

Attachment 1:

Burnside Gorge Community Association Official Community Plan Comments

June 10, 2011

These comments relate to specific sections or pages from the draft Plan and are supportive of, and in addition to, the letter written to the City of Victoria.

Section 6 - Land Management and Development

Page 32 - Broad Objectives: 6(e) Rock Bay as an area of intensive employment – as point out by Burnside Gorge Community Association (BGCA) in our response to the draft Downtown Core Area Plan Rock Bay is bisected by Bay Street. It does not end at Bay Street. This distinction will become important when the “Rock Bay” referenced in the draft OCP becomes the focus of this “incubator” idea. Also, this designation does not allow for live/work arrangements or flexible buildings that can be readily repurposed as needs/demographics change

Page 32 - Broad Objectives: 6(f) Town Centres/Urban Villages – the idea of services being met within a 15 minute walk from home is not feasible in Burnside Gorge in light of the car-centred reality in this neighbourhood.

Page 33 - Large Urban Village – anchored by a full service supermarket. The Selkirk development has only recently been built out so there will be no redevelopment here for decades. There is no room to accommodate this physically at this location

Page 33 - There is no mention of the Harbour. There is reference to 6.1.1 Marine and 6.1.12 Marine Industrial but our single largest bit of geography gets no mention at all. There is no consistent plan for where water meets land and no language indicating a commitment to a working harbour. The City should add an overriding concept to the Urban Place Guidelines that states that any potential use or change to harbour adjacent land require commercial access to the water. Additionally, the harbour must be planned and managed as a holistic resource. Harbour planning needs its own section in the OCP where City policies are articulated and the resource is managed in a unified way.

(Starting) Page 35 Figure 7 - Urban Place Guidelines:

- Town Centre: live/work should be added;
- Core Employment: should have live/work and flex buildings;
- Industrial (particularly in Rock Bay proper) should have live/work and flex buildings as a planned possibility. Community Services should not be a designated industrial use; and
- General Employment: should have live/work and flex buildings as a planned possibility.

Page 42 – General Development Guidance 6.7/6.11 – Density bonus. It is not clear in the language whether bonusing in specific area/community would allow for that money/bonus to be explicitly used in that community. This should be explicit or at least a heavy percentage weighted/allocated to local community for density bonus.

Page 43 – Local Area Planning Phasing (Map): Burnside Gorge has communicated as part of the Downtown Core Area Plan that the separation and naming of Rock Bay into two distinct areas (north of Bay St. and south of Bay St.) further fragments the planning, use and community. Rock Bay should always be looked at as a whole recognizing the migration of one use/type/zone to another (Employment Core (south) to Industrial (north) – Rock Bay as a whole is part of community that provides employment diversity and vitality to our city and neighbourhood, but it is also a transitional and transformative landscape that connects our residential community to the downtown core.

Rapid Transit Corridor: As a community, Burnside Gorge has the longest border with the rapid transit corridor. As noted by this map, well over 65% of Burnside Gorge is consumed by the Rapid Transit planning boundary and thus this concept impacts all of the employment and the majority of our residential citizens. Additionally, Burnside Gorge and Vic West are the only communities in Victoria that live and work to the West of the corridor – all other communities are collecting into it to facilitate regional transport. This puts Burnside Gorge in the unique position of being potentially impeded by the corridor as additional barrier to the rest of Victoria vis-à-vis access to downtown and eastern communities. Combining this with the vision of the Green district south of Bay, it is imperative that Burnside Gorge have significant participation in the planning process by those who live and work in the community and that our community be looked upon as a whole community and not segmented into uses and areas which could serve to have Burnside Gorge divided even further into ‘industrial’, ‘commercial’, ‘residential’, and ‘employment core’.

Page 44 - 6.13 in light of the timing and priority of the Rapid Transit Corridor, developing the local area plan for a Green district in Rock Bay is out of sync and does nothing to advance Burnside Gorge as a whole.

6.17 - the proposal of traffic calming near urban villages is to be applauded. For this and many other reasons provided throughout the OCP, Burnside Gorge will be seeking the downgrading of Gorge Road as an Arterial to a Collector. We will and have actively reached out to the Tillicum Gorge Community Association to further support this initiative.

Page 45 - 6.22 Burnside Gorge agrees with the desire for a site-specific master plan for Gorge Road Hospital. Two things we would like acknowledged: that the development master plan actively engage community residents and the Association and; that there is significant underutilization of the Gorge Hospital site since it's change in use and that the City and Association should engage in a discussion with VIHA in better and communal use of lands on the northern part of the site (unused parking lots and green space).

Page 46 - 6.24.1 This limit on residential development should apply to the entire harbour. Residential properties do not require access to the water. Only those uses that require access to the water for their operations should be permitted.

6.24.3: consider seeking ‘minimum’ parking space required for lands adjacent to Inner Harbour below Wharf Street.

Page 47 - 6.31 – an additional measure of progress should be a positive analytic outcome of local area plans meeting and integrating with the needs of neighbourhood plans and not usurping them.

Section 7 Transportation and Mobility:

Applaud the broad objectives of the transportation and mobility policies.

Upon review of the Objectives, Mode Priority, Thoroughfare Management and Design Objectives, Burnside Gorge recommends the following:

- Gorge Road from Jutland westward should be downgraded to a collector or secondary arterial. This should also include downgrading Jutland to a secondary arterial as well.
 - Having Burnside and Gorge Road as arterials running through the neighbourhood does not serve the community nor does it serve pedestrian or cyclist transportation priorities within the neighbourhood or our residents transiting to other areas.
 - Gorge and Burnside Roads are used as alternatives to Douglas Street. Three east-west arterials through our neighbourhood diminishes placemaking and leaves Burnside Gorge as a thoroughfare instead of a neighbourhood.
 - Maintaining Gorge Road as an arterial traps the residential community of Burnside Gorge with major arterials in all 4 directions.
 - Burnside Road connects up to Tillicum and then Highway 1 as well as connecting to Douglas rapid transit corridor. Gorge does not lead to any key destination and is primarily residential through to Saanich. As per section 7.3 – there is no reason for truck traffic on Gorge Road west of Jutland.
 - Business and truck traffic can use Burnside to access Harriet or Tillicum Road for access to Highway 1, Esquimalt or Saanich. Business and industrial traffic have Bay Street and Douglas to access north, west, east and south.
 - As an arterial, Gorge Road inhibits residents from accessing the Gorge waterway thus significantly diminishing community well-being and placemaking as described in the OCP.
 - There are no schools or supermarkets within Burnside Gorge thus requiring residents to cross major arterials to access all basic goods and services.
 - Gorge as an arterial disconnects the community from the waterfront and inhibits promotion and use and protection under Parks Recreation and Culture.
 - Our community is defined by the Gorge waterway and its history, including the working harbour, recreation and infrastructure services to name a few. To be separated by the Gorge as an arterial separates the community from its key defining feature.
 - Burnside Gorge plans to work together with the Tillicum Gorge Community Association to facilitate and encourage traffic calming as well as a uniform, cohesive approach to the re-birth of Gorge Road.

Page 55 7.17 Pedestrian Master Plan. Burnside Gorge applauds the desire to implement improvements. Currently, none of the major corridors in Burnside Gorge would comply with 7.17.1, 7.17.3 or 7.18. All major access routes (Burnside, Gorge, Jutland) identified within Burnside Gorge have significant safety impediments to families and seniors on all or parts of the corridors.

Page 56 MAP 5: Greenways Network. Burnside Gorge supports the Greenways network and would recommend an accelerated commitment to the improvement highlighted in the Burnside Gorge

neighbourhood. In light of the Rapid Transit and Green district planning to proceed along with increased traffic in our neighbourhood until transit solutions are implemented, the residential internal pathway should be actively pursued as well as increased emphasis on priority of the proposed shared greenway within our neighbourhood. Additionally, we propose that the shared green pathway be extended across the Point Ellice Bridge to connect with the Galloping Goose and Victoria West.

Page 57 7.18 – there are no public schools within Burnside Gorge. Serious consideration must be given to prioritising safe routes the three closest primary schools: Quadra Elementary, Tillicum Elementary and Vic West Elementary.

Page 58 Map 6 Cycling Network: Bridge Street should be enhanced for increased bike and pedestrian traffic to enhance a secondary human route to downtown from the west side of Douglas.

Section 8 Placemaking:

Sustainable neighbourhoods are part of placemaking. Burnside Gorge neighbourhood recommends that the Gorge waterway be identified as a memorable place. It meets most of the Placemaking Principals and Design Elements and the Broad Objectives (page 61). As per the comments above, a major feature of the Burnside Gorge neighbourhood is the Gorge waterway. A downgrading of Gorge Road to a corridor would significantly enhance: the interaction with the waterway; the way development is pursued along Gorge Road; connecting people to the natural feature and green space that defines the community; increasing connectivity on a human scale; connecting to the history and culture of the harbour and waterway as well as creating access to the proposed urban village of Selkirk. We are also encouraged that this would succeed in increasing pedestrian safety and comfort and remove barriers (Connectivity page 64).

Section 9 Parks, Recreation, and Culture:

Burnside Gorge acknowledges that the City has identified 3 areas within our neighbourhood for proposed parks in recognition of our under-representation of green space. We also acknowledge the strides the neighbourhood and the City have made in the building of the Burnside Gorge Community Centre as well as the Cecelia Ravine Park management Plan. With a significant number of young families in the neighbourhood as well as our commitment to the Gorge waterway, the Association will continue to work with the City to make these new parks and green spaces a reality in the near future.

Of note, Burnside School is highlighted in Map 8. While the facility and its grounds are there and well utilised by the Association, the school is no longer functioning as an educational access point for young families and children in the neighbourhood and this point can get lost in such a representational map.

Page 75: 9.3 – Acquisition Strategy. This is an excellent list of priorities for park acquisition. Burnside Gorge recommends that the Greenways Network be added to the acquisition list (under 9.3.3.) and that a timeline for completion of the Acquisition Strategy be committed to as many of the priorities identified on the list have been identified for a long time. The need to develop this Strategy means another planning step before any action.

Section 10 Environmental Management

Page 80 – The Harbour needs to be treated as its own section on the draft OCP. It is referenced dozens of times but always as an aside. Section 10.11 says to implement the Harbour Plan. Does this refer to the 10-year-old Victoria Harbour Plan? Has this not been implemented?

Section 13 Housing and Homelessness:

Page 94: Burnside Gorge recommends that a Broad Objective be worded to the effect that a 'housing continuum' be encourage and developed within all neighbourhoods in Victoria to promote community integration and diversification – particularly of affordable housing, transitional and supported housing, and non-market rental housing. Government-assisted housing as per Figure 15 should not be clustered in one or two neighbourhoods but dispersed throughout Victoria - 13.19 does not address this adequately.

Section 15 Community Well-being

Burnside Gorge supports the objectives and the inclusion of Community Well-being as criteria for a fulsome OCP. Social equity and distribution of services, physical accessibility, improved multigenerational capacity, community development, public engagement, safety and sustainability are all critical to Burnside Gorge realising its potential as a neighbourhood. We will rely on these objectives and ideals as we advocate to ensure Burnside Gorge grows as a neighbourhood and does not get usurped by corridor plans or compartmentalization of its various land uses.

Page 109 – Urban Food Production – 16.4.3.and 16.12 – recommend working with Association and VIHA at identifying lands that may be available for park and allotment gardens on the Gorge Hospital site before transition plan is drawn up.

Section 20 Neighbourhood Directions:

Burnside – page 128-129. Recap of core recommendations and comments:

- 20.1.5 - strongly recommend downgrading of transportation corridor of Gorge Road East, particularly from Bridge Street to Harriet. Maintaining Gorge Road East as a significant transportation corridor will retard and diminish the ability to facilitate Strategic direction 20.2.1 and 20.2.5, 20.2.7 and 20.2.9.
- 20.1.8 - recommend that all of Rock Bay (north and south of Bay street) be considered together for district plan. In strategic directions 20.2.3 and 20.2.4 the OCP has made Rock Bay north of Bay street nameless 'industrial lands' to complement 'Rock Bay'. This is part of Rock Bay.
- Strongly recommend the removal of 'community services' from uses for lands designated Industrial Use. This is an inappropriate, unsupported and unfounded use for an industrial area.
- Recommend Industrial, General Employment and Urban Core Employment have appropriate zoning for live/work arrangements and flex buildings.
- 20.2.1 - Selkirk Village, please see comments in 20.1.5. Additionally, Selkirk is significantly built out and maximised and does not have capacity for a supermarket that is a main characteristic of a large urban village. It is also difficult to access.
- 20.2.5 - improving public access must include Greenways paths and the downgrading of Gorge Road to collector status.
- 20.2.6 - recommend this include internal pathway (part of greenways)
- 20.2.7 - recommend improvement of city linkages with enhanced pedestrian corridors, bike lanes on Bridge Street and across Point Ellice Bridge, and planning north and south Rock Bay together.
- 20.2.8 - this direction should include Burnside Road and should mention ground-level commercial or other streetscape requirement.
- 20.2.9 - recommend complete redesign/traffic calming/pedestrian-focus of Gorge Road and applaud redesign and walkability improvements to Burnside including a pedestrian crossing at Napier Lane/Burnside and improve lighting at Washington Street pedestrian crossing.
- 20.2.12 - recommend that VIHA be engaged to work with neighbourhood and City around underutilized lands on the north end of their site in addition to engaging in a master plan.
- 20.2.13 - revitalisation of the Harriet/Burnside corner is welcomed, but this corner is more a transit hub than a small urban village. Declaring a village at this corner will not, in reality, meet OCP criteria but may, on paper, indicated there is a village within walking distance to residential homes.