

BUILDING A
BETTER VICTORIA



2018 PLATFORM

BOLD IDEAS FOR A BETTER VICTORIA

Victoria is at a turning point. The economy is booming - low unemployment, construction cranes across the horizon, and more new businesses downtown than ever before. And yet, most people are finding it harder than ever to make ends meet.

Each year, it becomes more difficult to start a family in Victoria. Each year, more seniors, working people and people on fixed incomes are finding themselves pushed out by renovictions and rising rents. All too often, we hear the claims that these challenges cannot be solved, that we should just wait a little while longer for the wealth to trickle down. That's just not good enough.

It is not too late to build a city that leaves no one behind. If we work together, we can build a city that is **affordable, inclusive, and thriving** for everyone. Together Victoria's three candidates - Sarah Potts, Laurel Collins and Sharmarke Dubow - bring diverse, fresh perspectives that are missing at the council table. **They will bring bold ideas, courageous actions, deep listening, and heartfelt compassion needed to solve our city's challenges.**

Together means together. In this platform, we present bold ideas - but **we promise to listen to residents with differing perspectives and work collaboratively with council colleagues** to find solutions that work for everyone. We promise to fight to ensure that the voices of Victorians are not forgotten and to always put people first.

Let's build a better Victoria, Together.



LAUREL COLLINS



SARAH POTTS

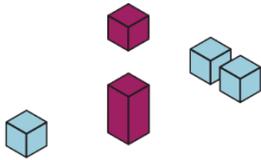


**SHARMARKE
DUBOW**

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OUR PLATFORM



AN AFFORDABLE CITY

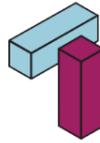
Lower everyday costs for you and your family by lowering transit fees and costs for seniors.

THE HOUSING CRISIS

Bold action is needed to ensure housing is affordable for everyone, not just an elite few. Victoria's housing crisis impacts all of us—renters, homeowners, and small businesses.

TACKLING ADDICTION AND HOMELESSNESS

It is not possible to police away the tragedies unfolding on our streets – evidence-based and compassionate responses are more important than ever.

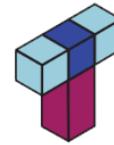


AN INCLUSIVE CITY

Inclusivity means making sure everyone who lives in Victoria is heard and that their needs are addressed, from neighbourhood associations to cultural and LGBTQ2s communities.

TRUE AND LASTING INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

Bring recognition of Indigenous culture and history into our public life, and ensure local First Nations share in Victoria's prosperity.



A THRIVING CITY

Ensure on financial responsibility and people-centred decision making to create a thriving city for all who work, live and play here.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The city is not on pace to meet its climate change targets. This is both a responsibility and an opportunity— we must redouble our efforts at environmental leadership.

THE CRD – STRONG CITY, STRONG REGION

The regional challenges of transportation, sustainability, and affordability require a new sense of urgency at the CRD.

THE HOUSING CRISIS

Victoria is in the midst of a housing crisis where people with good, middle class jobs can't find or afford a place to live. And for those who are able to find a place to rent or a home to buy, the cost of housing is often taking up most of their paycheck. That's not okay and we know we can do better.

If elected, housing affordability will be Sarah, Laurel, and Sharmarke's top priority because this issue affects us all. Renters are being squeezed, our seniors are at risk, young families are priced out of the city, and small businesses are struggling to attract workers. Affordable housing isn't a problem just for low-income households, it's affecting working and middle class families as well.

The housing crisis a complex problem, and we have published a detailed standalone housing strategy [here](#). We will take a number of bold actions to address the crisis:

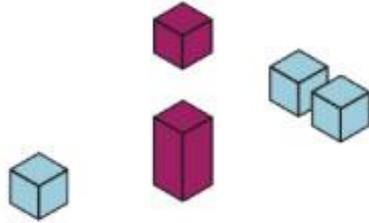
- Triple the regional social housing commitment to 6,000 units
- Have the city act as a co-developer of affordable housing
- Make it easier to build "gentle density" in low-density neighbourhoods
- Stabilize rents using newly granted rental zoning powers
- Have 4,000 new rental housing units underway by 2023 across the city
- Ensure half of all newly built housing is affordable
- Set amenity contributions higher to make developers begin paying their fair share

We will push the province to ensure the housing market work for all Victoria. Our councilors will ask the province to:

- Extend the Empty Homes tax to Victoria to crack down on housing speculation [here](#)
- Introduce a simple and effective 'Land Value Capture tax' to replace a very confusing and ineffective density bonus system
- Add protections for pet owners in rentals

These are bold proposals. But if we don't take decisive action now, our city and our communities will pay the price for years to come.

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AN AFFORDABLE CITY

AN AFFORDABLE CITY

City Council must recognize that Victoria's households are feeling the pinch. In addition to our [housing plan](#), we will tackle the rising cost of living head on with solutions to make transportation and our communities more affordable and family-friendly.

[Transportation that Works](#)

More people are coming downtown than ever before, and more people are living in the city than ever before. If we can't shift more journeys to alternative transportation methods, our roads won't be able to cope.

A Better Bus Service

We will work with BC Transit on a number of changes to make our bus service cheaper and better, including free transit for everyone under the age of 18 and tying fares to income.

People-Powered Journeys

Walkability and safety in residential neighbourhoods is paramount, and more bike storage is needed downtown.

[Helping Families Succeed in Victoria](#)

With a 0% vacancy rate for family-sized housing and multi-year waitlists for childcare, new parents are fleeing Victoria. We must ensure that a new child doesn't mean families have to pack-up and move to the suburbs. We will make it easier and more affordable for young families to call Victoria home.

Cost Relief for Parents

Seize the opportunity to fund new childcare spots, provide free intro swimming lessons, and invest in sports equipment libraries.

Healthy Kids

Involve our classrooms in local gardening projects, create new neighbourhood meal programs, and build more playgrounds and parklets.

[Respect Our Seniors](#)

We need an action plan that covers access to city services and looks at quality of life from a senior's perspective is needed. Our approach to existing and new housing must be aligned to our seniors' needs.

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TRANSPORTATION THAT WORKS

A booming South Island population means more cars on our roads than ever before, and the stress on our road systems will only increase with time. Everything we can do now to grow alternative transportation methods and reduce congestion in the city will benefit both drivers and non-drivers alike.

We must make the bus a more attractive, affordable and realistic option – that’s why we support working closely with BC Transit on creative solutions to increase ridership. And by targeting zero pedestrian deaths, we improve the walkability of our city and protect neighbourhoods.

Remove Fares for Youth

Allowing youth under the age of 18 to take the bus for free gives parents a needed break and helps foster a lifelong relationship with public transit.

Cheaper Bus Passes based on Income

Lowering the cost of transit for those who need it most will boost ridership help make our city more accessible to all, and ensure no one is denied a job because they can’t afford the trip into work.

Complete the West Shore transit link

The completion of this bus corridor is a critical step towards reducing traffic on our roads. While Victoria residents won’t be the regular users of this route, this will have a huge impact on reducing congestion coming in the city. As the bus route is completed and as ridership increases, let’s look to the future by keeping the option of light rail on the table.

Zero Pedestrian Deaths

Traffic-calming measures like lowering speed limits in residential neighbourhoods, mid-block crossings, and pedestrian-activated crosswalks will improve Victoria’s walkability, and contribute to our target of zero pedestrian deaths.

Adding covered bike storage

The amount of bike storage in popular areas is a key factor in the decision to cycle. Expanding bike storage on municipal property will further encourage residents to choose their bike over their car for short trips.

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HELPING FAMILIES SUCCEED VICTORIA

The 0% vacancy rate for family-sized housing in Victoria makes starting a young family here a daunting prospect. These families need action on the housing crisis, but also other supports to help them succeed.

New Childcare Placements

Seize the once-in-a-generation opportunity childcare funding opportunity from the province to work with local childcare businesses and non-profits to create hundreds of new child care spaces.

Free Swimming Lessons for Every Child

Ensure that every child in Victoria has access to intro-level swimming lessons for free.

Connecting Schools with Local Gardens

Support and grow School District nutrition programs to source produce from local gardens and involve children in school garden projects, through the use of grants and City land.

Expanding Neighbourhood Meal Programs

Encourage neighbourhood meal programs and good food boxes with ambitious local food targets through further partnership between neighbourhood houses, community centres and school districts. The example of Fernwood NRG shows that by working together, we can make a difference in addressing food security and providing dignified access to healthy, fresh food for all residents.

More Playgrounds and Parklets

Support the creation of new playgrounds and parklets, especially in neighbourhoods that have a shortage of outdoor playspace.

Free Access to Sports Equipment

Invest in sports equipment libraries to ensure children can take part in sport and outdoor activity regardless of their parent's incomes.

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RESPECT FOR SENIORS

Seniors on fixed incomes are feeling the squeeze from rising living costs, and too much of our housing stock is inaccessible for seniors with mobility challenges. Baby boomers, the largest generation in history are retiring and entering a new stage of their lives. Our social and physical infrastructure is already struggling to meet the needs of current seniors - we need to ensure that we are ready for the biggest wave of new seniors in our city's history.

Create a Seniors Action Plan

Create a Seniors Action Plan to ensure city services are accessible for seniors in our community. This could include everything from adding more benches on major walking paths, and ensuring that front-line workers can help seniors in crisis.

Aging in Place

Encourage developers to build seniors-friendly housing with designs that support people to age-in-place.

Senior-Aligned Housing

We need to ensure accessible social housing units are built to keep seniors off the streets, and we need to monitor and prevent increases in senior homelessness.

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TACKLING ADDICTION AND HOMELESSNESS

The last several years have been deadly for people living on the streets in Victoria. In 2017, 82 people were killed by fentanyl alone. More than ever, we need to act with compassion and determination to ensure the most vulnerable of us are not left behind and abandoned. It is not possible to police away homelessness – but we can house and help the people living on our streets.

Housing First Approach

Support Housing First and other approaches that prioritize getting people off of the streets and into pathways to treatment and recovery. Housing is not the complete solution, but it is the best first step.

Ending Youth Homelessness

Tackle youth homelessness head on with 156 new units for the 156 youth aged 15-24 years counted in the 2018 Greater Victoria homelessness count.

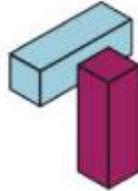
Prevent Overdose Deaths

Prevent more overdose deaths by ensuring all frontline municipal staff have training to confidently respond to opioid overdoses, and by establishing an emergency response fund to support grants for community responses to the overdose epidemic.

Harm Reduction Works

Harm-reduction approaches like the needle exchange are working - opioid deaths are tending downwards, but we need to go further to ensure that users of drugs are not forced into the shadows where they are more vulnerable. The city should support street level drug testing by Island Health to help people identify contaminated drug supply and prevent deaths on our streets. Ultimately, we support advocating for decriminalization of possession of drugs to the federal government - drug addiction needs to be treated as a medical issue, not a criminal issue.

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AN INCLUSIVE CITY

AN INCLUSIVE CITY

City Council must do more to ensure that all Victorians are heard and that their needs are addressed. When we embrace the diversity of our city, we build a Victoria that works for all of us.

[Strengthening Our Neighbourhoods](#)

It's time to empower our neighbourhoods— from online consultation to providing childcare at meetings, organizational support to participatory budgeting, we need to help our communities play an active role in the shaping of their city.

[Safer Nightlife](#)

Adopt a safe nightlife campaign to end sexual harassment and assault in our nightlife venues, and push for late-night transit hours to ensure safe rides home.

[Immigrant and Refugee Integration](#)

Victoria can become one of the best cities for immigrants and refugees in Canada with specific measures aimed at integration, protection, and cultural support.

[A Leader in LGBTQ2s Inclusion](#)

Victoria has made major strides towards LGBTQ2s inclusion, but there's still more to do. Now is the time to follow through on opportunities to show leadership.

[An Accessible City](#)

Too much of our infrastructure is inaccessible to people with accessibility challenges. We will ensure infrastructure and services are designed to be accessible for all.

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STRENGTHING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

A more inclusive city starts at the neighbourhood level, but neighbourhood organizations don't always get the support that they need. When people do get involved in City Hall's decision-making process, they often feel like their contributions are unheard and unvalued. We are committed to allowing residents a direct role in the shaping of their city.

Accessible Consultations

Every neighbourhood resident who wants a voice in consultations should have one, not just those who are able to attend the meeting. We support the creation of a new online system for consultations, including developments, rezoning, and community planning. And additional measures, such as child-minding, will make in-person consultations easier to access.

Enabling Neighbourhood Organizations

Make it easier for neighbourhood organizations and community non-profits to deliver community services like childcare, farmers' markets, gathering spaces, festivals, and others. When neighbourhoods have ideas that promote a more vibrant and inclusive city, City Hall should be a springboard, not a barrier.

More Influence in Decisions

Increase neighbourhood influence on how infrastructure and amenities are selected, including exploring neighbourhood-level participatory budgeting. We'll strengthen CALUC members' ability to influence the process by having city staff provide annual training on development and zoning.

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SAFER NIGHTLIFE

Using the Good Night Out International model, create a safe nightlife campaign to end sexual harassment and assault in Victoria venues, bars, clubs and pubs. Work with B.C. Transit to expand late night hours and ensure that late-night patrons and staff have affordable options to be able to make it home safely.

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A WELCOMING CITY FOR NEWCOMERS

Victoria is becoming a more diverse community, and we have an opportunity to become one of the best cities for immigrants and refugees in Canada. As a first step, let's reinforce our values by actively confirming that people of colour and Indigenous people will not be subjected to racial profiling or "carding", implementing recommendations from the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee to improve relations between police and communities of colour, instituting mandatory anti-racism training for all municipal staff to make sure our City is free from racism and discrimination, and ensuring that refugee claimants, particularly people of colour, can access community services without questions of immigration status or involvement of the police.

Inclusivity is a moral imperative, but it is also an economic driver - cities that successfully integrate immigrants and refugees benefit from unleashing their talents. We will launch a City Immigrant Mentorship Program, where city professionals help immigrant and refugee professionals make the transition to practicing their profession in Canada. We want international students to make lifelong connections that keep them living and doing business in Victoria. We would also support efforts to bring back an annual multicultural festival on the scale of the original FolkFest.

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LEADERS IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Make Victoria a leader in LGBTQI2s inclusion - real progress has been made in recent years, now it is time to follow through on opportunities to show leadership. Moving forward, we support the development of a community space and resource hub for the LGBTQI2s community in Victoria and develop a new standing Diversity and Inclusion LGBTQI2s Advisory Committee to make recommendations to City Council and staff. We will also implement the City's 2017 commitment to gender neutral toilets in municipal washrooms and require all new large developments to have gender neutral washrooms.

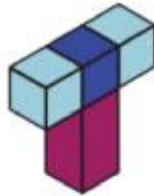
We would like to follow the lead of the federal and provincial government and mandate Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) training for council and city staff, and ensure all major City policies, plans and investments consider the realities and inequalities of diverse groups of people.

RAMP UP ACCESSIBILITY EFFORTS

We support the Accessibility Working Group - we need to listen to people facing accessibility issues to guide us in redesigning our infrastructure with everyone in mind. The city has made lots of mistakes in designing infrastructure and services without accessibility in mind, and we need to make fixing those issues a priority. Moving forward, we would like to bring in higher standards for accessibility in new projects, and explore incentives for owners of older buildings to make renovations (e.g. railings, ramps and elevators) that improve accessibility and allow seniors to age in place.

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A THRIVING CITY

A THRIVING CITY

City Council must champion sustainability and long-term planning. By putting people at the centre of everything we do, we can create spaces where community thrives.

[Vibrant Public Spaces](#)

Small council decisions have a big impact on our quality of life. Things like preserving park land, promoting urban farming, removing barriers for food trucks, and other creative improvements will make a huge difference to our local communities.

[Improved Financial Discipline at City Hall](#)

We must take a hard look at the City's operations. Financial responsibility means reviewing all aspects of City spending – from the way large projects are approved to high-growth spending areas.

[A Thoughtful Approach to Infrastructure](#)

Victoria can't afford to repeat the mistakes of the past. The lessons from these mistakes must be learned and actions taken to reduce risks on large infrastructure projects.

Commitment to the Arts

Victoria attracts and nurtures amazing artistic talent, but there is a lot more that can be done to raise the profile of our artists and support a more sustainable art economy. For a start, we support the creation of colourful new murals across the city, the new ArtsHub in the former Maritime Museum, and elevating the Victoria Art Gallery to become a national leader in Indigenous art.

Rethink Heritage

Earlier this year City Council gave out a massive 10 year tax holiday for the Customs House project - a project self-described as bringing "a new level of luxury to the city" - without support from the City's own heritage advisory panel. The City now gives out over \$1 million each year in tax breaks to luxury condo owners who have bought in to "heritage" developments that "preserve" little more than a foot-thick facade. The City's heritage policies aren't working and need an overhaul - we want to work with heritage experts and citizens to find a way to ensure that we really are protecting heritage and not just handing out tax breaks to luxury condo developers.

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VIBRANT COMMUNITY SPACES

We believe in the critical importance of placemaking; the way community comes into spaces to bring them to life through action. Through play and conversation, through sport, food, and friendship— these spaces form the bedrock of our neighbourhoods. We must continue to improve our public spaces and we need to focus more on designing them to encourage the interactions that activate public spaces as powerful nodes of community.

Protect Our Parks

The City should ensure that there is no net loss of parkland in any neighbourhood, and develop plans to acquire and develop more small parks in neighbourhoods that need them. We should also open up more city park space to dog owners, who are underserved by current spaces.

The Crystal Pool/North Park plan needs to put residents first and listen to their needs. A new facility is needed, but there should be no reduction of outdoor spaces, community-oriented facilities over athletic facilities, and more appropriate services for families and people of diverse culture backgrounds. There are also simple things that the city can do to mitigate the temporary disruption during construction - even through small measures like putting a temporary basketball court on a nearby parking lot.

Tactical Community-Building

We also need to try more small community placemaking projects. We think that the key to successful placemaking is putting decisions in the hands of residents. There are a few ideas we think are promising, which would require the city to loosen its rules to try something new:

- Pilot community cookfires and communal BBQ stations in parks
- Increase the amount of city park space available to dog owners
- Make it easier to garden on boulevards by designating more boulevards adjacent to multi-family buildings as allotment gardens for vegetables, pollinator flower gardens and native ecosystems

Support Placemaking Entrepreneurs

When entrepreneurs are proposing to invest their money to create more vibrant spaces for residents to enjoy, whether food trucks, patios, play spaces or public art - the city's attitude needs to be "how can we help make this happen" not "why should this happen". Here are some things we want to see more of:

- Allow food trucks in the downtown core, and in areas where shift workers are underserved by existing lunch options, and expand the number of food trucks
- Promote the creation of more patio space downtown
- Revitalize the inner harbour with off-season events for Victoria residents
- Conduct a full-summer second phase pilot of restricting traffic on Government St during the weekend and supporting more music, arts and mobile businesses to enliven our core tourist district

Invest in Food Security

Renters without access to gardening space and low-income people struggle to access enough nutritious food should have the ability to grow their own food. The city has made good steps forward by embracing the Urban Food Table as a source of policy innovation in the food security and urban farming world, and we need to keep moving forward. As a start, we would hold the city accountable for enabling urban farming and increase urban food assets by 50% by 2020 with online tracking.

We would make it easier for residents and farm businesses to grow food here in the city by cutting red tape for renters and homeowners to use boulevard space for gardens, enabling leaf mulch collected by the City to be delivered to residents and farm businesses, and increase deliveries to non-profit projects that desire to grow food, native ecosystems and pollinators gardens. As a longer-term initiative, we would also explore incentives for property owners and developers to provide unused space for urban food production to urban farms.

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IMPROVE FISCAL DISCIPLINE AT CITY HALL

Together Victoria has an ambitious vision for our city and we need to ensure fiscal discipline to move forward on these priorities. Therefore, it is critical we take a hard look at the city's operations and procurement processes. And we need to have the political courage to tackle the source of the biggest cost pressure on the city's budget.

Rebuild Public Trust in Fiscal Management at City Hall

It is clear that City Hall doesn't have the trust of most Victorians when it comes to providing cost-effective services and controlling infrastructure costs. We would push to establish a standing Oversight and Personnel Committee of the City Manager, Mayor and three councillors, who would meet bi-weekly to monitor the implementation of the city's budget, projects and priorities, investigate concerns with staff conduct, and report quarterly to council. We would also push to conduct a salary and performance review for senior staff at city hall.

Controlling Budget Pressures

Public safety is one of our municipality's biggest costs and Victoria residents pay a disproportionate share of the region's policing costs. The City of Victoria must call on the province to ensure that policing costs are reasonable and that other municipalities pay their fair share towards regional public safety activities. Supporting amalgamation of regional policing with Oak Bay, Saanich and Central Saanich Police Departments will reduce costs and improve public safety.

We are also concerned with the growing trend for police to be reallocated to social work activities, when professional social workers may be better trained and more cost effective for the same role.

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A THOUGHTFUL APPROACH TO BIG PROJECTS

We need to ensure that the lessons from previous infrastructure projects are not merely acknowledged, but inform how we manage every project moving forwards. Increasingly cities and governments around the world are looking to move away from big projects, which are too easily treated as “too big to fail” - **putting taxpayers at the mercy of contractors.**

Fixing Procurement

An audit of the Johnson Street Bridge project is the right decision, but an audit doesn't necessarily mean the same mistakes won't be made in future. We should commission a task force of independent experts to ensure that mistakes made in the Johnson St. Bridge are not repeated with the Crystal Pool and Firehall replacement projects.

Large city contracts should be “unbundled” into smaller contracts wherever possible. This reduces the risks of relying on multinational firms, and enables small local businesses to compete for City and CRD contracts.

Planning for Infrastructure

The key to better managing infrastructure costs is adopting meaningful long-term planning. This would incentivize the city to not only plan for the depreciation of existing assets, but also for how our physical and social infrastructure can accommodate future growth, mitigate climate change impacts, and prepare for the risk of a major earthquake in the future.

Better infrastructure planning also positions Victoria to be first in line for government investments in “shovel-ready” projects, and gives us the breathing room to plan out projects properly so that conversations about co-locating housing at Crystal Pool aren't happening at the 11th hour.

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TRUE AND LASTING INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

We acknowledge that the City of Victoria is located on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples known today as the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations. The history of our city's relationship with these Nations is filled with bad faith, broken promises, and shameful betrayals towards the people who have called this place home since time immemorial. These past actions are an indelible part of our present, which we must confront.

Today, we have an opportunity to embrace true and lasting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. In Victoria, good initial steps have been taken to bring recognition of Indigenous history and culture into our city and our public spaces, and to begin a journey of reconciliation with the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations. The journey is only just beginning, and we are committed to taking the next steps.

As candidates, our commitment to reconciliation is:

- To seek out the advice and leadership of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations who have stewarded this land since long before the City of Victoria was incorporated.
- To find opportunities to ensure that Indigenous peoples share in the prosperity of our community, such as pushing for opportunities for Indigenous contractors and employment in major city infrastructure projects.
- To support opportunities for residents to learn more about the Indigenous history and culture of this land on which we live today.
- To support the continued implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through the Witness Reconciliation Program and the City Family.

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CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Thanks to the visionary conservation efforts of previous generations, our city's natural beauty is unrivalled. We now bear this responsibility— to preserve Victoria for future generations, and to do our part as an eco-conscious community in the fight against climate change.

[Meeting our Climate Commitments](#)

The city is not on pace to meet its climate targets. Immediate action must be taken on retrofitting building, transit ridership, and organic waste for Victoria to live up to its environmental commitments.

[Protecting our Ecosystems](#)

Ecological conservation doesn't just happen on its own. It takes active, conscientious leadership with the foresight to recognize the value of natural spaces. Let's protect, nourish, and grow these resources.

Stopping Kinder Morgan

Our members and candidates strongly oppose the construction of the Kinder Morgan pipeline. The risk to our coastline is too great, the impact on the climate is too large, and the project does not have Indigenous consent.

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MEET OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

On the surface, the City of Victoria's Climate Leadership Plan is a strong commitment to tackle climate change. While the City has made bold promises, it's failed to follow through with actions. In 2007, the city promised to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2020. So far city operations emissions have declined by only 14%.

As a prosperous and eco-conscious community, we must do better. It is not enough to set ambitious targets and leave actions for future generations; we must lock-in actions today to guarantee we achieve our climate targets and to provide affected businesses with certainty about the coming changes.

To hit our **building emissions** targets, the rate at which buildings are being retrofitted must double immediately. We will provide revitalization tax credits that would reduce the costs to stratas and rental building owners who renovate their buildings to reduce emissions and improve energy efficiency. We would also support increased adoption of the BC Energy Step Code to ensure our building emissions targets are met and significant renovations are incentivized to include removal of oil tanks and oil heating systems.

To hit our **transportation emissions** target we will need to increase the percentage of trips taken using the bus from 12% to 25% and make all buses renewable powered over the next 12 years. To achieve this, we need to have B.C. Transit purchase only renewable powered from this point onwards, and increase ridership through incentives and more rapid transit routes. We can also make it easier to own an electric car by requiring all new developments to include electric car charging stations in parking facilities.

It's time to electrify the cruise ship terminal at Odgen Point. This will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and remove a longstanding air-quality and noise issue that hurts quality of life for James Bay residents.

In the next 12 years, we need to eliminate all **organic waste** going to the landfill, ensure methane produced by organic waste is collected for biogas energy, and divert the nutrients in waste to help grow food. When compost collection contracts are next up for review, proposals should be judged based on how vendors demonstrate they meet these objectives.

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PROTECT OUR ECOSYSTEMS AND NATURAL SPACES

For a city its size, Victoria is blessed with beautiful natural spaces and precious ecosystems - from the rich kelp beds off the Breakwater to the camas and garry oak meadows of Summit Park to the unique tidal inlet of the Gorge Waterway. Today, we benefit from the incredible efforts to preserve and restore these natural spaces by the generations before us. Now we must protect and grow this legacy.

CLEAN WATERWAYS

For the first time in decades, it is safe again for children to swim in the Gorge waterway. In partnership with other local governments, the harbour authority, boaters and homeowners, we need to continue to protect and improve the quality of water entering the Gorge. One exciting way that the city and homeowners can make a difference is through rain gardens like in Fisherman's Wharf Park, which filters run-off before it enters the waterway, reduces flooding risk for the neighbourhood and also provides valuable habitat to birds.

NATIVE PLANTS

We need to increase the use of native plants adapted to Victoria's climate in our parks, public spaces and the landscaping of new developments. Native plants require less water and are more drought resistant - they also can provide opportunities for restoring the food sources that Indigenous peoples need access to in order to practice their traditional culture.

GROWING THE URBAN FOREST

Let's follow the lead of cities across the Pacific Northwest by setting an ambitious target for Victoria's urban forest to increase tree canopy to 25% by 2025. As we increase our tree canopy, we must also preserve the iconic cherry blossom heritage gifted to our city by Japanese-Canadian immigrants long ago, and work with LifeCycles Project Society and homeowners to plant (and harvest!) more fruit and nut trees.

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THE CRD - STRONG CITY, STRONG REGION

The Capital Regional District (CRD) has a large role in many of the issues that impact Victoria residents the most, including our water supply, parks like Elk and Thetis Lake, the Hartland Landfill, and the regional housing authority. The CRD is out of mind for most of us due to complex structures of accountability and deliberations that move at a glacial pace, but it is critical to our region's well-being.

In addition to a seat on Victoria City Council, **Laurel Collins is also running to serve on the CRD Board** to bring new ideas and a fresh urgency to some key issues. We need the CRD working effectively to successfully tackle our biggest regional challenges: housing affordability, transportation, and sustainability.

[Working for Affordability](#)

The CRD plays a huge role in the construction of affordable housing in our region. New ways of working are needed to tackle the scope of this problem.

[Keeping us Moving](#)

Push for more input in the planning of our highways, and expand our campgrounds and multi-use trails in response to their exceptional popularity.

[Sustaining our Environment](#)

Take action to support our farmers and local food sources, and protect our natural watershed and ecosystems by opposing development outside the urban containment boundary.

[Reconciliation at the CRD](#)

Include First Nation governments in regional decisions that affect their rights and interests.

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WORKING FOR AFFORDABILITY

To meet the goal of tripling social housing targets, our region must pool its resources and pursue opportunities for a mix of new housing in the locations that work best. The Capital Regional District Housing Corporation (CRDHC) needs to evolve into an enterprising publicly-owned developer and operator of affordable housing across the full spectrum of housing affordability - from social housing to market rentals and cooperatives. Laurel will ensure the CRDHC has the resources it needs and hold it accountable for rising to the occasion of the challenges our region faces.

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KEEPING US MOVING

Push for the CRD to have a more meaningful role in regional planning over major arterial routes including Highway 1 to the Westshore and the E&N right of way, and work with BC Transit to collaboratively plan for implementing the long awaited Light Rail Transit links to the West Shore and Saanich Peninsula.

The Sea to Sea Regional Park is an amazing opportunity to increase the amount of outdoor recreational opportunities in the region. The park should be open and fully accessible as soon as possible. Laurel would also work to pursue more family-friendly camping opportunities within the CRD like the Sooke Potholes campground.

The regional biking, walking and hiking trails network is falling behind the ever increasing demand for more commuter and recreational routes. Laurel will push to complete the planned network and expand the Galloping Goose width to accommodate the high demand from daily commuters. She'll also campaign to increase the number of (drinking bottle friendly) fountains in parks and on Regional Trails (pet friendly ones too!).

SUSTAINING OUR ENVIRONMENT

We must preserve our region's watershed and natural ecosystems. Laurel will vote against any motion that would push beyond the urban containment boundary in the Regional Growth Strategy.

The CRD has a critical role to play in ensuring that our region can feed itself in the long-term. It's time we secure our food security future, starting by acting on the recommendations of farmers and food security experts made in the CRD Food & Agriculture Strategy, which includes:

- Establishing and funding a Farmland Trust to acquire affordable land that can be farmed in perpetuity by future generations of young farmers.

- Supporting young farmer programs to ensure the next generation of farmers get the skills, mentoring and access to land to keep growing the region's agricultural economy.
- Partnering with Indigenous communities to protect and restore native ecosystems, in particular the plants and animals that enable local Indigenous peoples to practice their traditional culture.

Changes in the global recycling markets, especially in China, mean that shipping our recyclables overseas is no longer a long-term solution. Meanwhile, over 30% of the waste going into the landfill is actually organic matter - wasted food that is contributing to methane emissions and taking up our limited landfill space. We want to work towards a circular economy - where the natural resources in our waste stream can be recycled into new products, soil for farmers and biogas energy that can power our homes.

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RECONCILIATION AT THE CRD

Due to the *Indian Act*, the 19 First Nations governments with traditional territories within the boundaries of the CRD have been prevented from participating in regional governance decisions that impact their communities. Over the last few years, the CRD has started to engage more meaningfully with local First Nations on decisions that impact their rights and interests, but there is much work to be done.

Laurel is committed to finding ways that First Nations can meaningfully participate in CRD decision making that affects their rights and interests, and ensure that all CRD decision making is guided by the TRC's calls to Action, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, The Douglas Treaty and the Modern Treaty Process. Laurel will also work towards bridging the wealth gap and finding shared economic prosperity for local First Nations.

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THANK YOU!

Thank you for taking the time to read **Bold Ideas for a Better Victoria**. We look forward to your feedback and ideas on the future of our city. Please send **your** comments and ideas to campaign@togethervictoria.ca.



www.togethervictoria.ca