

February, 2016

## **ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION: STRATEGIC PLAN**

### **Background**

The strategic plan of the Rockland Neighbourhood Association is reviewed annually and updated to reflect current issues affecting the neighbourhood.

### **Mission (Our distinctive identity)**

The mission of the Rockland Neighbourhood Association (RNA) is:

- To promote, facilitate, co-ordinate, support or undertake activities that will enhance the quality of life and the environment of the Rockland Neighbourhood and
- To provide a vehicle for public participation in the preservation and enhancement of the unique qualities which have come to characterize the Rockland neighbourhood.

These activities are supported by a public process whereby Rockland residents have the opportunity to express their views and thus influence all matters concerning the neighbourhood.

### **Values (Principles that guide our decision making and actions)**

- Acting openly, honestly and fairly in all our affairs
- Being a constructive force within the larger Victoria community
- Residents and owners have the right to participate in a public, managed process of change
- Constructively expressed diverse views are welcomed, receive a respectful hearing, and are fully taken into account in any decision making process
- Acting in an advocacy role, with suitable consultation in the neighbourhood, when strategic issues (policies and plans) are under consideration
  - Developing the neighbourhood's position and energetically championing widely supported positions
- Acting in a facilitator role when specific issues, for which policies and plans are in place, are under consideration
  - Ensuring that all neighbours are provided the opportunity to express their position and accurately reporting those positions to the decision makers
- Supporting a continuous renewal process in which investment by property owners is compatible with the Neighbourhood Plan

### **RNA-Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats**

- Strengths
  - Talented, experienced and committed people
  - Practical, common sense approach
  - Functional constitution and by-laws
  - Good, although dated, neighbourhood plan
  - Good relationships with City staff, Mayor and council

- Challenges
  - Dated Neighbourhood Plan; need to better articulate the Rockland “character” we are seeking to nurture
  - Communication with the RNA members and the neighbourhood at large needs to be more focussed
  - Communications vehicles could be improved – haven’t used local newspapers or social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
  - Ongoing need to make sure website links are current and working
  - Ongoing need to orient new board members
  
- Opportunities
  - Continue to revitalize co-operative effort across neighbourhood and community associations through the Victoria Community Association Network (VCAN)
  - Develop an “Amenities Strategy” in partnership with attractions in the neighbourhood including the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Craigdarroch Castle, Government House and Langham Court Theatre. Build on relationships established with the “Victoria150” (anniversary) event
  - Engage with initiatives such as *Biketoria* and *Walk on Victoria* to achieve neighbourhood objectives relating to transportation, quality of life and the environment
  - Participate in the formal LAP process for Fairfield/Gonzales and apply lessons learned to the Rockland LAP process in 2017.
  
- Threats
  - Some city policies, procedures and actions are not aligned with Neighbourhood Plan direction
  - Slow implementation of Local Area Planning will continue to tie up volunteer association resources in reactive spot-rezoning issues for the foreseeable future

### **Summary of Key Issues**

- Land Use Issues
  - City policy of increasing density, especially along transportation corridors
  - City not consistent in use of the Rockland Neighbourhood Plan (1987) for guidance
  - Slow implementation of Local Area Planning. Use of spot re-zoning as a short-term approach
  - Inconsistent definitions in by-laws and by-law enforcement
  - Large-scale multi-family dwellings, strata and semi-detached development, inappropriate floor space ratio (FSR) and building mass
  - Sub-dividing large lots (small lot development)
  - Increased demand for land and alternative uses of land
  
- Traffic speeds and, to a lesser extent, volume and noise
  - How to best collect data

- Prepare for next Transportation Plan
- Environmental/sustainability issues
  - Loss of green space
  - Need to strengthen tree by-laws and protect mature vegetation; no plan to address mature tree replacement on private land
  - Promotion of greenways, pathways, cycleways and parks
  - Unmanaged native deer population is increasingly impacting gardens and is seen by some to constitute a safety issue
- Community representation in RNA membership and on Board.
  - At present both RNA membership and Board show an over-representation of home-owners and older members of the community
  - We need to achieve a greater balance by recruiting younger people and renters, two groups that are currently under-represented, including asking owners of rental buildings to interest their tenants

**Action Priorities (measurable activities & results to be achieved within a specified period of time)**

- Prepare for Local Area Planning for Rockland and the Fort Street/Oak Bay Avenue corridor scheduled to begin in 2017
- Develop terms of reference for the Environment Committee
- Form Communications Committee to develop comprehensive Communications Strategy to engage a broader swath of residents
- Develop and implement plan for directive and interpretive signage

**On-going activities**

- Develop positions on emerging civic policy issues as appropriate
- Increase membership especially among groups currently under-represented, younger residents and renters