

Housing Affordability

- Many participants expressed support that there is “something for everyone” in Victoria, with a range of prices and housing types across a continuum, ranging from housing for the homeless to care homes.
- “It shouldn’t cost \$200,000 for a closet”.
- Some expressed concern that the new condo developments are not providing housing for people who already live here.
- Affordable housing should not ghettoize people or a neighbourhood. Certain groups, such as single parents and service workers, may face particular affordability barriers.
- Well-designed affordable housing buildings can achieve multiple benefits, such as mixing uses, income levels, address energy performance.
- The lack of provincial and federal support is a challenge.
- There is concern that downtown heritage buildings will be converted into expensive units.
- Integrating affordable housing into neighbourhoods is a challenge.
- Clear, yearly targets for housing affordability would measure success.
- There is a need for new tools and approaches to improve housing affordability, such as inclusionary zoning, financial incentives, relaxed zoning requirements for secondary suites, developing “grey” space (parking lots), housing cooperatives, cluster housing with shared living/dining areas, waiving parking requirements.

Food Systems

- Many people and groups felt that Victoria should increase food production in the city.
- There is an interest in increasing food security through urban agriculture, more regional agriculture and other food programs, such as in schools and how-to courses.
- Food could be grown on rooftops, community gardens, parks, schoolyards, street fruit trees, boulevards and other public lands.
- Food production on private lands should be encouraged by the City.
- Issues about liability and long-term maintenance of food production projects need to be addressed for urban agriculture.
- Supporting infrastructure, such as rainwater barrels, is needed.
- A year-round, indoor farmers market would serve farmers and customers.
- Inclusionary zoning could be used to require food production features in new developments, such as a certain land area for food gardens or fruit trees.
- A regional approach is needed due to cross-cutting issues such as a loss of meat processing facilities, agricultural land, curbside organics pick-up and decreasing economic viability of farms.

Sustainable Transportation

- Many people felt that Victoria should reduce auto-dependency through more walking, biking and transit.
- There was broad support for making Victoria more walkable, and neighbourhood services and amenities that support a small “walkshed”.
- Some specific streets are challenging for pedestrians. Children need to feel safe walking to school. Pedestrian-only streets could enhance street life.
- There is a need for more bike paths, bike lanes and infrastructure such as racks.
- Bike lanes need to be continuous and well-designed.
- Public transit needs to be more affordable and convenient, particularly downtown. New options such as light-rapid transit should be encouraged.
- Other issues mentioned include concern about tour buses in neighbourhoods, need to keep Harbour as a transportation hub, need for planning for scooters, and need for new features in developments such as electric car plug-ins.
- Parking requirements for buildings should be re-visited or eliminated.

Neighbourhood Design

- Neighbourhoods design is key to supporting a sustainable lifestyle; keywords used include “walkable”, “compact”, “complete”, “healthy”, “villages”.
- Neighbourhood centres can be integrated hubs, where people can find what they need within walking distance, and act as magnets and centres of activity.
- Neighbourhood design can foster connectedness, inclusivity, trust, diversity and resiliency among residents.
- “The places in between the buildings are the places that matter”. “Create the opposite of a gated community”.
- Victoria’s neighbourhoods have a unique character, and a strong identity.
- There is concern that density may diminish neighbourhood character. Others felt that density is essential. How can we encourage density in neighbourhoods?

Climate & Energy

- There is a need to both reduce Victoria’s carbon footprint and prepare the community to live with more expensive energy.
- Specific emission sources of concern include cruise ships, more uptake of industrial/commercial waste, upgrading the energy efficiency of all homes, challenges of upgrading heritage buildings, and the higher emissions of outlying neighbourhoods compared to the core.
- The City’s economy should diversify now to anticipate future industry changes due to peak oil.
- There is a need to plan for and focus on the local impacts of climate change, rather than the global ones.
- Air quality goals (e.g. reducing cruise ship emissions) can be dovetailed with GHG reductions. The OCP should have clear targets for emissions.

Children

- There is concern that Victoria is losing children and young families to other municipalities in the CRD.
- Schools play an important neighbourhood role and should be more of a focus.
- Cities should be designed for children in order to appeal for all ages.
- Children also need to feel safe walking to school
- Need to make young people feel included in Victoria, and increase diversity of the city.

Seniors

- Victoria is in a position to be a leader in planning for an aging population.
- Are we planning to take care of seniors as they age – they won't be leaving Victoria for their hometowns...