



DESIGN BRIEF

District of Saanich in association with the FRANK planning collaborative

Draft Date: January 15, 2017

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the Community Design Workshops that will take place over three days from Friday, January 20 to Sunday, January 22, 2017. We invite you to actively take part and contribute to one or all of the planned public events. The Saanich community will help shape their future in an engaging three days of conversations and visual representations of potential ideas and concepts for the Uptown-Douglas Corridor (see map page 4).

The District of Saanich and the FRANK planning collaborative consulting team would like to thank you for taking part in this important initiative that will shape the Uptown-Douglas corridor for the next 25 years.

1.1 The Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan Process

The Community Design Workshops are part of the overall planning process for the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan that was initiated in early 2016 and is targeted to be completed early 2018. The Community Design Workshops are hosted to test and refine the current ideas and to create key concepts that will inform the framework for the Plan and the Uptown-Douglas Corridor check in report to Council in Spring 2017.

1.2 Purpose of the Design Brief

This design brief provides the base information and framework to guide stakeholders through the Community Design Workshop process. It outlines input received to date by the public and the Advisory Committee as representatives of the Uptown-Douglas Corridor area.

1.3 The Community Design Workshops

The community design workshops will provide an opportunity to dynamically explore key concepts and develop the framework of the community plan and implementation strategies. The options and preferred land use plan concept will then be presented to Council for consideration to direct the next phase of the project.

The Community Design Workshop Public Sessions
Uptown Mall, Community Room
(Above Best Buy)

Friday January 20, 6:30 – 9:00 (Facilitated Workshop)
Saturday January 21, 6:30 – 8:00 (Open House)
Sunday January 22, 6:30 – 8:00 (Presentation + Open House)

Detailed agenda is available at: www.saanich.ca/udcp

1.4 Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan: Area Map



LEGEND

 UPTOWN-DOUGLAS CORRIDOR PLAN AREA



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1.5 Desired Outcomes

The desired results of the community design workshop include:

1. Active engagement of key stakeholders (land owners and community);
2. Validation of the Structural and Big Moves in the Uptown-Douglas Corridor area;
3. Alignment of the Structural and Big moves with the vision, values and ten approved objectives;
4. Creation of preliminary land use, urban design, green, and mobility concepts as well as an integrated plan for further consideration and refinement that will evolve over the course of the Design Workshops starting from the following themes:
 - a. **Green Plan:** green building, parks, open space, natural environment and sustainability.
 - b. **Transportation & Mobility:** Transit, pedestrian, bicycles, vehicular, goods movement and other modes of transportation connectivity
 - c. **Character Areas & Land Use:** Form, character, economic vibrancy, land use and place-making.
5. Visualization of conceptual ideas which may include:
 - Green Plan Team:**
 - a. Regional Green Connections and Relationships
 - b. Local Green Connections, Open Space, Parks, Plazas, and interrelationships (east/west green connector)
 - c. Stormwater/drainage/daylighting creek concepts
 - d. Green Roofs and District Energy framework (diagram)
 - e. Green Canopy and Environmental Gain (Concept diagram)
 - Transportation & Mobility Team:**
 - a. Streets Hierarchy Plan
 - b. Transit Plan
 - c. Bicycle Plan
 - d. Conceptual Street Cross-Sections and elements.
 - Character Areas and Land Use Team:**
 - a. Land Use Plan and Sub-Areas
 - b. Features illustrated concepts or diagrams/sketches
 - c. Land Use Sub-Areas Plans – height, density, use and urban character

***Note:** These plans and diagrams may be integrated in one or more

instances to illustrate integration and interrelationships (to be determined).

6. Overall support for the fundamental directions of the plan and associated strategies.

2. Background Information

2.1 Uptown-Douglas Corridor Baseline Conditions

The Baseline Conditions Report provides a snapshot of the existing context in the Uptown-Douglas Corridor area. It is available on the District of Saanich website at: <http://www.saanich.ca/udcp>

2.2 Challenges and Opportunities

A high level summary of the constraints and opportunities was completed by the Advisory Committee. In addition, a comprehensive public engagement process in 2016 focused on identifying issues and opportunities. The full report of the engagement process can be found at www.saanich.ca/udc. Key findings include:

Challenges

- Traffic congestion.
- Area is dominated by streets vehicular movement and infrastructure.
- Jurisdiction of road right-of-ways lies with the Province and not the District.
- Pedestrian realm and connectivity throughout the area.
- Currently no distinct identity for the UDC area.
- Employment/housing balance and growth.
- Housing options and affordability.
- Fragmentation of regionally significant industrial lands as development pressure increases.
- Small series of connected plazas, parks, open spaces in the area.

Opportunities

- Area could provide an anchor as the downtown of Saanich.
- Increase residential developments.
- Improve pedestrian realm and connectivity.
- UDC is identified as a future location for a transit hub.
- Large sites in the area have the potential to redevelop and integrate sustainable infrastructure.
- Develop a green infrastructure network and to improve

environmental performance.

2.3 Policy Summary

A high level review of the policies that relate to the Plan was developed and are available at www.saanich.ca/udcp.

3. Vision and Values

3.1 Vision for the Uptown-Douglas Corridor

Public engagement activities took place between May and June, 2016 and included a survey, poll questions, small-group discussions, and pop-up events located throughout the study area. Across all activities, an estimated 2,500 engagement interactions took place, and approximately 900 responses were collected. Based on public input, the Advisory Committee has adopted this vision for the Plan:

The Uptown-Douglas Corridor area welcomes a diversity of people to live, work and explore in this vibrant, accessible community – a showcase of urban sustainability. Gathering places and destinations in the Corridor are green, safe and connected by walking, cycling, transit, and vehicle mobility.

3.2 Community Values

Increase Public safety. Trails, streets, buildings and public spaces are designed so residents and users are safe to live, work and explore.

Encourage Active Lifestyles. Active lifestyles and active transportation modes are promoted through urban design, creating and connecting destinations and enhancing walking and bike routes.

Build community. Thoughtful place-making and engagement welcomes residents, businesses and visitors and enhances the sense of community in the UDC area for all abilities, ages and stages of life.

Enhance the natural environment. A conscious shift is made from grey to green to enhance the natural environment and improve livability.

Foster economic vitality. Support economic investment and development that fosters a range of business and employment opportunities.

Integrate mobility. Multi-modal infrastructure is developed to connect

people and places.

Support complete communities. A range of housing options are accommodated close to services, amenities, employment, and recreational opportunities.

4. Ten Council Objectives

The District of Saanich Council approved the following objectives to ensure certain elements would be achieved through the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan. These objectives have guided the development of the Plan to date. Later in the process, targets will be developed to measure how well the objectives are being achieved.

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

5. Structural & Big Moves

What is a Structural/Big Move? These are the fundamental actions necessary to transform an area from *what it is* to *what it wants to be*. Without them, change is normally limited and the status quo will probably continue. These Structural and Big Moves are intended to inform smaller moves and strategies that will collectively transform the Uptown – Douglas Corridor Plan over the next 25 years.

Through November and December, the Advisory Committee and the District of Saanich staff teams worked through a series of brainstorming exercises to draft a set of Structural and Big Moves that would help achieve the objectives and set the stage for the Uptown-Douglas Corridor Plan development. These will be reviewed and further refined during the Community Design Workshop series.

DRAFT STRUCTURAL & BIG MOVES

1. **Put Pedestrians First** – Develop an exceptional pedestrian realm and safe, people-friendly, connections; enhance east-west movement and build on the Galloping Goose and Lochside Trails.
2. **Create a Central Landmark Transit Hub** - Develop the regional transit hub that creates convenient connections, encourages redevelopment and reinforces pedestrian first priority.
3. **Accelerate Rapid Transit Implementation on Douglas Street** – Support more compact transit oriented development in coordination with the transit hub that increases housing and business options, enhances the pedestrian realm and accelerates the evolution to rapid transit on Douglas Street.
4. **Create a Network of Active and Engaging Public Places** – Develop/create a series of plaza spaces/parklettes/pocket parks/streetscape redesigns highlighted by a central civic space.
5. **Lead Growth with Residential**- Encourage growth in the core area with a mix of compact multiple dwelling residential units to bring more people into the central area throughout the day and activate the street with retail and service commercial where appropriate to service this growing population.
6. **Conserve Light Industrial** – Retain the light industrial uses west of Douglas Street and enhance this area with street improvements and mixed use where appropriate to keep local employment and expand opportunities.
7. **Attract More Diverse and Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial** – Support existing commercial business like the Uptown Centre and expand street-oriented uses

in specific areas to reinforce pedestrian corridors.

8. **Transform Oak Street into a High Street Spine** – Design and zone Oak Street as the central high street integrating transit, bikes, a pedestrian promenade and amenities along with active and engaging mixed-use buildings framing the street.
9. **Develop a Compact Urban Core** – Foster land use change that increases residential and employment opportunities and positions the area as the heart of Saanich.
10. **Convert Grey to Green** – Develop the area as a showcase of urban sustainability through enhancing nature and integrating green infrastructure and green buildings.

Other Ideas?

The current list is draft. Through the course of the workshop other structural and big moves may emerge. This is particularly the case in the public session on Friday January 19th, where new participants may have novel or unique ideas that resonate with the objectives for the area. The current list is flexible and can be added to, refined and enhanced throughout the course of the 3-day workshop.

6. Community Design Workshop Overview

The workshops will:

- First: Validate and refine the Structural and Big Moves into a three layered plan;
- Second: Develop draft strategies, phasing and actions; and
- Third: Visualize the plans and strategies into an integrated plan and with diagrams/graphics.

The format for the workshops will be as follows:

1. The FRANK, Saanich and Advisory Committee will be divided into three theme teams:
 - i. **Green Plan:** green building, parks, open space, natural environment and sustainability.
 - ii. **Transportation & Mobility:** Transit, pedestrian, bicycles, and other modes of transport connectivity.
 - iii. **Character Areas & Land Use:** Form, character, economic vibrancy and place-making.

2. There will be a core team session each morning and advisory committee session in the afternoon for the first two days. The final day will be reserved for preparations for the evening public presentation. The FRANK and Saanich Staff Team will review the previous day's work each morning and prepare for the afternoon.
3. The general public will be invited to a community workshop on the first day, followed by an open house on the second day, and a presentation of early directions on the final day. In this way, the public sees the evolution of the Structural and Big Moves to a plan with detailed strategies and actions.
4. The goal is to be rigorous in developing each "layer" (green, transportation and land use/urban design) of the plan, yet seek overlap and integration where possible. Status quo is not acceptable and will be pushed to improve, enhance, and transform the sub-areas within the study area where possible.
5. The *Design Brief* sets the framework, content, outcomes and detailed agenda for the three days.

7. Detailed Agenda:

Day 1: Structural & Big Moves to Small Moves Workshop

Output: Confirm Big Moves and develop concept application

6:30 pm	Community Workshop introduction and process
6:45 pm	Round table discussions on refining big moves
7:45 pm	Report back by groups
8:45 pm	Summary and next steps
9:00 pm	Adjournment

Day 2: Small Moves to Strategies Workshop

Output: Preliminary strategies, phasing and actions

6:30 pm	Public Open House for big moves, small moves, strategies, phasing and actions
8:00 pm	Adjournment

Day 3: Preparation for Public Presentation

Output: PowerPoint Presentation to Public to upload to Saanich Website

6:30 pm	Community presentation to present and discuss integrated plan
7:30 pm	Questions and next steps
8:00 pm	Adjournment

8. Advisory Committee & Stakeholder Design Group Assignments

Each theme group’s work will consider the economic, social and environmental aspects related to their theme area. On the following pages each group is provided with associated (current draft) Structural and Big Moves, and a series of strategies that have been initially created through workshops with the Advisory Committee and Saanich staff teams.

The assignment is to:

- a) consider these strategies,
- b) modify them - add important details such as principles that may be important to implementing the strategy, and
- c) add new strategies that will assist to meet the “Structural and Big Moves”

Group I: Green plan team

Potential Structural & Big Move	Potential Strategy
Create a Network of Active and Engaging Public Places – Develop/create a series of plaza spaces/parkettes/pocket parks/streetscape redesigns highlighted by a central civic space.	Increase the tree canopy in the UDC area on specific streets, open spaces and parks.
	Expand open space and parks as well as greenway linkages in the UDC area using roofs, streets, bridges and other multi-level resources.
Convert Grey to Green – Develop the area as a showcase of urban sustainability through enhancing nature and integrating green infrastructure and green buildings.	Identify site and neighbourhood green infrastructure opportunities (green roofs, rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavement, etc.). Complete feasibility study for district energy system in the UDC area.

	Investigate a minimum green building standard and incentives for future development.
	Reduce imperviousness in the UDC area by developing tools such as stormwater utility incentives. May include feasibility study of district stormwater utility.
	Explore possibility of daylighting Cecelia Creek associated with improving Cecelia Creek watershed health.
	Link the environmental assets in the area where possible and create further stewardship programs to improve wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

Group 2: Transportation and mobility team

Potential Structural & Big Move	Potential Strategy
<p>Create a Network of Active and Engaging Public Places – Develop/create a series of plaza spaces/parkettes/pocket parks/streetscape redesigns highlighted by a central civic space.</p> <p>Put Pedestrians First – Develop an exceptional pedestrian realm and safe, people-friendly, connections; enhance east-west movement and build on the Galloping Goose and Lochside Trails.</p>	<p>Create a major street greenway and streetscape enhancement program that enhances pedestrian and bicycle activity in the area. This includes creation of an including Oak Street pedestrian corridor and two new cross street connectors from Oak to Douglas, as well as other identified new pedestrian ways.</p> <p>Create a more people-friendly urban centre around Douglas, Blanshard and Vernon.</p>
<p>Attract More Diverse and Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial – Support existing commercial business like the Uptown Centre and expand street-oriented uses in specific areas to reinforce pedestrian corridors.</p>	<p>Ensure the transit center is connected to and integrated with the pedestrian and bicycle circulation system. To be accomplished in partnership with BC Transit and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.</p> <p>Establish road design principles that will reduce road speeds in the area.</p>

	Create east-west connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.
Put Pedestrians First – Develop an exceptional pedestrian realm and safe, people-friendly, connections; enhance east-west movement and build on the Galloping Goose and Lochside Trails	Identify mid-block pedestrian crossing locations and roundabouts, particularly from Nigel Valley to retail area. Work with Capital Region District to enhance accessibility and qualities of the Galloping Goose and Lochside Trail system.
Create a Central Landmark Transit Hub - Develop the regional transit hub that creates convenient connections, encourages redevelopment and reinforces pedestrian first priority.	District of Saanich to discuss options with MOTI regarding jurisdiction items of road segments in the study area.
Accelerate Rapid Transit Implementation on Douglas Street – Support more compact transit oriented development in coordination with the transit hub that increases housing and business options, enhances the pedestrian realm and accelerates the evolution to rapid transit on Douglas Street.	Provide for exclusive busways on Douglas as well as connections between the Patricia Bay Highway (Highway 17) and the new transit center.

Group 3: Character areas and land use team

Potential Structural & Big Moves	Potential Strategy
<p>Put Pedestrians First – Develop an exceptional pedestrian realm and safe, people-friendly, connections; enhance east-west movement and build on the Galloping Goose and Lochside Trails.</p> <p>Create a Network of Active and Engaging Public Places – Develop/create a series of plaza spaces/parkettes/pocket parks/streetscape redesigns highlighted by a central civic space.</p>	<p>Support higher density residential along corridors and transit hub locations.</p> <p>Suggest and support CRD to complete an audit of regional arts and cultural facilities and identify what gaps could be provided in the UDC area.</p> <p>Consider acquisition of land for a new community centre/civic park in municipal park acquisition plan based on growth projections.</p>

<p>More Diverse and Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial – Support existing commercial business like the Uptown Centre and expand street-oriented uses in specific areas to reinforce pedestrian corridors.</p>	<p>Develop/create a series of plaza spaces/parkettes/pocket parks; link with trails and transportation corridors and bold east-west connection.</p>
<p>Develop a Compact Urban Core –Foster land use change that increases residential and employment opportunities and positions the area as the heart of Saanich.</p>	<p>Create a unique identity for the Plan area perhaps Saanich to sponsor a ‘branding’ competition to develop the UDC area identity.</p> <p>Identify vacant/underutilized lands and highest and best future use.</p>
<p>Accelerate Rapid Transit Implementation on Douglas Street – Support more compact transit oriented development in coordination with the transit hub that increases housing and business options, enhances the pedestrian realm and accelerates the evolution to rapid transit on Douglas Street.</p> <p>Transform Oak Street into a High Street Spine – Design and zone Oak Street as the central high street integrating transit, bikes, a pedestrian promenade and amenities along with active and engaging mixed-use buildings framing the street.</p>	<p>Create more active street edges for pedestrians.</p> <p>Conceptualize Oak Street as a ‘high street’ with potential for mixed use and an active street edge throughout.</p>
<p>Conserve Light Industrial – Retain the light industrial uses west of Douglas Street and enhance this area with street improvements and mixed use where appropriate to keep local employment and expand opportunities</p>	<p>Protect and strengthen industrial-zoned lands by carefully considering new applications that may include residential or mixed uses in the area. Industrial areas require unique transportation and infrastructure support. [note: there were some suggestions to allow for residential in industrial area...this should be discussed as an option]</p>
<p>Develop a Compact Urban Core –Foster land use change that increases residential and employment opportunities and positions the area as the heart of Saanich.</p>	<p>Maintain and add affordable housing throughout the area.</p>

<p>Lead Growth with Residential- Encourage growth in the core area with a mix of compact multiple dwelling residential units to bring more people into the central area throughout the day and activate the street with retail and service commercial where appropriate to service this growing population.</p>	
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