

Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan

Terms of Reference

Approved by Saanich Council - September 14, 2015



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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan Terms of Reference is to provide a framework to guide the development of a vision and community plan for the Uptown Major Centre, the Douglas Corridor and the surrounding area over the next 20-30 years.

Based on the overarching framework of sustainability, the Plan will address land use, built form, transportation and mobility, environment, community services and amenities and urban design in order to guide future development of the area.

2. STUDY AREA

The Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan study area is approximately 171.3 ha and is defined by the municipal boundary with the City of Victoria, at Tolmie Avenue, north to Huxley Street, and between Burnside Road and Harriet Road to the west and Darwin Avenue and Calumet Avenue to the east.

The area includes two major regional transportation corridors; Douglas Street linking downtown Victoria to the Western communities, and Blanshard Street connecting Highway 17 to the Greater Victoria International Airport, the Township of Sidney and BC Ferries Swartz Bay Terminal (See Map 1).

The Study Area also includes the Saanich Municipal Hall, Fire Hall, Police Station, and outdoor amenities such as the Galloping Goose Trail, Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary and Rutledge Park.

3. PLANNING CONTEXT

The study area is located at the centre of the region, is bisected by three key regional transportation corridors, and is the future location for a rapid transit line and the regional transit hub. A key point of interest within the study area is the Uptown Shopping Centre, formerly known as the Town and Country Shopping Centre, which is a focal point both within Saanich and throughout the region. Constructed in 1965, Town and Country was one of the first shopping centres in the region. It functioned not only as a commercial engine, but also as a social gathering place for residents.

The old Town and Country Shopping Centre has since been replaced with the redevelopment of the site as Uptown Shopping Centre. As a result of the extensive redevelopment of the site, the commercial and social roles of the Shopping Centre and surrounding area are undergoing significant transformation. The Plan seeks to coordinate redevelopment of the area to create a vibrant urban environment that attracts new jobs and residents and serves as the heart of Saanich.

Land use within the study area is predominantly mixed commercial and industrial (See Figure 1) in close proximity to Douglas and Blanshard Streets with significant multi-family and single-family residential at the periphery of the study area (See Map 2). Recent redevelopment activity in the area demonstrates a transformation to a more vibrant, walkable, mixed-use hub of community activity. Focus has shifted to developments that contribute to a more urban form through

predominantly four to six storey mixed-use residential buildings and street-oriented commercial buildings.

Given the nature of the Uptown Centre as a major transportation hub, traffic has had a significant influence on the character and land use of the surrounding area. Major transportation corridors from the northern island and the Saanich Peninsula pass through this Centre and as a result, much of the existing commercial land uses in the area are auto-oriented.

Multiple jurisdictions are also involved in this area. The Trans-Canada Highway to Douglas Street, and the Pat Bay Highway to Blanshard Street are classified as arterial highways by the Province and construction and maintenance of all arterial highways is the responsibility of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI). The District of Saanich is responsible for all other major roads, collector and local streets. Furthermore, BC Transit has identified Douglas Street as a future rapid transit corridor and Uptown as the site of a future major regional transportation hub.

The 2014-2018 Strategic Plan identifies the development of the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan as one of the initiatives to work towards a more vibrant and connected economy. Building on the momentum created by the redevelopment of the Uptown Shopping Centre, this Plan would set community-wide policy to guide the future of the Uptown Major Centre, the Douglas corridor and the surrounding areas.

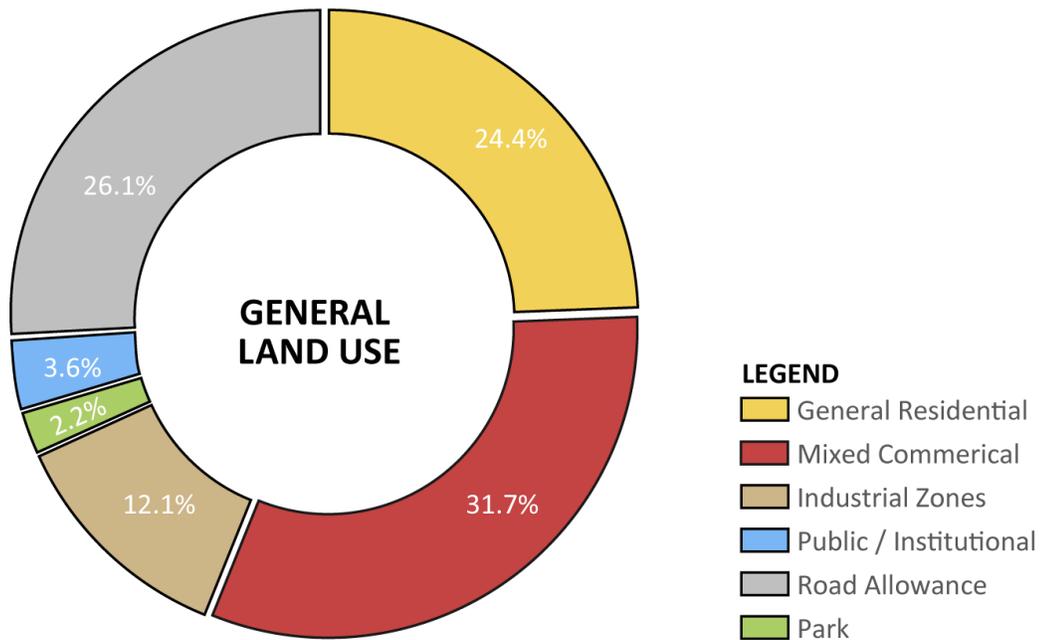


Figure 1: Use within the Plan Area

4. OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan is to create an area that is environmentally, socially and economically resilient and contributes to the overarching framework of sustainability in the OCP. Key Plan objectives are to:

1. Enhance the role and identity of the Uptown Centre as a regional hub and focal point in Saanich;
2. Create a more attractive, vibrant and walkable urban centre;
3. Create a connected, sustainable and balanced transportation network that encourages more walking, cycling and transit use;
4. Enhance and restore key environmental assets, including Cecelia Creek and watershed;
5. Enhance the network of parks, open spaces and cultural and community facilities;
6. Maintain and enhance opportunities for commercial and industrial uses;
7. Promote green infrastructure, green buildings and renewable energy;
8. Integrate public realm improvements and land use changes to support the development of complete streets and the future introduction of rapid transit on Douglas Street;
9. Expand the range of housing choices; and
10. Balance infrastructure and circulation for business traffic, pedestrian mobility, access to future transit infrastructure, bicycle network, parking and truck traffic needs.

5. SCOPE OF WORK

As previously noted, the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan aims to provide a framework and policy directions to help guide and manage positive change in a holistic manner, while also seeking to further the vision articulated in the Official Community Plan (OCP). The policy directions included in the Plan would be based on issues that were identified through consultation with the community as well as research and analysis completed by staff.

An overarching framework or focus on sustainability will guide the development of the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan. Key themes of the plan include:

- Land-Use, Urban Design and Placemaking;
- Transportation and Mobility;
- Economic Vibrancy, Prosperity and Sustainability;
- Parks, Open Space and Community Facilities;
- Sustainable Design, Green Buildings and Infrastructure; and
- Natural Environment.

The scope of work for the project will include the following:

- Consult with area land owners, business representatives and residents to develop a vision for the study area and establish principles to guide future development;
- Develop guidelines for intensification of the Uptown Major Centre and surrounding area by identifying appropriate areas and uses for development;

- Develop land use, urban design and mobility policies and guidelines that integrate existing and future land uses with current and future transit initiatives;
- Develop urban design concepts, development principles and design guidelines for selected key streets;
- Determine potential impacts and infrastructure needs on local community services and facilities, parking, traffic, bicycle circulation and transit;
- Identify opportunities for parks, open space and other public realm improvements;
- Identify the tools and methods available to support implementation such as Zoning, Development Cost Charges, and design standards;
- Identify public and private amenity opportunities and establish priorities and mechanisms to achieve appropriate community services and amenities; and
- Define guidelines for future land use with respect to use and building height;

6. PLANNING PROCESS

Development of the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Action Plan will occur in six phases, followed by implementation of the Plan, which would be ongoing (See Figure 2).

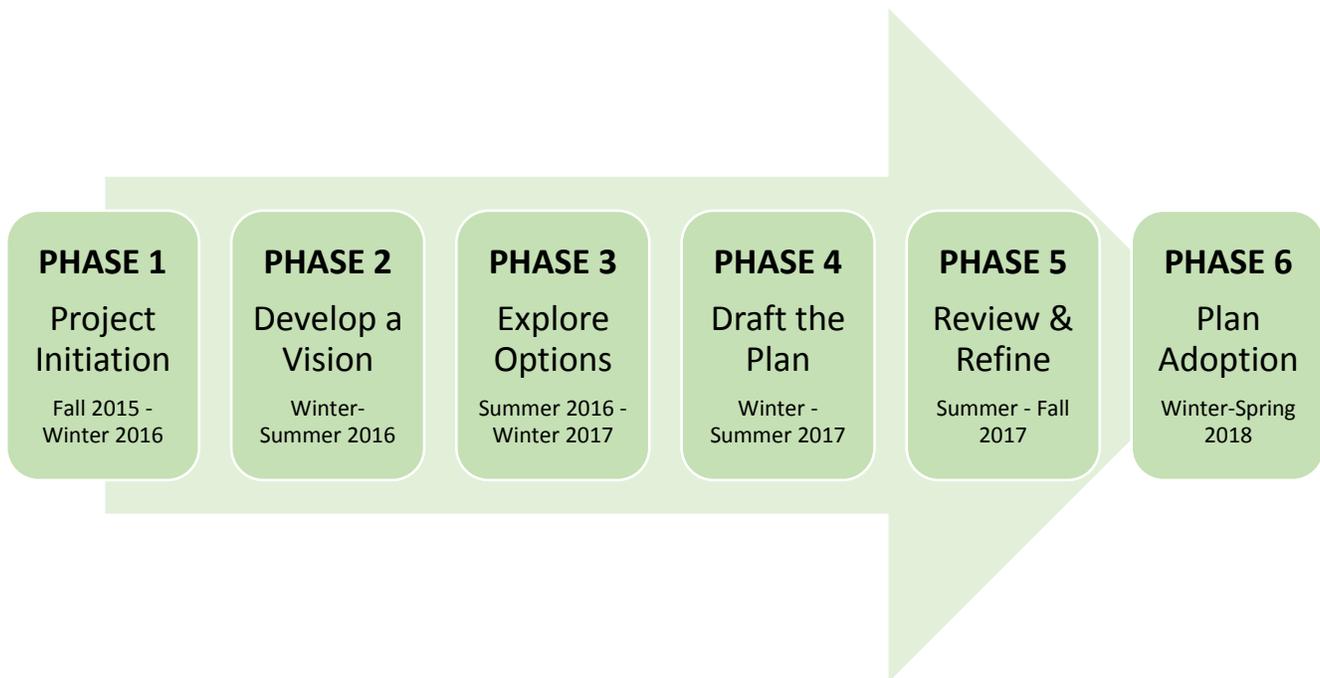


Figure 2: Planning Phases

This process ultimately consists of a 30 month period in which the public will be actively involved. Table 1 outlines a more detailed planning process with project phases and key activities.

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	KEY DELIVERABLES	DURATION
Phase 1: Project Initiation	<u>Research and Analysis:</u> Prepare background information and baseline data Research and technical analysis of key issues <u>Public Engagement:</u> Refine Public Engagement Strategy and form Project Advisory Committee	Baseline Conditions Report Public Engagement Strategy Establishment of Advisory Committee Draft list of planning issues or topics to address in plan update Summary of relevant policies and studies influencing the planning area	Fall - Winter 2015
Phase 2: Develop a Vision	Public consultation to assess priorities, identify issues and develop vision, principles and goals. Research and analysis (continued)	Summary of engagement process and outcomes Refined list of priority issues to address in Plan update Vision, Principles & Goals	Winter – Summer 2016
Phase 3: Explore Options	Analysis of policy options Prepare land use concepts and conceptual streetscapes Conduct technical review of primary option Public engagement regarding choices and options for the future	Summary of engagement process and outcomes Land Use & Streetscape Concepts Plan Alternatives and Framework Report Preferred policy options and preferred design concepts	Summer 2016 – Winter 2017
COUNCIL CHECK IN			
Phase 4: Draft the Plan	Development of Uptown/Douglas Corridor Plan Internal review of Draft Plan	Draft Plan	Winter – Summer 2017
Phase 5: Review and Refine	Review Draft Plan with Advisory Committee and public/stakeholders	Summary compilation of feedback on Draft Plan	Summer – Fall 2017
Phase 6: Plan Adoption	Develop staff report Council meeting Public Hearing	Proposed Plan Outreach and communications to inform staff on content and implementation Adopted Uptown/Douglas Corridor Plan	Winter-Spring 2018
Implementation			

Table 1: Planning Process

7. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The key components of public engagement are outlined in the process section of this Terms of Reference. Based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of public participation, Table 2 identifies examples of the level of public engagement that could be used for the Uptown/Douglas Corridor Plan. Based on feedback from the Project Advisory Committee and other area stakeholders, engagement techniques can be adapted to help ensure key stakeholders are engaged in the process.

	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternative and/or decision	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
Examples of Techniques	Project website Newsletters, email updates Background research summaries	Public Survey Stakeholder interviews Open Houses	Workshops Stakeholder meetings Focus Groups	Project Advisory Committee

Table 2: Proposed Engagement Activities - IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation

Identified stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- the general public and residents;
- local businesses, land owners and operators;
- Mount View, Gorge Tillicum and Quadra-Cedar Hill Community Associations;
- public institutions and agencies such as the Capital Regional District (CRD), City of Victoria, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, School District 61, BC Transit,
- local Non-Government Agencies (NGO's);
- municipal departments; and
- Saanich Advisory Committees, including the Planning Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee (PTED), Trails and Recreation Advisory Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Committee and Environmental Advisory Committee.

8. PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Project Advisory Committee will be established in the Project Initiation phase. The Committee will be comprised of approximately 16 individuals that are broadly representative of area demographics and interests.

Member composition would include:

- Two members from the Mt. View Colquitz Community Association;
- One member from the Gorge Tillicum Community Association;
- One member from Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association;
- Two members who are residents of the study area;
- Three members from the business community, including:
 - Business owners/operators
 - Land owners
- One member from the Urban Development Institute;
- One member from the Saanich Youth Council;
- Up to five at large members, with a priority on members who represent or bring expertise in the following areas:
 - Mobility and transportation
 - Environment
 - Housing
 - Social services
 - Seniors or youth issues
 - Land use planning and urban design.

Key roles of the advisory committee will be to:

- Advise on public engagement techniques to ensure outreach is effectively undertaken in the community;
- Promote the project and public engagement opportunities within the community; and
- Provide feedback to staff on plan concepts and content.

Committee members would be recruited through an open application process in the pre-planning stage. Staff would select members based on the membership criteria identified above.

In addition to the core Advisory Committee, smaller technical resource groups may be assembled on an ad hoc basis to address topic specific issues as they arise. These technical working groups could include representatives from the following organizations:

- Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure;
- BC Transit;
- City of Victoria;
- Saanich Engineering Department;

- Saanich Parks Department; and the
- Capital Regional District.

9. BUDGET

The planning process will require planning and technical staff and consultants, as well as resources from other departments, as dictated by the nature of issues explored in the local area planning process.

The budget for the Uptown/Douglas Corridor Action Plan is \$246,000 over three years. Typical components included in this figure include costs for consulting work, background studies, advertising, venues, facilitator, supplies, printing and graphic design work.

10. DELIVERABLES

The proposed Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan would provide detailed policy guidance for future growth and change within the study area. The Plan would be developed in close consultation with other departments in order to consider other District priorities, objectives and resources.

The Plan may include some or all of the following components:

- Vision, broad objectives, policies, actions and a list of desired amenities;
- Design concepts, illustrations, diagrams, and design guidelines; and
- Priority actions for implementation.

11. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER INITIATIVES

A key element of the Uptown/Douglas Corridor Plan will be to ensure the plan is well-integrated with other Saanich and regional initiatives. This includes:

- Integrating recently adopted Saanich and regional policy into the Plan; and
- Aligning with any current Saanich or regional initiatives that have implications for the study area, including:

District of Saanich Active Transportation Plan

The District of Saanich is currently working to develop an Active Transportation Plan that will examine options to improve walking and cycling throughout Saanich. Although this is a long-range transportation planning exercise, one of the plan objectives will be to develop pedestrian infrastructure priorities for the next five years. The Engineering Department will be consulting with the Planning Department throughout this project and both the Active Transportation Plan and the Uptown/Douglas Corridor Plan will be developed in context with each other.

City of Victoria - Burnside-Gorge/Douglas Area Plan

The City of Victoria is currently working on the Burnside-Gorge/Douglas Area Plan to examine long-term land use, policy and design concepts for the Rock Bay lands, the Douglas Street Corridor and the Burnside neighbourhood to the Saanich border. Collaboration with the City of Victoria has already begun and staff are continuing to look for possible opportunities for joint engagement and planning efforts as both projects continue, particularly in relation to land use and major transportation corridors, including Douglas Street.

BC Transit Initiatives

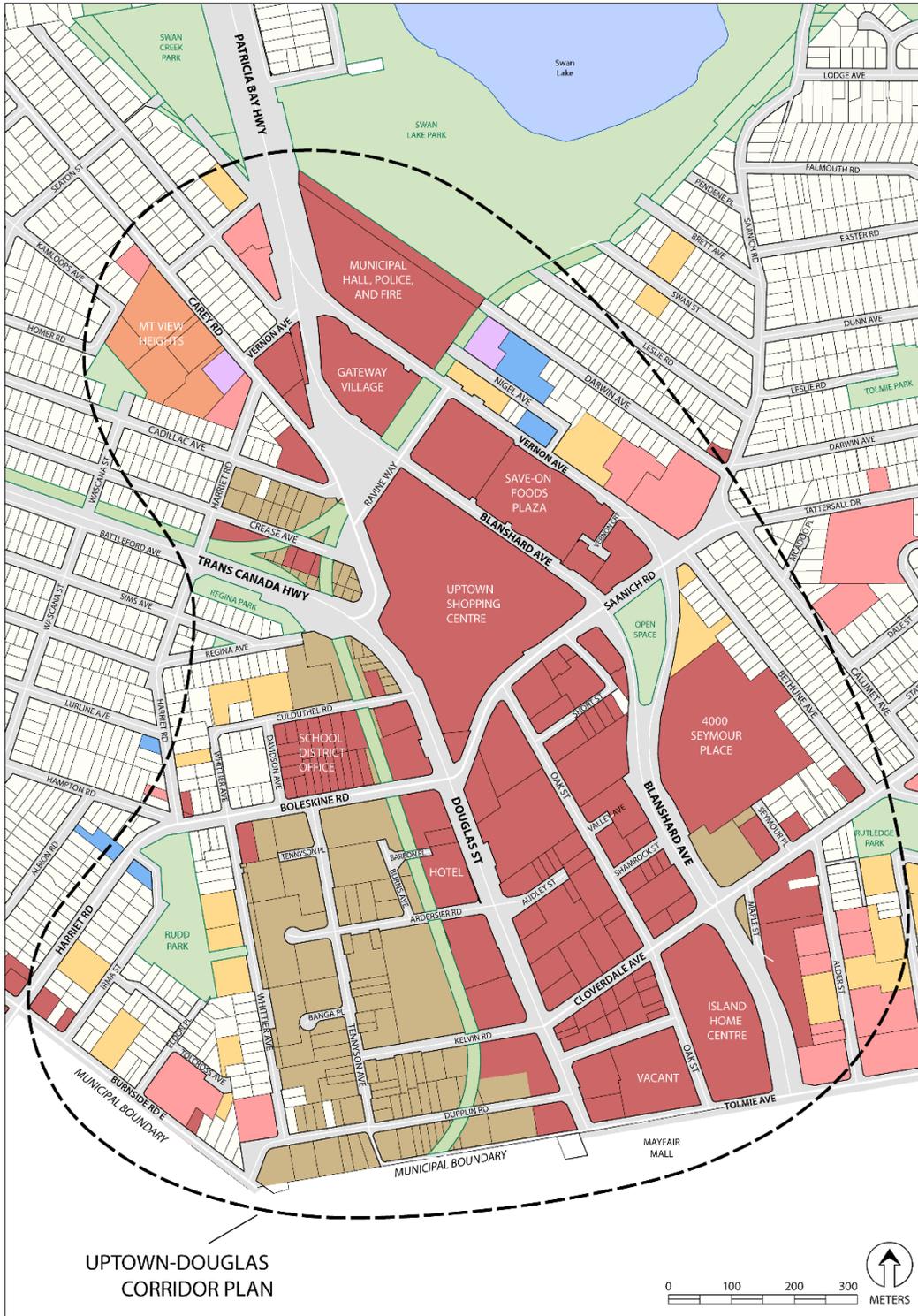
As BC Transit continues to explore measures to improve rapid transit within the region, the District of Saanich will continue to coordinate efforts on projects and transportation-related issues as they arise. It is anticipated that this coordinated approach will allow for a continuous integration of existing and future land uses with current and future transit initiatives.

Nigel Valley Master Plan

BC Housing is currently leading a process to develop redevelopment concepts for a group of properties adjacent to the Municipal Hall between Darwin Avenue and Vernon Avenue. A key goal of this project is to strengthen the role of existing housing and social service providers and enhance the quality of life for residents. Integrating the vision for this area with the broader Uptown - Douglas Corridor Vision will be essential.



Map 1: Study Area



LEGEND

GENERAL LAND USE

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| SINGLE FAMILY | APARTMENT | PERSONAL CARE |
| ATTACHED HOUSING | MIXED COMMERCIAL | PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL |
| COMP. DEVELOPMENT | INDUSTRIAL LANDS | PARK / OPEN SPACE |

Map 2: General Land Use