for the installation or renewal of underground infrastructure with minimal disruption to surface traffic, business, and other activities. Methods include tunneling and horizontal directional drilling.

Some services are shared with Saanich and Victoria in order to maximize efficiencies. These shared service agreements pertain to police, fire, and emergency communications, as well as water, stormwater and sewer in some locations. The District provides residents with bi-weekly garbage and kitchen waste collection, while the CRD is responsible for recycling services, and providing disposal sites for solid waste and compost. The Oak Bay Police Department has protected residents since 1906 and contracts with the Saanich Police Department for major crime investigations. The Oak Bay Fire Department has provided emergency and non-emergency services since 1937 (see section 6.3).

Oak Bay’s utilities play a vitally important role in supporting the community. Oak Bay maintains an inventory of and actively monitors its underground services, prepares a schedule of repair and maintenance to address priorities, and completes annual plans and budgets for the renewal process.



Photo Credit: Hope Burns

Like other communities worldwide that were founded more than 100 years ago, a significant amount of the District’s underground infrastructure is in its latter years of service, and the needs for repair and replacement exceed the available resources. In 2009, Oak Bay completed an inventory of all District-owned property as part of its Tangible Capital Assets Project. The project, in compliance with Public Sector Accounting Board standards, advanced the District’s asset management practices and included an analysis of the District’s largest expenditures – its linear assets (Figure 5.4).

Asset Category	Useful Life (years)*	Total Length (m)	Useful Life Expired (m)	Useful Life Expired (% of total)	Replacement Costs
Roadway	30	939,311	792,237	84%	\$61,794,486
Storm Drain (Gravity Mains)	50 - 80	142,106	124,490	88%	\$62,867,634
Sanitary Sewer (Gravity Mains)	50 - 100	104,972	93,094	89%	\$47,012,354
Water Systems (Pressure Mains)	50 - 100	120,533	57,969	48%	\$26,955,587

\*Reflects range of estimated useful life of materials within each asset category.

Figure 5.4 Tangible Capital Asset Analysis – 2009

Source: District of Oak Bay



Residents also have a role in becoming a more sustainable community. For example, reducing waste decreases the impacts of disposal, collection, transportation, and processing of the waste. Water and energy conservation also reduce the needs for services and impacts on infrastructure and the environment.

Most of the District's funding for utility construction and maintenance is from taxes, with occasional grants. Almost all municipalities apply development cost charges (DCCs) to new construction projects to provide the funding for improvements and upgrades to utilities, roads and parks required to support increases in density. Oak Bay does not currently charge DCCs.

## Roads

The road network is described in Section 5.1. The District allocates funds for annual road repair and maintenance. This includes sidewalk replacement; ramps and curb-drops are now standard practice.

## Sanitary Sewers

The District's sewer collection system conveys sanitary sewage through a series of pipes and pump stations, the most significant of which is the Currie Road pump station, for primary treatment and discharge into the ocean. As part of the regional wastewater treatment plan, the Currie Road pump station and conveyance pipe is proposed to be upgraded, with other conveyance upgrades to transmit sewage to a proposed secondary treatment plant.

A major ongoing issue for Oak Bay is the inflow and infiltration of stormwater into the regional sanitary system, which the provincial government has required to be eliminated over time. Oak Bay has been carrying out significant work on this issue in South Oak Bay. Work on separating the combined storm/sanitary sewer lines in the Uplands is scheduled to begin in the near future. The District's proposed cost-sharing of sewage treatment is the highest per capita, due in part to the combined sewer/storm system in the Uplands neighbourhood.

Although the Tangible Capital Assets analysis includes calculations of sewer system improvements based on pipe replacement, there is a much less expensive alternative. Most sewer pipes can be rehabilitated with liners and this is the method that the District is currently using where possible.



*Photo Credit: Catherine Berris*

## Storm Sewers

Oak Bay's storm sewer system includes many older pipes, direct outfalls to creeks and the ocean, and combined storm/sanitary sewers in Uplands. Storm sewer pipes are generally in worse condition than sanitary sewer pipes as they are subject to mechanical damage from rocks and other debris. They can be rejuvenated with liners where the pipes are intact enough to support that. The District has been spending around \$300,000 annually on pipe upgrading and replacement.

The stormwater system has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed population growth. Once the District implements rainwater management to a greater degree, there will be less demand on the system. Rainwater management typically involves some attenuation and treatment of runoff prior to discharge into creeks or the ocean where possible.

## Solid Waste Management

The District collects solid waste, which is directed to the Hartland landfill. Curbside recycling and garden waste are collected by a private operator and transported to a sorting depot in Victoria.

Oak Bay also operates a municipal yard and recycling facility. This facility is highly valued by the community because it is convenient, tax-funded, it allows disposition of excess refuse (beyond the bi-weekly pick-up allowances), and the facility encourages conscientious recycling. Paint, batteries and other materials are recycled at the yard. Recycling of soft plastics and other specific materials is available through third party community-based monthly drop-off depots.

"Zero waste" is a goal and practice to guide people in emulating sustainable natural cycles, where all discarded materials are resources for others to use. While Oak Bay may not be ready to commit to becoming a zero waste municipality, it has the opportunity to move towards that goal, and to use zero waste principles to influence municipal decisions such as purchasing, and to educate, inform, and facilitate community decisions to reduce, reuse and recycle. One specific opportunity is for event organizers to run zero waste events as a model and inspiration for others.

**Zero waste** means designing and managing products and processes to reduce the volume and toxicity of waste and materials, conserve and recover all resources, and not burn or bury them.





Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch

## Water

Water is provided to the District from the CRD, and pump stations direct it to higher ground for distribution to the community. The volume and pressure are generally good. The region's primary water supply from the Sooke Lake Reservoir is very secure and has sufficient quantity to serve future regional growth, including the District of Oak Bay. The District is gradually replacing and repairing water pipes, using liners and replacing old cast iron pipes. This is helping to conserve water by reducing leaks in the system. The District has considered a potential need for a second water main connection for emergency purposes, possibly at Leighton Street in Victoria.

## Shoreline Management

Some areas of the shoreline are eroding. This is most significant in McNeill Bay, and there is also some erosion in the Willows Beach area. The District is monitoring shoreline erosion, conducts mitigation on an annual basis, and has established a contingency fund to address the issue.

## Lighting

The District has been implementing some 'dark sky' lighting, and using more energy efficient lighting. Cattle Point is designated as an Urban Star Park by the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada and is a destination for star gazing.

**Dark sky lighting** principles are quite straightforward; light when you need it, where you need it, and no more. The dark-sky movement is a campaign to reduce light pollution. The advantages of reducing light pollution include an increased number of stars visible at night, reducing the effects of unnatural lighting on the environment, and cutting down on energy use.



## Community Survey Input

*Concerns identified by the community include combined sewers, surface water runoff, and shoreline erosion. The unknown cost of renewing aging infrastructure was a primary theme in the community survey. Many are aware of a growing need and urgency for infrastructure repair and replacement and are worried about looming unknown costs associated with upgrading sewage treatment for the region. The survey found a high level of agreement that repair and replacement of water and sewer lines is a high priority. Some respondents advised against spending money on anything other than essential services. Others suggested looking after the basics - water, sewer, garbage, power and roads - prior to anything else. Some residents think that bringing in more people and more businesses are part of the solution to infrastructure costs because this would help to increase the tax base.*

*In the community survey, some interest was expressed in dark sky lighting, but mostly residents mentioned their qualms regarding reduced lighting and fears of falling and feeling less secure. Some said there is not enough light now at night so to reduce it further did not make sense to them. Groups such as the elderly, the visually impaired, and people who walk or jog at night were said to need sufficient street lighting due to the poor condition of sidewalks and to prevent injury from overhanging branches. A few felt that most light pollution comes from their neighbours' lights, and several mentioned the new antennae and the annoying 'blinking lights' on Trial Island. A resident suggested that replacing tall street lights with lower, energy-saving (and more attractive) street lights would save energy costs, effectively light the sidewalks where it was needed, and reduce light shining in residents' windows at night.*

*Residents appreciate the municipal yard and recycling facility and provided some suggestions for improvement, including through-fare/enter-exit points for more efficiency and safety and expanded hours on the weekend. None of the strategies of the survey dealt with solid waste curbside collection, but it was mentioned in the comments. For example, a busier municipal yard facility was attributed to more households having to go to the dump since garbage collection became bi-weekly and due to use of the facility by non-residents. Requests included expanding the materials that can be recycled, pick-up of household goods, and green waste pick-up.*



## 5.2.1 Utilities and Services Objectives

The utilities and services objectives of the OCP are as follows:

1. Renew and develop Oak Bay’s engineering infrastructure and utilities in sustainable ways to meet the community’s needs.
2. Improve the level and quality of services continuously.
3. Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the delivery of services.
4. Encourage the investigation of shared services where this can increase efficiency.
5. Plan for and undertake shoreline management.
6. Use and require “dark sky” street and building lighting to reduce light pollution.



*Photo Credit: Hope Burns*



## 5.2.2 Utilities and Services Policies

The utilities and services policies of the OCP are as follows:

### General Policies

- US1. Maintain and extend shared service agreements with other municipalities and the CRD where efficient and practical.
- US2. Repair and replace water and sewer lines on an ongoing basis.
- US3. Prepare a Development Cost Charge Bylaw for utilities, roads and parks.
- US4. Consider energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in the purchase of District vehicles, tools and equipment and in maintenance and operations.
- US5. Reduce water use and waste generation to the degree possible in municipal operations.
- US6. Continue to implement and expand the road maintenance program commenced in 2012.
- US6. Update engineering and building bylaws in accordance with this OCP and a renewed *Zoning Bylaw*, ensuring that the various bylaws are synchronized.
- US7. Consider undertaking a comprehensive Asset Management Program that builds upon PSAB 3150 reporting, in order to maintain a sustainable foundation of infrastructure that is affordable, provides service levels consistent with the community's expectations, and encourages growth and economic development.

### Sanitary and Storm Sewers

- US8. Incorporate innovative rainwater management techniques into major civic projects, per the proposed Rainwater Management Policy.
- US7. Finalize plans for and undertake the separation of the Uplands combined sewer system.

## Solid Waste Management

- US9. Consider improving traffic circulation at the municipal yard and recycling facility and expanding its hours on the weekend.
- US10. Consider expanding the solid waste collection program, potentially including materials that can be recycled, pick-up of household goods, and green waste pick-up.

## Water

- US11. Explore the potential need for a second water main connection for emergency purposes.

## Shoreline Management

- US12. Conduct a shoreline assessment of the McNeill Bay area, and other locations as required, to identify options for shoreline and seawall stabilization.

## Lighting

- US13. Establish Oak Bay as a “dark sky” community and limit illumination of the night sky and light trespass, balancing this with the need to light high-use sidewalks and paths for safety reasons.
- US14. When District light standards are being replaced, consider energy consumption and dark sky principles without compromising light levels required for pedestrian safety. Explore the potential for shorter, more energy efficient lights for new or replacement street lighting.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## 5.3 Emergency Management

### *Community Health and Resilience → Emergency Management*

- Saving lives
- Preserving the environment
- Protecting property
- Building broad community networks and partnerships



### Overview

The District of Oak Bay is committed to providing the community with an emergency plan that enables it to respond to and recover from an emergency or disaster that interrupts the lives of its residents, local businesses, and the services of the District. Managing that risk extends beyond emergency response planning to include risk assessment, land use policy, mitigation, business continuity and recovery. The District has an Emergency Response and Recovery Plan that is updated every five years. The Plan is based on the four principles of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery (Figure 5.5).

The delivery of protective and emergency management services in Oak Bay is community-focused. The emergency program, and fire and police departments, have tailored their programs and priorities to align with the needs of residents and businesses in the District.

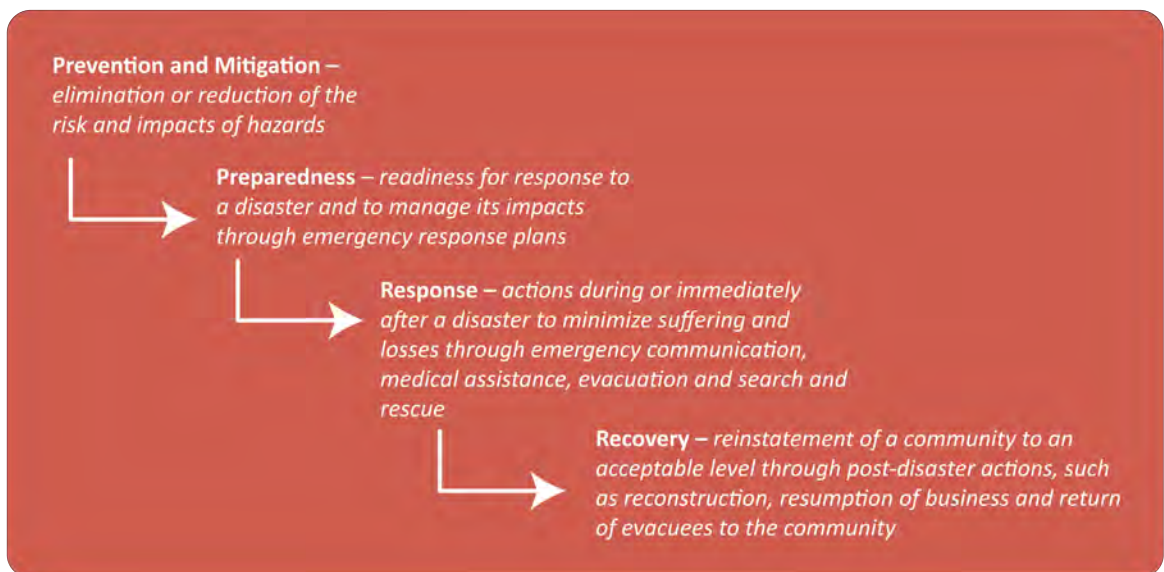


Figure 5.5: The Four Principles of Emergency Management



## Hazardous Conditions

Emergency management in Oak Bay considers the entirety of the District including all lands, facilities, infrastructure, businesses, institutions, federal and provincial lands, and addresses all types of potential emergencies including earthquakes, severe storms or major fires. Oak Bay is most vulnerable to two natural hazards, earthquake and severe weather incidents. The rain storms and wind incidents have been increasingly intense in recent years.

The District is located within Seismic Zone 5. This area is at risk of a damaging earthquake that could threaten critical infrastructure such as sewers, water mains, gas mains, power lines, roads, municipal buildings, service facilities and institutions. Figure 5.6 illustrates the Composite Relative Earthquake Hazard Map. Amplification factors refer to the extent to which amplification factors (not the actual amount of earthquake ground motion) can vary with different strengths and periods of ground motion. The amplification factors on this map do not exceed the seismic design criteria of the current building code, but could be significant for structures not built to the current code. Low to high hazard is applied to areas with insufficient data to assign a more specific hazard rating.



*Photo Credit: Catherine Berris*

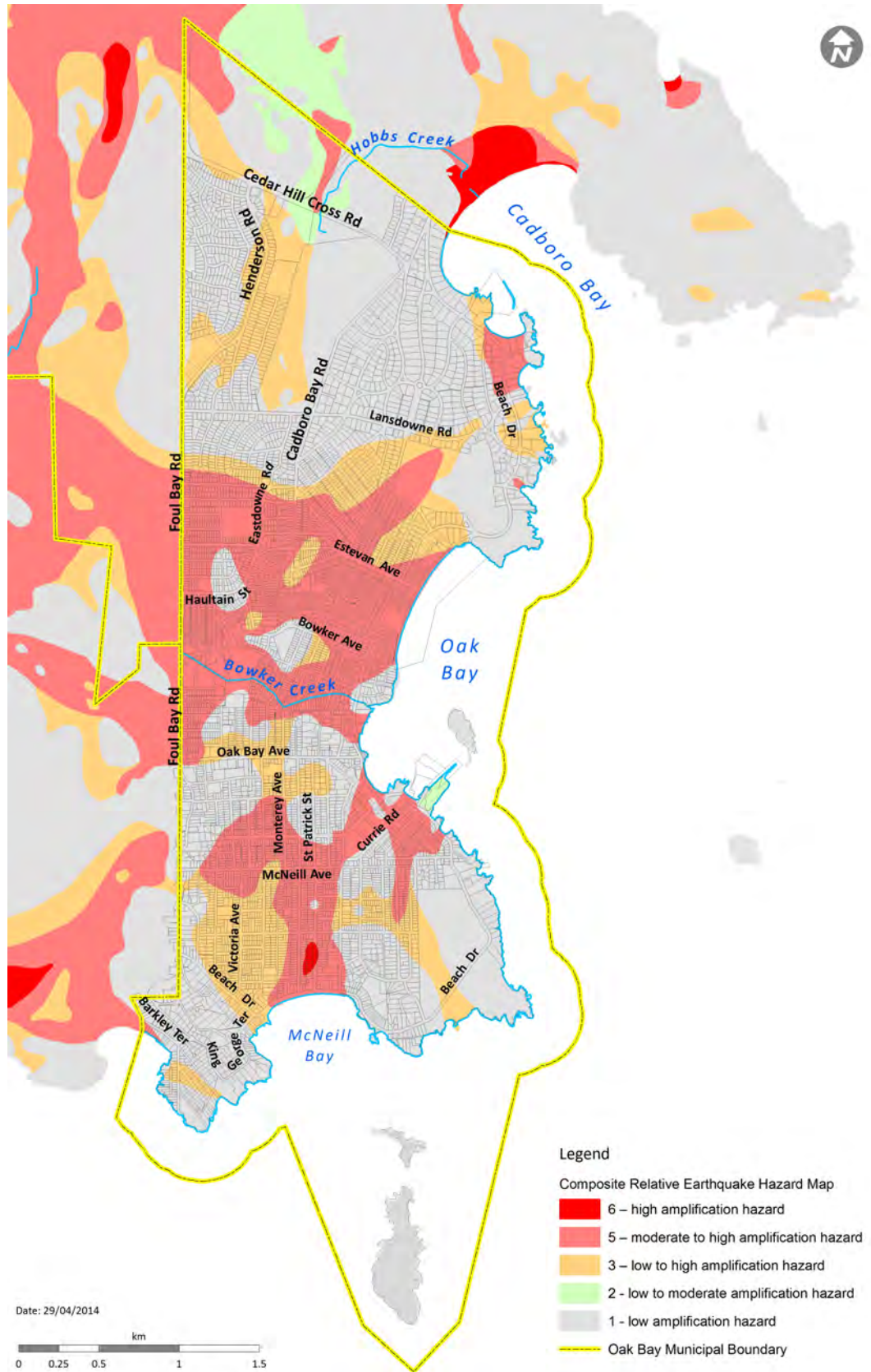


Figure 5.6 Composite Relative Earthquake Hazard Map





**Figure 5.7 Tsunami Zone Map**

Source: CRD





*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

There is one location in Oak Bay that is known to have geological instability (see Schedule F).

Sea level rise is also a consideration, as noted in Section 2.6 Climate Change and Energy. The CRD is currently in the process of developing a Sea Level Rise Coastal Assessment and Model Bylaw that is expected to be completed at the end of 2014. It will determine the Flood Construction Level for the CRD and proposed policies for inclusion in OCPs. The same locations that are at risk related to sea level rise also have increased likelihood of experiencing flooding associated with severe storms.

In 2013, the CRD conducted a tsunami risk assessment that identifies tsunami planning zones and risk areas within Oak Bay (Figure 5.7). The District's assessed risk was determined to be very low. The main tsunami threat for the Oak Bay area is associated with a Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) earthquake off the west coast of Vancouver Island. A tsunami created elsewhere in the Pacific Basin could, at most, cause effects in low-lying coastal areas similar to large winter storms, and generate strong water currents that could threaten people on beaches. If a major CSZ earthquake of a magnitude of 8 or greater occurred and generated a tsunami that struck the coastline of Oak Bay at high tide, Windsor Park and other low lying beach areas may be at risk of a tide surge.

### 5.3.1 Emergency Management Objectives

1. The emergency management objectives of the OCP are as follows:
2. Prepare and implement emergency plans, policies and protocols that provide the District with a framework for the protection of public safety, health, the environment, critical infrastructure, property and economic stability through its bylaws, policies, and planning and development decisions.
3. Provide current information and training for Oak Bay staff regarding emergency hazardous events and natural disasters that may affect the District and in current mitigation and preparedness practices.

Promote municipal and community resilience through education on the implementation of improved mitigation and preparedness practices.

### 5.3.2 Emergency Management Policies

The emergency management policies of the OCP are as follows:

- EM1. Establish a Shorelines Development Permit Area (Schedule E) that includes considerations related to sea level rise.
- EM2. Establish a Hazardous Conditions Development Permit Area (Schedule F) that includes considerations related to geotechnical hazards.
- EM3. Prepare plans and policy to respond to, and recover from, a major emergency/disaster that considers risk assessment through an all-hazards approach.
- EM4. Continually update the emergency plan through applications of a hazard, risk and vulnerability assessment, and address the risk assessment results through bylaws and policy direction to mitigate the identified risk.
- EM5. Consider emergency management planning and mapping to include critical infrastructure and vulnerable populations in the community.
- EM6. Incorporate natural hazard risk assessments into the planning and location of critical infrastructure, such as municipal services, transportation and utilities.
- EM7. In land use decision-making, address natural hazards, including earthquake, severe weather events, soil erosion, fault lines and flooding.
- EM8. Prepare and adopt policy and incentives for seismic upgrades to commercial and residential designated heritage buildings.
- EM9. Consider incentives to non-heritage properties for seismic upgrading in their buildings.
- EM10. Actively promote and foster new emergency management partnerships with local, regional, provincial governments, non-government agencies, and community organizations to encourage coordination of emergency management in the CRD.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## 6.0 Implementation

### 6.1 Implementing Actions

The OCP's implementation depends on the collective decisions and actions of the District, developers, residents, businesses, service providers, and federal and provincial agencies that have jurisdiction over certain matters. The District's means of implementing the Plan include zoning, development permits, building permits, subdivision, and fiscal programs to support land acquisitions, capital projects, District operations, and other District activities. While the *Local Government Act* does not require the District to commit to or authorize any specific project set out in the OCP, it does indicate that all decisions should be consistent with the Plan.



The implementation table addresses actions that involve the preparation of new or revised policies and tools (Figure 6.1). This is presented as an initial list, as new implementation strategies may evolve throughout the life of the OCP as new needs arise or priorities shift. The action steps have cost implications and will need to be considered within the context of the District’s Long Term Financial Plan and annual budgeting. For some of the implementation actions, there is a significant amount of work required before the action can be undertaken, e.g., updating the *Zoning Bylaw*. The identification of action items does not commit the District to undertaking these actions.

The actions are listed along with the following information:

**Level of Effort Required**

- Low – small project
- Medium – medium project
- High – major project

**Phasing**

- Short – within 1 to 3 years
- Medium – within 4 to 6 years
- Long – 7 years or more

The table also identifies the District staff that would be expected to be involved with or lead each task.

*The first two items on the table, the Development Procedures Bylaw and updating the Zoning Bylaw, are critical to implementing many of the policies in this OCP. The priorities and timing of other actions will be determined by District staff and Council during their annual planning.*

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Level of Effort Required</b>	<b>Phasing</b>	<b>District Responsibility</b>
<b>Short term</b>			
Prepare a Development Procedures Bylaw or amendment of the Land Use Procedures Bylaw to implement the Development Permit Areas, sustainability checklists, etc.	Low	Short	Planning
Update the Zoning Bylaw to include provisions related to secondary suites, infill housing, sustainable and energy efficient technologies, parking requirements, home-based businesses, amenity zoning and Heritage Conservation Areas	High	Short	Planning
Update other bylaws to ensure compliance with the OCP	Medium	Short	Planning, Engineering
Review and update the Tree Protection Bylaw	Low	Short	Planning
Prepare a Rainwater Management Bylaw	Low	Short	Engineering
Prepare an Urban Forest Strategy	Medium	Short	Parks and Recreation
Prepare a Park Master Plan for Carnarvon Park	Medium	Short	Parks and Recreation
Develop a policy and regulatory framework to permit secondary suites	Medium	Short	Planning
<b>Medium term</b>			
Prepare a community amenities policy to guide community amenity contributions in relation to density bonus, or density transfer	Low	Medium	Planning
Prepare a Housing Strategy	Medium	Medium	Planning
Prepare a Development Cost Charge Bylaw	Medium	Medium	Engineering, Planning
Prepare an Urban Design Plan for Oak Bay's villages	High	Medium	Planning
Prepare a network plan of proposed trails/paths and trails/paths needing improvement, and a sidewalk upgrading plan	Medium	Medium	Parks and Recreation, Engineering
Develop a Special Events Policy	Low	Medium	Parks and Recreation
Amend road standards to accommodate "complete streets" in the villages per the Urban Design Plan	Low	Medium	Engineering
<b>Long term</b>			
Prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Medium	Long	Parks and Recreation
Review and update the Public Arts Policy	Low	Long	Planning
Prepare an Arts and Culture Master Plan	Medium	Long	Parks and Recreation
Prepare a comprehensive Asset Management Strategy	Medium	Long	Engineering

**Figure 6.1: Implementation Table**



*Photo Credit: Gloria Back*

In addition to the implementation items noted above, there are many communication and partnership actions that are included in policies throughout the OCP. These are considered part of the regular responsibilities of District staff. These items include communications to the public and stakeholders about matters related to land use planning and management. Partnership actions involve collaboration and coordination with other governments and organizations on a wide range of initiatives related to climate change and energy, environment, community and social well-being, arts and culture, education, affordable and inclusive housing, community institutional uses, special events, tourism, active transportation, transit, and emergency management. These actions may occur on an ongoing or periodic basis.

## 6.2 OCP Monitoring and Review

Monitoring the OCP will be important in order to evaluate whether the vision, goals and objectives are being achieved. This can help the District to adjust efforts during the term of the OCP to better meet the community's vision. Monitoring systems often include quantitative and qualitative indicators.

Qualitative indicators may be collected through expert opinions, surveys, and focus groups. An annual workshop with OPAC could be an efficient and highly informative way to gauge progress.

A monitoring system needs to have appropriate indicators that can be measured without too much effort. Ideal indicators are those that are already collected by the District or other jurisdictions, e.g., census, CEII.

An initial list of quantitative indicators is identified in Figure 6.2. It is recommended that the District review the indicators during the annual reporting cycle, recognizing that not all data will be available annually. The District will likely need to revise the indicators over time as the data available from other sources changes and based on the experience of using these indicators.



Indicator	Data Source
Number and type of development projects	District - Planning
Number of affordable and inclusive housing units	District - Planning
Number of regulated secondary suites	District - Planning
Age profile of housing by decade	District - Planning
Number of registered/designated heritage properties	District - Planning
Length of trails	District - GIS
Length of bike lanes	District - GIS
Parkland per capita	District - Planning
Tree canopy	District – GIS (using iTree)
Transportation mode share	CRD
Number of businesses	District
Population – size, age distribution, employment, income, house values	Census
Residential to commercial tax ratio	District
Per capita disposal of solid waste	District – Public Works, CRD
Greenhouse gas emissions quantity and source	CEEI

**Figure 6.2: Indicators**

# 7.0 Development Approval Information Required

## 7.1 Application

As outlined in section 920.01 of the *Local Government Act*, development approval information may be required under any of the following circumstances:

**.1 The development results in any of the following:**

- A change in Official Community Plan land use designation
- A change in zoning
- A requirement for a development permit

**.2 The development may result in impacts on:**

- The natural environment
- Affordable and inclusive housing
- Identified heritage resources and archaeological resources
- Public facilities such as schools and parks
- Community services
- Transportation patterns and traffic flow
- Infrastructure including sewer, water, roads, drainage, street lighting, and other infrastructure
- Energy flows and greenhouse gas emissions

**.3 The development could result in other impacts that may be of concern to the residents of Oak Bay, District staff or Council**

## 7.2 Objectives

The main objective of this specification is to ensure that appropriate studies and information are provided to the District prior to development, in order for the District to evaluate the impact of the development on the community.

# 8.0 Development Permit Areas

## 8.1 Introduction

The *Local Government Act* Section 919.1 provides municipalities with the authority to establish Development Permit Areas (DPAs). Development permit areas are an effective tool for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, managing development in hazardous conditions, and setting out expectations regarding the ‘form and character’ of certain types of development.

Oak Bay has some important creek corridors and shorelines with high environmental values, and there are lands that contain potentially hazardous conditions. Establishing these as DPAs will provide the District the opportunity to manage the development process with consideration for these environmental resources and geological conditions.

The District has experienced a steady flow of development applications for mixed use, commercial and multi-unit residential projects in the past. With this OCP, there will also be applications for infill residential. Establishing DPAs that include design guidelines for these development applications will provide staff and Council with a framework for guiding and responding to development proposals.

The guidelines in the DPAs are based on the development patterns, technologies, demographics and perspectives of the day. Over time guidelines may need to change as conditions evolve.

This Plan sets out the designations, justification, objectives, application/exemptions and guidelines for each DPA.





Photo Credit: Hope Burns

## 8.2 Natural Environment Development Permit Areas

### Introduction

Oak Bay residents care deeply about natural areas, including creeks and the shoreline. Development permit areas for the natural environment will help to protect the integrity of ecosystems while allowing appropriate development to occur. This will further the vision and goals of the OCP, helping to balance environmental protection with increased development.

#### 8.2.1 Watercourses Development Permit Area

##### .1 Designation

Areas outlined on Schedule D: Watercourses Development Permit Area (DPA) are properties that contain areas designated under *Local Government Act* Section 919.1(1) (a), for protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity. The Development Permit Area itself includes the following, as defined in the *Riparian Areas Regulation*:



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

- the 30 m strip on both sides of the watercourse measured from the high water mark, based on the definition of “high water mark” in the *Riparian Areas Regulation*
- for a 3:1 (vertical/horizontal) ravine less than 60 m wide, the strip on both sides of the watercourse measured from the high water mark to a point that is 30 m beyond the top of the ravine bank
- for a 3:1 (vertical/horizontal) ravine 60 m wide or greater, a strip on both sides of the watercourse measured from the natural boundary to a point that is 10 m beyond the top of the ravine bank

## .2 Justification

Bowker Creek is a highly valued urban creek that has been the subject of extensive study and a long-term restoration and enhancement plan, as described in Section 4.1. Oak Bay also contains the upper reaches of Hobbs Creek. Hobbs Creek begins just east of Henderson Park and flows north through Saanich to Cadboro Bay. These creeks offer important habitat and hydrological values, as well as interpretation and nature education opportunities. Oak Bay has statutory responsibilities to regulate development within the riparian areas of these creeks subject to the *Riparian Areas Regulation*.

## .3 Objectives

The following are the objectives of the Watercourses Development Permit Area:

1. To implement the *Riparian Areas Regulation*



2. To preserve and protect aquatic and riparian habitat in order to support species biodiversity and natural ecological function, as well as the economic vitality of fisheries
3. To guide development to occur in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts upon aquatic and riparian habitat, fish and wildlife

#### **.4 Application**

As provided in section 920(1) of the Local Government Act, the following activities must not occur within this DPA except to the extent that there is an exemption for the activity under 8.2.1.5 or the owner has first obtained a development permit:

1. land must not be subdivided
2. construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure must not be started
3. land must not be altered

#### **.5 Exemptions**

The following do not require a development permit:

1. Repair, maintenance, alteration or reconstruction of existing legal buildings, structures or utilities provided there is no alteration of undisturbed land or vegetation
2. Emergency repairs to existing structures or utilities where a potential safety hazard exists
3. Removal of trees deemed to be hazardous and a threat to life or safety, as determined by a qualified arborist
4. Small-scale removal by hand of invasive species or noxious weeds
5. Larger-scale removal of invasive species or noxious weeds in accordance with a vegetation management plan prepared by a Registered Professional Biologist or other qualified professional
6. Within an existing landscaped area that is outside of a Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area, the placement of non-permanent structures, such as benches, tables and garden ornaments and gardening and yard maintenance activities, such as lawn mowing, tree and shrub pruning, vegetation planting and minor soil disturbances that do not alter the contours of the land
7. The construction of a small accessory building (maximum area of 10 m<sup>2</sup>), such as a gazebo, garden shed or playhouse, if all the following apply:
  - No trees are removed
  - The building is located outside of a Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area



8. Emergency actions performed by federal, provincial, regional or District staff required to prevent, control or reduce an immediate threat to human life, the natural environment, archaeological resources, or public or private property including:
  - Forest fire, flood, and erosion protection works
  - Protection, repair or replacement of public utilities
  - Clearing of an obstruction from a bridge, culvert, dock, wharf or stream
  - Bridge repairs
  - Removal of hazardous trees

## **.6 Guidelines for Watercourses Development Permit Area**

1. For land in a natural or naturalized condition, retain existing vegetation, topography and hydrology to the degree possible.
2. If suitable areas of land for the use intended exist on the property outside the Watercourses DPA, the proposed development should be directed to those areas in order to minimize development in the DPA. The onus will be placed with the applicant to demonstrate that encroaching into the Watercourses DPA is necessary due to circumstances such as topography, hazardous conditions or lack of alternative developable land, and that every effort is made to minimize adverse impacts.
3. Where a parcel of land is entirely within the Watercourses DPA, site development to maximize the separation between the proposed building/land use and the most sensitive area.
4. Where there is significant disturbance within the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA), restore and enhance the riparian area per a vegetation restoration plan, to be installed under the supervision and in accordance with the recommendations of a Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) or Registered Landscape Architect.
5. Encourage developers to exceed the minimum standards of the *Riparian Areas Regulation*.
6. Ensure that parcels that would result from a proposed subdivision that are part of or adjacent to riparian areas are large enough to contain a building site that does not require a SPEA to be crossed by a driveway, and to accommodate a reasonably usable yard area between the building envelope and the edge of the SPEA, with a depth not less than 7.5 m measured perpendicularly from the building envelope to the boundary of the SPEA.
7. The following guidelines pertain to properties along Bowker Creek, as stated in the Bowker Creek Blueprint (2012) and the Bowker Creek Watershed Management Plan (2003)<sup>1</sup>.
  - For any major development projects on sites where Bowker Creek is buried, consider ‘daylighting’ the creek if possible.

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*Bowker Creek Watershed Management Plan. Capital Regional District, 2003.*

- Increase the width of the undisturbed riparian area along the creek, ideally to 30 metres from the top of bank, and restore and enhance riparian vegetation in this area.
- Design the creek and the riparian corridor to provide native habitats, biodiversity, and passage for fish and wildlife.
- Replace any hard structures such as walls along the creek with landscape solutions such as planting or bioengineering, subject to bank stability and erosion control considerations.



Photo Credit: Kevin Murdoch

## 8.2.2 Shorelines Development Permit Area

### .1 Designation

Areas outlined on Schedule E: Shorelines Development Permit Area (DPA) are properties that contain areas designated under *Local Government Act* Section 919.1(1) (a) for protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity; and section 919.1(1) (b) for the protection of development from hazardous conditions. The Shorelines Development Permit Area itself includes the following:

1. All those upland and foreshore areas measured horizontally above and below and within 15 metres of the natural boundary of the sea, including the entire shoreline forming the south and east boundaries of Oak Bay.

### .2 Justification

Oak Bay has an abundance of ocean shoreline. It is very diverse, including the long sandy Willows Beach, rocky headlands, offshore islands, and rich intertidal habitats at McNeill and Gonzales Bays. The shoreline offers biologically rich and diverse habitat for waterfowl, raptors, shellfish, marine mammals, and smaller marine creatures. In addition to its ecological importance to an array of aquatic species, the ocean shoreline has a key role in natural systems such as ocean processes, erosion control and flood management.

### **.3 Objectives**

The following are the objectives of the Shorelines Development Permit Area:

- 1.** To preserve and protect aquatic and shoreline habitat in order to support species biodiversity and natural ecological function, as well as the economic vitality of fisheries
- 2.** To guide development to occur in a manner that minimizes environmental impacts upon aquatic and shoreline habitat, fish and wildlife
- 3.** To protect the integrity of the foreshore, shoreline and natural coastal and intertidal processes
- 4.** To conserve and manage the foreshore as a public resource
- 5.** To protect development from flooding associated with sea level rise

### **.4 Application**

As provided in section 920(1) of the Local Government Act, the following activities must not occur within this DPA except to the extent that there is an exemption for the activity under 8.2.2.5 or the owner has first obtained a development permit:

- 1.** land must not be subdivided
- 2.** construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure must not be started
- 3.** land must not be altered

### **.5 Exemptions**

The following do not require a development permit:

- 1.** Repair, maintenance, alteration or reconstruction of existing legal buildings, structures or utilities provided there is no alteration of undisturbed land or vegetation
- 2.** Emergency repairs to existing structures or utilities where a potential safety hazard exists
- 3.** Removal of trees deemed to be hazardous and a threat to life or safety, as determined by a qualified arborist
- 4.** Small-scale removal by hand of invasive species or noxious weeds
- 5.** Larger-scale removal of invasive species or noxious weeds in accordance with a vegetation management plan prepared by a QEP or other qualified professional



6. Placement of non-permanent structures, such as benches, tables and garden ornaments and gardening and yard maintenance activities, such as lawn mowing, tree and shrub pruning, vegetation planting and minor soil disturbances that do not alter the contours of the land
7. The construction of a small accessory building (maximum area of 10 m<sup>2</sup>), such as a gazebo, garden shed or playhouse, if all the following apply:
  - No trees are removed
  - The building is located a minimum of 10 metres from the high water mark of the ocean and is not within an area of geotechnical instability
8. Emergency actions performed by federal, provincial, regional or District staff required to prevent, control or reduce an immediate threat to human life, the natural environment, archaeological resources, or public or private property including:
  - Forest fire, flood, and erosion protection works
  - Protection, repair or replacement of public utilities
  - Clearing of an obstruction from a bridge, culvert, dock, wharf or stream
  - Bridge repairs
  - Removal of hazardous trees

## **.6 Guidelines for Shorelines Development Permit Area**

1. For land in a natural or naturalized condition, retain existing vegetation, topography, natural features and hydrology along the marine shoreline and foreshore where this will help to retain the stability and environmental resources.
2. Stabilize the shoreline to manage erosion.
3. If suitable areas of land for the use intended exist on the property outside the Shorelines DPA, the proposed development should be directed to those areas in order to minimize development in the DPA. The onus will be placed with the applicant to demonstrate that encroaching into the Shorelines DPA is necessary due to circumstances such as topography, hazardous conditions or lack of alternative developable land, and that every effort is made to minimize adverse impacts.
4. Where a parcel of land is entirely within the Shorelines DPA, site development to maximize the separation between the proposed building/land use and the most sensitive area.
5. Where there is significant disturbance within the Shorelines DPA, restore and enhance the vegetation per a vegetation restoration plan, to be installed under the supervision and in accordance with the recommendations of a QEP or Registered Landscape Architect.
6. Provide a minimum 15 metre setback from the natural boundary for new buildings and structures, or additions to existing buildings and structures. A setback of less than 15 metres may be considered if it is supported by a qualified professional and sufficiently satisfies other guidelines associated with this DPA.

7. Consider the effect of minimum elevation guidelines, when established by the CRD or other public authority, with respect to sea level rise for the purpose of establishing a Flood Construction Level.
8. Avoid or minimize filling, deposit, excavation or other disturbance to the upland within the Shorelines DPA, except for the purposes of bank stabilization or erosion control.
9. Avoid or minimize filling, deposit, excavation or removal of foreshore and seabed materials within the Shorelines DPA, except for the purposes of bank stabilization or erosion control or for maintenance of navigation channels and existing facilities.
10. Consider the use of non-toxic and environmentally sustainable materials within the Shorelines DPA to preserve and protect fish habitat.
11. Avoid or minimize shoreline hardening (such as retaining wall and rock embankments), pilings, floats, wharves and other structures that disrupt light penetration to the water column or obstruct public access to the foreshore, except where a qualified professional has determined that a more environmentally sensitive approach to shoreline stabilization such as vegetation enhancement, upland drainage control, bioengineering, beach enhancement, tree anchoring or gravel placement are not appropriate given site-specific conditions. Integrate any proposed shoreline hardening with native vegetation and natural features to the greatest extent possible and do not prevent public access along the foreshore. This will necessitate an integrated design and development process supervised jointly by 1) a Qualified Coastal Professional and 2) either a Registered Professional Biologist or Landscape Architect.



*Photo Credit: Catherine Berris*

### 8.2.3 Hazardous Conditions Development Permit Area

#### .1 Designation

Areas outlined on Schedule F: Hazardous Conditions Development Permit Area (DPA) are properties that contain geotechnically unstable land and are designated per the *Local Government Act* Section 919.1(1) (a) and (b) for the protection of the environment and protection of development from hazardous conditions, respectively. The DPA applies to areas on Schedule F.

## **.2 Justification**

An area of Oak Bay north of the Royal Victoria Yacht Club and east of Beach Drive has been identified in geotechnical engineering studies as being unstable. The designation of the area as a development permit area will permit the District to request geotechnical information prepared by a qualified engineer at the time of development to assist in the formulation of development conditions considered appropriate in light of professional advice.

## **.3 Objectives**

The following are the objectives of the Hazardous Conditions Development Permit Area:

- 1.** To prevent damage to the environment from inappropriate development in hazardous areas
- 2.** To limit development so as to prevent development from causing or exacerbating geotechnical hazards
- 3.** To protect against damage to property and risks to health and safety

## **.4 Application**

As provided in section 920(1) of the Local Government Act, the following activities must not occur within this DPA except to the extent that there is an exemption for the activity under 8.2.3.5 or the owner has first obtained a development permit:

- 1.** land must not be subdivided
- 2.** construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure must not be started
- 3.** land must not be altered

## **.5 Exemptions**

The following do not require a development permit:

- 1.** Repair or maintenance of existing buildings or other structures, provided there is no alteration of undisturbed land or vegetation
- 2.** Emergency repairs to existing structures or utilities where a potential safety hazard exists
- 3.** Removal of trees deemed to be hazardous and a threat to life or safety, as determined by a qualified arborist
- 4.** The construction of a small accessory building (maximum area of 10 m<sup>2</sup>), such as a gazebo, garden shed or playhouse, if all the following apply:
  - No trees are removed



- The building is not within the area deemed geotechnically unstable or within the area recommended as a setback from the geotechnically unstable area by a qualified engineer
- 5. Emergency actions performed by federal, provincial, regional or District staff required to prevent, control or reduce an immediate threat to human life, the natural environment, archaeological resources, or public or private property including:
  - Forest fire, flood, and erosion protection works
  - Protection, repair or replacement of public utilities
  - Clearing of an obstruction from a culvert, dock, wharf or stream
  - Removal of hazardous trees

#### **.6 Guidelines for Hazardous Conditions Development Permit Area**

1. Preserve and protect the integrity of the geotechnically unstable area and take measures to minimize risks based on the professional geotechnical report.

## 8.3 Built Environment Development Permit Areas

### Introduction

Oak Bay residents care deeply about the form and character of development in the community. Throughout the OCP process, there was fairly universal interest in establishing guidelines for new development projects as permitted by legislation.

Infill Residential is a new form of housing for Oak Bay and it will only be accepted if it can be accomplished with respect for neighbourhood character. Design guidelines will be helpful in that regard.

Much of the Multi Unit Residential development in Oak Bay is aging as it was built many decades ago. The community is in need of guidelines that meet the needs of current and future residents, taking advantage of new building technologies and concerns about sustainability.

Commercial and Mixed Use projects also have an opportunity to introduce new building forms that will increase the vitality of commercial areas. This will bring more residents to commercial areas and provide opportunities to enhance the public realm.

The intent of the built environment guidelines is to set sufficient limits to exclude new projects that are obviously out of character with Oak Bay (e.g., large grey concrete walls with no windows or detailing), and to be flexible enough to allow creative designs that borrow enough characteristics of established neighbourhoods to blend with the diversity that already exists. The guidelines will enable successful projects that encompass innovation, environmental practices, and features that meet the needs of existing and future residents.



Photo Credit: Catherine Berris

### 8.3.1 Infill Residential Development Permit Area

#### .1 Designation

Areas designated Established Neighbourhoods on Schedule B: Land Use Framework Map are designated as Infill Residential Development Permit Area (DPA) pursuant to the following:

1. *Local Government Act* Section 919.1(1) (e) for the establishment of objectives for the form and character of intensive residential development
2. *Local Government Act* Sections 919.1(1)(h), (i) and (j) for the establishment of objectives to promote energy conservation, establishment of objectives to promote water conservation, and establishment of objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, respectively

*“Intensive residential” is the term within the Local Government Act through which form and character guidelines can be established for residential development.*

#### .2 Justification

Infill Residential development in Oak Bay’s established neighbourhoods, including infill single detached, duplex, triplex, laneway house, and garden suite options, will add to the variety of house types, styles and costs. This will provide housing for people of different ages, income levels and stages of life in these desirable neighbourhoods. This DPA provides guidelines to promote development that reflects the community’s character, respects the natural environment, and allows existing houses to be retained. Infill is a more intensive use of the land, which makes use of existing infrastructure and already disturbed land, reduces development pressure on natural areas, and helps to create a more compact and inclusive community. This can support increased walking, biking and transit use.

In Oak Bay, infill has the added benefits of allowing some residents to remain on their properties and to obtain income, and bringing more people closer to existing and planned commercial areas, increasing the viability and vitality of these important places.

### **.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the Infill Residential Development Permit Area are to promote developments and redevelopments that accomplish the following:

1. support a sustainable and compact community
2. respect and integrate with neighbourhood character and streetscapes
3. provide housing diversity to meet the changing needs of residents throughout their life cycle, including the needs of those with physical and developmental disabilities
4. allow owners to retain existing houses and remain on their property
5. provide landscapes that retain and enhance the urban forest and include rainwater management
6. establish a 'good neighbour' design approach by integrating new houses with respect for landscaping, sunlight, views and parking

### **.4 Application**

As provided in section 920(1) of the Local Government Act, the following activities must not occur within this DPA except to the extent that there is an exemption for the activity under 8.3.1.5 or the owner has first obtained a development permit:

1. land must not be subdivided
2. construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure must not be started
3. land or a building or other structure on that land, must not be altered

### **.5 Exemptions**

Development permits are not required in the Infill Residential Development Permit Area for the following:

1. Development of land or renovation or alteration of a building that does not require a rezoning to create additional residential units

For sites approved through the DPA process: interior renovations, an exterior renovation that does not alter the form or character of the building, an exterior addition with less than 10 square metres of floor area, and/or an accessory building with less than 10 square metres of floor area



## .6 Site Planning and Building Guidelines

- 1.** Locate and design the building massing to:
  - be complementary with the character and scale of the surrounding neighbourhood and adjacent buildings in terms of building height, building massing, street setbacks, , landscaping, and quality of finishing and details
  - consider the potential for larger buildings and smaller setbacks on arterial and collector roads and adjacent to commercial areas
  - respect the privacy of adjacent properties
  - limit shadowing of public outdoor use areas and adjacent residential properties
  - follow passive solar siting principles to reduce the energy needed for lighting and heating, e.g., penetration of sunlight and natural light into interior spaces
- 2.** Vary building height to add visual interest, but if doing so, select one principal roof form for the building.
- 3.** Respect the patterns and rhythms of buildings and open spaces that are characteristic of a street. When it is not possible to achieve similar size and shape, the front of the building should be broken into smaller parts creating an illusion of a smaller building in scale with its neighbours.
- 4.** Orient patios, porches, balconies and decks away from neighbouring yards, or if not possible, inseting or screening them, to improve privacy for neighbours, recognizing that some overlook of yards and decks between houses on adjoining lots is not unusual and may be unavoidable.
- 5.** Design driveways, garages and parking pads to have a minimum intrusion on pedestrian use of the street, with landscaping of parking areas.
- 6.** Emphasize building entries with features such as porches, steps, walkways and landscape, reflecting characteristics from the street and neighbourhood, and facing the street where possible.
- 7.** Use building materials, landscaping and paving that contribute to the street and that are in keeping with other houses and properties on the street.
- 8.** Design the proportion of the façade that has windows, and the size and detailing of windows, to relate to those of neighbouring houses.
- 9.** Consider the location of windows carefully in relation to overlook, recognizing that some measure of overlook may be welcomed by neighbours where security is an issue. Plan window openings on the sidewalls so that they do not directly align with those of adjacent houses.
- 10.** Use sustainable building practices and technologies such as water and energy conservation, waste reduction, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, solar panels, geothermal energy and other emerging systems.

## **.7 Landscape Guidelines**

- 1.** Design the site layout and building locations to:
  - retain and conserve as much natural vegetation, rock outcrops, existing hydrology, and unique site features as possible, including Garry Oaks, other large trees, and significant vegetation
  - respect the existing topography, minimizing the need for cut and fill, major blasting, or tall retaining walls
- 2.** Use low impact development practices such as the following:
  - maximize the extent of landscaped areas on site with absorbent soils and minimize the amount of impervious surfaces to increase the natural infiltration (absorption) of rainwater and to provide a more natural or landscaped character
  - reduce the amount of impervious paving and use permeable materials where possible, e.g., permeable pavers, permeable asphalt or concrete, decks, reinforced grass
  - consider the use of bioswales, rain gardens, and other design techniques that allow greater infiltration of water, including within and around parking areas
  - promote the use of rainwater collection/re-use systems that collect rainwater for irrigation
- 3.** Use native, low maintenance (drought resistant, low water requirement) concepts in landscape plans.
- 4.** Design the landscape to retain, and if possible to increase, the tree canopy on the site, considering connectivity of green space with adjacent lots.
- 5.** Design the front yard landscape to be predominantly vegetated, and design fences to allow views into the property.
- 6.** Consider energy efficiency and conservation in landscape design, e.g., provide shade in summer, moderate wind, allow sunlight and daylight into buildings.
- 7.** Select light fixtures based on dark sky principles, e.g., shielded to direct light downward only.

## **.8 Access, Circulation and Parking Area Guidelines**

- 1.** Minimize the intrusion of driveways and parking by encouraging shared driveways to units with individual vehicular access.
- 2.** Provide at least one rear or side yard parking space for visitors where possible.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

## 8.3.2 Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Areas

### .1 Designation

Areas designated Multi Unit Residential on Schedule G: Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Area (DPA) are designated Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Areas (DPAs) pursuant to the following:

1. *Local Government Act* Section 919.1(1) (f) for the establishment of objectives for the form and character of Multi Unit Residential development
2. *Local Government Act* Sections 919.1(1) (h), (i) and (j) for the establishment of objectives to promote energy conservation, establishment of objectives to promote water conservation, and establishment of objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, respectively.



## **.2 Justification**

Multi Unit Residential development in Oak Bay will provide affordable and inclusive housing options in transition areas between commercial areas and established neighbourhoods, and through the redevelopment of existing multi-unit residential properties. This DPA provides guidelines to promote development that reflects Oak Bay's unique character while increasing density. This will strengthen Oak Bay as a complete community, increasing support for local shops and services, and enhancing the viability of active transportation and public transit.

## **.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Area are to promote developments and redevelopments that accomplish the following:

1. support a sustainable, and compact community
2. respect neighbourhood character and streetscapes
3. provide housing diversity to meet the changing needs of residents throughout their life cycle, including the needs of those with physical and developmental disabilities
4. provide landscapes that include vegetation and rainwater management
5. support safe pedestrian access and accessibility
6. consider the impacts of new construction on adjacent residents

## **.4 Application**

As provided in section 920(1) of the Local Government Act, the following activities must not occur within this DPA except to the extent that there is an exemption for the activity under 8.3.2.5 or the owner has first obtained a development permit:

1. land must not be subdivided
2. construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure must not be started
3. land or a building or other structure on that land, must not be altered.

## **.5 Exemptions**

Development permits are not required in the Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Area for the following:

- 1.** interior renovations
- 2.** an exterior renovation that does not alter the form or character of the building
- 3.** an exterior addition with less than 10 square metres of floor area
- 4.** an accessory building with less than 10 square metres of floor area

## **.6 Site Planning and Building Guidelines**

- 1.** Design and build new development to contribute to the cohesion, visual identity and the quality of streetscapes, particularly when adjacent and nearby buildings are similar to each other in scale, proportion, rhythm, and pattern, per the following design measures:
  - incorporate building elements that are complementary, such as street walls, façade rhythm, and horizontal cornice lines
  - add interest to the streetscape through variations in building height, rooflines and massing
  - contribute to both streetscapes if the building is located on a corner site
- 2.** Locate and design the building massing to:
  - provide a transition between the form, character and scale of the surrounding neighbourhood and the character of commercial areas or arterial and collector roads that are close to or adjacent to the property being developed
  - provide variations in height, massing and rooflines on larger buildings to create visual interest
  - respect the privacy of adjacent properties
  - limit shadowing of public outdoor use areas and adjacent residential properties
  - follow passive solar siting principles to reduce the energy needed for lighting and heating, e.g., penetration of sunlight and natural light into interior spaces
  - retain prominent views of nearby or distant landscape features from public spaces
- 3.** Orient building frontages and main entrances to the dominant street frontage where possible, with well-defined entries and direct pedestrian access to the entries from the street.

4. Retain large front setbacks where there is substantial green space and trees that contribute to the character of the streetscape.
5. Apply Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to building and site design, balancing these with objectives related to landscaping.
6. Finish building elevations visible from the street to the same standard as the street façade and provide visual interest.
7. Use sustainable and green building practices and technologies such as water and energy conservation, waste reduction, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, solar panels, geothermal energy and other emerging systems.
8. Incorporate planted roofs and roof-top gardens on buildings for use by residents, with care taken in design to minimize the impact on privacy of neighbours.
9. Provide charging stations for electric vehicles and secured storage for bicycles.
10. Screen roof-top mechanical and ground-level equipment from views in a manner that is consistent with the architectural design of the building, and so as not to cause visual, noise or vibration impacts on project residents or adjacent residential lots.

## **.7 Landscape Guidelines**

1. Design the site layout and building locations to:
  - retain and conserve as much natural vegetation, rock outcrops, existing hydrology, and unique site features as possible, including Garry Oaks, other large trees, and significant vegetation
  - respect the existing topography, minimizing the need for cut and fill, major blasting, or tall retaining walls
2. Use low impact development practices such as the following:
  - maximize the extent of landscaped areas on site with absorbent soils and minimize the amount of impervious surfaces to increase the natural infiltration (absorption) of rainwater and to provide a more natural or landscaped character
  - reduce the amount of impervious paving and use permeable materials where possible, e.g., permeable pavers, permeable asphalt or concrete, decks, reinforced grass
  - consider the use of bioswales, rain gardens, and other design techniques that allow greater infiltration of water, including within and around parking areas
  - use rainwater collection/re-use systems that collect rainwater for irrigation
3. Use native, low maintenance (drought resistant, low water requirement) concepts in landscape plans.
4. Design the landscape to retain, and if possible to increase, the tree canopy on the site.



*Oak Bay residents provided many comments about dogs on the community survey. In buildings where dogs are allowed, small dog off-leash ('dog relief') areas close to building exits can help keep main building entrances clean and reduce the impacts of dogs on those who do not appreciate them.*

*Composting can be incorporated within food gardens, provided it is well managed to control odour and pests.*

5. Make sites accessible to people of all abilities through the use of universal design principles.
6. Consider energy efficiency and conservation in landscape design, e.g., provide shade in summer, moderate wind, allow sunlight and daylight into buildings.
7. Incorporate outdoor amenities such as benches, courtyards, food gardens, dog relief areas, and recreation facilities to provide opportunities for residents to socialize and to contribute to a sense of community.
8. Screen surface parking areas and service areas where necessary to reduce impacts on neighbouring residences and the public realm. Use planting for screening where possible.
9. Design the front yard landscape to include a significant proportion of vegetation, and design fences to allow views into the property.
10. Locate and design directional signs and any similar features to be low profile, ground-oriented and externally lit with low intensity fixtures accentuated by landscaping. Do not use flashing lights, neon signs and similar bright lights.
11. Locate refuse and recycling container areas where they are accessible to residents and to container pick-up trucks, screened with an appropriate durable enclosure, and provide landscaping around the perimeter of the enclosure where possible. Avoid direct exposure of refuse and recycling areas to public streets.
12. Select light fixtures based on dark sky principles, e.g., shielded to direct light downward only.

## **.8 Access, Circulation and Parking Area Guidelines**

Design the internal road and parking system for efficient circulation of all types of vehicles, with a layout that discourages speeding, and provide safe pedestrian routes from parking lots to building entrances.

Include internal landscaping within large areas of surface parking in order to “break-up” the hard surface area.



Photo Credit: Gloria Back

### 8.3.3 Commercial and Mixed Use Development Permit Area

#### .1 Designation

Areas designated Oak Bay Village, Secondary Village, Corner Commercial, and Specialized Commercial on Schedule H: Commercial and Mixed Use Development Permit Area (DPA) are designated Commercial and Mixed Use Development Permit Areas (DPAs) pursuant to the following:

1. *Local Government Act* Section 919.1(1) (f) for the establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial or multi-family residential development
2. *Local Government Act* Sections 919.1(1) (h), (i) and (j) for the establishment of objectives to promote energy conservation, establishment of objectives to promote water conservation, and establishment of objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, respectively.

#### .2 Justification

Commercial and Mixed Use development in Oak Bay will expand the amount of commercial space, mostly in existing commercial areas, and provide more residential use above commercial to increase the vitality of these areas and the viability of businesses. This DPA provides guidelines to promote development that reflects the unique character of Oak Bay's commercial areas, incrementally replacing aging buildings. This will strengthen Oak Bay as a complete community, increasing support for local shops and services, and enhancing the viability of active transportation and public transit.

### **.3 Objectives**

The objectives of the Multi Unit Residential Development Permit Area are to promote developments and redevelopments that accomplish the following:

1. support a sustainable and compact community
2. respect and enliven the character and streetscape of commercial areas and contribute to the neighbourhood sense of place
3. provide housing diversity to meet the changing needs of residents
4. provide landscapes that include vegetation and rainwater management
5. support safe pedestrian access and accessibility
6. consider the impacts of new construction on adjacent residents

### **.4 Application**

As provided in section 920(1) of the Local Government Act, the following activities must not occur within this DPA except to the extent that there is an exemption for the activity under 8.3.3.5 or the owner has first obtained a development permit:

1. land must not be subdivided
2. construction of, addition to or alteration of a building or other structure must not be started
3. land or a building or other structure on that land, must not be altered.

### **.5 Exemptions**

Development permits are not required in the Commercial and Mixed Use Development Permit Area for the following:

1. interior renovations
2. an exterior renovation that does not alter the form or character of the building
3. an exterior addition with less than 10 square metres of floor area
4. an accessory building with less than 10 square metres of floor area

### **.6 Site Planning and Building Guidelines**

1. Design and build new development to contribute to the cohesion, visual identity and the quality of streetscapes, particularly when adjacent and nearby buildings are similar to each other in scale, proportion, rhythm, and pattern, per the following design measures:



- incorporate building elements that are complementary, such as street walls, façade rhythm, and horizontal cornice lines
  - add interest to the streetscape through variations in building height, rooflines and massing
  - contribute to both streetscapes if the building is located on a corner site
- 2.** Locate and design the building massing to:
    - provide a transition between the form, character and scale of the surrounding neighbourhood and the character of commercial areas or arterial and collector roads that are close to or adjacent to the property being developed
    - provide variations in height, massing and rooflines on larger buildings to create visual interest
    - respect the privacy of adjacent properties
    - limit shadowing of public outdoor use areas and adjacent residential properties
    - follow passive solar siting principles to reduce the energy needed for lighting and heating, e.g., penetration of sunlight and natural light into interior spaces
    - retain prominent views of nearby or distant landscape features from public spaces
  - 3.** For buildings over two storeys, use setbacks and/or terracing above the second level to reduce massing impacts on the street, to allow sunlight penetration, and to retain the scale of Oak Bay’s commercial areas.
  - 4.** Provide outdoor spaces that are accessible to the public and complementary to the uses of the building, e.g., outdoor eating areas, plazas, courtyards. Encourage the inclusion of public art in these outdoor spaces.
  - 5.** Apply Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to building and site design, balancing these with objectives related to landscaping.
  - 6.** Finish building elevations visible from the street to the same standard as the street façade and provide visual interest.
  - 7.** Use sustainable building practices and technologies such as water and energy conservation, waste reduction, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, solar panels, geothermal energy and other emerging systems.
  - 8.** Incorporate planted roofs and roof-top gardens on buildings for use by residents.
  - 9.** Provide charging stations for electric vehicles and secured storage for bicycles.
  - 10.** Screen roof-top mechanical and ground-level equipment from views in a manner that is consistent with the architectural design of the building, and so as not to cause visual, noise or vibration impacts on project residents or adjacent residential lots.

- 11.** Locate commercial uses at street level with a maximum amount of glazing on the façade at this level and with well-defined entries oriented towards the dominant street.
- 12.** Address potential conflicts between commercial and residential uses through design features such as physical separation of uses, noise and visual barriers, and mechanical systems to address air quality.
- 13.** Minimize the visual, noise and traffic impacts of commercial activity on the surrounding neighbourhood.

## **.7 Landscape Guidelines**

- 1.** Design the site layout and building locations to:
  - retain and conserve as much natural vegetation, rock outcrops, existing hydrology, and unique site features as possible, including Garry Oaks, other large trees, and significant vegetation
  - respect the existing topography, minimizing the need for cut and fill, major blasting, or tall retaining walls
- 2.** Use low impact development practices such as the following:
  - maximize the extent of landscaped areas on site with absorbent soils and minimize the amount of impervious surfaces to increase the natural infiltration (absorption) of rainwater and to provide a more natural or landscaped character
  - reduce the amount of impervious paving and use permeable materials where possible, e.g., permeable pavers, permeable asphalt or concrete, decks, reinforced grass
  - use bioswales, rain gardens, and other design techniques that allow greater infiltration of water, including within and around parking areas
  - use rainwater collection/re-use systems that collect rainwater for irrigation
- 3.** Use native, low maintenance (drought resistant, low water requirement) concepts in landscape plans.
- 4.** Make sites accessible to people of all abilities through the use of universal design principles.
- 5.** Consider energy efficiency and conservation in landscape design, e.g., provide shade in summer, moderate wind, allow sunlight and daylight into buildings.
- 6.** Incorporate outdoor amenities such as benches, courtyards, food gardens, dog relief areas, and recreation facilities to provide opportunities for residents to socialize and to contribute to a sense of community.
- 7.** Consider landscape screening of surface parking areas and service areas where necessary to reduce impacts on neighbouring residences and the public realm.

8. Locate refuse and recycling container areas where they are accessible to residents and to container pick-up trucks, screened with an appropriate durable enclosure, and provide landscaping around the perimeter of the enclosure where possible. Avoid direct exposure of refuse and recycling areas to public streets.
9. Select light fixtures based on dark sky principles, e.g., shielded to direct light downward only.
10. Do not install flashing lights, neon signs and similar bright lights, except in Oak Bay Village.

## **.8 Additional Guidelines for Specialized Commercial Areas**

In addition to applicable Guidelines set out in section 8.3.3.6 and 8.3.3.7, in the case of land shown as “Specialized Commercial DPA” on Schedule H: Commercial and Mixed Use DPA, the following guidelines are applicable:

1. Design the site’s vehicular circulation and parking to be efficient for all types of vehicles, with a layout that discourages speeding, providing safe pedestrian routes from parking lots to building entrances.
2. Design the landscape to retain, and if possible to increase, the tree canopy on the site.
3. Design the front yard landscape to include a significant proportion of vegetation, and design fences to allow views into the property.
4. Locate and design directional signs and any similar features to be low profile, ground-oriented and externally lit with low intensity fixtures accentuated by landscaping.



# 9.0 Heritage Conservation Areas

## 9.1 Introduction

Part 15 of the *Local Government Act* provides municipalities with the authority to establish Heritage Conservation Areas (HCA). These HCAs are used by local governments to protect the buildings, structures, land or features that contribute to the overall heritage character of a neighbourhood or distinct areas. An HCA must demonstrate distinct heritage value and character, and design guidelines can direct a variety of character defining elements to reflect heritage values and manage change within a neighbourhood.

For Oak Bay, heritage conservation areas are one tool recognized by the Official Community Plan to conserve the character of clusters of heritage buildings and their associated landscapes. They aid in conserving Oak Bay's history and heritage, as well as its established neighbourhoods and streetscapes.

## 9.2 Prospect Heritage Conservation Area (HCA1)

### .1 Category

Sections 614 and 615 of the *Local Government Act*

### .2 Justification

The Prospect Heritage Conservation Area is a predominantly residential neighbourhood with a significant cultural landscape with a sloped topography, narrow scenic roads, significant architecturally designed houses, and a location fronting the Oak Bay beachfront. It is significant for its aesthetic, historic, social, natural history and educational values, particularly its representation of the origins of the Oak Bay community in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the leafy suburban character of its evolved cultural landscape, and its mix of architecturally significant and more modest residences.

The Prospect is significant for its use by First Nations for millennia. While more widely understood and acknowledged, the colonial history of this area is only a brief chapter in the overall history of human occupation. There has been Indigenous land use in this area for living, fishing, food and medicine gathering since time immemorial; and there are archaeological sites recorded within the boundary of The Prospect.

The area is important for its integration into a landscape with features such as steep topography that rises in elevation from the foreshore to the higher elevations of York Place, which give some homes a prominent physical status and considerable views; bedrock outcrops; and Rattenbury's Beach and foreshore, all of which have a physical and visual influence on the form of development and overall character of the neighbourhood. The landscape is important for its ecologically significant areas including rare wildlife and plant species, and its lush vegetation, both native and ornamental, safeguards habitat for birds and small mammals.



*Mount Baker painted by Samuel Maclure, c. 1890 (BC Archives PDP03773)*

Of particular importance in the area is the presence of significant residences built with superior material and craftsmanship of the time, and designed by some of BC's most prominent late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century architects such as Francis Rattenbury, Samuel Maclure, Karl Spurgin, John Tiarks, Ralph Berrill, Percy L. James and others, often interpreting classic residential building styles such as Queen Anne, Tudor Revival and Classical Revival. The inclusion of contemporary buildings by well known late 20<sup>th</sup> century architects, including a 1996 house designed by Pamela Charlesworth and Campbell Moore's 1992 Barwin House, makes the area a showcase for some of BC's most prominent architects' residential work for over a century.

Significant streetscapes have evolved into a harmonious integration of narrow roadways, buildings, trees, garden and natural vegetation, with remaining evidence of early large estate development and the adaptation of neighbourhood design to the site's natural topography.

The eclectic arrangement of buildings and traces in the landscape, such as openings in walls, overgrown gates, small pathways and laneways, public staircases, a decorative well head, and vegetation and tree patterns, are valued for their physical manifestations of past patterns of land use. Layers of vegetation are important for their contribution to the bucolic nature of the neighbourhood and for softening harder elements such as buildings, structures and roadways. Trees and plantings provide screening between the street and private spaces, and create a peaceful rural atmosphere, including large sequoia trees associated with the garden development at Briarbrae, and others planted around 1912.

Landscape details are fundamentally integral to the character of the place. They include stone walls, some with capped pillars, along most streets; gates and fences; narrow sidewalks; lack of curb and gutter; and the Lych Gate and stone wall at York Place and Oak Bay Avenue.

The important rural character of the place and country lane feel has been retained, even in the presence of new construction that, to date, manages to mostly fit into the character of the neighbourhood.

### **.3 Objectives**

The following are the objectives of the Prospect Heritage Conservation Area:

- 1.** To maintain the distinctive character of the Prospect neighbourhood as expressed by the layout of the neighbourhood, the collection of early homes, as well as the gardens, streetscape, and landscape features.
- 2.** To ensure the long term protection of heritage in the neighbourhood while maintaining flexibility to provide for the upkeep of resident homes and landscapes.
- 3.** To retain the buildings and features as listed in the Schedule of Properties to the greatest extent possible.
- 4.** To ensure new development is respectful of, and contextual to, the heritage character of the neighbourhood.



#### **.4 Application**

As provided in section 615 of the *Local Government Act*, the following activities must not occur within the Prospect Heritage Conservation Area (HCA1) unless the owner has first obtained a heritage alteration permit:

1. land must not be subdivided;
2. construction of a building or structure, or an addition to an existing building or structure must not be started;
3. a building, structure or land must not be altered;
4. a feature that is protected heritage property must not be altered.

#### **.5 Exemptions**

Heritage alteration permits are not required for the following:

1. interior alterations to a building or structure that do not affect the external appearance;
2. routine maintenance of buildings and structures, such as exterior painting of buildings;
3. construction or demolition of accessory buildings with less than 10 m<sup>2</sup> of floor area, and which are not heritage designated or listed in the Schedule of Properties;
4. subdivision where a rezoning is not required;
5. tree cutting, landscaping or fence construction for which no municipal approval is required, or as may be identified through a heritage designation or the Schedule of Properties;
6. anything that does not require a building permit unless it alters the character defining elements (eg. materials) of a property that is heritage designated or listed in the Schedule of Properties;
7. municipal works;
8. properties identified by Plan VIS1752.

#### **.6 Guidelines**

Any work for which a heritage alteration permit is required must conform with:

1. all applicable bylaws
2. the latest edition of the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada as published by Parks Canada
3. The Prospect Heritage Conservation Area Guidelines, which form a part of the Official Community Plan.

.7 Schedule of Properties - Prospect Heritage Conservation Area

<b>Property</b>	<b>Name / Feature</b>
1512 Beach Drive	<i>Sandhurst</i>
1526 Beach Drive	<i>Haynes Cottage</i>
1538 Beach Drive	<i>Bide-A-Wee</i>
1558 Beach Drive	<i>J.W. Morris House</i>
1580 Beach Drive	<i>Home, Stone Walls and Pillars</i>
1590 Beach Drive	<i>Captain and Mrs. L. Adamson House</i>
1701 Beach Drive	<i>Iechinihl</i>
1710 Beach Drive	
2340 Oak Bay Avenue	<i>Lych Gate (Feature Only)</i>
2364 Oak Bay Avenue	<i>Crenellated Stone Walls and Pillars (Features Only)</i>
2390 Oak Bay Avenue	<i>F. Hamilton and E. Harrison House</i>
1513 Prospect Place	<i>Florence E. Rattenbury Home</i>
1525 Prospect Place	<i>C. Dubois Mason Home</i>
1532 Prospect Place	
1535 Prospect Place	<i>Sheilin</i>
1554 Prospect Place	<i>Crenellated Stone Walls, Pillars and Gates (Features Only)</i>
1584 Prospect Place	
1621 Prospect Place	<i>Seldon Humphrey's House</i>
1660 Prospect Place	<i>Conrad P.W. Schwengers Home</i>
1670 Prospect Place	
1680 Prospect Place	
2390 San Carlos Avenue	<i>Patio Court</i>
2396 San Carlos Avenue	<i>Patio Court</i>
2402 San Carlos Avenue	<i>Patio Court</i>
2408 San Carlos Avenue	<i>Patio Court</i>
2414 San Carlos Avenue	<i>Patio Court</i>
1545 York Place	
1561 York Place	<i>Crenellated Stone Walls and Capped Pillars (Features Only)</i>
1574 York Place	<i>Crenellated Stone Pillars (Feature Only)</i>
1580 York Place	<i>Arran</i>
1586 York Place	<i>Mr. &amp; Mrs. J. Harman House, Carriage House</i>
1587 / 1595 York Place	<i>Annandale</i>
1590 York Place	<i>Gibson House</i>
1596 York Place	<i>Woodlawn Summer House (Building Only)</i> <i>Crenellated Stone Wall (Feature Only)</i>
1605 York Place	<i>Briarbrae</i>



*Photo Credit: Mike Lloyd*

# Acronyms and Definitions

## Acronyms

CEEI – Community Energy and Emissions Inventory

CPTED – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

CRD – Capital Regional District

DPA – Development Permit Area

GHG – greenhouse gas

OCP – Official Community Plan

QEP – Qualified Environmental Professional

RGS – Regional Growth Strategy

RSS – Regional Sustainability Plan Strategy

TDM – Transportation Demand Management



# Definitions

Page numbers in this section will be added in final graphic layout

**Adaptable housing** – see page 83

**Affordable housing** - see page 76

**Aging-in-place** means that an individual or group of people grows older without having to change their place of residence and/or community.

**Amenities** mean items that add to the physical, aesthetic, or functional appeal of a particular site, neighbourhood, or the community in general.

**Bed and Breakfast** means the provision of sleeping accommodation, toilet facilities and a breakfast meal to paying guests as a home-based business.

**Bioengineering**, also called soil bioengineering, uses live plant materials to provide erosion control, slope and stream bank stabilization, landscape restoration, and wildlife habitat. These techniques can be used alone or in conjunction with conventional engineering techniques.

**Bioswale** refers to a vegetated area, usually lower than the surrounding area, used to retain and filter rainwater runoff.

**Building Code of British Columbia** is the legislation that regulates buildings standards in the Province of British Columbia.

**Carbon neutral** refers to achieving a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas emissions being produced and the amount of clean-energy or environmental rehabilitation projects being undertaken to offset those emissions.

**Character** refers to the distinct quality and appearance of a building or place that comes from a unique mix of defining physical and social attributes.

**Climate change** refers to any long-term significant change in the “average weather” that a given region experiences. Average weather may include average temperature, precipitation and wind patterns. It involves changes in the variability or average state of the atmosphere over durations ranging from decades to millions of years. These changes can be caused by dynamic process on Earth (ocean processes, volcanoes), external forces including variations in sunlight intensity, and more recently by human activities.

**Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)** refers to a series of design interventions and strategies for reducing opportunities for crime and empowering legitimate users to feel ownership over both public and private space.

**Daylighting** – see page 54

**Density** refers to the number of residential dwelling units allowed within one legal parcel based on its land area. In this Plan, all densities are net of roads, parks, utilities, and other non-residential, but complementary uses.

**Density bonus** refers to the concept of increasing the floor area or number of units allowed on a property, usually in exchange for certain amenities provided to the community by the property owner or developer.

**Density transfer** means the concept of transferring the right to create new parcels through subdivision of land, or floor area, from one location to another either within one property or between two properties, with the transfer registered on titles. The process involves the affected property owners negotiating an agreement to transfer the right of development in principle and then applying for a rezoning to implement the transfer.

**Development** refers to new construction projects that involve residential, commercial, and/or community institutional uses. Because Oak Bay is fully developed, the term 'development' also includes 'redevelopment', i.e., replacement of existing building(s) with new building(s).

**Development Permit Area** refers to area designated pursuant to the *Local Government Act* where approval of a development permit is required before a building permit can be issued or a subdivision is approved with specified exemptions.

**Home-based business** – see page 67

**Duplex** refers to two attached, ground-oriented dwelling units.

**Ecosystem** means a complete system of living organisms interacting with the soil, land, water, and nutrients that make up their environment. An ecosystem is the home of living things, including humans. It can be any size, but it always functions as a whole unit. Ecosystems are commonly described according to the major type of vegetation, for example, an old-growth forest or a grassland ecosystem.

**Flood Construction Level** is the designated flood level plus the allowance for freeboard used to establish the elevation of the underside of a wooden floor system or top of concrete slab for habitable buildings.

**Garden suite** is a legal, detached, ground-oriented suite located in the back yard of a property with a single-family home as its primary use. Property owners may convert an existing accessory building if it meets policy guidelines or build something new.

**Greenhouse gas (GHG)** refers to gases present in the atmosphere, which reduce the Earth's loss of heat into space and therefore contribute to global temperatures through the greenhouse effect. Greenhouse gases are essential to maintaining the temperature of the Earth, however, an excess of greenhouse gases can raise the temperature of

a planet to uninhabitable levels. Current levels of CO<sub>2</sub> are approximately 100 ppmv higher than during pre-industrial times. Greenhouse gases include water vapour, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>).

**Home-based business** means any business for gain or support clearly secondary to the principal residential use of a property.

**Inclusive housing** – see page 76

**Infill development** – see page 84

**Local Government Act** is legislation enacted in British Columbia to establish, give powers to and regulate local governments. Part 26, Division 2 of the Act provides regulation and guidance of the development and use of an Official Community Plan.

**Low impact development** – see page 53

**Mixed-use** means development that combines two or more types of development: residential, commercial or community facility.

**Multimodal transportation** means the provision and accommodation of a variety of transportation modes including, but not limited to, walking, cycling and transit.

**Natural boundary** means the visible high water mark of any lake, river, stream, ocean, or other body of water where the presence and action of the water are so common and usual and so long continued in all ordinary years as to make upon the soil of the bed of the lake, river, stream, ocean or other body of water a character distinct from that of the banks thereof, in respect to vegetation, as well as in respect to the nature of the soil itself (Section 1, *BC Land Act*).

**Naturalizing** – see page 58

**Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP)** is defined in the Riparian Areas Regulation.

**Riparian area** means a transitional zone between upland and fresh water ecosystems. The vegetation it supports is in contact with the stream, or is sufficiently close, to have a major influence on the total ecological character and functional processes of the stream.

**Secondary suite** means an additional living space within a detached home that is separated from, and smaller than, the primary dwelling. A secondary suite is intended for the use of a separate household and contains its own entrance, cooking facilities and sanitary facilities.

**Sense of place** – see page 70

**Single detached house** means a single dwelling not attached to any other dwelling or structure (except its own garage or shed). A single-detached house has open space on all sides, and has no dwellings either above it or below it.

**Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA)** is defined in the *Riparian Areas Regulation* as being an area adjacent to a stream that links aquatic to terrestrial ecosystems and includes both the existing and potential riparian area vegetation and the existing and potential adjacent upland vegetation that exerts an influence on the stream, the size of which is determined according to this regulation on the basis of an assessment report provided by a qualified environmental professional in respect of a development proposal.

**Streetscape** – see page 51

**Subdivision** means a parcelization of land defined under the *Land Title Act* or the *Strata Property Act*.

**Sustainability** – see page 10

**Townhouse** means one of three or more dwellings joined side by side (or sometimes, side to back), but not having any other dwellings either above or below.

**Traffic calming** refers to engineering and urban design measures used to slow down the flow of traffic and create safer and more comfortable streets for pedestrians, cyclists and adjacent residents.

**Transportation demand management** – see page 132

**Tree canopy** - see page 50

**Trenchless technology** – see page 146

**Universal design** – see page 83

**Urban agriculture** refers to the cultivation, processing and distribution of food within an urban area.

**Walkability** refers to the extent to which an area is safe, comfortable and accommodating for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Watershed** is a defined drainage and runoff area that contributes water to a particular body of water.