

In Your Neighbourhood

Playing Courts

Many of the sport courts in Victoria need some maintenance work, such as lighting, refreshed lines and resurfacing. Priorities for short term improvements have been determined through a condition assessment, but we also want to hear from users on how the City should best spend the \$50,000 budget for maintenance for 2017. We will also want input into priorities for the next few years. A workshop will be held on Wednesday May 3 at City Hall from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Please RSVP to parkspermits@victoria.ca.

North Park Village Street Revitalization

The improvement project for Cook Street (North Park Village) has begun and be complete by July 1. The FCA and NPNA have been directly involved in developing the design for crosswalks, banners and gateway signage, as well as considering other enhancements to bring (even more!) vibrancy to the village centre.

Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVR)

At their [March 9 meeting](#), Council directed staff to provide advice on tools available to limit the number of STVRs where they are currently allowed and that this include options for:

- a) A City-initiated rezoning to remove transient accommodation as a permitted use from residential strata property, with an "opt-out" process where stratas can apply to retain transient accommodation as a permitted use, where a majority of strata lot owners in a residential strata indicate their support for that use.
- b) A business license scheme for Short-Term Vacation Rentals that is consistent with the Strata Property Act and does not include granting licences for stratas that do not allow Short-Term Vacation Rentals in their bylaws.
- c) Maintaining transient accommodation as a permitted use, with the option of an "opt-in" mechanism for a City initiated rezoning to prohibit transient accommodation as a permitted use, where a majority of owners of units in a residential multi-unit building (condominium) downtown indicate their preference for this rezoning.

Visual Victoria

We are now in the last stages of the planning process and draft plans have been posted on our [website](#). An Open House was held on March 30 at City Hall for comments from the public on the two plans. We have appreciated your valuable input and it has been considered in the preparation of the draft plans. The Way-finding Strategy will be presented to Council on April 27 and therefore comments on the document must be received before Tuesday April 4, 2017. The Downtown Public Realm Plan report is scheduled to go to Council on May 25, 2017 with any final comments due by Friday April 7.

Participatory Budgeting Victoria

Victoria's [Participatory Budgeting](#) pilot project is underway and requires twelve volunteers for its steering committee. Participatory budgeting gives Victoria residents the opportunity to decide how to spend \$60,000 of City budget. The steering committee will develop and oversee the process ensuring that transparency, fairness, inclusivity and community outreach objectives are met. The deadline for applications is April 9.

Public Engagement Roadmap

A workshop and open house on citizen and business engagement in City decision making was held February 18 at the Royal BC Museum. Based on feedback from the workshop and consistent with the

[International Association of Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#) principles, a draft [Public Engagement Roadmap](#) is being developed. The roadmap will map out the level of engagement on upcoming City initiatives to make public involvement in city decision-making easy and effective. The draft Roadmap will be ready early April, at which point a survey and next steps will be communicated.

Cannabis Dispensaries (*media release*)

The exemption period for compliance with the City's cannabis regulations has expired. The City will now be launching legal proceedings for any cannabis retailer who has not applied for a business license or a rezoning. From the outset, the City's objective has been to work with the industry to gain compliance with the regulations, which took effect in November 2016.

The regulations provided a grace period of 60 days to allow businesses to meet the requirements of the regulations, which include applying for a business license and rezoning the property. The City provided education and support during that period to help businesses become compliant. As of March 17, 33 cannabis retailers had applied for a business license 23 had applied for rezoning. Sixteen cannabis retailers had yet to apply for rezoning and one for a business license. The legal proceedings can be halted by non-compliant cannabis retailers by applying for the required business license and rezoning.

Crystal Pool

Planning for the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre continues to progress. The City has recently developed a dedicated [project web page](#) with a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). This list will be updated to provide timely information regarding the plans for the referendum anticipated for fall 2017. If you have other questions, please email staff at crystalpool@victoria.ca.

Cycling Network Implementation

Following feedback from the public and stakeholders along the Fort Street corridor, the revised designs will go to City Council for consideration and approval this spring.

Heritage Properties Register

On [March 9](#), Council defeated a motion to approve a [recommendation](#) for the addition of fifty properties to the Heritage Register. As registered properties, the buildings would have been given consideration for heritage designation status, should redevelopment of the sites be considered in the future.

Housing Strategy Garden Suites Policy

At their [March 9](#) meeting, Council provided direction to staff in implementing the City's housing strategy with regards to Garden Suites. This included additional guidelines to mitigate privacy impacts in response to public feedback and information on the City's website providing further clarification of the rezoning process and provisions to ensure that garden suites are used for rental accommodation.

Neighbour Day

Council approved a proclamation request from for Neighbour Day on Sunday, May 7. According to the proclamation, Neighbour Day is a day designated to residents opening their doors and getting to know their neighbours through a variety of social activities and engagements. For ideas on things to do and toolkits for an event, check their [website](#).

Neighbourhoods are also invited to do three things to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Confederation. The campaign was started by a challenge from Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi to residents in cities across Canada to get involved in serving their communities. More information can be found at the [Three Things website](#).

Great Neighbourhood Grants

The Great Neighbourhood program will be opening for applications mid-April. The City will be launching the program on April 19 from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m. with a [Neighbourhoods Ideas Fair](#) at City Hall. The purpose of the event will be to stimulate ideas for projects and provide guidance in preparing grant applications. Neighbourhoods which have been involved in projects that they think would be of interest to other prospective grant applicants are invited to submit photos for the event. Please let your neighbourhood City staff contact I know if you have suggestions or questions about this event.

Create Victoria

The City is developing a draft Cultural Policy and a draft Arts and Culture Master Plan - [Create Victoria](#) - to guide the City's investment in arts and culture over the next five years. Public input has been received through a variety of activities and online engagement. The survey deadline has been extended to Thursday, April 13 to allow more time for arts and culture practitioners to complete the Economic Impact Assessment section. The City will present the draft Cultural Policy and draft Arts and Culture Master Plan to the community in mid-June for feedback.

City Book Prize

Submissions are now being accepted for the \$5,000 City of [Victoria Butler Book Prize](#) and the \$5,000 Bolen Books Children's Book Prize. The Victoria Book Prize Society's annual fall gala showcases the literary achievements of authors and illustrators who make Greater Victoria their home. Books must have been published between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017. The deadline for submissions is May 12, 2017. For applications and guidelines visit www.victoriabookprizes.ca or www.victoria.ca.

Shortlisted nominees for both prizes will be announced in September and authors will be showcased at a gala held at the Union Club of British Columbia on Wednesday, October 11, 2017.

Social Enterprise

At its [March 23 meeting](#), Council approved the *Good Jobs + Good Business = Better Community Action Plan*. The actions in the [five-year plan](#) are meant to both help people who are out of the workforce get to work and to grow a strong, inclusive economy. The plan identifies three sets of recommendations that will strengthen the City's procurement practices to maximize community benefit as well as to support the small business and social enterprise sectors.

Motion to Amend Streets and Traffic Bylaw

In response to the low vacancy rate for accommodation in Victoria, at its [April 13 Council meeting](#), Council will be directing staff to report back at the next quarterly update on implementing bylaw amendments to address potential waivers for sleeping in vehicles offenses and/or deleting Section 84 of the Streets and Traffic Bylaw 09-079.

Home Renovation Rebates and Heating Oil Tank Incentives

The City of Victoria is partnering with BC Hydro, Fortis BC, the Province and CRD to enhance the Home Renovation Rebate and Oil to Heat Pump Programs. Switching to an air source heat pump could qualify for a combined incentive of \$2,000 from the Province of BC (\$1,700), the City of Victoria (\$150) and the Capital Regional District (\$150). The offer is only available to City of Victoria residents until July 31, or until funds are exhausted.

Victoria homeowners who have had an Energy Evaluation may also be eligible to receive free Home Energy Coaching through the Municipal Partner Offer. The coaching will assist you with prioritizing and selecting home energy improvements.



April 2017 Update

Fernwood

For more information on the Home Renovation Rebate (HRR) Program or the Municipal Partner Offer, visit www.victoria.ca/sustainability or call 1.844.881.9790. For more information on the Oil to Heat Pump Incentive Program visit www.oiltoheatpump.ca or call 1.877.545.6247.

Staying in Touch

- For information on other key initiatives at the City, check [here](#) and follow the links for details.
- You can also download the [ConnectVictoria app](#) and stay up to date on latest news, jobs and events. Through the app, you can contact the City and submit a service request like a streetlight outage or pothole.
- [Council Highlights](#) provides a snapshot of the progress made on City programs, initiatives and on Council decision-making. [Email staff](#) if you would like to subscribe to the highlights.

Council Meetings

Committee of the Whole will meet April [6](#), [13](#), 20 and 27 at 9 a.m. and Council will meet April [13](#) and 27 at 6:30 p.m.