

MAY 10, 2019

# Heritage Conservation Areas in Victoria

# Presentation Outline

Today in Victoria, Heritage Conservation Areas are a **citizen-initiated, unique urban planning tool** to be used **selectively** to conserve groups of properties that share recognizable features and have a common story.

## Breakdown:

1. **History of HCA's in Victoria (Old Town Case Study)**
2. **Victoria's new Citizen-led HCA process**
3. **Impacts-** Common public concerns that limit their widespread use.

# History- HCA's in Victoria

Map 70: HCA1: Traditional Residential – St. Charles Street

- 13 Existing Heritage Conservation Areas (HCA's) in Victoria
- HCA's range widely in scale from Old Town, which contains 195 heritage properties alone, to the Elora and St. Charles Street Heritage Conservation Areas, which are very small
- All of the five HCA's in residential areas are small and do not have stand-alone guidelines
- All HCA's refer to the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*



# HCA's in Victoria- Results & Public Perceptions

## Successes...

- No HCA properties have been demolished
- HCA designation protects heritage register properties, which are not individually designated, almost as well as individual designation

## Challenges...

- Recent City attempts to implement HCA's in Victoria were unsuccessful (citizen-led HCA policy emerged from this)
- Concerns over property values and home insurance remain major factors
- Apart from Old Town, most Victoria HCA's do not have a strong identity (Compared to Cabbagetown in Toronto)



*Residents of Cabbagetown, a heritage conservation district in Toronto designed their own flag*

# Property Values in Two Victoria HCA's

- Between 1997 and 2017, the average sale price of a single detached home in Victoria increased from \$223,504 to \$905,556 (**+\$682,052**), a 305% increase

\*Inflation would have resulted in a 45% increase in value (\$223,504 to \$323,388)

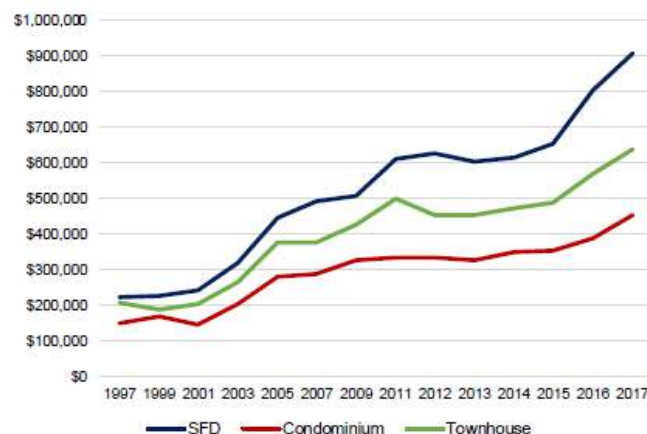
## Average House Prices

(SOURCE: VICTORIA REAL ESTATE BOARD MULTIPLE LISTING SERVICE)

The average price is the total dollar value of all properties sold divided by the number of sales.

1997 - 2016 Average Sale Prices			
	SFD	Condominium	Townhouse
1997	\$223,504	\$151,952	\$208,072
1999	\$227,309	\$168,989	\$186,864
2001	\$243,445	\$145,131	\$204,144
2003	\$317,540	\$205,379	\$264,941
2005	\$445,017	\$278,782	\$376,789
2007	\$490,000	\$288,850	\$374,900
2009	\$505,000	\$327,500	\$425,000
2011	\$611,312	\$332,638	\$498,232
2012	\$623,775	\$335,629	\$454,150
2013	\$603,477	\$325,260	\$454,556
2014	\$612,784	\$349,324	\$473,938
2015	\$651,810	\$353,409	\$488,861
2016	\$801,513	\$387,262	\$568,094
2017	\$905,556	\$452,732	\$636,456

Average Housing Sale Prices - Victoria - 1997-2017

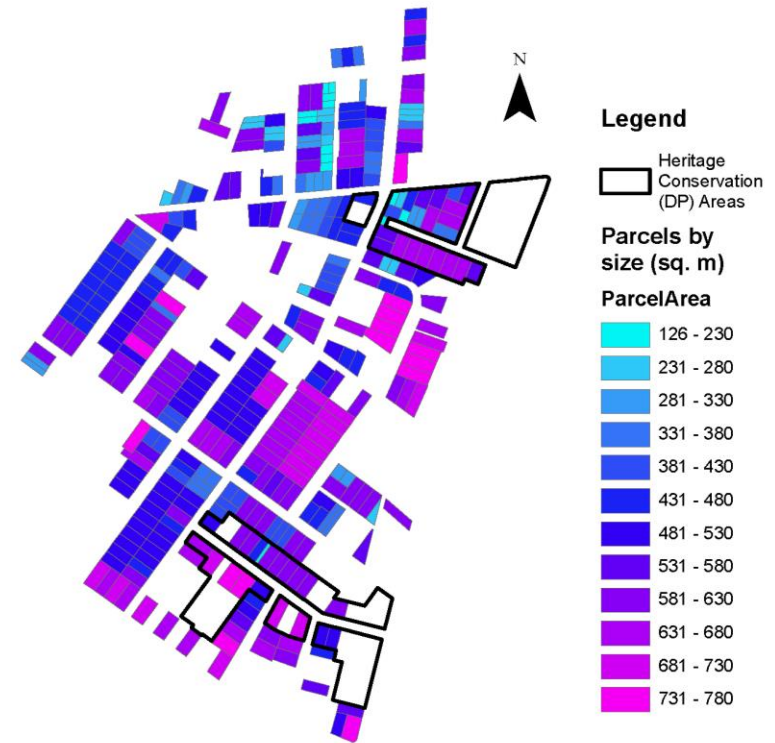


# Property Values in Two Victoria HCA's

- 2017 staff analysis of changes in property values based on BC tax assessment data
- BC Assessment values established by professional appraisers who account for real estate transactions in the area, zoning adjustments and BC land title changes, unique lot characteristics and quality of the house and other improvements
- Analysis compared similar size lots inside and outside HCA's

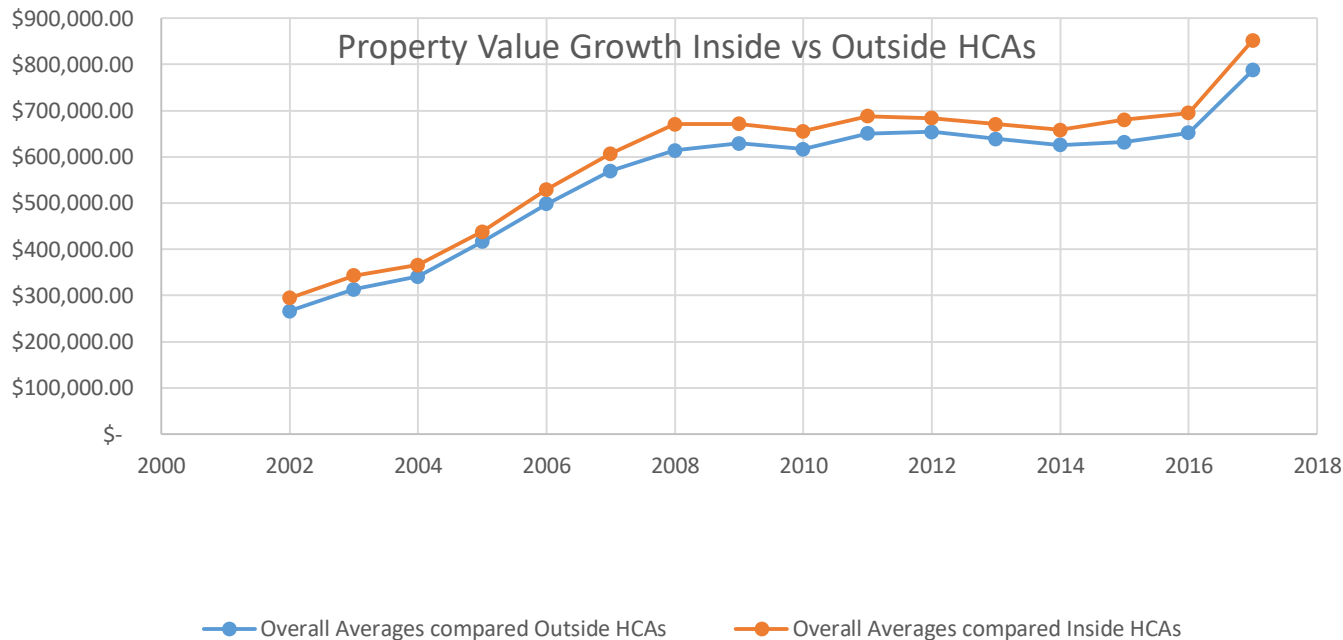
\* Analysis not based on confirmed sales data, which are difficult to acquire

East James Bay HCA Study Area



# Property Values in Two Victoria HCA's

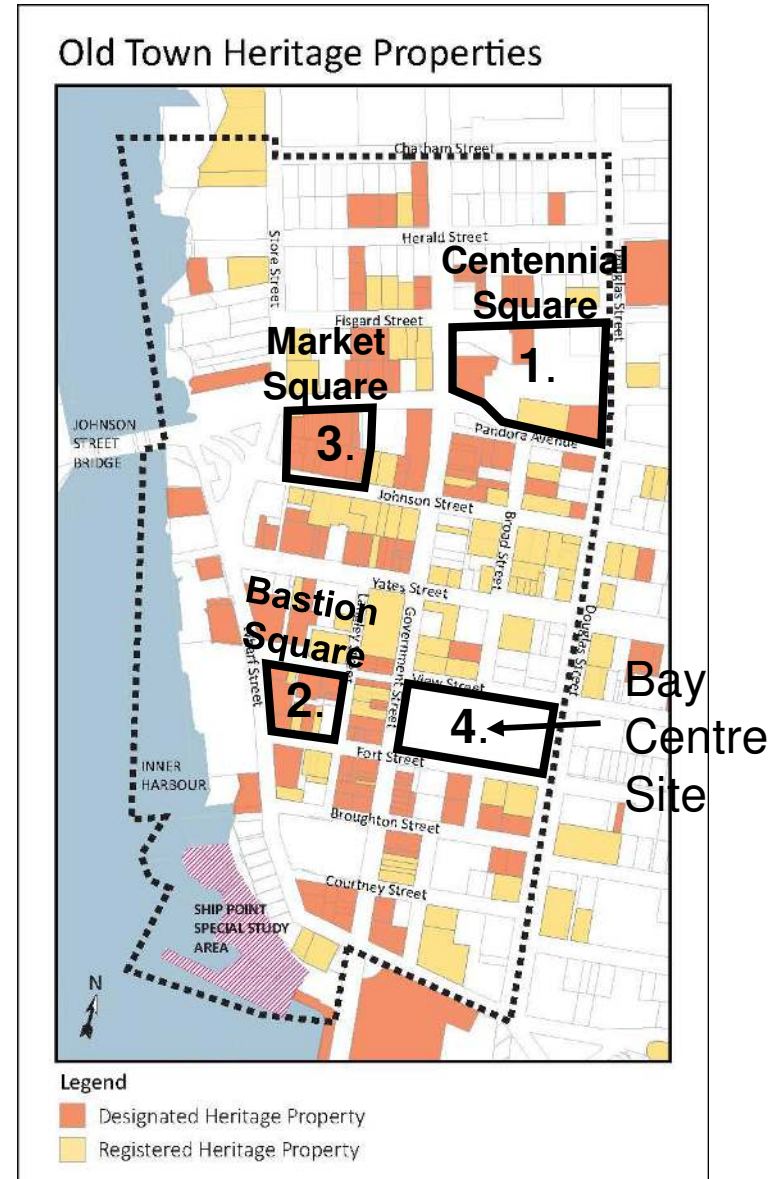
- Between 2002 and 2017 properties **outside** HCAs increased in value by 195.7%
- Between 2002 and 2017 properties **inside** HCAs increased in value by 189.0%
- Annual growth rates for properties outside HCAs are cumulatively higher than that of properties inside HCAs (difference of 2.28%)



- Change outside HCA's from 2002-2017: \$266,376 to \$787,873
- Change within HCA's from 2002-2017: \$294,914 to \$852,308

# Old Town- BC's First HCA

- Victoria's first HCA was Old Town, designated in 1995 in response to the 1986-89 Bay Centre development
- Old Town was the first HCA designated in BC
- 195 heritage properties, 95% of which were constructed before 1918
- Old Town is an HCA and a DPA simultaneously
- Alterations to designated and register properties require authorization through heritage alteration permits
- Alterations to non-heritage properties require a development permit





# Old Town HCA History

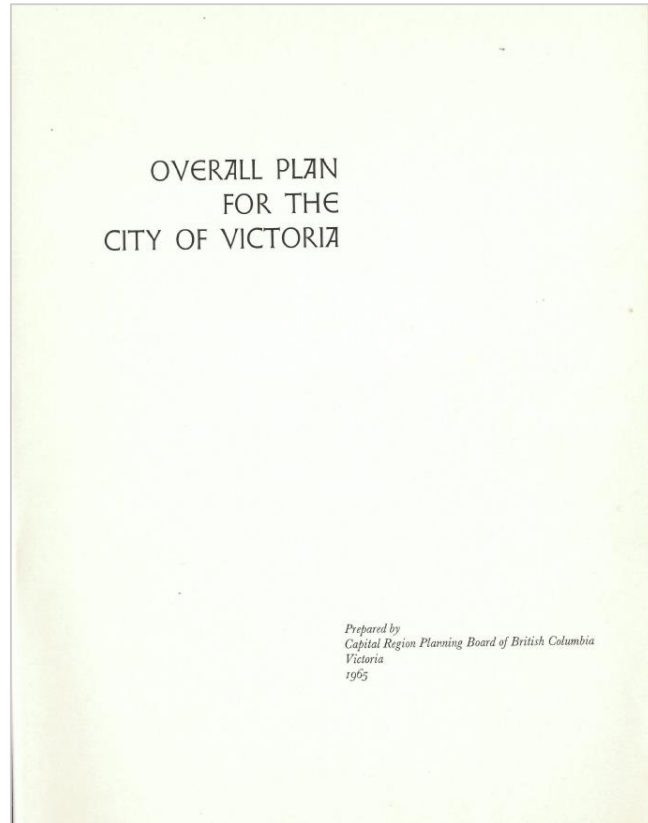
*Old Town HCA was the culmination of a long series of urban planning revitalization measures that started in the 1960's...*



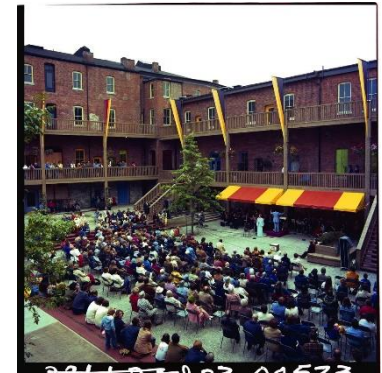
*Centennial Square, 1965*



*Bastion Square, 1965*



*1965 Overall Plan for Victoria & Urban Renewal Schemes*

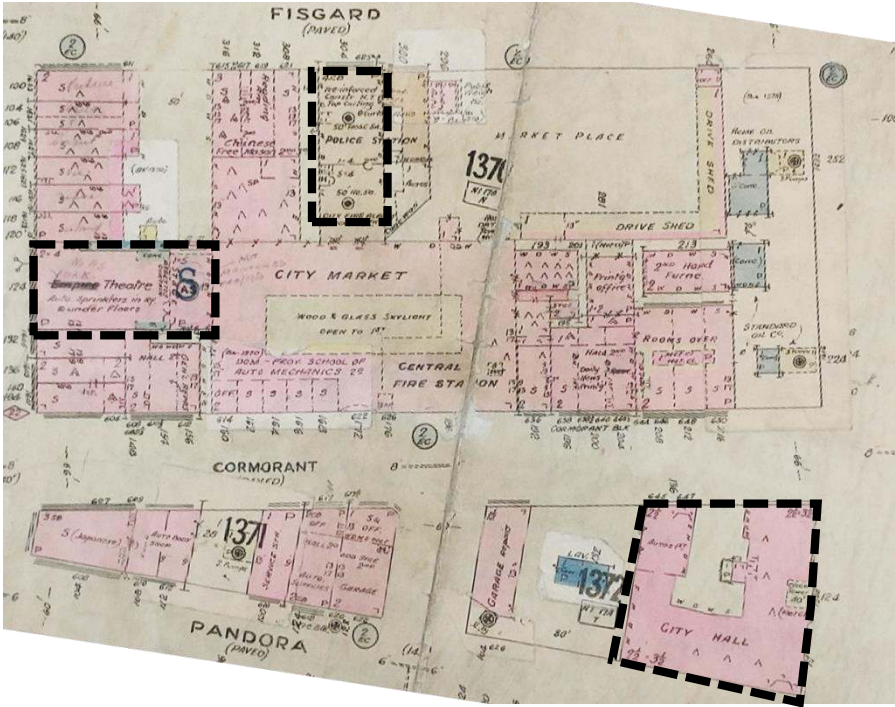


*Market Square, 1974*

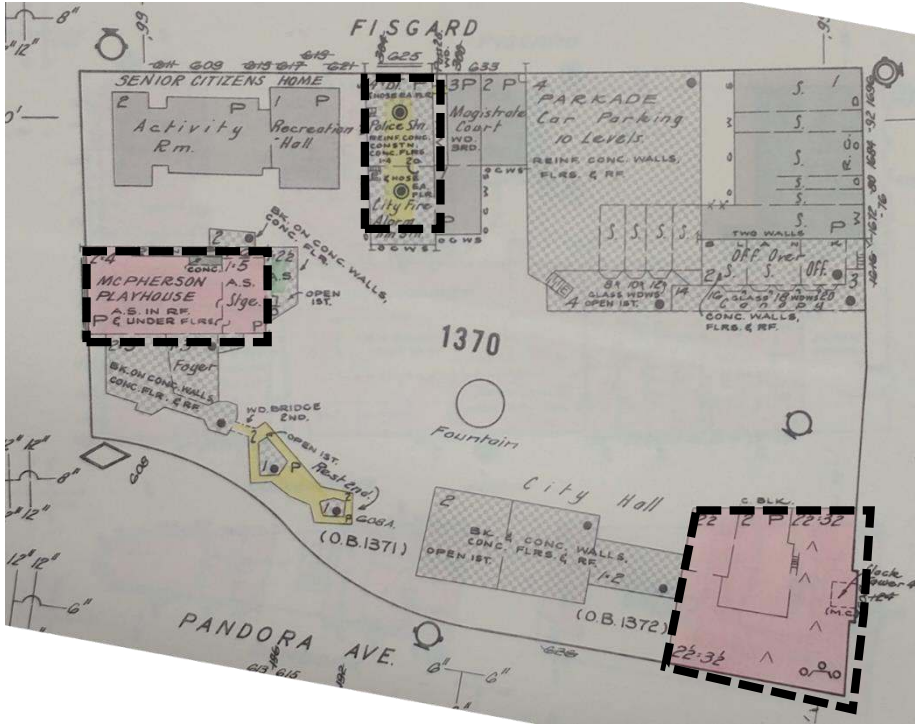


*This Old Town, 1975*

# Centennial Square

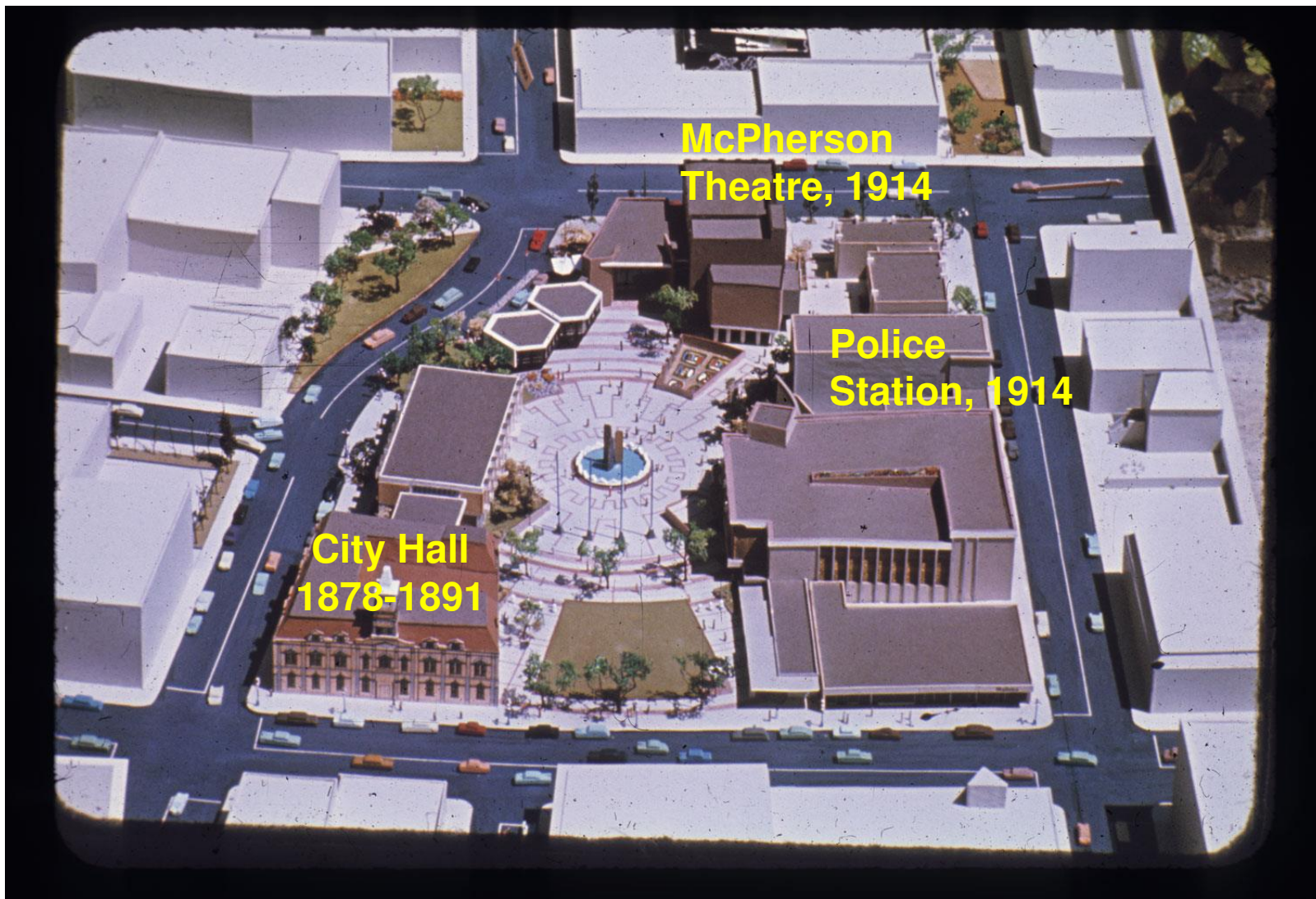


1934



1967

# Centennial Square



# Centennial Square



Centennial Square Fountain, Rod Clack architect-planner; Jack Wilkinson artist, *Private Collection*



Panorama of Centennial Square, Clive Justice landscape architect, Clive Justice photo, *Private Collection*

# Bastion Square, 1965

*In the 1950's, Bastion Square was a street*



*Then in 1965, Bastion Square became a square...*



# Urban Renewal Efforts and the 1965 Overall Plan for Victoria

- Removal of overhead electrical wiring
- Paint up campaign based on Norwich scheme
- 1965 Overall Plan for Victoria envisioned parking garages built and located purposefully to keep automobiles out of the core
- Prohibition of surface parking within 60 feet of any street
- No drive-in facilities



*Graphic from 1965 Overall Plan for Victoria*

# Market Square



1940's

# Eaton Centre (Bay Centre) Re-development

- Razed two city blocks of historic buildings including the Driard hotel.
- Final scheme was postmodern and re-created a number of the demolished buildings as non-functional display objects





# Eaton Centre (Bay Centre) Re-development



BC Archives Photo # B-00434 - Supplied for Research Only. No Duplication. Fees May Apply for Other Use



*Driard Hotel, 1892, John Teague*

# Old Town Challenges



**Facadism...**



**Very large “additions” with small setbacks**

# 2019 Old Town Design Guidelines



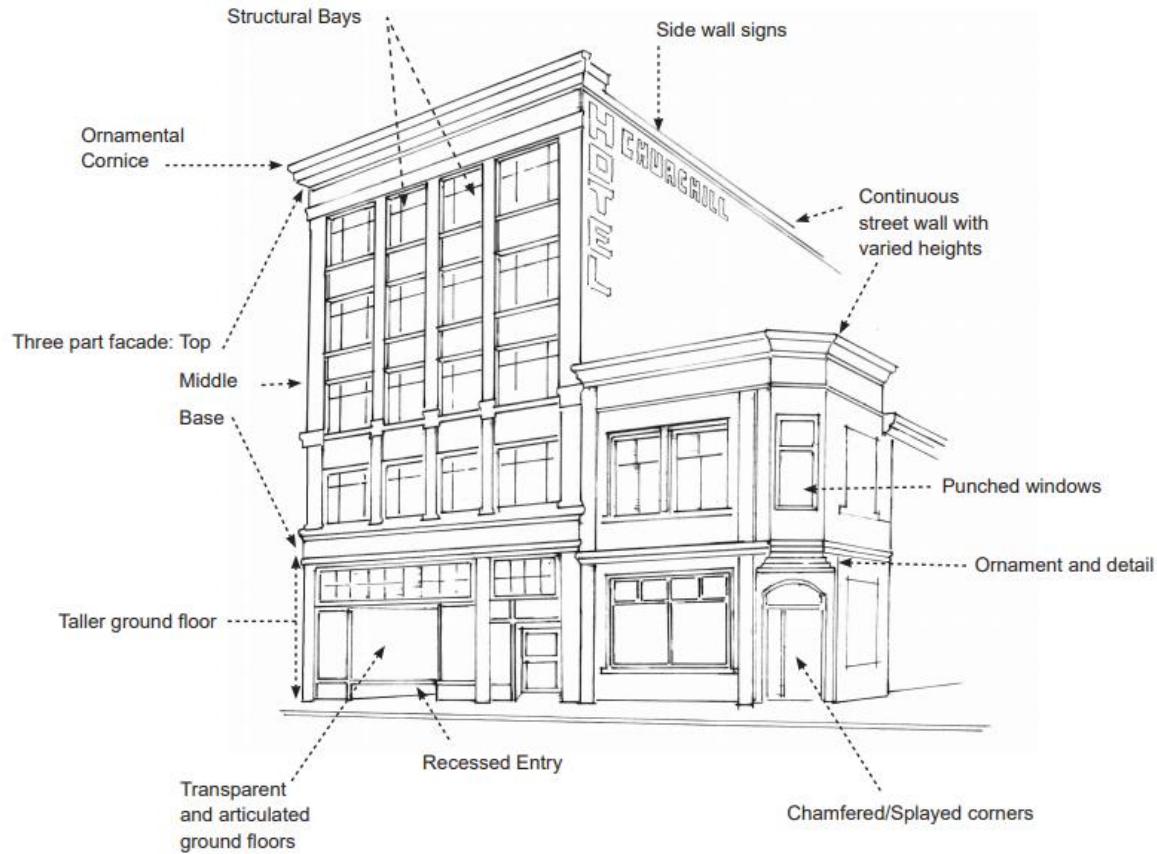
## Old Town Design Guidelines

New Buildings and Additions to Existing Buildings (2019)



# 2019 Old Town Design Guidelines

## Old Town – Character Defining Elements



# 2019 Old Town Design Guidelines

**Objective:** (c) To enhance the area through infill, building additions and open spaces with a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that responds to its historic setting through sensitive and innovative interventions.

## 5.3 Facade Composition

### Background

Buildings in Old Town range in style from simple masonry warehouse buildings along the harbour to the more complex Victorian, Italianate and Edwardian designs of larger commercial buildings found throughout the rest of Old Town. The majority of existing heritage buildings in Old Town were constructed during the decades between 1858 and 1918. Their design generally follows a consistent format – the classically derived three part composition of base, middle and top. The base frequently consists of a storefront rich in detail and with a large amount of glazing, and defined at its upper edge by a mid-cornice or decorative band. Ground floor façades typically have high ceilings and recessed entries embellished with decorative tiles and panels. The middle is characterized by punched window openings with a vertical orientation in a relatively solid masonry upper wall and the top is defined with a simple or elaborate cornice.

### Intent

To ensure that new building facades and additions incorporate proportions, elements and materials that create balance with, and relate positively to, adjacent and nearby heritage buildings.

### Guidelines

- 5.3.1 Distinguish and define the building base, middle and top through facade articulation (projections and recesses), architectural elements or changes in proportions, and materials and finishes.
- 5.3.2 Ensure that facade elements such as storey levels, doors, and windows reflect a balanced proportion with respect to their placement, relative height, width and size.
- 5.3.3 Maintain a generally consistent building wall or build-to-line along the sidewalk edge.
- 5.3.4 Define the top edge of a building by a cornice line or similar articulation.
- 5.3.5 Generally align floor heights, mid-cornice lines, window sills and top edges with those of adjacent heritage buildings.
- 5.3.6 Provide varied roof lines to create visual interest along the street.
- 5.3.7 Incorporate repetitive structural bays with punched window openings in a vertical proportion.



*Illustration of a new building using traditional, human scale design elements, proportions and materials in a contemporary expression.*



*Historic Building – Wharf Street*



*Modern Building – Broad Street*

# Citizen-led HCA's- Process

The new Citizen-led Heritage Conservation Areas Policy is a two-phase process...

## Phase 1- Nomination

- Mechanism for identifying new residential HCA's are citizen nominations
- Nominator completes an HCA form assessing *heritage value* and *heritage character*, and proposes boundaries
- Staff assess heritage merits and proposed boundaries, consults with CALUC
- Staff administer a survey to local affected property owners
- Nomination and survey results will be presented to City Council for authorization to study
- If authorized, staff proceed to study phase



# Citizen-led HCA's- Process

## A two-phase process...

### Phase 2- Study Phase

- Staff complete detailed assessment of the area with the nominator
- Staff will develop a statement of significance with the nominator
- Staff will prepare a draft by-law to amend the OCP
- OCP amendment is posted to the city website for two weeks and a public consultation is held
- Staff prepare a report to Council seeking approval of the OCP amendment



*Words Baker House by Ron Thom, 1952*

# Citizen-led HCA's- Criteria

- Multiple contiguous properties, preferably on both sides of the street
- A large proportion should display heritage character, embodied in a common set of characteristics
- “Period of Significance” to be defined for the HCA
- “Contributing” or “non-contributing” categories
- Properties with buildings from outside the period of significance are “non-contributing” and exempt from HAP requirements, except for new construction (additions or replacement buildings)





# Automatic Exemptions

New HCA's attempt to balance property rights with conservation

- Interior renovations
- Exterior painting
- Additions under 100m<sup>2</sup> that do not exceed the width or height of the rear wall opposite a street
- Garden suites located behind the main rear wall of the existing home
- Roof replacement
- Landscaping changes to non-historic features
- Routine repairs and maintenance of all kinds



# Citizen-led HCA's- Pros & Cons so far

Pros	Cons
Empowers residents, prevents them from feeling “targeted” by the city	Delegates responsibility, making the city look idle when demolitions occur
Bottom-up, consensus driven process gives Council and planners confidence that they are giving residents what they want	Council worries more about individual residents in opposition to the HCA.
Longer process enables more relationship building between city and residents	Longer process delays implementation, while properties change hands and situation on the ground evolves
Identification of heritage done by those who experience it everyday	Residents motivated by concern for neighbourhood character, not conservation

# Questions?



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