

# WHAT WE HEARD

## UNIVERSITY DISTRICT ENGAGEMENT 1 NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2023

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The University of Victoria's [Real Estate Strategy](#) lays out a vision for making our campus more inclusive, connected and accessible, diversifying revenue streams to support university priorities for years to come. This would include the development of a new mixed-use [University District](#) near the main campus with new housing and supporting commercial uses.

The first phase of community engagement for the University District proposed a high-level vision for new housing and commercial services on UVic lands at Gordon Head Road and McKenzie Ave - the Ian Stewart Complex and surrounding properties.

**For updates or more information on this project, please visit: [uvic.ca/udistrict](http://uvic.ca/udistrict)**

### As we CONTEMPLATE

land redevelopment, we acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. Engagement with Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ communities is occurring in parallel and integrated with this project planning process.



**University  
of Victoria**

# ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Community engagement is an essential part of planning for a new University District. The University District development will offer significant opportunities for consultation and engagement throughout the project phases. This project is unique for the university and will involve regular engagement with multiple partners and community members.

## PROJECT TIMELINE

NOV-DEC 2023	SPRING 2024	FALL 2024	WINTER 2025
University District Project Start up	Planning Principles & Design Directions	Master Plan & Design Guidelines	Rezoning Application
Community Engagement #1	Community Engagement #2	Community Engagement #3	Community Engagement #4 (as needed)

This first phase of engagement, from November-December 2023, focused on the project vision for a mixed-use University District including housing and commercial services. The purpose of the first phase of engagement was to introduce the vision and to receive community input.





# HOW WE ENGAGED

The first phase focused on engaging with both our campus community and our immediate neighbourhoods. Over 900 individual engagements were made in this initial round of consultation. These included in-person opportunities for consultation with local community associations including the Gordon Head Community Association and UVic's Community Association Liaisons Committee (CALC).

**IN-PERSON PRESENTATIONS AND TOUR TO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVES:** We received in person feedback on the project vision.

**CAMPUS OPEN HOUSES:** We also heard from students, faculty and staff at open houses on campus. Over two sessions, we engaged with interactive display boards and heard from nearly 200 members of our campus community. We collected hundreds of ideas via post-it notes and discussed the project and answered questions with staff, faculty, students and community members.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

OVER **900** INDIVIDUAL ENGAGEMENTS



**185**  
CAMPUS  
COMMUNITY



**105**  
BROADER  
VICTORIA



**592**  
SURVEY  
RESPONSES

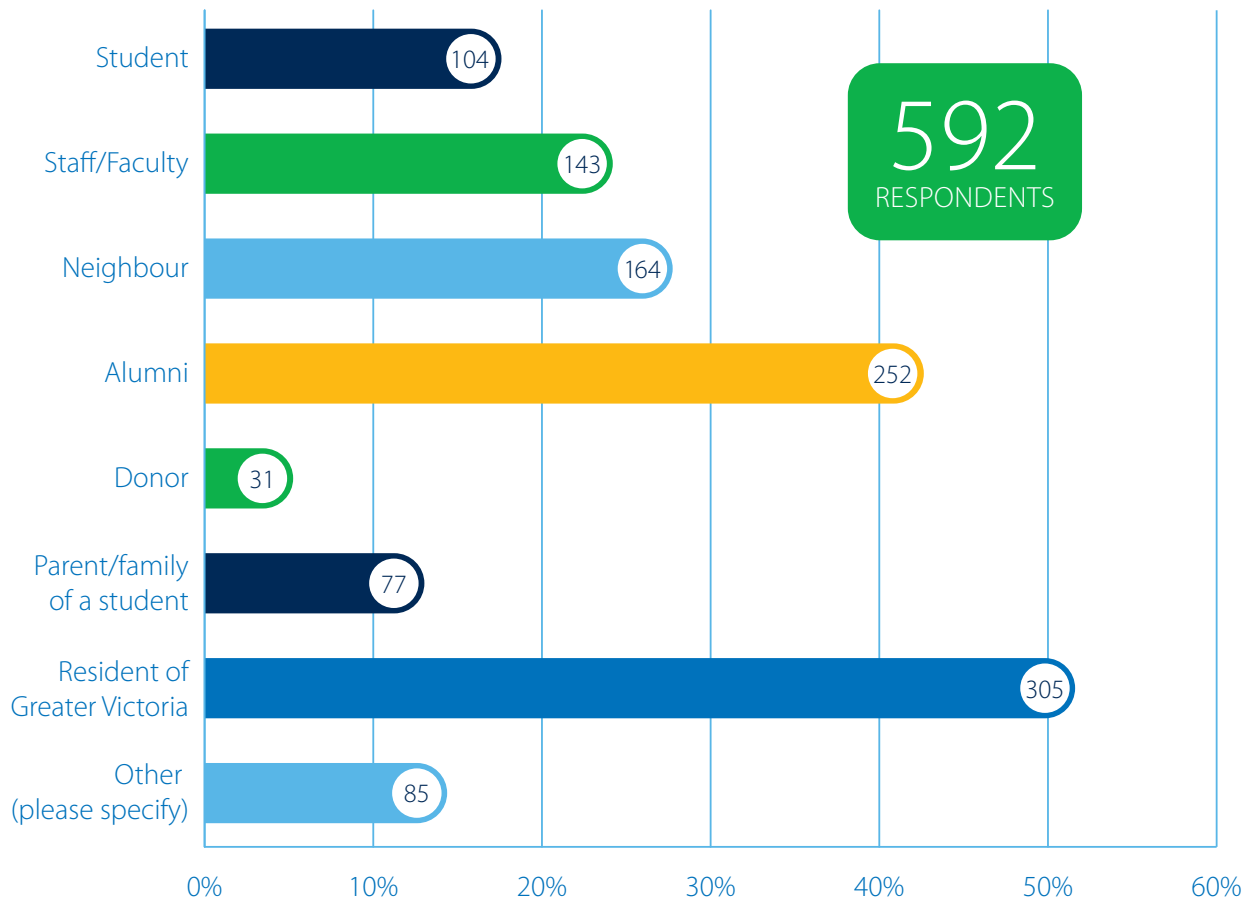
**ENGAGEMENT WITH THE DISTRICT OF SAANICH AND SAANICH COMMUNITY MEMBERS:** We collaborated with the District of Saanich on their Quadra McKenzie Study workshop and shared the University District vision with over 85 community participants during the three-hour event. We received input and feedback on the vision and heard from people about opportunities for housing, retail and public spaces in the University District.

**SURVEY & PROJECT WEBSITE:** We launched a project website to share information about the University District and conducted an online survey to get feedback on the vision for the project. There were almost 600 responses to the survey and over 55% of the respondents lived in Saanich. The webpage was also used to promote the engagement events.

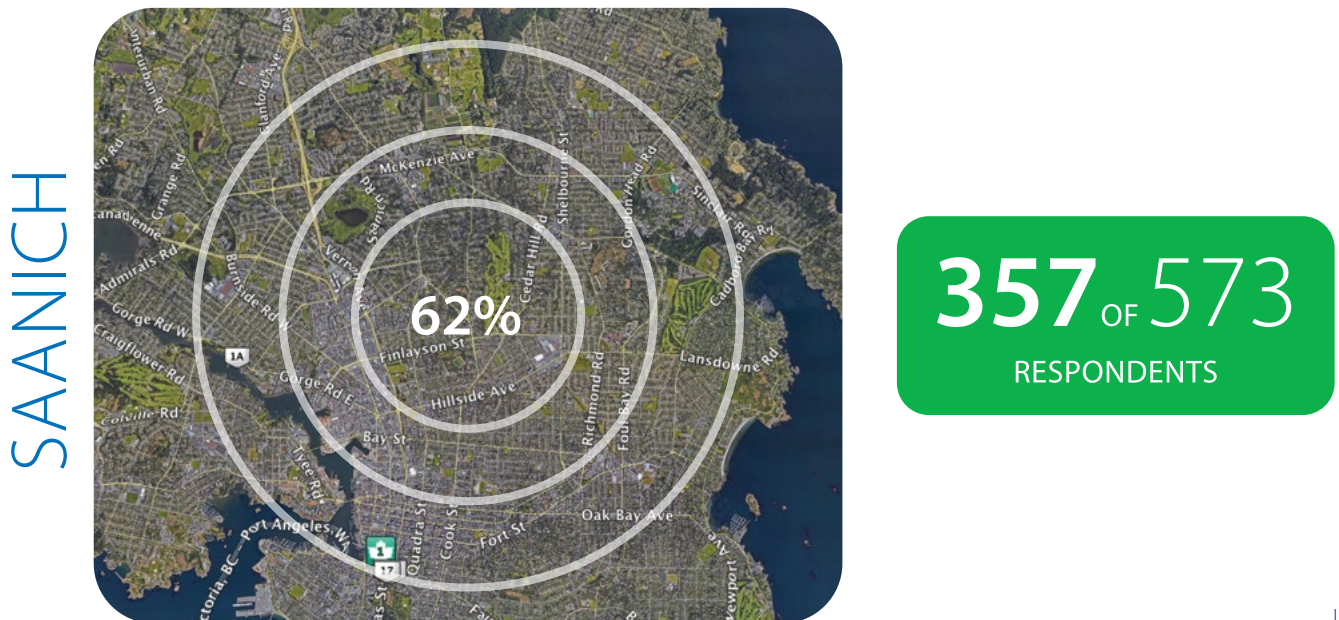


# SURVEY RESPONSES

What is your relationship to UVIC? Respondents could select any that applied.



In which neighbourhood do you live?



# WHAT WE HEARD...

## 1

### Enthusiasm for new housing:

The feedback from the survey, summarized below, as well as the hundreds of in person conversations we had with campus and community members told us almost everyone is really keen for some kind of housing on the Ian Stewart Complex Site. Only 15 of the 592 survey responses preferred no housing on the site and 9 responses were unsure about housing. Only a few of the folks we spoke to in-person brought forward concerns about housing on the site. For most folks, housing on the site made sense and their feedback provided suggestions for housing types or approaches. Things we frequently heard included:

- "You should do it!"
- "Awesome – great idea!"
- "Yay! Housing!"
- "Go faster!"
- "More housing for students, faculty and staff"

## 2

### Need for non-market rental housing:

The second theme that emerged was the need for non-market rental housing. We heard repeatedly (in well over half of our conversations and survey responses) that people want to see **non-market rental** housing as part of the University District project.

Things we heard repeatedly included:

- "Affordable rentals"
- "Rental apartments"
- "Rental apartments, missing middle"
- "AFFORDABILITY!"
- "Is there a built-in system to ensure affordable housing?"
- "This is a way to better link the university to the neighbourhood and provide much needed affordable housing for students, staff and faculty."

# WE ALSO HEARD

Through the survey and in conversations with participants during the consultation sessions, we asked several questions about potential uses for the site around housing, amenities, and public spaces. We also asked people what made them excited and what made them concerned about the University District. Participants were asked to write free-hand responses to the survey questions below, so each response often included several themes.

We heard a range of responses, and a few key themes emerged.

## Q. What types of housing would you like to see in the University District?

563 responses to this question included:



*"Rental apartments (available for students but not limited to students), appropriate percent non-market housing, more density - some missing middle, but don't be afraid to go bigger, too."*

*"Mixed income housing, townhomes and rental apartments with commercial ground floors, senior housing"*

## Q. In addition to much-needed new housing, what other amenities and supporting uses do you envision for this area?

565 responses to this question included:



*"Rental apartments, restaurants, coffee shops, retail, grocery, gym."*

*"Groceries, pharmacy, restaurants and anything to encourage walking."*

## Q. What features would you like to see in the landscape and public spaces of the University District to make them more inviting and accessible?

518 responses to this question included:



*"A plaza with outdoor seating and a cafe or restaurant. It should be multifunctional in that it would also have bike racks and also open space that could allow for outside workout classes. It should have good exposure and be well lit to ensure safety for users."*

*"Seating, green spaces, paths through forested areas, lots of trees, bike paths, bike parking, tons of bright lights to make the areas feel safe for people (especially women and marginalized communities at nighttime)."*

## Q. What excites you about our vision for the University District?

480 responses to this question included:



*"Adding vibrancy to the neighborhood."*

*"Affordability for students but also hopefully families again. I have moved to the Westshore and commute into work for an hour each way every single day because it's all that I can afford while still working at UVIC. More housing supply for families, not just 1 bedrooms and bach-pads/studios."*



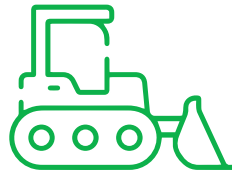
## Q. What concerns you about our vision for the University District?

489 responses to this question included:



1  
WON'T BE FAST  
ENOUGH/PROVIDE  
ENOUGH HOUSING  
185

2



REMOVING EXISTING  
REC FACILITIES  
143

3



TRAFFIC/PARKING  
108

4



TOO EXPENSIVE/  
LACK OF  
AFFORDABILITY  
106

*"Not enough housing. Think bigger!"*

*"Overly car-centric: walkability to bus junctions is paramount."*



## SOME COMMUNITY MEMBERS

also expressed disappointment at the closure of the ice rink at the Ian Stewart Complex, especially from those who currently use the rink. Many of those suggested incorporating community recreation facilities, such as a rink, into the new plans for the University District. While we understand that the decision to retire the rink is a disappointment for some, redevelopment of this land will allow us to help meet critical housing needs in the community, contribute to the creation of a vibrant campus and generate revenue to support university priorities.



# NEXT STEPS

We will be taking everything that we heard into the next stage of the University District work. The next stage of the project involves a consultant to work with the university on a development plan for the site.

The development planning process will include the next round of consultation and will offer opportunities for our students, staff and faculty, as well as the wider community to participate and contribute to the detailed project plans for the University District. This phase will involve far more specifics including project phasing, building heights, housing types, green spaces, and plans for public spaces.

## FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

will be shared widely  
including on our

PROJECT  
WEBSITE.

[uvic.ca/udistrict](http://uvic.ca/udistrict)

