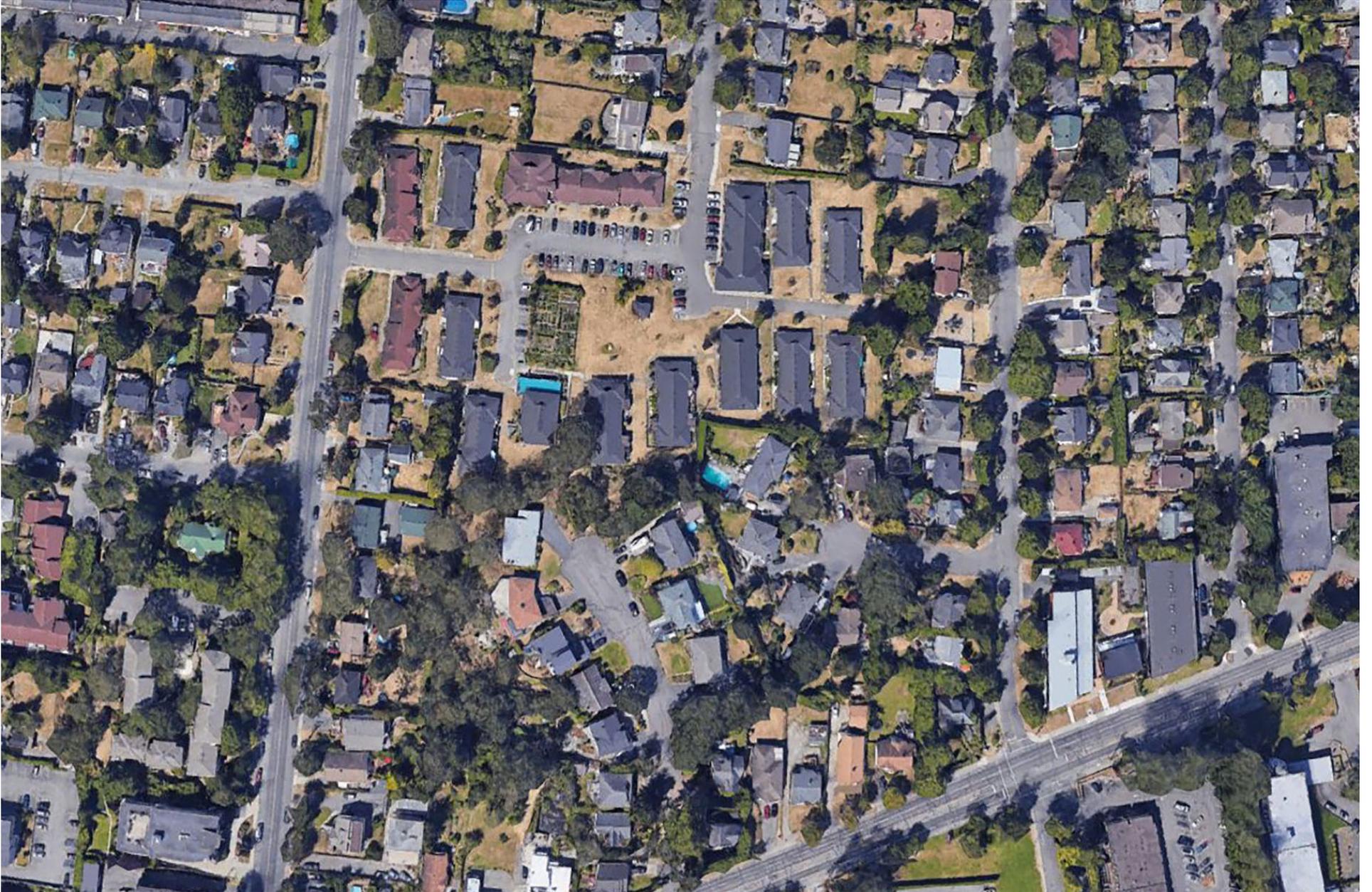


Chown Place Leaves the Nest: Diversifying a Senior Community

Victoria, British Columbia
Fall 2020/Spring 2021

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Google Earth aerial view of Chown Place

Introduction

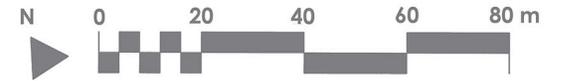
Chown Place is a 5.6-acre site in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada originally founded in 1956 as affordable housing for seniors over the age of 55. At the time of this writing Chown Place has 108 units in 17 buildings. However, the City of Victoria is experiencing a housing shortage and that shortage is expected to continue. This has put the most strain on affordable housing stock. Members of the Gorge View Society, a non-profit which manages affordable senior housing in Chown Place, recognized the opportunity that Chown Place can provide for the area.

Many of Chown Place's current low-rise and low-density garden style apartments are reaching the end of their building life cycle, but the character of the city is changing as well. This type of housing was standard fare in the age of the car, whereas presently more than 60% of travel in Victoria is now through public transit systems, so there is no need to own a car. While the desire for transportation options and a walkable urban environment have changed over the last 70 years, the way land is used in Chown Place has stayed the same.



OUUDS
The University of Oklahoma Urban Design Studio

Chown Place



Rendering of existing site conditions

How We Got Involved

We are students at the University of Oklahoma's Master's in Urban Design offered through the Christopher Gibbs School of Architecture. That is a long way from Victoria, BC, Canada. Our connection is Dr. Kristina Leach, who resides near Chown Place and is a Director of the Gorge View Society, and an Affiliate Faculty Fellow at the Gibbs College of Architecture.

It was Dr. Leach who learned of the expansion project at Chown Place and proposed it to Shawn Schaefer, Director of the Urban Design Studio at the University of Oklahoma's Tulsa Campus.



Graduate Student Urban Design Team. Left to right: Autumn Tiller, Lahari Peluri, Camila Coronado and Jeremy Banes

What This Document Does

The main objective for Chown Place is to create a plan for the site that contains between 300 and 400 units, incorporates a mix of housing sizes to accommodate families, and increases the number of affordable units as well as the current senior residents. For this reason, an additional 58 units in a new 4-story building is planned to begin construction this year (2021). The new building provides the greatly needed increase in units; however, that is only one of the goals stated in the Burnside Gorge Neighborhood Plan as we discovered through our design process. There are other opportunities that could be incorporated into the future vision for the site.

One of the challenges to our project, that the planning and design of Chown Place has already begun, which necessarily influences many of the possible outcomes of our design process. Number Ten Architects is a firm that has been contracted to develop Chown Place. The plans Number Ten Architects have produced will allow for a greater density and meet the planned 300-400 units; however, we discovered many opportunities to make Chown Place special for its residents and the surrounding neighborhood. We have chosen to build on the work of Number Ten Architects while attempting to provide for a range of other desired outcomes as expressed by the stakeholders, residents, neighbors, experts, and other governmental entities.

So far Chown Place has been considered a "nested" community within the Burnside-Gorge Neighborhood: within the community but not really a part of it. This is a situation that needs to change, and while we have specifically focused on Chown Place we have also looked for opportunities to incorporate objectives found in the Burnside-Gorge Neighborhood Plan. This document is meant to be complimentary to that plan, and our intent is that the development of Chown Place should help facilitate the goals expressed in the Burnside-Gorge Neighborhood Plan and thereby link Chown Place to the greater community.

Design Approach

Urban Design is best taught through a “service learning” approach giving hands on experience with real world projects. As each project is different, the approach must be more based in guiding principles and patterns rather than a system of steps.

We use a design thinking approach adapted from the Interaction Design Foundation. The design process is somewhat sequential; however, it is often the case that many of the stages take place iteratively. The process is meant to help identify problems and then develop solutions that balance those objectives.

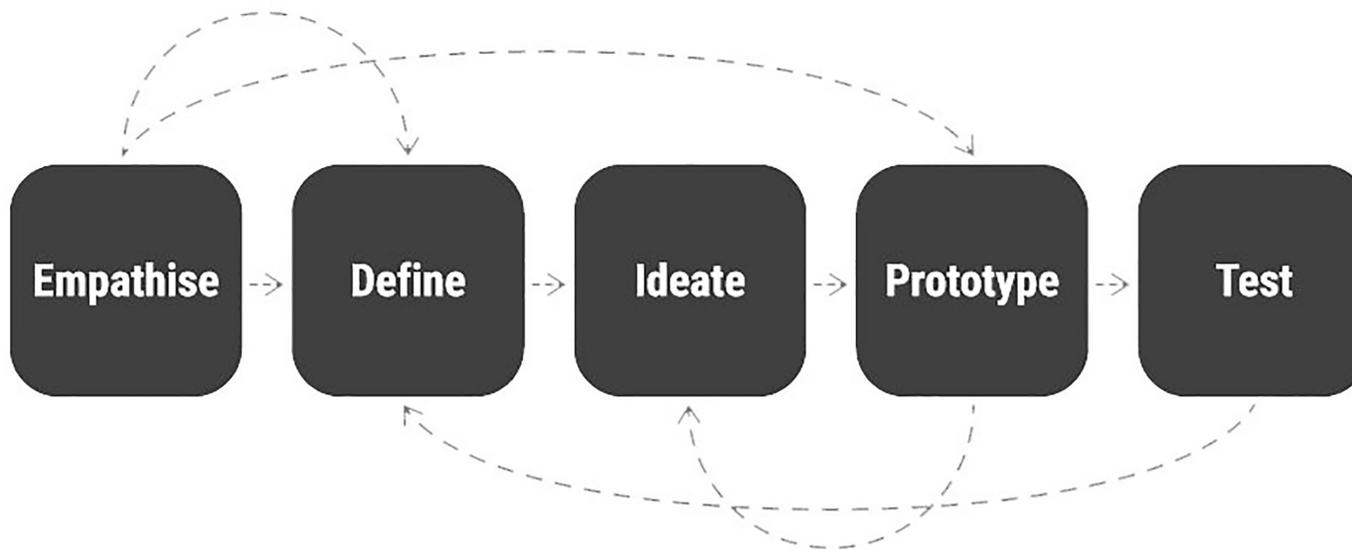


Diagram of design thinking process, adapted from the Interaction Design Foundation at interaction-design.org

Process

Empathize

We empathized with the Chown Place community through engagement with:

- Community Leaders And Stakeholders
- Experts And Special Interests
- Residents And Property Owners
- Public And Outside Observers

Community Leaders and Stakeholders

Community Outreach Pyramid

There are many people and organizations involved in any Urban Design project and all their interests must be considered for a project to be complete and useful. Different approaches are often necessary to procure feedback from different groups. Our process of engagement is depicted in the Community Outreach Pyramid shown below.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PYRAMID



Stakeholder Meetings

We engaged members of the Gorge View Society, the Burnside Gorge Community Association, and other stakeholders through monthly meetings. At each meeting we presented what we gathered or conceptualized through each of the stages of the Empathize, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test design process. We solicited feedback and learned more about the area and community.

We learned from the monthly stakeholder meetings that they had other concerns than only increasing the available number of units. They wanted about three times the number of units, but also had interests in making Chown Place a hub and destination for the neighborhood, protecting the environment with Green or sustainable development, increasing safety in and around Chown Place, and a desire to make Chown Place a landmark in the area.

Participating stakeholders included:

David King - Chairperson
Avery Stetski - Chairperson
Kristina Leach - Board Member
Minh Ngo - Board Member
Adrian Shewchuk - Board Member
Liz Bartley - Administrative Assistant
Joe Calenda - Board Member

Meeting Schedule/Time of Meetings:

Saturdays at 9:00 am PDT to 10:30 am PDT
(11:00 am CDT to 12:30 pm CDT)

Fall 2020
September 12th
October 10th
November 14th
December 12th

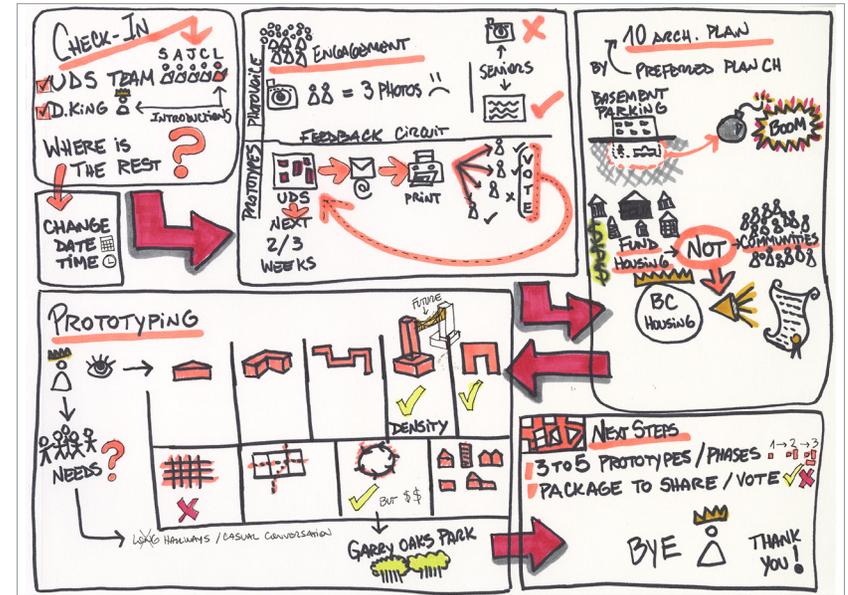
Spring 2021
February 13th
March 13th
April 10th
May 8th

Visual Scribing - Minh Ngo

The Visual Scribe Minh Ngo, who lives near Chown Place and attended many of our monthly stakeholder meetings, gave us a complimentary session teaching us her technique for recording meetings in simple graphic sketches. The process of putting speech and conversation into pictures gives different perspectives than might be recorded through traditional note taking, and can help to more clearly define major ideas. Our experience was that it was a great way to see the major themes in our monthly stakeholder meetings. It also happened to be incredibly fun!

Website

<https://www.visualscribe.ca/>



Hand-drawn visual notes from February 2021 stakeholder meeting



Hand-drawn visual notes from March 2021 stakeholder meeting



Hand-drawn visual notes from April 2021 stakeholder meeting

Experts and Special Interests

We conducted individual interviews with experts in the fields of gerontology, aging in place, mental health and homelessness, and affordable housing in Victoria. We also interviewed members of the Gorge View Society, the Gorge-Tillicum Community Association, city engineers for the cities of Victoria and Saanich, and architects from Number Ten Architects. Below you can read summaries of our findings.

Marc Cittone - Victoria City Planner, Affordable Housing in City of Victoria

October 15th, 2020

We learned why there is a need for affordable housing in the city of Victoria and what are the “must-haves” when designing them.

Greg Shinn - Mental Health Association of Oklahoma, Mental Health and its Effect on Homelessness

October 20th, 2020

We learned that mental illness and substance abuse is an issue everywhere, homelessness is a direct result of a lack of affordable housing, and affordable housing is best resolved by non-profit/government intervention.

Avery Stetski - Burnside Gorge Community Association, General Information about Chown Place, Part A

November 5th, 2020

We learned about the new 4-story building, urban design opportunities in Chown Place and got some feedback regarding the photovoice activity.

Kim Cassie - Gerontological Social Worker, Gerontology

November 9th, 2020

We learned about how gerontology will affect urban design and which activities are good for integrating people of a certain age.

Gabe Epstein - Gorge-Tillicum Community Association, On the Outside Looking In

November 14th, 2020

We learned about the relationship between Saanich, Tillicum and Burnside Gorge Neighborhoods. We were also apprised of the needs of each and more about affordable housing.

David King – Gorge View Society, General Information about Chown Place, Part B

November 16th, 2020

We learned about how Chown Place’s residents reacted to the new 4-story building and financial considerations regarding this new development.

Marcio Teixeira Da Silva – Developer/Manager, BC Housing, BC Housing Development of New 4-Story Building in Chown Place

January 11th, 2021

We learned about the process a person should go through to be considered a resident of the new building. Also, how many units and which types the new building will be offering.

Barry Cosgrave – Architect from Number Ten Architectural Firm, Design Process of the New 4-Story Building in Chown Place

January 15th, 2021

We learned about the design process, how Chown Place’s residents were engaged and how the building’s program was developed.

There were others who we contacted but with whom we were unable to interview. Nonetheless, we learned many things from these interviews, such as:

- How programs can be utilized to integrate multi-generational residents
- Need for and design approaches to affordable housing
- Methods of housing residents while development occurs
- Mixed-use properties are desired but has regulatory issues with current funding sources
- Different approaches to finding funding sources
- Details of the new building by Number Ten Architects
- How the current Chown Place residents view the new building
- The relationship between Saanich, Tillicum, and Burnside Gorge Neighborhoods and their unique needs

Chown Place Special Planning Area

Expert Interview

Date: October 15th, 2020

Key Notes – Affordable Houses in Victoria

- New families are forming. Need for an “affordable lifetime home” since it is too expensive to own a home.
- There are now approximately between 2000 to 3000 households just in Victoria that are too small (bedroom size) or do not satisfy the need of the people living in them.
- People really want to live in Victoria, there is a need to accommodate about 20% of new houses in Victoria City.
- Victoria houses are more sustainable:
 - The city is more walkable
 - No need to own a car (car sharing/bicycles)
 - Public Transportation
 - 60% of trips are by sustainable transportation
- Having a Stable Home and being part of a community is very important for people’s mental health.
- From Chown Place to Saanich School. Cross Harriet Rd (great crosswalk) and then it is a 10 min walk or 5 min bike ride.
- Demand for family size units (3-bedroom unit)
- The Must-Haves in an Affordable House:
 - Storage Place
 - Outdoor Access (share space, balcony, catwalk)
 - 2 to 3 bedroom (windows in them)
 - Working area (nook for a desk)
 - Natural Light
 - Ceiling: right height (more = expensive)
 - Ground Floor Units: own access with small patio
 - Share green space (gardening, kids playground)
 - Bicycle storage
 - Parking: car share (MODO – non-profit car share)
 - Outdoor spaces protected (rain/sun)
 - Floor adaptability (seniors)
 - Bathrooms: one but compartmented = shower, sink and toilet different spaces (less expensive)
 - Simple Design
 - Canadians in particular take shoes off when entering a house, so a coat/show closet near the entry is important.
- Apartment buildings near Chown Place: contact for available units while the constructions in Chown Place are taking place (People want to be in the same area while their house is being remodeled)

Sample meeting notes from an expert interview

Residents And Property Owners

The photovoice activity was designed to engage Chown Place residents and the surrounding neighborhoods. Feedback was solicited by having participants take or submit photographs of things they would like to P.A.R.K. – “Preserve,” “Add,” “Remove” or “Keep Out” in their community.

From this engagement we learned that private gardens, community gardens, and opportunities to enjoy the outdoors were important issues for the residents of Chown Place.



"Preserve" fair weather outdoor eating



"Add" community gardens for recreation and food security



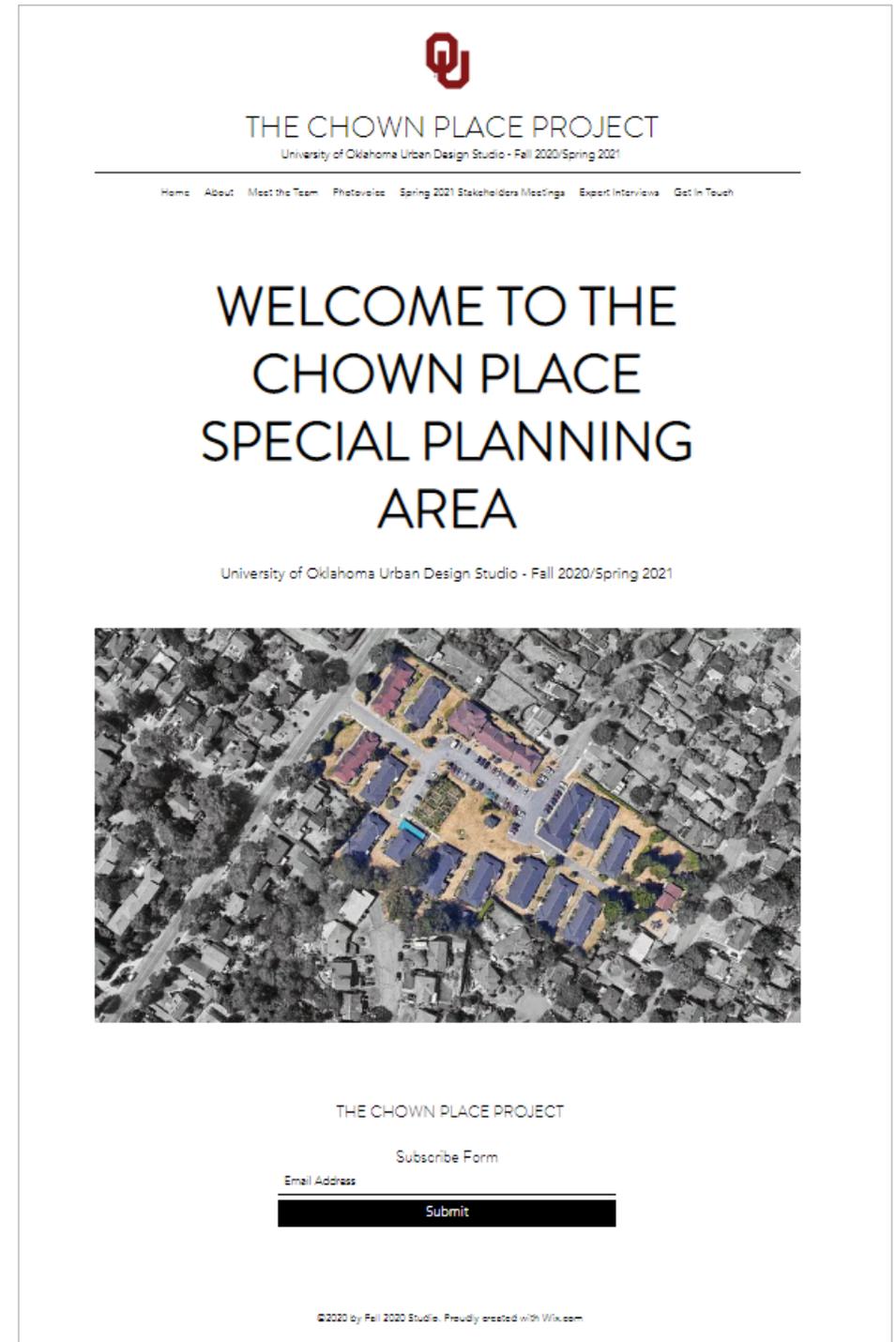
"Preserve" spaces for personal gardening

Public And Outside Observers

Chown Place Project Website

A website was created so that those we did not specifically contact could still have access to the research and work we were doing. Minutes from the monthly stakeholder meetings, pictures from the photovoice activity, and expert interview summaries were all available on the website along with an opportunity to contact us for further information or input.

To learn more about the project, visit our website:
<https://fall2020studio.wixsite.com/chownplacedesign>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Chown Place Project website. At the top center is the University of Oklahoma logo (OU). Below it, the text reads "THE CHOWN PLACE PROJECT" followed by "University of Oklahoma Urban Design Studio - Fall 2020/Spring 2021". A horizontal navigation bar contains links: Home, About, Meet the Team, Photovoice, Spring 2021 Stakeholders Meetings, Expert Interviews, and Get In Touch. The main heading is "WELCOME TO THE CHOWN PLACE SPECIAL PLANNING AREA". Below this is the same text "University of Oklahoma Urban Design Studio - Fall 2020/Spring 2021". A large aerial photograph shows a residential neighborhood with a central area highlighted in yellow and blue, indicating the project site. At the bottom, there is a "THE CHOWN PLACE PROJECT" header, a "Subscribe Form" label, an "Email Address" input field, and a "Submit" button. The footer contains the text "©2020 by Fall 2020 Studio. Proudly created with Wix.com".

Process

Define

We defined the physical and legal constraints for the project by documenting:

- Existing Conditions
- Urban X-Rays/Legibility Analysis
- Land Uses And Regulations
- Illustrative Plan

Existing Conditions



Chown Place from Irma Street, looking south



Chown Place from Harriet Road, looking northeast



Current parking conditions at Chown Place, looking west



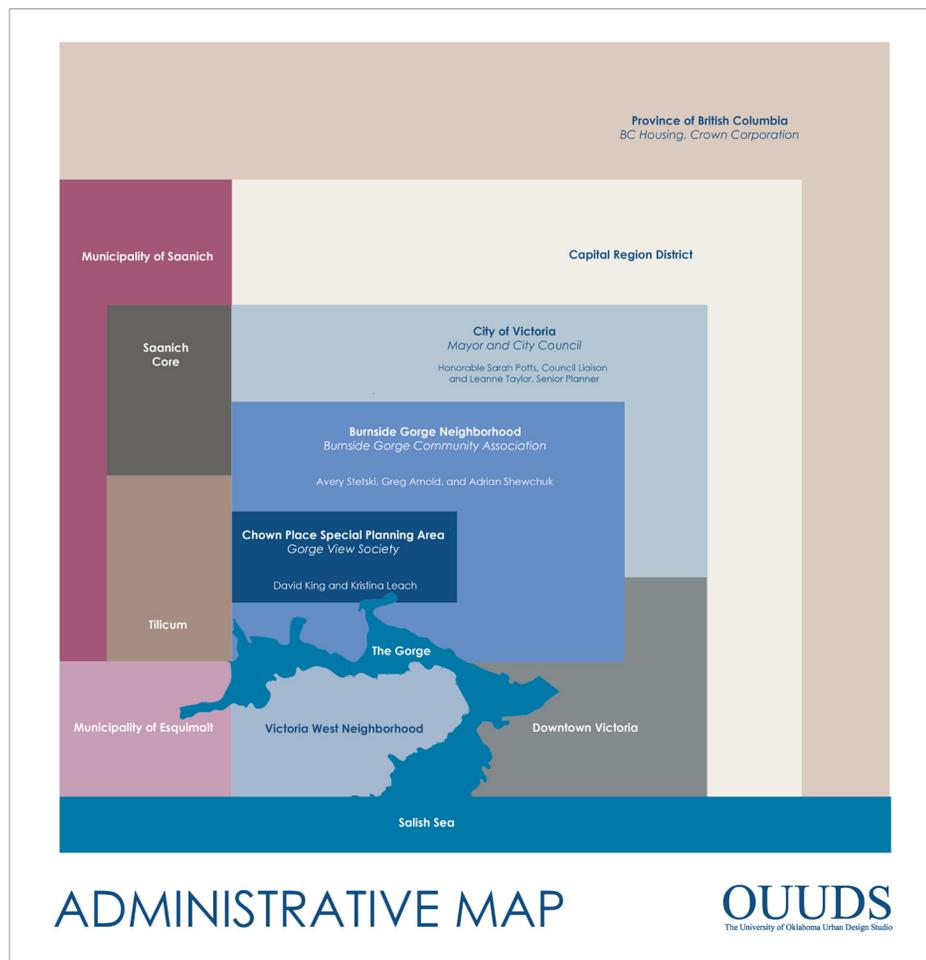
Existing community garden, looking southwest

Urban X-Rays

We analyzed Chown Place at city, neighborhood, and site scales and through several frameworks to learn more about the physical, economic and social constraints on the area.

Administrative Map

Victoria, along with neighboring municipalities are part of the Capital Region District, a regional planning district of British Columbia. Victoria is the provincial capital.



The neighboring district of Saanich has a greater population than Victoria. Saanich and Victoria are divided by Harriet Road. Saanich has different development requirements than Victoria. For instance, the Victoria side of the street has curb and gutter and sidewalks, while the Saanich side in Tillicum Neighborhood does not.

Children living in Gorge Neighborhood attend the Tillicum Elementary School in Saanich.

Funding for the expansion of housing in Chown Place is being provided in part by BC Housing, a Crown Corporation which will not fund anything except housing units.

Topology

The island is the result of uplift near the Cascadia Subduction Zone where the Juan de Fuca Plate moving east plunges under the North America Plate moving west. The shallow bedrock prohibits extensive excavation and basements.

Chown Place is located on a hill approximately 37 meters above sea level overlooking the Gorge Waterway 300 meters to the south.

Burnside Gorge and Chown Place are in Coastal Douglas Fir and Garry Oak Woodland habitat. Garry Oaks are a protected species with efforts to conserve them and increase their range.

Climate

Despite its northern location the weather in Victoria is moderate due to westerly winds and the Pacific Ocean. Temperatures rarely exceed 30 degrees Celsius or fall below zero.

Administrative hierarchy for Victoria/British Columbia

Victoria is in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains and the Vancouver Island Ranges it is the driest part of British Columbia with approximately 600 mm of rain per year.

Victoria has an eight month long growing season and is known as the City of Gardens. Garry Oak, Pacific Mandrone, and Hairy Manzanita are rare, native plants. Even cold-tolerant palms grow here.

Mobility

The roadways in this area are oriented around the gorge, giving them an irregular pattern. Furthermore, the blocks are long so that some trips could require going well out of the way. Chown Place sits on such a block with truncated roads on the north, south, and east.

Transit lines in the area are mostly isolated to major perimeter streets such as Burnside Road and Gorge Road.

Trails in the area are mostly limited to Galloping Goose trail (and its offshoots) and those adjacent to the gorge.

Mostly major roads are deemed bicycle or “all ages and stages” friendly.

Chown Place has roughly 80 parking stalls for use by 108 residential units, many of which go underutilized.

Parking requirements from the City of Victoria stipulate 0.3 parking stalls be provided per each residential unit.

The City of Victoria has granted leniency for Chown Place in parking provisions, to aid in achieving the goal of emphasizing alternate forms of transportation.

Public Spaces

75% of the households in Burnside Gorge live in multi-unit housing, so access to green space and community centers are important.

The neighborhood also has an extensive waterfront area along the Upper Harbor and Gorge Waterway; however, most of the waterfront is privately owned. The city holds several easements for access in this area, so there is opportunity for public access to the waterfront.

There is a lack of green space or open space near Chown Place. That space will be even more limited when the four-story building is constructed over Chown Place’s current community gardens.

Roads And City Grid Analysis

The overall development pattern of Victoria is a grid of mostly north/south and east/west blocks. However, the Strait of Juan de Fuca in the south and the gorge in the northwest distort large sections of the Victoria street grid.

The Burnside Gorge Area’s arterial roads are on three major axis which makes blocks of irregular shapes.

Block Types Analysis

Chown Place is located on a superblock approximately .6 km by .9 km, that could be broken up with pedestrian/cycling connections. There are three cul-de-sacs on the superblock, two that abut Chown Place directly.

The area near Chown Place also has several long blocks of approximately .5 km running mostly southwest to northeast that are a hindrance to traffic flows. These blocks are about twice as long as neighboring blocks in Tillicum.

Waterfront Issues

Much of the waterfront is privately held which is a significant restriction to public access for pedestrians and cyclists and significantly limits the opportunities for public crossings. This will have to be addressed for Victoria to create a continuous waterfront access.

Chown Place Density

Chown Place Special Planning Area allows for multi-unit buildings up to three stories and up to 1.0 Floor Space Ratio (FSR = areas of all floors of a building divided by the property area).

There is a lack of retail and mixed-use buildings around Chown Place.

There is a need for more housing. People are in long waiting lists for the current multi-family units.

There is a large amount of free space within the single-family residential area surrounding Chown Place that could be used to create better connections or new spaces for the community.

The future 4-story building in Chown Place will increase demand for buildings such as schools, libraries, retail, offices, entertainment, etc. to satisfy the needs of the growing population.

Illustrative Plan

The different frameworks we analyzed in the Urban X-Rays (mobility, public space, block and building types) were recreated in layers to give us a better understanding of Chown Place's surroundings. This Illustrative Plan will be a base drawing to work with in the next phases (Ideate and Prototype).



Hand rendered illustrative plan of existing site conditions

Legibility Map

Using Kevin Lynch's approach to wayfinding, we built maps defining how people might navigate the neighborhood. We evaluated the area around Chown Place in terms of districts, edges, paths, landmarks, and nodes.

For example, the shoreline creates a highly visible edge that acts as a barrier.

The larger roads like Harriet Road, Burnside Road, and Gorge Road act as paths of travel.

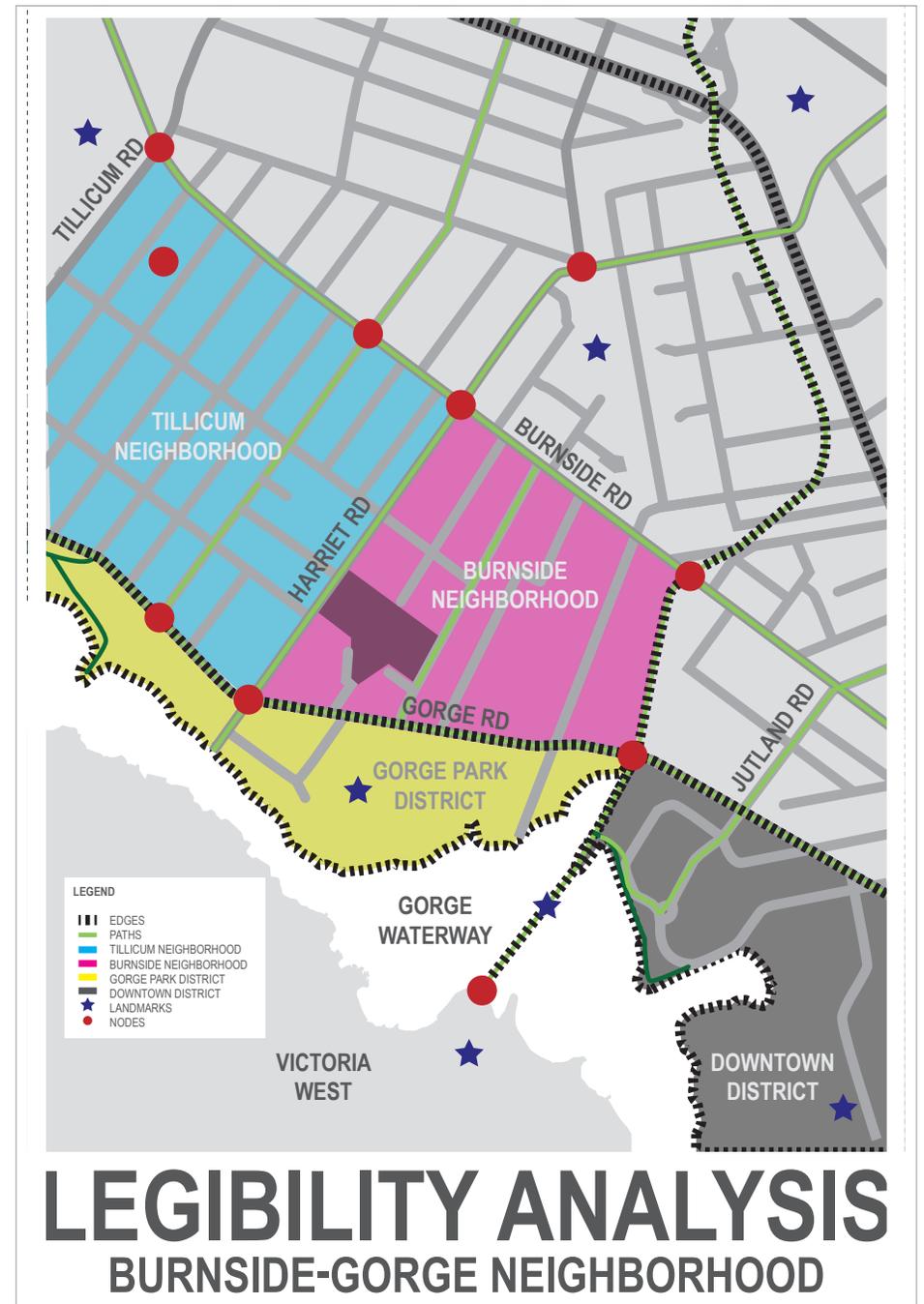
Although both sides of Harriet Road are districts of single-family housing, the Burnside-Gorge Neighborhood (on the south and east side) has gutters, curbs, and sidewalks, whereas the Tillicum side of the road is just an open ditch.

Regulatory Analysis

This analysis involved research into zoning regulations for the City of Victoria and local area specifics found in the Chown Place Special Planning Area, The Burnside-Gorge Neighborhood Plan, and The Tillicum Local Area Plan from the neighboring district.

From this analysis we learned things such as property line setbacks, building height limits, parking space requirements, and design standards.

We also learned that, due to the current housing shortage, guidance concerning building heights was less important than providing housing for citizens of Victoria. Therefore, there was some flexibility in the code if it alleviated the housing shortage.



Legibility analysis showing edges, paths, districts, landmarks and nodes

Process

Ideate

As part of the ideate phase, we compiled the information gathered in the previous two phases and devised:

- Summary Findings
- Goals

Summary Findings

Information gathered from the Empathize and Define Stages starts coming together and various ideas are presented without the necessary burden of making them work. The conclusion is a list of objectives obtained from the Empathize Phase and a clear understanding of the constraints and limitations obtained through the Define Phase. The following list of objectives was confirmed by the stakeholders.

Integrate Chown Place into Burnside Gorge

- Remove the “nested community” label
- Make Chown Place a landmark
- Promote Social Interaction

Expand Gorge View

- Place 300-350 units in 5.6 acres of Chown Place
- Large demand of housing in Victoria
- Change the dwelling unit mix to accommodate a range of age ranges and household sizes

Enhance Entrances to Chown Place

- Harriet Road
- Irma Street (North)
- Balfour Avenue
- Irma Street (South)

Promote Environmental Sustainability

- Green public spaces
- Community gardens
- Green roofs/vertical gardens
- Minimize surface area
- Passive solar orientation

Generate Public Space

- Community interaction
- Playground (Balfour)
- Garry Oaks Sanctuary

Design Affordable Homes

- Aging-in-place
- Simple design
- Share spaces
- Working area

Boost biking and walkable connections

- Bike Storage
- Trails (N-S/W-E)
- Minimize on-site parking

Encourage residents mixture/amenities

- Activities for all ages
- Promote different generations’ interaction
- Convenience goods and services

Protect residents

- Homelessness situation
- Job offerings (groundskeeper, construction labor)
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Assessment (CPTED)

Preserve heritage

- Buildings with names
- Wayfinding
- Memorial plaques
- Monument (history of Chown Place)

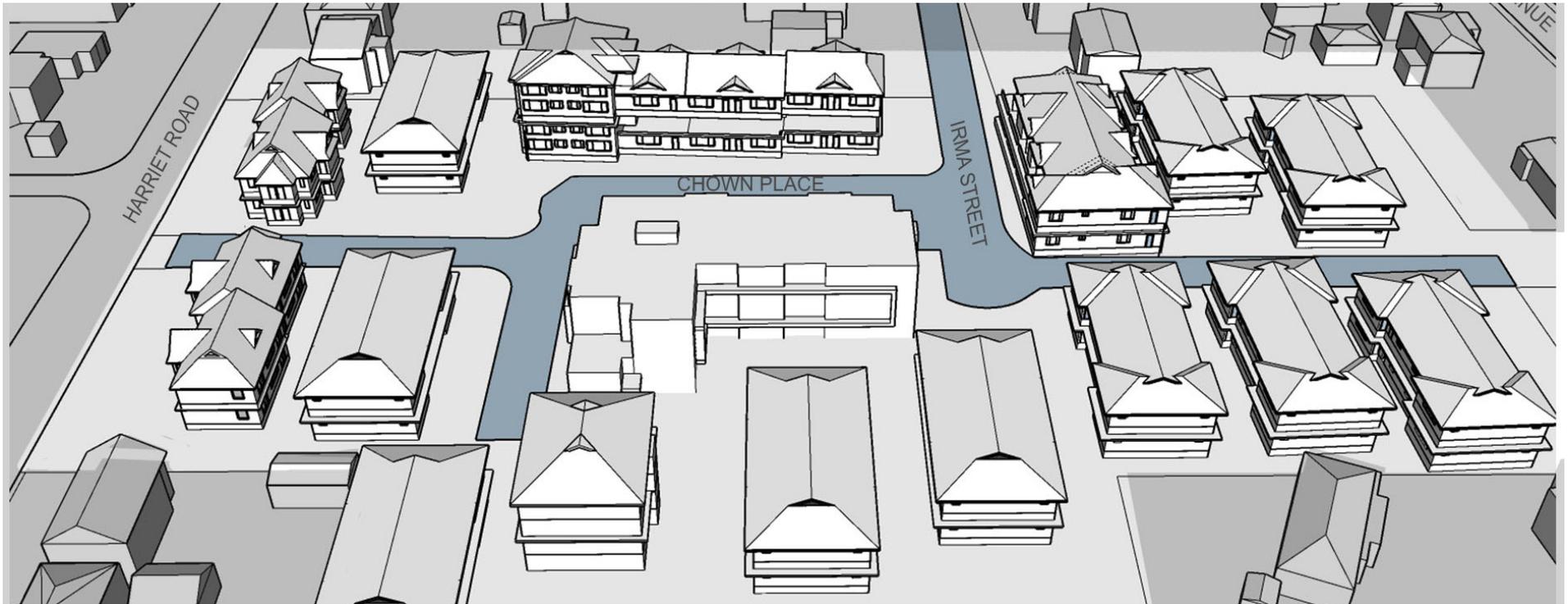
Process

Prototype

The goal here is to produce many different ways to meet the objectives referenced in the previous section and look for configurations that support and complement each other. This task produces many prototypes, but that number must be reduced to the best designs. In the end we presented the stakeholders with five options, each listed with the pros and cons and estimates on the number of housing units and parking stalls.

We generated the preliminary design concepts for the Chown Place community below:

- Existing Footprint
- L-Shape Layout
- Courtyard Concept
- Point-Block Towers
- Missing Middle Infill



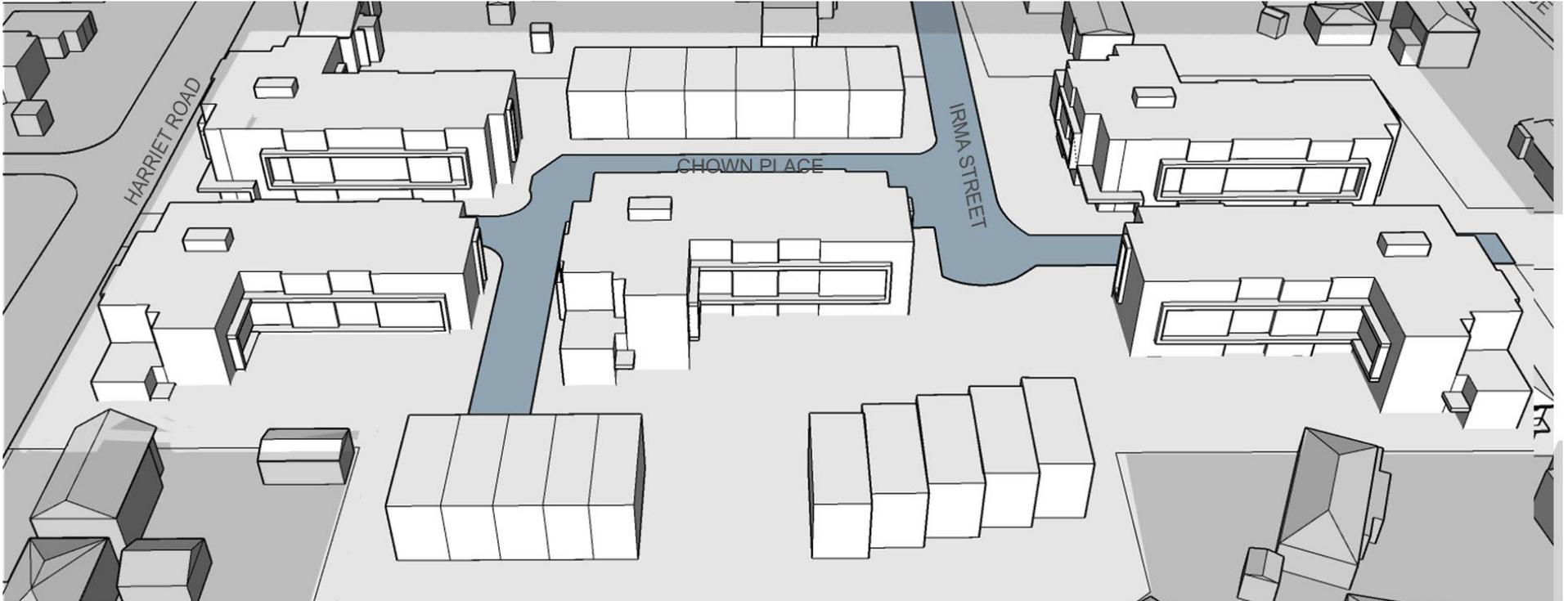
Existing Footprint

This concept is based on the existing building footprint of Chown Place. This approach involves the phased replacement of each building with one containing a higher density of units, minimizing the disruption to current residents.

Summary Statistics

- Total units: 274
- Number of parking spaces: 79

2D and 3D views of existing footprint prototype



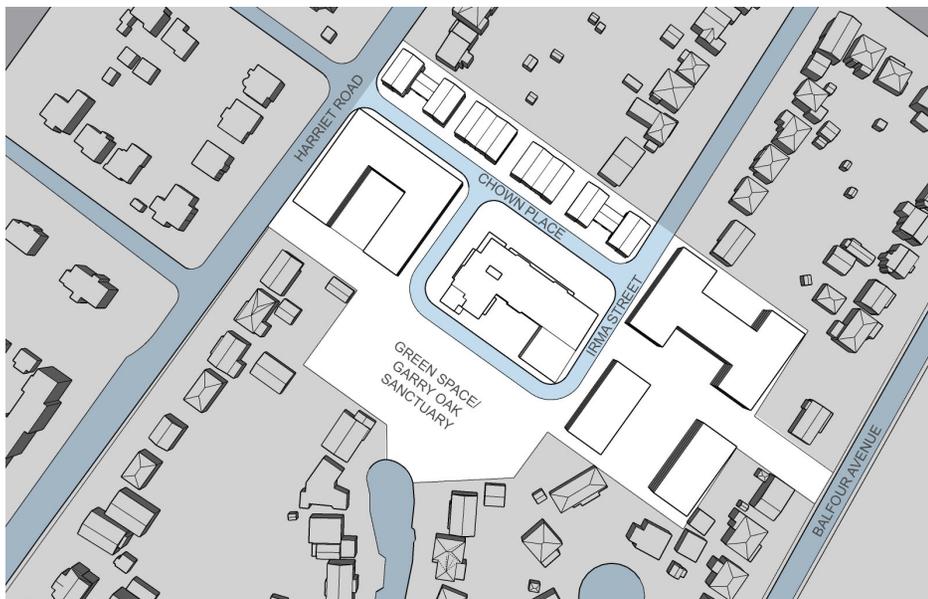
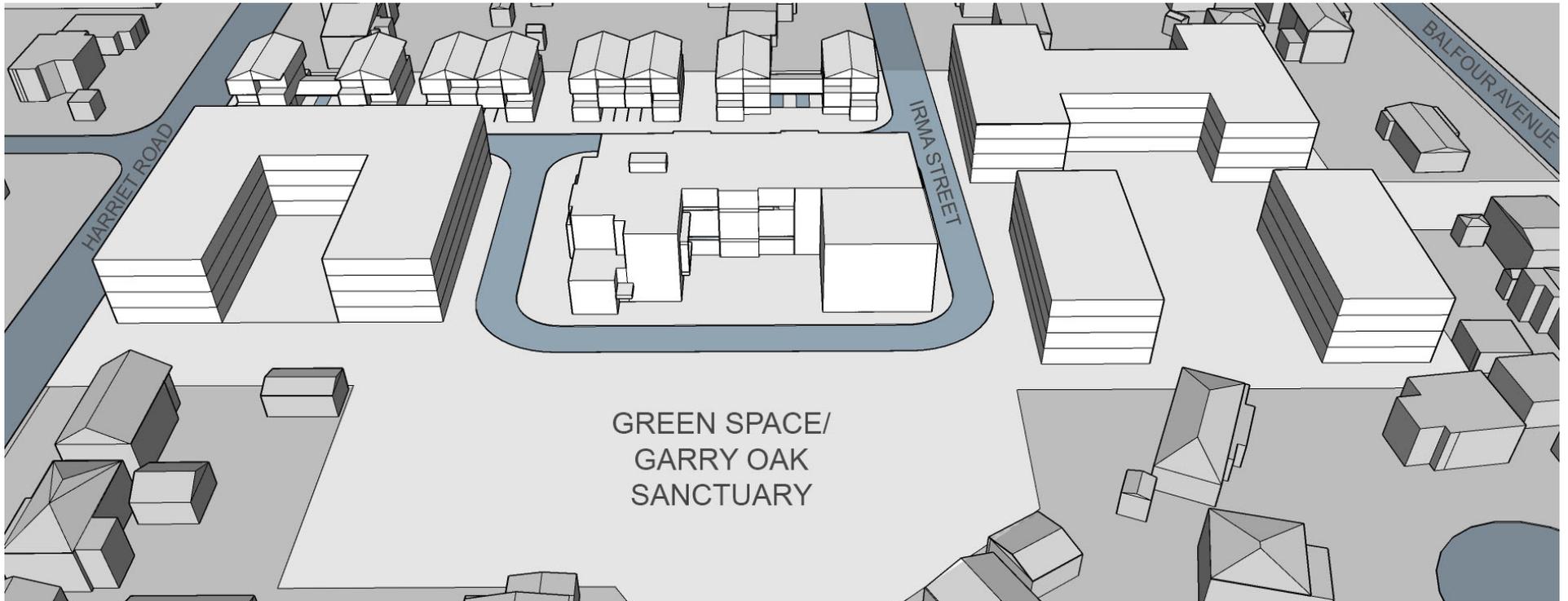
2D and 3D views of L-shape layout prototype

L-Shape Layout

This concept is based on repetition of the footprint of the new 4-story building planned for later this year. This approach involves the phased replacement of groups of buildings with one L-shaped structure containing a higher density of units, oriented to best fit portions of the site on which they are located.

Summary Statistics

- Total units: 306
- Number of parking spaces: 138



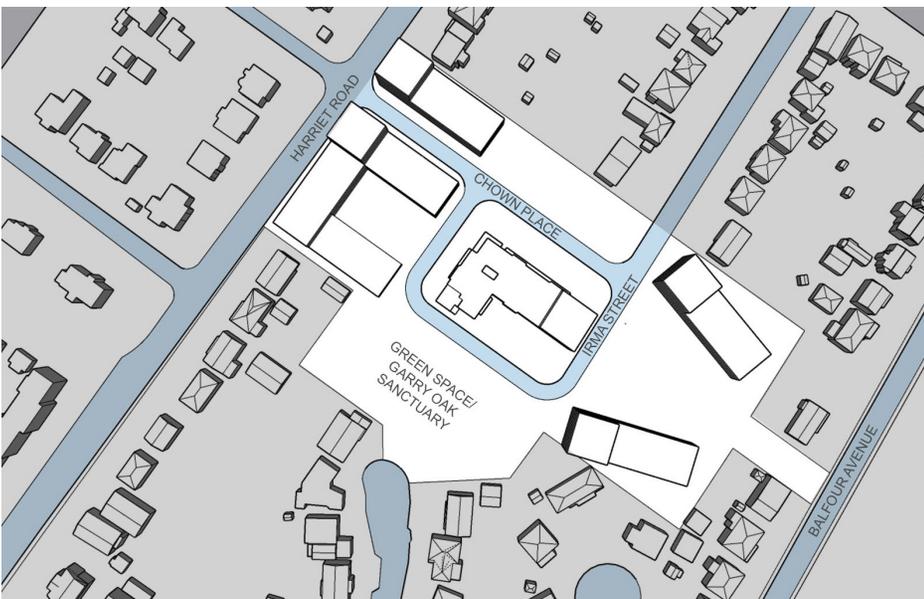
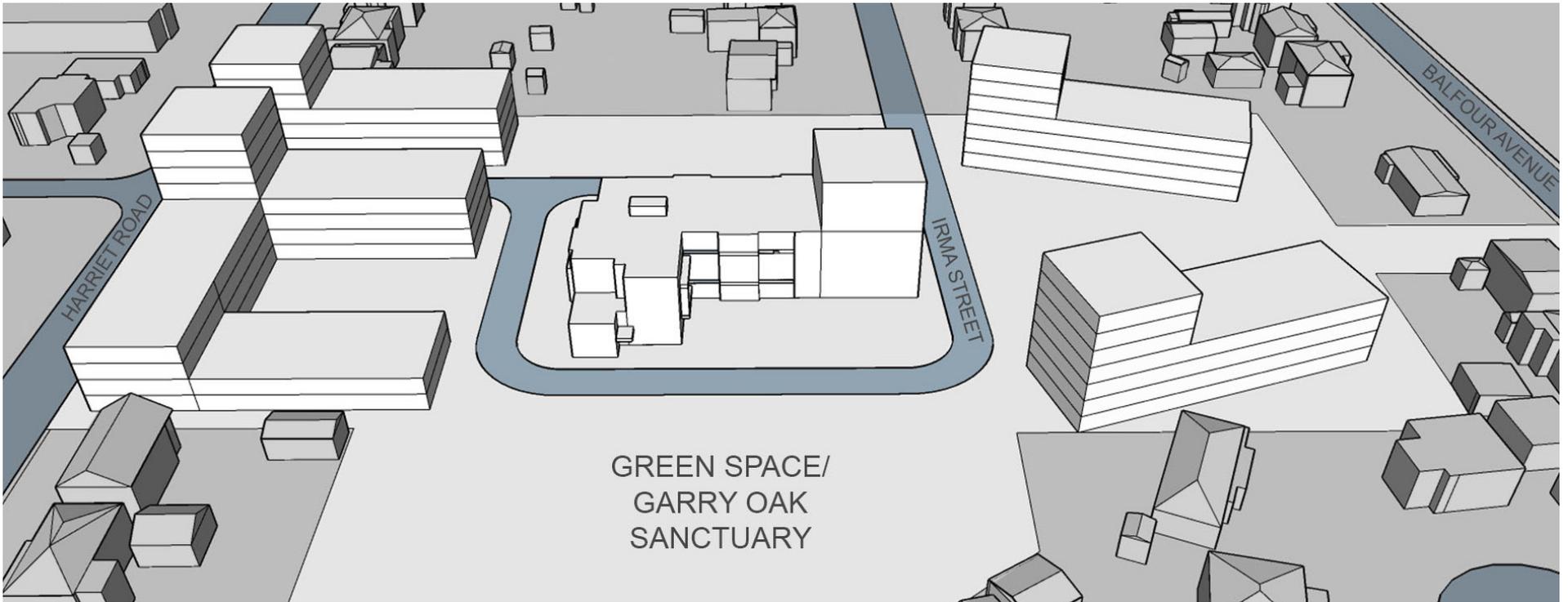
Courtyard Concept

This concept is based on the creation of courtyard spaces adjacent to groups of buildings. This approach involves the phased replacement of groups of buildings with multiple configurations of building types centered on the courtyard spaces, and leaves the south central portion of the site open to become a centralized gathering space for both residents and the surrounding community.

Summary Statistics

- Total units: 300
- Number of parking spaces: 100

2D and 3D views of courtyard concept prototype



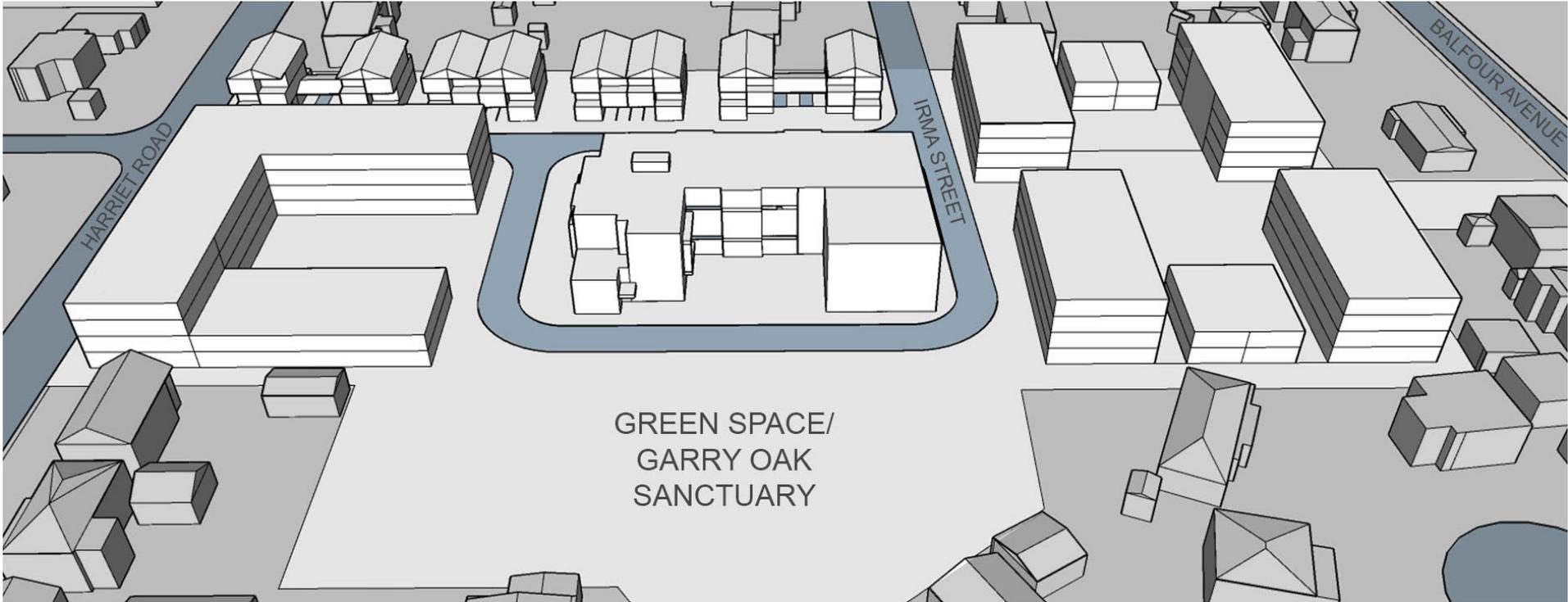
Point-Block Towers

Point-block towers typically feature community/retail/mixed-use spaces on the lower, wider levels, and residential units on the taller, narrower stories. This approach leaves both the grounds around the buildings as well as the south central portion of the site open to become centralized gathering spaces for both residents and the surrounding community.

Summary Statistics

- Total units: 325
- Number of parking spaces: 108

2D and 3D views of point-block towers prototype



Missing Middle Infill

Missing middle housing involves the use of multiple smaller housing types, spanning the range from single-family to multi-family. This approach provides for diversity in housing to meet a wide range of household needs, and leaves the south central portion of the site open to become centralized gathering spaces for both residents and the surrounding community.

Summary Statistics

- Total units: 310
- Number of parking spaces: 103

2D and 3D views of missing middle infill prototype

Process

Test

In the final test phase, we solicited feedback on the prototypes generated in the previous phase. The methods of feedback gathered included:

- Unit Calculator
- Prototype Survey

Unit Calculator

The prototypes are then tested for how well they achieve desired outcomes and for feasibility. We even built a spreadsheet to estimate the number of units our designs would support. Feedback was solicited from stakeholders, experts, residents and neighbors that narrowed down the prototypes and helped us finalize our design.

	m ²	floors	total m ²
Building 1	256	7	1792
Building 2	544	4	2176
Building 3	256	7	1792
Building 4	544	4	2176
Building 5	624	4	2496
Building 6	544	2	1088
Building 7	256	7	1792
Building 8	256	7	1792
Building 9	256	7	1792
Building 10	544	4	2176
Building 11	544	4	2176
Building 12			0
Building 13			0
Building 14			0
Building 15			0
Building 16			0
Building 17			0
Building 18			0
Building 19			0
Building 20			0
=			
Total m ²	21248		
-			
Load Factor %	<input type="text" value="12"/>		
=			
Usable m ²	18698.24		
Unit Mix	no. units	m ²	Total m ²
Studio	<input type="text" value="44"/>	44	
Large 1 bdr	<input type="text" value="48"/>	48	
2bdr	<input type="text" value="68"/>	68	
3bdr	<input type="text" value="88"/>	88	
Large 3 bdr	<input type="text" value="98"/>	98	
AVG Unit size		69.2 m ²	
Estimated no. of Units	<input type="text" value="270.21"/>		
+			
New Building	<input type="text" value="58"/>		
=			
Total Units	<input type="text" value="328.21"/>		

Sample unit calculator spreadsheet

Prototype Survey

A prototype survey was created for distribution to the stakeholders, Chown Place residents, and the neighboring property owners. The survey first gave a list of objectives gathered through outreach activities, an opportunity to rate how well each prototype accomplished those objectives, and ended with definitions of terminology used in the survey.

The survey was then shared with Liz Bartley, Chown Place administrative assistant, who printed and distributed them to the residents. The completed surveys were returned to Liz, scanned and returned to the Studio. From there, the results were compiled and helped us refine the project into a final design proposal.

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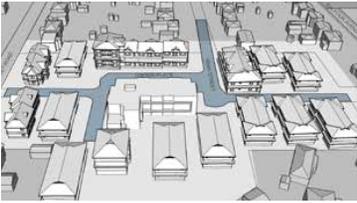
EXISTING FOOTPRINT

SUMMARY STATISTICS

- Total units: 274
- Number of parking spaces: 79



PLAN VIEW



3D VIEW





VISUAL EXAMPLES

DESCRIPTION

This concept is based on the existing building footprint of Chown Place. This approach involves the phased replacement of each building with one containing a higher density of units, minimizing the disruption to current residents.

COMMENTS:

Please rate the designs above on how well they meet the established criteria (1 being not at all, and 5 being exactly what is needed). Refer to page 2 for details about the criteria, and page 8 for definitions of urban design terms. Feel free to provide commentary explaining why you rated the design the way that you did.

INTEGRATE	1	2	3	4	5	DESIGN	1	2	3	4	5
EXPAND	1	2	3	4	5	CONNECT	1	2	3	4	5
ENHANCE	1	2	3	4	5	ENCOURAGE	1	2	3	4	5
PROMOTE	1	2	3	4	5	PROTECT	1	2	3	4	5
GENERATE	1	2	3	4	5	PRESERVE	1	2	3	4	5



Survey Feedback

Of the 108-unit community, only 4 residents responded to the survey. Some of the responses ranged from wildly impressed with the detail and content of the survey, to confused as to why an American school was studying a community in Canada. Though participation was limited, the existing footprint, courtyard and missing middle prototypes went most highly ranked. Residents were also not shy to provide additional commentary about what they wanted to see implemented in the future. The most common priorities included:

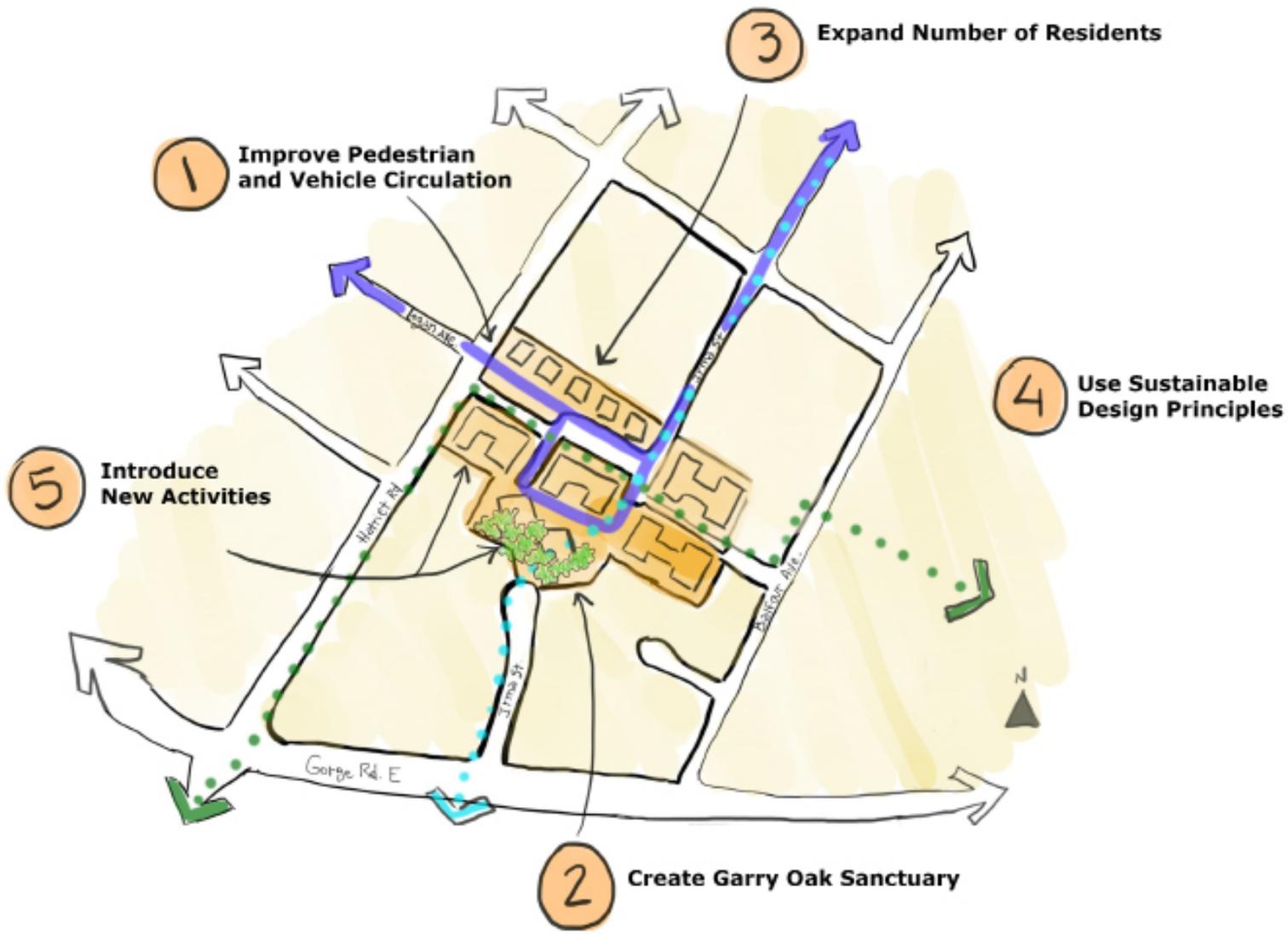
- Emphasis on balconies and outdoor spaces
- Human-scaled buildings
- Community gardens, courtyards and maximizing green spaces
- Affordability of units
- Integration of mixed-use spaces

Big Moves

Big Moves for Chown Place

All we learned in the Empathize and Define Phases and the objectives we arrived at in the Ideate Phase formed five major themes that we would call Chown Place "Big Moves." These were also confirmed with the stakeholders.

1. Improve Circulation for Pedestrian and Vehicles
2. Create a Garry Oak sanctuary
3. Expand Number and Mix of Residents
4. Use Sustainable Design Principles
5. Integrate New Activities



Big Moves concept sketch

1. Improve Pedestrian and Vehicular Circulation

Close the Loop

The current layout for circulation on the property is mostly a connection from Harriet Road on the West side of the property to Irma Street on the North side with two dead-ends for parking and access to buildings. We have proposed connecting the dead-ends, creating a one-way loop.

Realign the Entrance

The current offset "T" made by the entrance to Chown Place and Logan Avenue along Harriet Road is awkward, inconvenient, and a potential hazard. Realigning the entrance to Logan Avenue is a more logical configuration, and allows the old Harriet Road entrance (which must be preserved for utility easements) to be used as a gallery for pedestrian/cycle traffic.

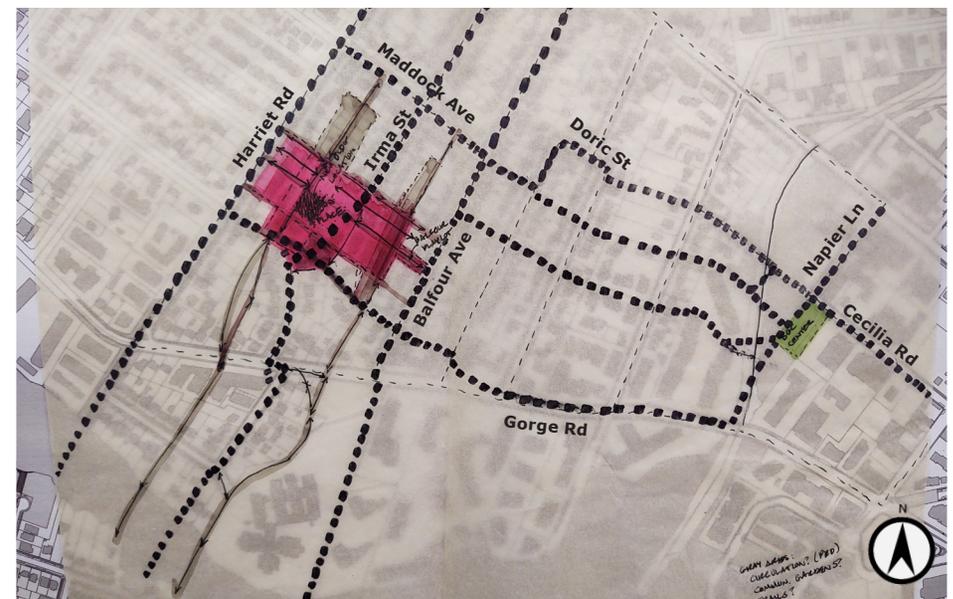


Visual depiction of "closing the loop"

Connect Neighborhood Destinations with Trails

The Burnside Gorge Neighborhood Plan seeks to establish better connections between existing trails to create a comprehensive network for pedestrian and cycling. The superblock upon which Chown Place sits does not currently have clearly established north/south or east/west paths. We have sought to make Chown Place a nexus for those connections and a neighborhood destination by creating those paths.

We recommend closing the loop, realigning the entrance, and connecting neighborhood destinations with trails to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation. These recommendations meet many of the objectives listed in the Ideate Phase.



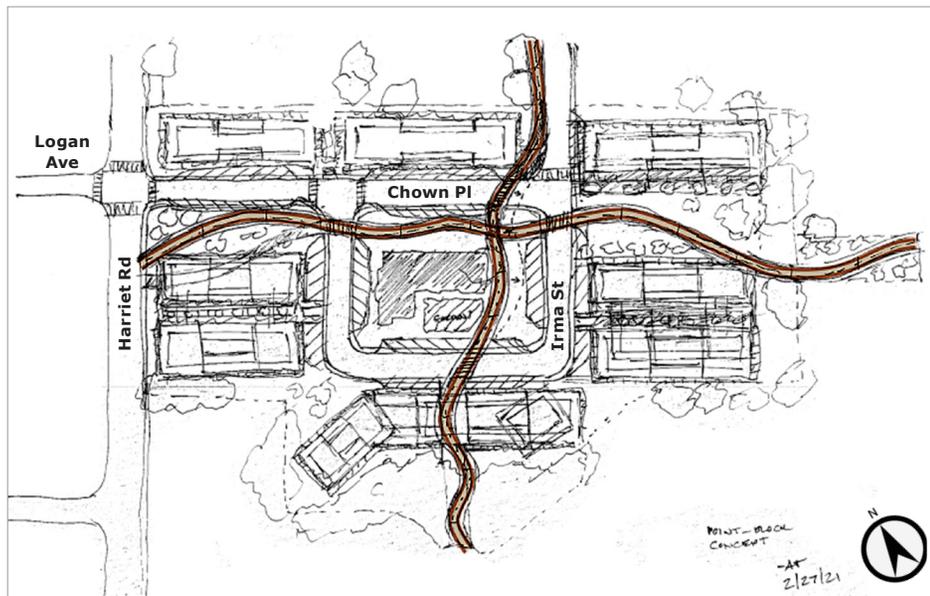
Prospective trail connections to Chown Place from surrounding community

As part of our research on the feasibility of aligning the entrances, our team reached out to engineers at both the municipalities of Victoria and Saanich. The process of implementing the recommended improvements would require communication first with the City of Victoria, who would then collaborate with the engineers in Saanich.

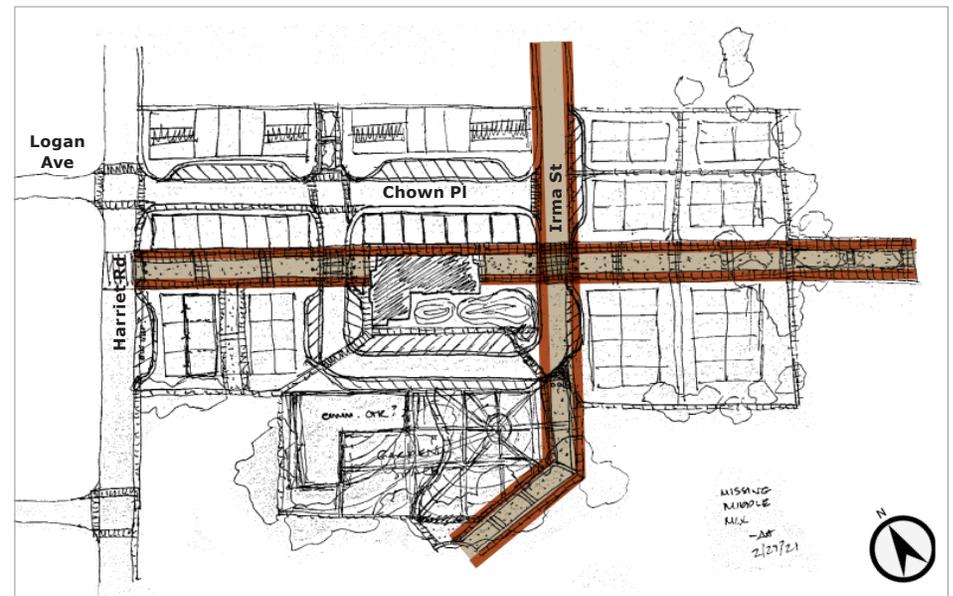
What these improvements do:

- Improves circulation throughout the site for vehicles both residents and construction
- Enhances all entrances to Chown Place
- Improves safety by providing better access for emergency vehicles
- Improves safety through a dedicated pedestrian and cycle entrance

- Boosts biking and walking connections by creating clear routes through the site
- Promotes social, community, intergenerational interactions through the gallery
- Provides neighborhood access to the public space, Garry Oak Sanctuary, and events at the community center
- Increases streetscape for additional convenience goods and services
- Create more potential mixed-use and live/work opportunities
- Contributes 20 on-street parking stalls around the loop minimizing the need for on-site parking elsewhere
- Facilitates coordination between the city engineers of Victoria and Saanich for a more consistent streetscape on both sides of Harriet Road.



Sketch of freeform Chown Place trail concept



Sketch of linear Chown Place trail concept

Vehicle and Public Transit Connections

As the population living in and around Chown Place grows, more traffic seems likely. The realigned entrance to Chown Place makes a traffic signal or round-a-bout possible which will help with traffic flow. Additionally, the growing population might influence a future public transit stop near Chown Place along Harriet Road that would reduce the need for car dependency even further.



Rendering of realigned intersection at Harriet Road and Logan Ave, looking northeast



Rendering of realigned intersection from Logan Ave, looking east

2. Create a Garry Oak Sanctuary

Community Gardens

Victoria is a very garden-minded city. Through the photovoice activity and conversations with stakeholders we have had reinforcing feedback about the importance of gardening for leisure and relationship building. Integrating gardens near the Garry Oak grove enhances the outdoor experience for all.

Community Center

In addition to its usefulness for the residents, a community center that could host events such as weddings or conferences would make Chown Place a focal point and a participant in neighborhood events. We intentionally located the community center and daycare facilities near the Garry Oak grove to provide indoor/outdoor options in a beautiful nature setting.



Rendering of community gardens/center/Garry Oak sanctuary, looking north



Rendering of community gardens/center/Garry Oak sanctuary, looking south

Boardwalks Through the Oak Grove

Currently the Garry Oak grove does not have a clearly delineated North/South path. Boardwalks will provide this function and allow those passing through the grove to appreciate the Garry Oaks without disturbing them.



Existing Garry Oak sanctuary



Sketched concept of Garry Oak boardwalk



Rendered concept of Garry Oak boardwalk

Use Views for a Biophilic Connection

Biophilia is the integration of living nature into the built environment. A connection with nature improves our health and well-being. We felt that the Garry Oak grove was not an inconvenience that prevented more intense development but rather an opportunity to utilize that natural connection. Observation decks and gathering spaces have been intentionally placed to take advantage of this connection to nature.

The community gardens, community center, boardwalks through the Oak Grove and using views for a biophilic connection meet many of the objectives identified in the Ideate Phase.

What these improvements do:

- Makes Chown Place a landmark and a neighborhood destination
- Promotes environmental sustainability
- Utilizes green public spaces
- Promotes social, community and intergenerational interactions
- Generates public space
- Integrates Chown Place into Burnside Gorge
- Makes Chown Place a neighborhood host, rather than a “nested community”
- Encourages activities for all ages
- Promotes wayfinding
- Enhances the southern entrance at Irma Street



Rendering of rooftop community space (mixed-use building along Harriet)

3. Expand the Number and Mix of Residents

Introduce New Mix of Households

Chown Place has been a senior residence for nearly 70 years. The existing 108 units are made up of 88 single person units and 20 units for couples. It has been an expressed desire of the stakeholders to open Chown Place to a greater mix of households particularly to entice families and younger adults. The plan is to have several types of units from micro-units under 40 sqm to family sized three-bedroom units of up to 100 sqm. Our estimates have a unit mix of:

<i>Unit Type</i>	<i># units</i>	<i>sqm</i>
Micro/Studio	130	44
Large 1 bedroom	100	48
2 bedroom	60	68
3 bedroom	20	88
Large 3 bedroom	18	98

Arrange Housing Around Courtyards

Understanding the need for housing made it very tempting to maximize the number of units in Chown Place our sole objective; however, a slightly lower density allowed our designs to fulfill many of the other objectives that had been expressed throughout the design process by stakeholders, experts, and residents. Arranging housing into courtyards created the needed increase in density but also created spaces to see others and enjoy the outdoors as well. The plentiful opportunities to see and be seen has the added safety effect removing places for hidden activity.

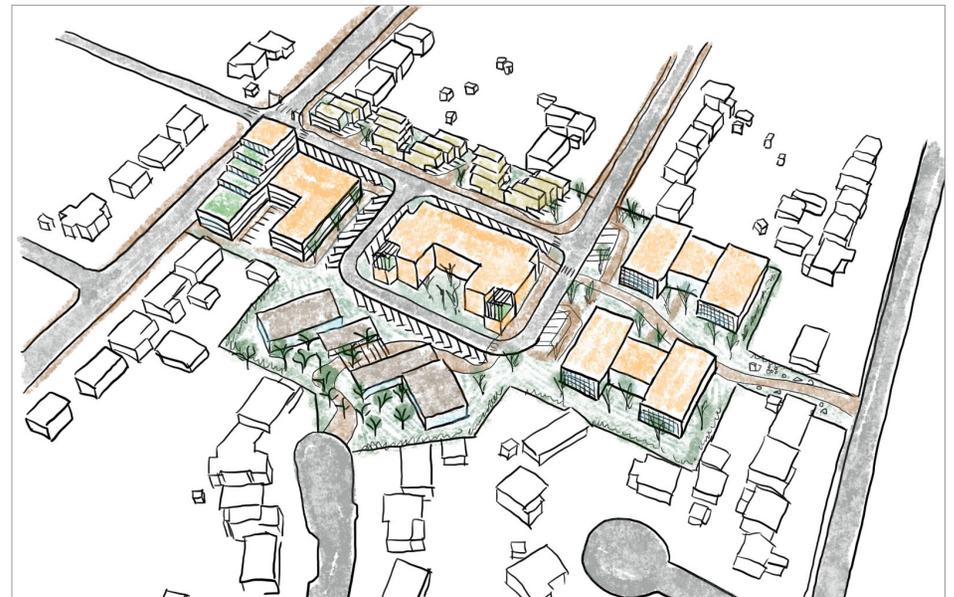
Gradient of Housing Types

Dropping mid-rise apartments into a neighborhood of single-family houses is incongruous at best. In sensitivity to the neighbors, we have chosen a strategy of using house-scale buildings that consist of multiple units such as row or town houses. These will be strategically placed near the northern perimeter of Chown Place to integrate its higher density

scale into the surrounding neighborhood. Furthermore, the building faces on the east and south of Chown Place have been terraced to soften the visual impact as well as create more outdoor and green spaces.

Phasing Strategy

A phasing strategy allows for the development of the site with as little disruption to the current residents as possible. Also, some of the buildings on Chown Place are not very old and should not be demolished too early in their life cycle. Our strategy also attempts to balance the urgent need for housing in Victoria and the logistics of developing the site.



Sketch of courtyard prototype concept

Phasing Summary						
Phase	Project	Unit Change	Cum.Units	Parking Change	Cum. Parking	Years
One	Add new Building P	58				
	Add Garden Suites	8				
	Add Missing Middle	4				
	Phase Subtotals	70	178		78	2021-2022
Two	Demolish Buildings A -B - C	-24				
	Re-align Entry / Intersection Gateway					
	Add Parking			78		
	Townhouses on Pilotis	24				
	Add Garden Suites	8				
	Add Missing Middle	4				
Phase Subtotals	12	190		78	156	2023-2026
Three	Demolish Buildings L-K-J	-18				
	Add New Community Center/Daycare					
	Close the Loop Road			20		
	Expand Building P - Microunits	24				
	Add Garden Suites	8				
	Add Missing Middle	4				
Phase Subtotals	18	208		20	176	2026-2029
Four	Demolish Buildings M-N-O	-16				
	Add Mixed-Use Buildings on Harriet Rd.	50				
	Add Garden Suites	8				
	Add Missing Middle	4				
Phase Subtotals	46	254			176	2030-2033
Five	Demolish Buildings G-H-I	-24				
	Add South Terrace Building	50				
	Add Garden Suites	8				
	Add Missing Middle	4				
Phase Subtotals	38	292			176	2033-2036
Six	Demolish D-E-F	-24				
	Add North Terrace Building	50				
	Add Garden Suites	8				
	Add Missing Middle	4				
Phase Subtotals	38	330			176	2037-2040

Spreadsheet documenting phased development plan



Phasing Criteria:

Below are criteria we considered in the generation of our phasing plan.

- Age of existing buildings
- Minimizing displacement of residents
- Relocation of infrastructure
- Access for construction staging and emergencies
- Subdivision of land and future project financing

Phased development plans



Accessory Dwelling Units in the Neighborhood

Garden Suites—otherwise known as Accessory Dwelling Units or Granny Flats—and Missing Middle Housing arose out of the logistics of housing current Chown Place residents while parts of the site transition to newer and higher-density units.

Approximately 320 single-family lots are within a 5-minute walk to the center of Chown Place, half in Burnside gorge and half in Tillicum. Accessory Dwelling Units can be financed in small increments that will be appropriate for fundraising efforts. Accessory dwelling unit residents get affordable housing in a good neighborhood close to Chown Place. The City of Victoria and District of Saanich can increase the population and housing density in ground-based neighborhoods resulting in higher tax revenue and better land utilization without adding major new utilities. The new housing types are affordable, fit into the scale and character of the neighborhoods, and provide more housing options throughout the area.

We propose to build small accessory dwelling units for single occupancy, senior housing in Burnside Gorge Neighborhood and Tillicum Neighborhood, especially near Chown Place. Gorge View Society could pay for construction on private property owned by residents in exchange for long-term rights to lease and manage the units (alternatively, prefabricated units might be physically delivered). Accessory units could be transferred to new owners with encumbrances. The property owner benefits from capital improvements to the property and its appreciation, and receives a portion of rent to pay taxes, utilities, and insurance. Gorge View Society would receive the rest of the rent to service debt on construction, market and lease the units, manage, and maintain them, and cover other direct costs. With proper planning, Gorge View Society could use the accessory dwelling units as shell space to accommodate phasing of rehabilitation and replacement of buildings at Chown Place.

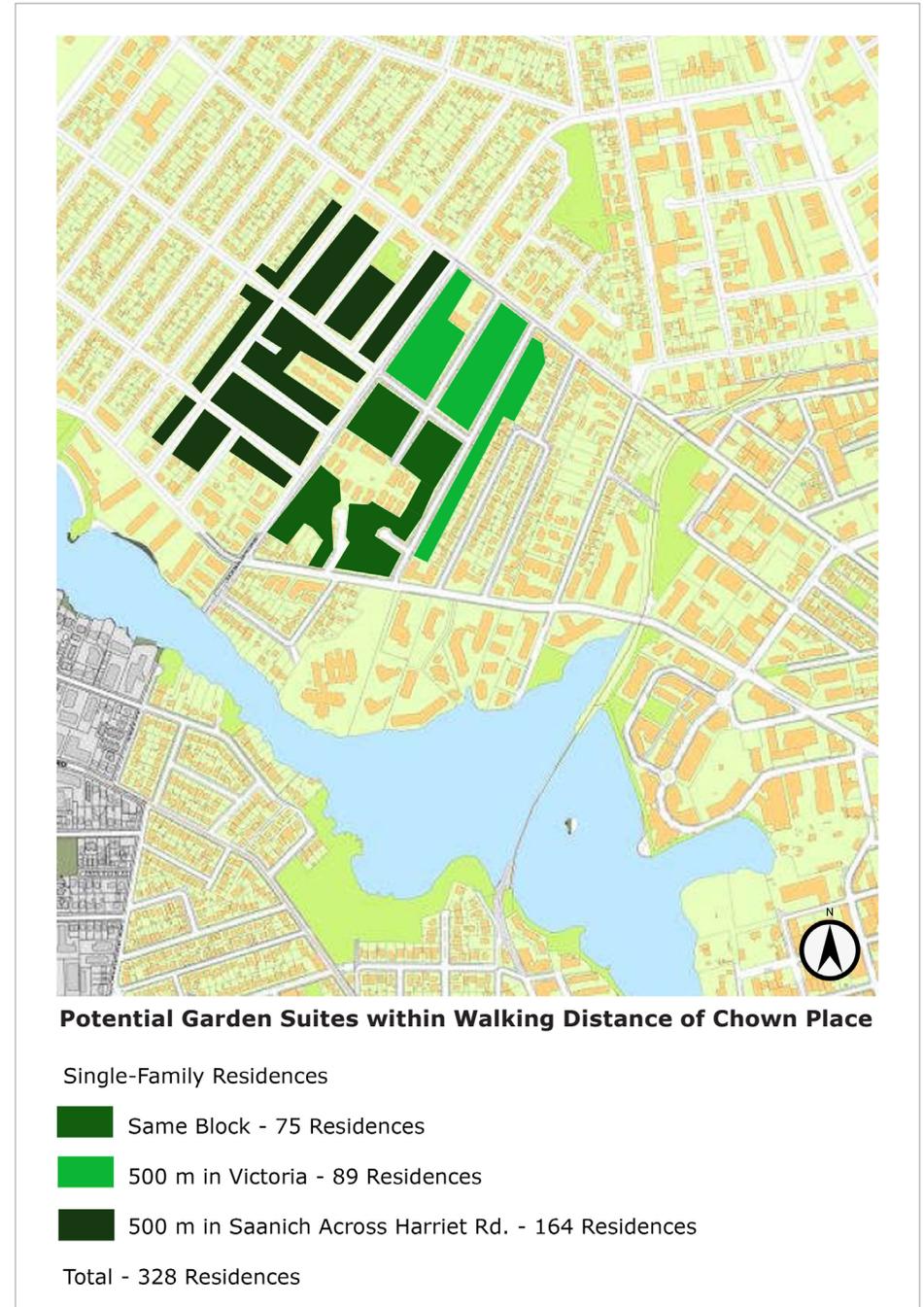


Diagram of locations for potential garden suites

Our estimate was that eight accessory dwelling units could be built per phase of construction.

Missing Middle Housing Plan

The Missing Middle plan for Chown Place is to purchase vacant lots or houses that could be demolished to build duplexes, triplexes, or quadplexes to be owned and managed by the Gorge View Society. Our estimate is that four units could be acquired in each phase of development.

Partnerships Within the Community

Introduction of the garden units and missing middle housing presents a unique opportunity to not just Chown Place, but the surrounding neighborhoods as well. Tackling the permitting process for individual property owners could be daunting to undertake. With the support of the Gorge View and Burnside-Gorge community associations, the process could be streamlined to be more manageable and realistic for owners to pursue. Since both associations are registered charities, joint fundraising efforts could potentially aid with costs of securing and maintaining the added mix of housing throughout both communities. Expanding further, Gorge-Tillcum Community Association could serve as partner to these organizations as well.

To expand the number and mix of residents we have chosen to introduce a new mixture of housing types, arrange housing around courtyards, use a gradient of housing types on the perimeter, and have recommended a phasing strategy to develop the site. This approach helps us meet many of the objectives defined in the Ideate Phase.

Expand Gorge View

- Places 300-350 units in 5.6 acres of Chown Place
- Helps meet the large demand of housing in Victoria
- Accommodates a range of ages and household sizes

Design affordable homes for:

- Aging-in-place
- Simple design
- Shared spaces
- Working areas

Encourages resident mixture/amenities

- Activities for all ages
- Promotes social, community, intergenerational interactions
- Convenience goods and services



Rendering of completed Chown Place redevelopment

4. Use Sustainable Design Principles

Use Green Roofs, Terraces, and Gardens

Many sustainable design trends have developed over the last few decades that integrate plant life into the built environment. Many of these create synergies that make buildings cheaper to operate as well. We have tried to integrate these wherever possible. Our designs include terraced buildings with green roofs for insulation also promote roof top gardens and places to gather outside and take advantage of the views, and a wall of espalier trees screening a parking garage while providing a two-dimensional garden.

Passive Homes

Better understanding of sustainability has provided some strategies that are both climate friendly and economical. Superinsulation is the process of significantly increasing the amount of insulation and airtightness of a building, and it is particularly convenient in new construction. Passive solar utilizes large south facing windows that allow sunlight to heat a thermal mass during the day that continues to warm a structure for many hours after sundown.

Throughout our designs we integrated as much nature and green space as we could, and we intend that the development of Chown Place be done with sustainability in mind. We incorporated these objectives from the Ideate Phase.

Promote Environmental Sustainability

- Green public spaces
- Green roofs/vertical gardens
- Minimize surface area
- Passive solar orientation



Green roof on community center



Terraces and espaliers outside townhomes

5. Integrate New Activities

During our research, we learned that the standard measure for walking distance in Japan is 80 meters per 1 minute of walking time. Meaning a 10-minute walk from home is equivalent to 800 meters in distance. On the other hand, standard bicycling distance for commuting typically falls between 8,000m and 16,000m. From there, we deduced that 800m would be considered a reasonable distance to walk to amenities, such as a grocery store. Having gleaned that information, we noted the distance of services and stores from Chown Place. Below are of the closest amenities we found:

School/Daycare

- Tillicum Elementary School = 1.09 km
- Victoria High School = 2.21 km
- New Kids on the Block Daycare = 523 m

Grocery Stores

- 7-Eleven = 559.33 m
- Fairway Market = 1.02 km
- Walmart Supercentre = 1.70 km

Restaurants/Bars

- Hecklers Bar & Grill = 273.83 m
- Wing's = 606.78 m
- II Greco = 1.23 km
- KFC = 1.51 km
- The Mantra (Indian Cuisine) = 1.59 km
- Tim Hortons = 1.63 km
- Denny's = 1.66 km
- Glo Restaurant + Lounge = 2.12 km

Other:

- Burnside Gorge Community Centre = 966.43 m
- Tillicum Centre Shopping Mall = 1.24 km

After some analysis, we incorporated new activities (such as services and stores) into the design of the new vision for Chown Place:

New 6-story building on Harriet Road:

This building features a commercial ground level, where people could potentially rent spaces for coffee shops, beauty salons, and small grocery stores. Our proposal also includes a gallery space using the existing Harriet Road entrance. This provides an additional path for pedestrian traffic to commercial tenants, along with access to existing utility infrastructure such as water, electricity, gas, and sewer.

North and south terraces buildings on Balfour Avenue:

Also includes ground level space for future commercial opportunities, such as restaurants and bars.

Community center on the Garry Oaks grove:

The community center includes space to accommodate multiple activities and events such as:

- Day care
- Weddings
- Yoga classes
- Gardening classes
- Community gatherings

We estimated the size of the community center based on the future number of area residents and staff. Roughly 400 guests plus chairs and tables necessitates a minimum of 1.4 square meters per person. With this information in mind, the proposed community center totals 940 square meters with 380 square meters of support space. These are contained within two buildings, intersected by the Garry Oaks boardwalk. These spaces have the potential to increase by the addition of stories to anticipate the future needs of the growing community.



Mixed-use buildings with shops and dining, complemented by food trucks



Outdoor event space at the community center/Garry Oak sanctuary

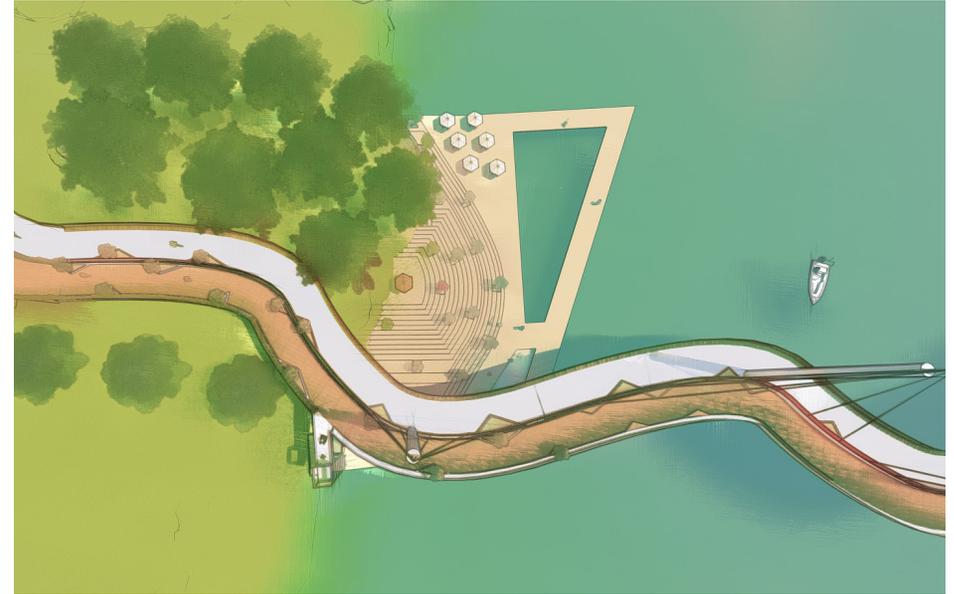
Bonus: Gorge Waterway Crossing

Bonus: Gorge Waterway Crossing

We have considered some options for the Burnside Gorge Neighborhood that were not specific projects within the Chown Place design, but nevertheless were ideas that would certainly integrate well into the larger vision for the neighborhood.

Trail Connection and Bridge

We have proposed a pedestrian/cycling bridge extending across the gorge to nearby Banfield Park. This would create a fun and new connection for people to enjoy the outdoors throughout the Victoria area.



Rendering of trail connection to the Gorge Waterway from above



Rendering of trail connection to the Gorge Waterway, looking south



Rendering of trail connection to the Gorge Waterway from street level, looking south

A Swimming Hole in the Gorge

Another fun idea would be to create a space for enjoying swimming in nice weather. This would be a great opportunity for Burnside Gorge residents to gather and socialize.

Tiered Steps into the Gorge

This would be another opportunity to take advantage of the scenic gorge while enjoying the outdoors with the added advantage that the steps could be a gathering place, even when it is not warm enough to swim.



Swimming hole/tiered step concept for Gorge Waterway from above



Swimming hole/tiered step concept for Gorge Waterway



Tiered step concept for Gorge Waterway

Special Thanks

Thank you

The Urban Design Studio would like to thank all the individuals and organizations that provided support to us during this service-learning project.

First and foremost, we wish to acknowledge Kristina Leach Ph.D., Affiliate Faculty of the Christopher C. Gibbs College of Architecture, for initiating the project and bringing the community partners and the students together. Dr. Leach serves on the Board of Directors of the Gorge View Society, the non-profit owner and operator of Chown Place. Thank you, Kristina! The Chair of the Gorge View Society Board of Directors, David King played a key role providing vision and leadership for the effort. Mr. King's assistant, Liz Bartley contributed to community engagement efforts, and board member Joseph Calenda exhorted us to look for a new paradigm of neighborhood development in the 21st Century Canadian City.

The Burnside-Gorge Community Association is the other prime community partner we wish to acknowledge. Led by Chairperson Avery Stetski and Land-Use Committee

Representative Adrian Shewchuk, the Community Association expressed support and gave valuable feedback to the students and to Gorge View Society. Special thanks to Burnside Gorge Newsletter Editor, Rachel O'Neill, for running several articles in

the newsletter to promote community engagement activities. The Studio also wishes to thank Minh Ngo, the Visual Scribe, for sharing her time and expertise to introduce us to visual note-taking techniques.

Barry Cosgrove and Number 10 Architects deserve our gratitude for sharing their design expertise and digital files for the newest Chown Place Building. We wish to acknowledge the City of Victoria and the District of Saanich for providing mapping and engineering data. Special thanks to Steve Hutchinson, Victoria Transportation Planner, and David Williams, Saanich Engineering Supervisor, for detailed information about Harriet Road.

Katy O'Meilia from TSW Planning, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture also provided helpful advice to us during the prototyping process.

Finally, the Studio would like to acknowledge the contributions of partners to our team, working behind the scenes. To Roshita Taylor, who helped contribute to our research efforts in the first semester; and Viginia Paiva, who created the beautiful renderings of the Gorge waterway concept.

Suggested Readings

Suggested Readings

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