



HILLSIDE-QUADRA EQUITY ANALYSIS

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Hillside-Quadra: A Unique Neighbourhood

Located just north of downtown Victoria, the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood is home to a diverse population of approximately 7500 residents. Bounded by three high-volume traffic routes (Blanshard, Cook and Bay Streets), the area is served by a commercial centre near the intersection of Hillside Avenue and Quadra Street known as Quadra Village. The Village is home to unique shops and restaurants, a small theatre and Caribbean, Dutch, Indian, Greek and Filipino food stores. The Quadra Village Community Centre on Kings Rd. in Quadra Village provides vital support and community connection services for residents.

Hillside-Quadra has a history of having to withstand more than its share of regional initiatives, from the demolition of 127 historic houses for the widening of Blanshard Street in the 1960s¹, to the construction of the Evergreen Terrace social housing complex, to the recent tent encampment in Topaz Park. Hillside-Quadra has the city's highest concentration of subsidized housing developments, and recently became the home of the new 320-unit Summit care facility for seniors with dementia.



Photo: Victoria Heritage Foundation

In October 2019, City of Victoria Mayor and Council approved the kick-off of a local area planning process that focuses on planning for neighbourhood villages and mobility corridors. This Village and Corridor Planning project includes a consideration of housing options, mobility needs, and public spaces over the next 10 to 20 years². In this first stage of the project, Quadra, Fernwood and North Park Villages are the focus. In further stages of the project, the areas of Rockland, Fairfield, Jubilee, Oaklands and James Bay will be explored.

To support that ongoing local area planning process as it pertains to Quadra Village, this report offers an equity analysis of the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood, with comparative reference to other parts of Victoria. The report begins with a presentation of neighbourhood-specific data, to demonstrate the current inequities that exist between Hillside-Quadra and other neighbourhoods in the city. The analysis includes data relative to the key determinants of health and well-being, according to the available research. It also includes a brief analysis of many of the services and amenities that can be currently accessed by Hillside-Quadra residents. That combined data, together with a broad and equity-based community engagement process, will help the neighbourhood association for the area (the Downtown Blanshard Advisory Committee) and the



Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee to liaise with City of Victoria staff with a better understanding of the current assets and needs of Hillside-Quadra, as seen through an equity lens.

The overall goal of this equity analysis project is to support the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood association to shine a light on the unique qualities of the neighbourhood and population, in order to learn more about the residents of the area, advocate for a more equitable allocation of resources from the City, and support future funding proposals. We hope that this report will serve as an important reference point for citizens and staff interested in the future of Hillside-Quadra and the Villages and Corridors planning process.

What is an Equity Lens?

It is widely recognized that city planning in North America helped to create and then perpetuate discriminatory policies and practices that discriminated against communities of colour, Indigenous peoples and communities, LGBTQ+ communities, women, and persons with disabilities. Through policies and practices, including public engagement processes that are designed to exclude, the field of planning has contributed to the development of inequities over several decades. If planning tools can be used to exclude and hold back some within our communities, those same tools can be used to develop and implement policies that result in more fair and equitable communities, where everyone, in every neighbourhood, can thrive. As an important new tool, an equity lens can help city governments, like the City of Victoria, to level the playing field, and help ensure that all neighbourhoods and communities can thrive.

“To serve the public interest, planners must ensure proposed policies will serve and benefit all residents of a community. The basis of the planning profession is to create better communities, which means clean air, clean water, decent housing, open space and recreation, safe neighborhoods, transportation options, and good schools in every neighborhood.”

(American Planning Association, [APA Planning for Equity Policy Guide](#), p. 5)

An equity lens is a framework that introduces a set of questions to be brought forward when planning and making decisions about new policies, programs or initiatives.

Applying an equity lens means continually asking:

- Who will benefit from a policy, program, initiative or service?
- Who might be excluded from those benefits and why? Indeed, who might be harmed?
- How might some population groups be unfairly burdened today or in the future? How might existing privilege be further entrenched?
- Have important decisions been made with the direct input of those who will be most affected by that decision?

- From whose perspective are you evaluating the ‘success’ of your project or policy?

Committing to using an equity lens also means demonstrating the courage to uncover power differences among individuals or groups involved in the process, acknowledging privilege, and working to dismantle the systemic barriers that can make it difficult for some community



members to participate in, and benefit from, local decision-making processes. An equitable planning and development process reaches community members who may not contribute regularly to local planning and decision-making. The result can be policies and strategies that are more responsive to local needs.

It is important to consider 4 types of equity³ when designing using an equity lens:

- *Procedural equity* – inclusive, accessible, authentic engagement and representation in decision-making;
- *Distributional equity* – fair distribution of benefits and burdens across all segments of a community and city, prioritizing those with highest need;
- *Structural equity* – decisions are made with a recognition of the historical, cultural, and institutional dynamics and structures that have routinely advantaged privileged groups;
- *Transgenerational equity* – decisions consider generational impacts and do not result in unfair burdens on future generations.

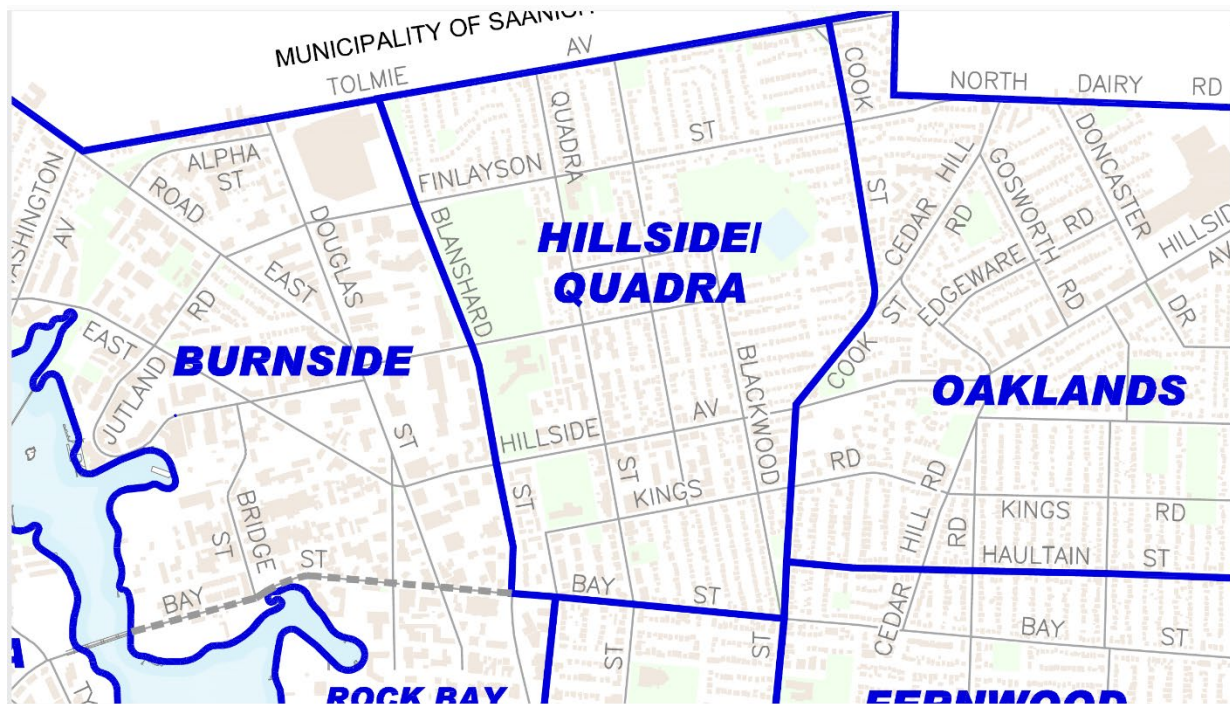
Using an equity lens does not stifle growth or serve as an impediment to development. Instead, considering equity in local decision making creates and extends opportunities to each member of the community, recognizes the needs and capacities of community members, and acts to ensure that inequities are not unintentionally worsened.

Finally, using an equity lens does not mean that we pour all our resources into supporting those neighbourhoods or groups that are struggling most. Equity initiatives can sometimes become very narrow in focus and strive to improve the lives of those at the lowest end of the gradient (people experiencing homelessness, frail seniors, people living in poverty), but research has shown that these targeted efforts don’t work over the long-term. Similarly, universal strategies do not work either, because they assume that we all have the same needs. Research from the UK has demonstrated that, to achieve the most improvement in health and well-being for the greatest number of people, we need to offer resources and support for all population groups, in proportion to their level of need. This is known as [proportionate universalism](#)⁴ or [targeted universalism](#).

What Do We Know about the Residents of Hillside-Quadra?

To more effectively advocate for a more equitable distribution of resources between Hillside-Quadra and other neighbourhoods in the city, it is important to understand the characteristics of the current residents of Hillside-Quadra, and identify the proportion of residents who might require additional support. This section outlines the neighbourhood-level data we were able to access, much of it from the 2016 census. Other data, including some that is more up to date, might be available, should the neighbourhood association have other questions that are not answered here. The research on those [environmental and societal factors that shape our health and well-being](#) guided the types of data that are shown here.

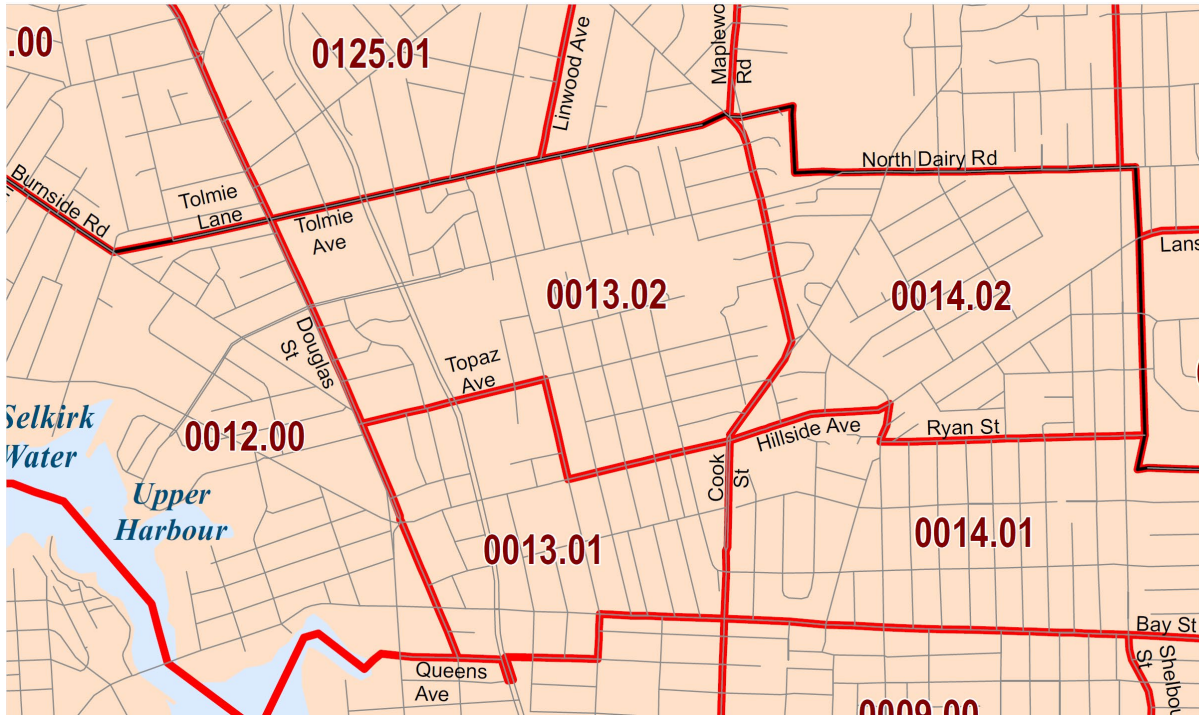
For the purposes of this report we used the [City of Victoria neighbourhood boundaries](#). The southern section of the boundary ends at Bay street and the western section ends at Blanshard Street.



City of Victoria Neighbourhood Boundaries⁵.

There are important differences between the boundaries of the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood outlined by the City of Victoria and the boundaries of the census tracts of the neighbourhood, as identified by Statistics Canada. The Statistics Canada census tract 13.01 boundary differs in both the southern and western sections and tract 13.02 differs in the western section. In tract 13.01, the boundary changes at Bay Street and Quadra Street, where it extends further south to Queens Avenue. It then extended further west past Blanshard street all the way to Douglas, which is the western boundary for both tracts 13.01 and 13.02⁶.

This distinction is important, because much of the information that we can derive from census data must be derived from data about census tracts 13.01 and 13.02, a portion of which (the extreme western portion) is outside of the Hillside-Quadra boundaries.



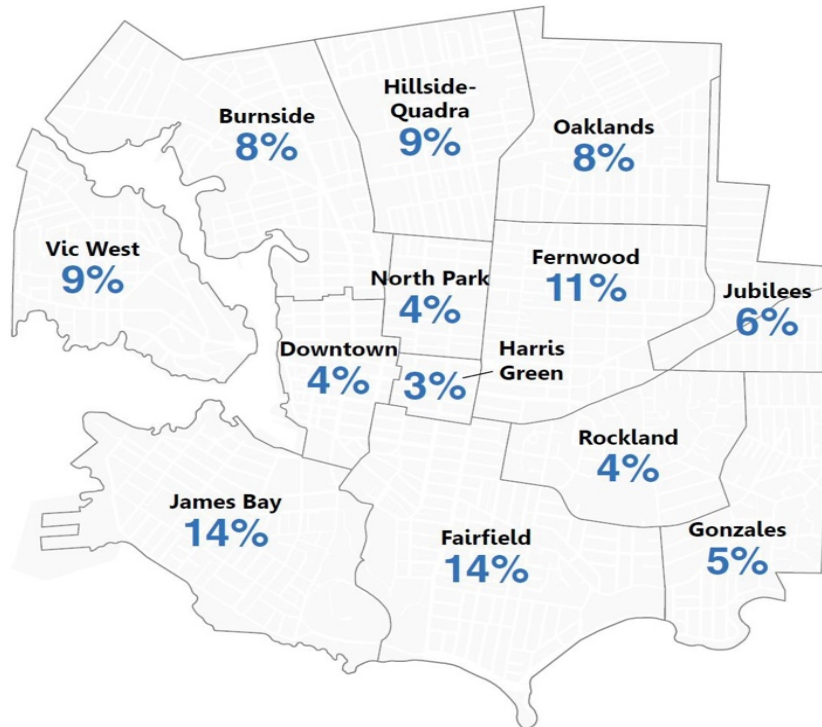
Statistics Canada. [Census Tract Reference Maps, by Census Metropolitan Areas or Census Agglomerations](#). Census of Population, 2016.

[Census tracts](#) are small, relatively stable geographic areas located in census metropolitan areas that have a core population of 50,000 or more. According to the 2016 Census, the population of census tract 13.01 was 4539. The population of census tract 13.02 was 3907⁷.

Population Demographics - General

As of the 2016 Census, the total population of Hillside-Quadra was 7565⁸, making up 9% of the population of the city of Victoria.

The population of Victoria continues to grow. Although we do not have neighbourhood-specific projections, the population of the Greater Victoria School District (SD61) region is expected to grow 7% from 2016 (the last census year) to 2025⁹.



Population as percentage of city total, 2016

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Income & Employment

Inequities in income and financial well-being continue to increase in Victoria, and these inequities have only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Income inequities hurt us all. People living in poverty do experience many more health and social challenges than those who do not struggle financially, but it is more than that¹⁰. Inequities related to income affects the social fabric of our lives, reducing connections among people in communities and leading to more stress, fear, and insecurity for everyone¹¹. It is not an accident that, as income inequities have increased in Victoria, so have its social issues.

Living affordably is a challenge for many residents of Victoria, but especially for those in the neighbourhoods north of downtown, including North Park and Hillside-Quadra.

As of the 2016 Census, the unemployment rate of Hillside-Quadra was 6.4%, slightly higher than the Victoria average of 6.0%. The highest unemployment rate in the city is North Park (8.1%), and the lowest rates were found in Fairfield and Gonzales (both 5.4%)¹². It is important to note that unemployment rates in Victoria have increased significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic hit in mid-March. That might be especially the case for Hillside-Quadra, which we assume has a high proportion of residents who work in service and tourism – sectors which have been hard hit by the closures and other safety requirements that have been necessary through the pandemic.

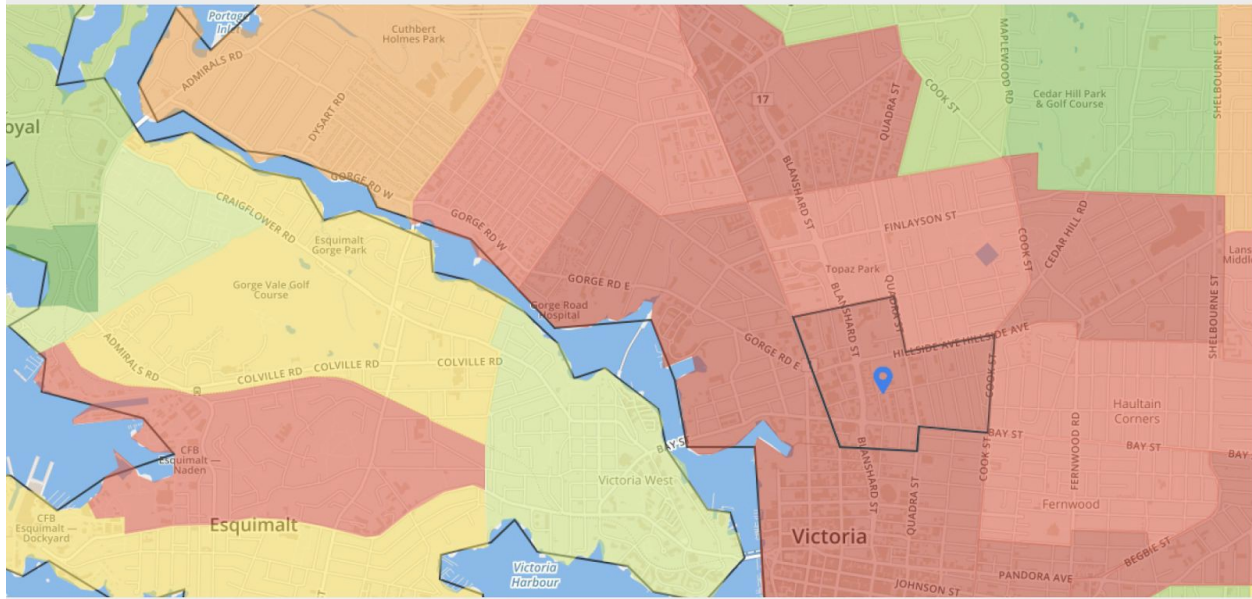
Not surprisingly, income inequities are increasing in Victoria. Globally, income inequities are measured by an indicator known as the Gini coefficient. In general, trends in the Gini coefficient demonstrate that income inequities have been increasing since the 1990s, especially in cities¹³. A

Gini coefficient of zero indicates perfect equality, where everyone has the same income. A Gini coefficient of one indicates maximum inequality (i.e. one person has all the income and others have none). On a national or provincial level, the Gini coefficient is viewed as a measure of economic inequality and involves a complex statistical analysis¹⁴. But when zooming into smaller regions, like individual cities, an increasing Gini coefficient can be interpreted as a measure of segregation. In the north west corner of Hillside-Quadra, near Topaz Park, the 2016 Gini coefficient was 0.48, one of the highest rates in Greater Victoria¹⁵.

The [Neighbourhood Financial Health Index](#) is a tool that brings together a series of indicators on income, assets, debt and poverty. Compiled by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) and Prosper Canada, this tool shows the levels of financial health at the neighbourhood scale. The census tract consisting of Hillside Quadra ranks 77 of 78 (see map on next page). The NFHI is a composite index looking at income, assets, and debt. This index reflects a more accurate sense of financial vulnerability and is more telling about inequities than merely reporting on income, since wealth inequities are even greater.



NFHI Neighbourhood Financial Health Index



Overall NFHI Rank:
77 out of 78 CTs in CMA/CA

77

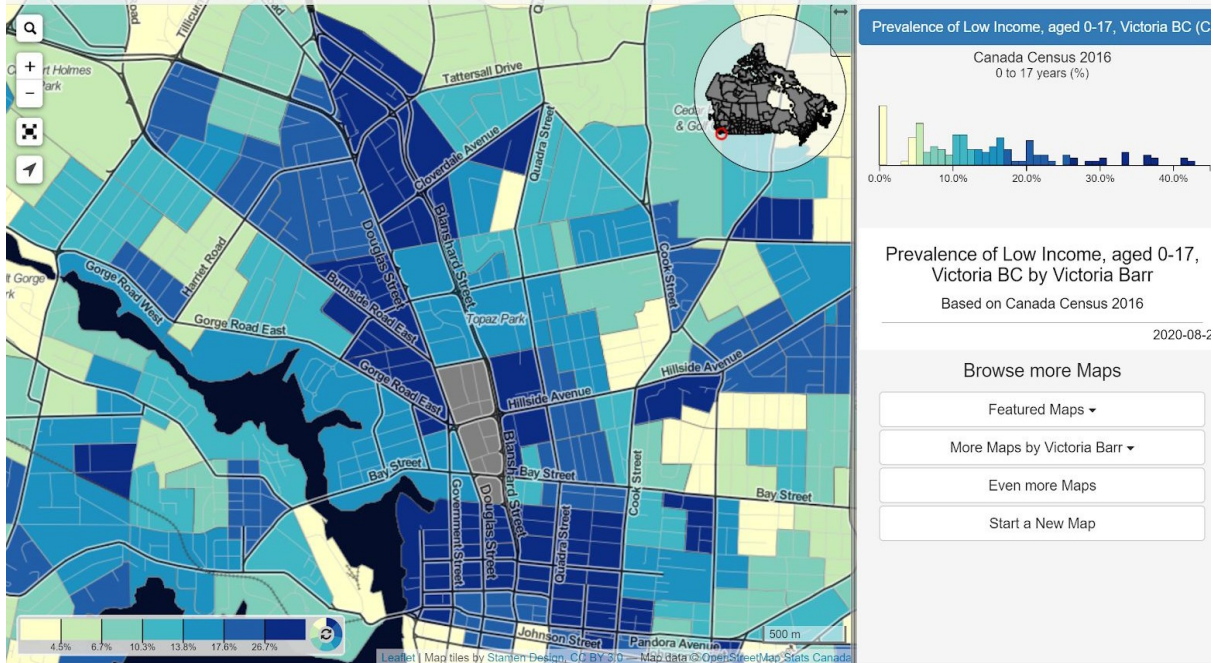
Data: December 2017 (2018 release)



Components:

Components	Ranks	Benchmark Averages	Visual Bar
Household Income	77	CMA/CA Avg. \$96,749	
Liquid Assets	74	CMA/CA Avg. \$381,978	
Real Estate Assets	78	CMA/CA Avg. \$685,832	
Neighbourhood Poverty	77	CMA/CA Avg. 26.3%	
Consumer Debt	2	CMA/CA Avg. \$38,322	
Mortgage Debt	5	CMA/CA Avg. \$113,611	

Portions of Hillside-Quadra have high proportions of children living in poverty. Prevalence of low income among children ranges from 10% in the northern part of the area, bordering Finlayson St., to 44% around Hillside Ave. and Blanshard Street. The average child poverty rate for the Victoria Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) is 16%¹⁶.



Source: Statistics Canada. % Children 0-17 Years Low Income, Based on Low Income Cut Off (LICO), by Census Tract 2016.

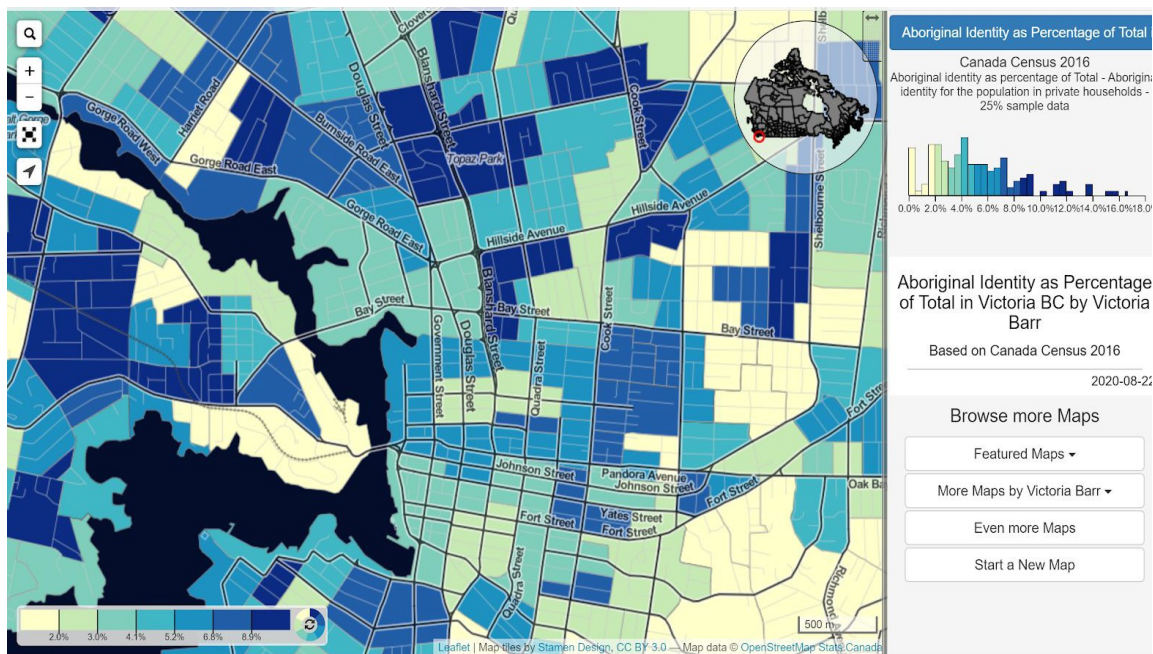
Not surprisingly, many of the areas of Hillside-Quadra in which residents with low income live are also adjacent to busy roads, including Hillside Ave. and Blanshard St. Living near high-traffic areas can increase exposure to harmful chemicals in the air, which can cause or worsen asthma and other respiratory and cardiovascular health conditions in people of all ages¹⁷. Children are particularly susceptible to the negative health effects of traffic-related air pollution. Children breathe in more air in relation to their body weight, so air pollution can affect them more, and can interfere with the healthy development of their respiratory systems. Children living in areas with heavy traffic have a higher risk of having breathing problems, including asthma, than other children¹⁸. For more information, see [real-time air quality data](#) provided by the air quality monitoring station, located near the corner of Blanshard and Topaz Streets. Information about health risks due to current air quality conditions in Victoria can be found in [this site](#) that provides data for the [Air Quality Health Index](#).

Other health concerns about living in high-traffic areas include noise, which can affect quality of life, cardiovascular health and mental health¹⁹, and risk of injury for pedestrians and cyclists²⁰.

Racialized Communities

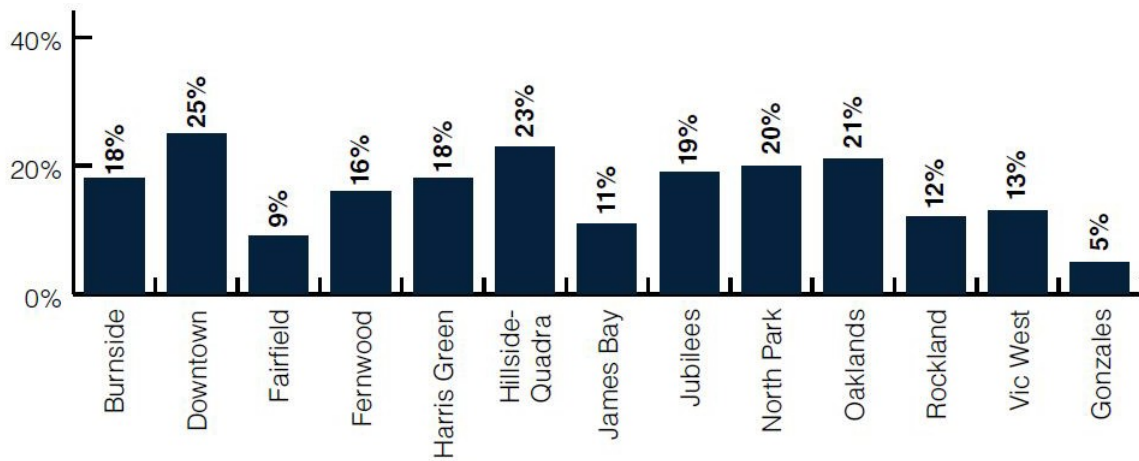
At an average of 6%, the proportion of the population of Hillside-Quadra who identifies as Aboriginal is the second highest for any neighbourhood in the city. Only Oaklands (7%) and Burnside (also 7%) have higher proportions. Not surprisingly, the proportion of Indigenous residents varies within the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood. The area near Topaz Park has a proportion of 9.4%, while the area near Hillside and Blanshard has a proportion of 12%. The average proportion for all the City of Victoria is 4.6%²¹.

To identify racialized populations, Statistics Canada uses the term 'visible minority'. The Government of Canada defines visible minorities as persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. The term has been rightly criticized as outdated and harmful, in part because it downplays the diversity of racialized communities and assumes whiteness as the norm, "[leading] people of colour to fall into an amorphous blob of otherness, no longer existing as people and communities."²²



Source: Statistics Canada. Aboriginal Identity as a Percentage of Total. Canada Census 2016.

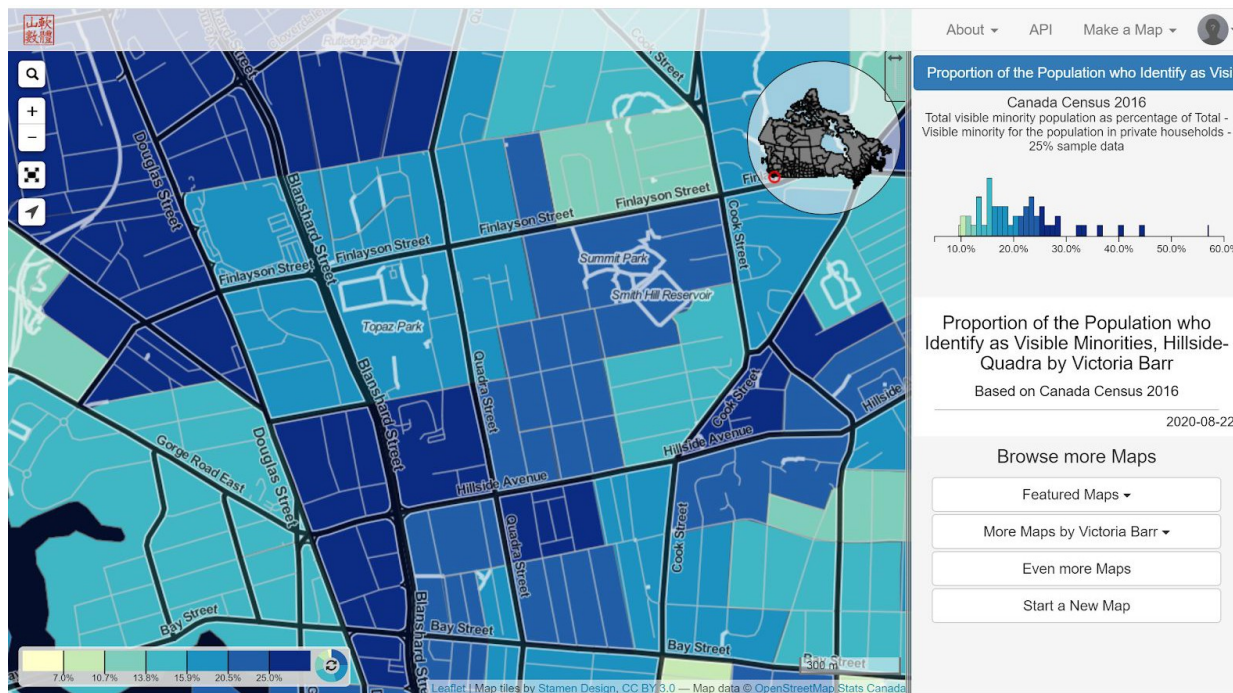
At 23%, Hillside-Quadra has the second highest proportion of people who identify as visible minorities, second only to Downtown at 25%. The Victoria average is 15.2%.



Visible Minority by Neighbourhood, 2016

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 Census of Population.

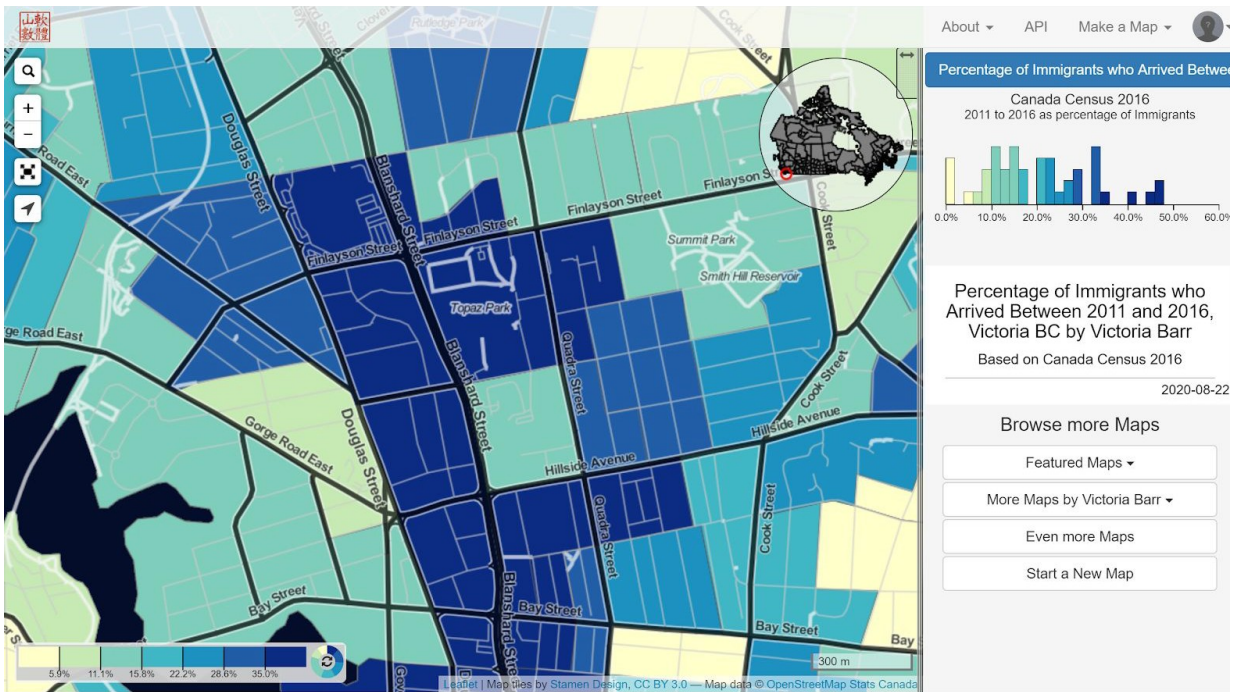
Again, there is variation within the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood. The proportion of ‘visible minorities’ ranges from 11.1% north of Finlayson St., to 40.9% south of Hillside Rd. at Quadra St.



Source: Statistics Canada. Visible Minority Population as a Percentage of Total. Census 2016.

The number of residents who have immigrated to Canada in Hillside-Quadra (19%) is similar to the average percentage in Victoria as a whole (18%). However, Hillside-Quadra has seen more recent immigrants (who arrived in Canada from 2011-2016) than any other neighbourhood in Victoria. In the area surrounding Topaz Park, more than 46% of the immigrants in that area

arrived in Canada between 2011-2016. The area between Bay St. and Hillside Rd. also welcomed many new immigrants between 2011 and 2016.

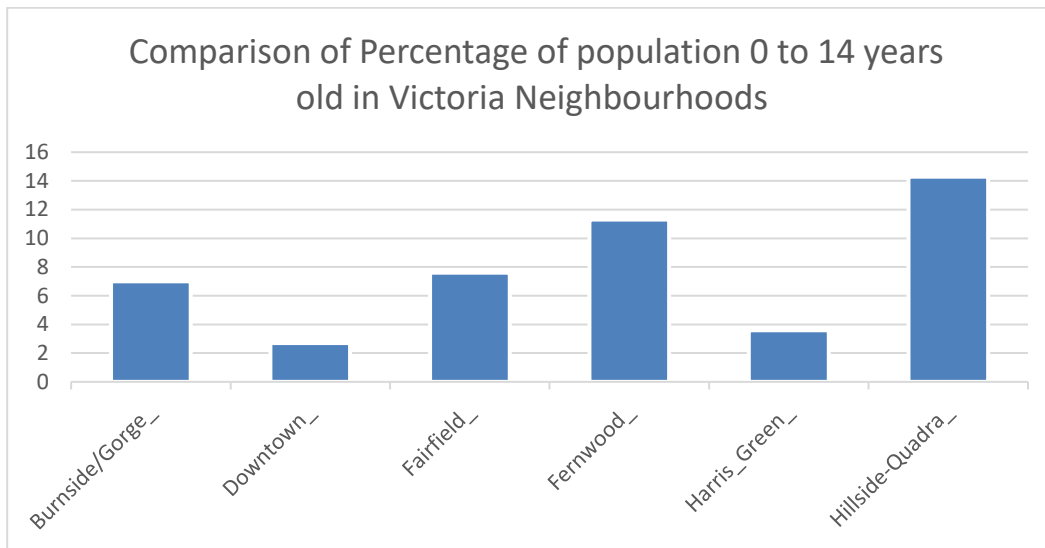


Source: Statistics Canada. Percentage of Immigrants who Arrived Between 2011 and 2016. 2016 Census.

In the Victoria CMA, 11.7% of all residents who have immigrated to Canada, did so between 2011 and 2016²³.

Children & Youth

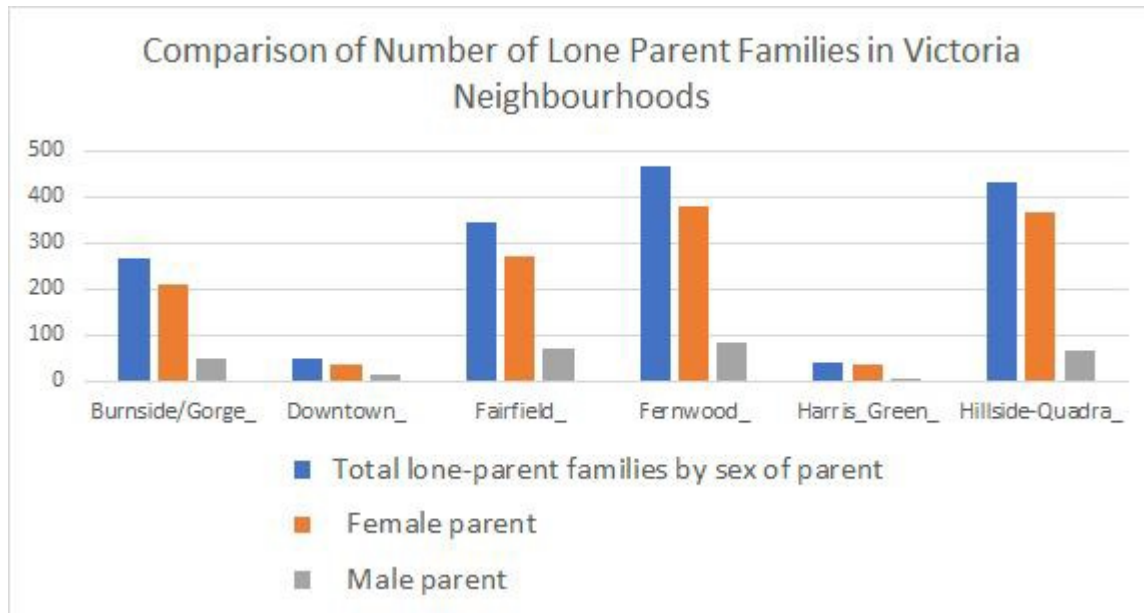
At 14%, Hillside-Quadra has the highest proportion of children aged 0-14 of any neighbourhood in Victoria.



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Short-Form Census, Broken Down by Selected Neighbourhoods.

Hillside-Quadra also has the highest proportion of very young children of any neighbourhood. Of the 1080 children aged 0-14 living in Hillside-Quadra, 425 of them (39%) are babies, toddlers and preschoolers, aged 0-4. By 2025, the population of children (1-14) in School District 61 is expected to grow by 3%. However, over that same time period, the number of youth aged 10-14 is expected to grow by 16%²⁴.

Hillside-Quadra has a high rate of single parent families, compared to other neighbourhoods in the city. Children in single parent families have double the poverty rate of children in families with 2 parents.



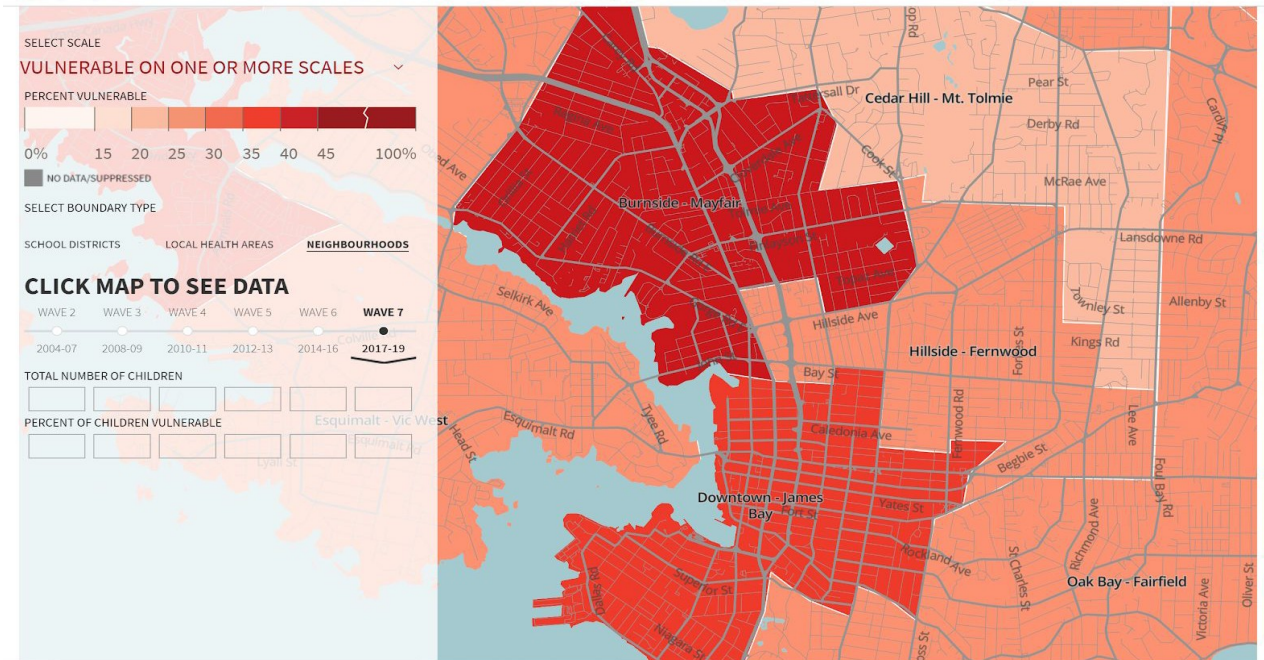
Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Short-Form Census, Broken Down by Selected Neighbourhoods

The experiences children have during the early years of their lives (ages 0-6) sets a foundation for their entire life course. Decades of international research demonstrates that early childhood development, and its physical, social/emotional and language/ cognitive components, can shape basic learning, school success, economic participation, social citizenry, and lifelong health^{25,26,27}.

The Northern section of the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood shows approximately 40 - 45% of children in kindergarten are vulnerable on one or more scales of the Early Development Instrument (EDI), a questionnaire that has been used in BC since 2004 to collect information about children as they enter kindergarten. Children are assessed on five domains of development: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills. The questions on the EDI are known to be good predictors of adult health, education and social outcomes.

In comparison, only 25-30% of children in Fairfield and 20-25% in the Cedar Hill/Mt. Tolmie area of the city are considered to be vulnerable on one or more scales of the EDI.

Kindergarten Children Vulnerable on One or More Scales of the Early Development Instrument (EDI), BC School District #61, Wave 7: 2017-2019



Source: Human Early Learning Partnership, University of British Columbia.
<http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/maps/edi/sd/61/>

If we can offer more support to families with young children, we can significantly reduce this risk and help ensure that these children lead long and healthy lives.



Seniors

Hillside-Quadra has the lowest proportion of seniors of any neighbourhood in Victoria. Eleven percent (11%) of Hillside-Quadra residents are aged 65 or over²⁸. In contrast, 34% of James Bay residents are 65 or over. Again, however, there is variation within the neighbourhood. In the area near the corner of Hillside Ave. and Cook St., the proportion of seniors is 31.7%²⁹.

The poverty rate among seniors in Greater Victoria was 4.7%³⁰. In 2015, British Columbia's seniors' poverty rate of 8.8%, based on the LIM (Low Income Measure) After Tax, was well above the Canadian average of 6.6%³¹.

People with Disabilities (Diversabilities)

The 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability found that 22% of the Canadian population above the age of 15 lives with a disability. The prevalence ranges from 13% for those aged 15 to 24 years, to 47% for those aged 75 and older. Disability varies with age. While disabilities related to pain, flexibility, mobility and mental health were the most common disability types, mental health-related disabilities were most common disabilities among youth aged 15 to 24 years³².

It is estimated that currently 19,000 people in Victoria live with one or more disabilities³³. The City of Victoria is preparing an Accessibility Framework, which was presented to Council on August 6, 2020. The new Framework has three focus areas: built environment, governance and services, and capacity and collaboration.

It is difficult to find neighbourhood-level data on the proportion of, and experiences of, people with diversabilities in Victoria. However, we do know that, in Canada, disability and poverty go hand in hand. The Survey report found that only 59% of individuals with disabilities were employed, compared to 80% of those without disabilities³⁴.

Housing

As a basic human need, affordable and suitable housing is essential to our well-being and quality of life. Housing stability, quality, safety and affordability all affect our health, as do the physical and social characteristics of our neighbourhoods³⁵.

Victoria continues to face a housing crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the challenges that many Victoria residents face to find housing that is affordable and meets their needs. More than 20% of households in Victoria are faced with housing that is unsuitable, inadequate or unaffordable³⁶. More than 36% of Victoria households spend more than 30% of their income on shelter costs³⁷.

Almost 6 out of 10 (59%) households in Hillside-Quadra rent, rather than own, their home. That percentage is roughly equal to the average in Victoria as a whole (60.6%).



With homeowners generally having more power and being more involved when it comes to civic engagement opportunities, a population where the majority are renters can mean less of a voice for the community.

Neighbourhood	Owner households	Renter households
Burnside	33%	67%
Downtown	30%	70%
Fairfield	43%	57%
Fernwood	34%	66%
Gonzales	67%	33%
Harris Green	35%	65%
Hillside Quadra	41%	59%
James Bay	32%	68%
Jubilee	34%	66%
North Park	21%	79%
Oaklands	53%	47%
Rockland	45%	55%
Victoria West	51%	49%

Victoria households by tenure, 2016

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

The 2018 the City of Victoria Housing Report indicated that very few new housing units were approved in Hillside-Quadra by the City that year. The neighbourhood gained only 7 new dwelling units in 2018. This period of relative stability in housing development for Hillside-Quadra reflects City of Victoria Building Permit data from 2012-2018, which indicates that Hillside-Quadra saw fewer new housing units added (47) than any other neighbourhood in the city.

Dwelling Units Approved by Neighbourhood (2018)							
Neighbourhood	New Construction	Conversions (excluding secondary/garden suites)	Secondary Suites (including new construction and conversions)	Garden Suites (including new construction and conversions)	Total (excluding demolitions)	Demolitions	Net New Dwelling Units
Burnside	52	0	0	0	52	1	51
Downtown	264	0	0	0	264	0	264
Fairfield	98	0	10	2	110	12	98
Fernwood	154	0	6	2	162	8	154
Gonzales	4	2	7	3	18	7	11
Harris Green	316	0	0	0	316	0	316
Hillside-Quadra	2	0	7	2	11	4	7
James Bay	394	3	1	0	401	2	399
Jubilee	16	1	0	0	18	3	15
North Park	3	0	1	0	4	1	3
Oaklands	5	0	7	5	17	8	9
Rockland	7	0	2	0	9	3	6
Victoria West	2	1	1	1	6	1	5
Total	1317	7	42	15	1381	50	1331

Source: [2018 City of Victoria Housing Report](#)

More recently¹, there are currently many new housing units under construction or pending approval in Hillside-Quadra (see Recent Development table, below). Those projects include 64 units at 2566/2570/2580 Fifth St., 34 units at 2780 Fifth St., and a proposed 57 units at 1025 Kings Rd. The non-market units added or approved include 21 modular supportive units at Evergreen Terrace (2501 Blanshard St.) and Forest Heights, a 40-unit non-profit development at 2558 Quadra St. This new housing totals 242 units yielding 209 net new units, not including the 320 bed Summit long term care facility. A complete data set is not available, so additional units only requiring building permits have likely been constructed in 2019-2020.

A Capital Regional District (CRD) proposal to build approximately 200 units of housing for people with low incomes needing mental health supports at the former Blanshard Elementary School site (950 Kings Rd.) sparked a community movement to demand investment in public amenities for the neighbourhood. Area residents put forward a vision of a community hub to include recreation, a library and greenspace. Questions remain about how to replace amenities like the old Blanshard Elementary School gym, which serves the densely populated area of subsidized and market housing surrounding the 950 Kings/ school site.

Snapshot of Recent Development									
Non-market		Market Rental		Strata			Institutional		
Address	Number of Units	Net Unit Increase	Studio	1 bed	2 bed	3/4 bed	Tenure	Status	
2501 Blanshard	21	15	21				Non Market Rental	Completed 2020	
2558 Quadra	40	21	20	16	4		Non Market Rental	Approved	
2780 Fifth St	34	34		17	17		Rental	Completed 2020	
2566/2570/2580 Quadra	64	62	20	29	8	7	Rental	Construction	
2708 Graham/1050 Hillside	4	3				4	Rental	Construction	
1025 Kings Rd	57	42	12	30	13	2	Rental	Proposed	
3031 Jackson St	8	7				8	Strata	Construction	
2580/2582 Vancouver St	8	6			6	2	Strata	Proposed	
Various Small Infill	6	6+	n/a				Market Units		
Subtotal	242	209	73	92	48	23			
950 Kings	Special Case: City moved to start a rezoning after community activism regarding lack of public amenities								Proposed
955 Hillside The Summit Long Term Care	320	320	320				Health Facility	Completed 2020	

Data for this table based on [City of Victoria Development Tracker](#) and local knowledge.

In the context of the Villages and Corridors Planning process, it is important to note that it is

¹ This section about current housing developments in the neighbourhood was provided by the Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) facilitator for Hillside-Quadra and the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee.

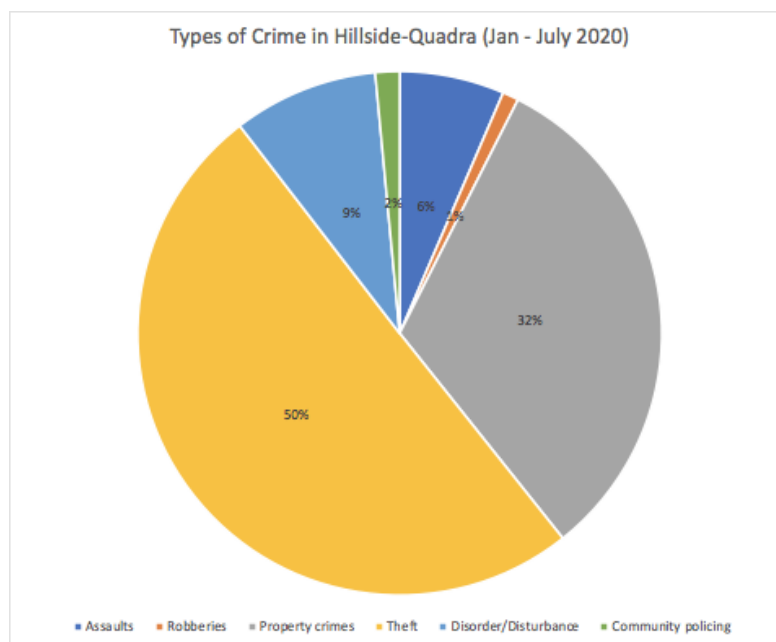


difficult to get meaningful data reflective of what is happening and what is being proposed. For example, the [Development Tracker](#) on the City of Victoria website provides information about stages of development, sorted by neighbourhood, but there is not a central source of rezoning data. The lack of up-to-date data requires other sources of information which might not be as easily obtained.

Hillside-Quadra has the city’s highest concentration of subsidized housing developments, and in July 2020 the 320-unit Summit long term care facility opened for seniors with complex care needs. Those living in subsidized housing receive government financial assistance for rent and are often low-income earners. As such, residents would require access to adequate transportation networks, affordable food, childcare, and employment opportunities. Seniors living in Summit will have most of their care needs met in-house, but age-friendly design of the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood would help integrate these residents into the community. For example, wayfinding signs, benches, lighting, parks, open spaces, civic facilities, and accessible trails/roads/sidewalks are all features of the physical environment that can promote healthy aging.

Crime & Safety

The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced crime rates across Victoria. In Hillside-Quadra, the area in and around Topaz Park saw an increase in crime during a temporary tent encampment that was

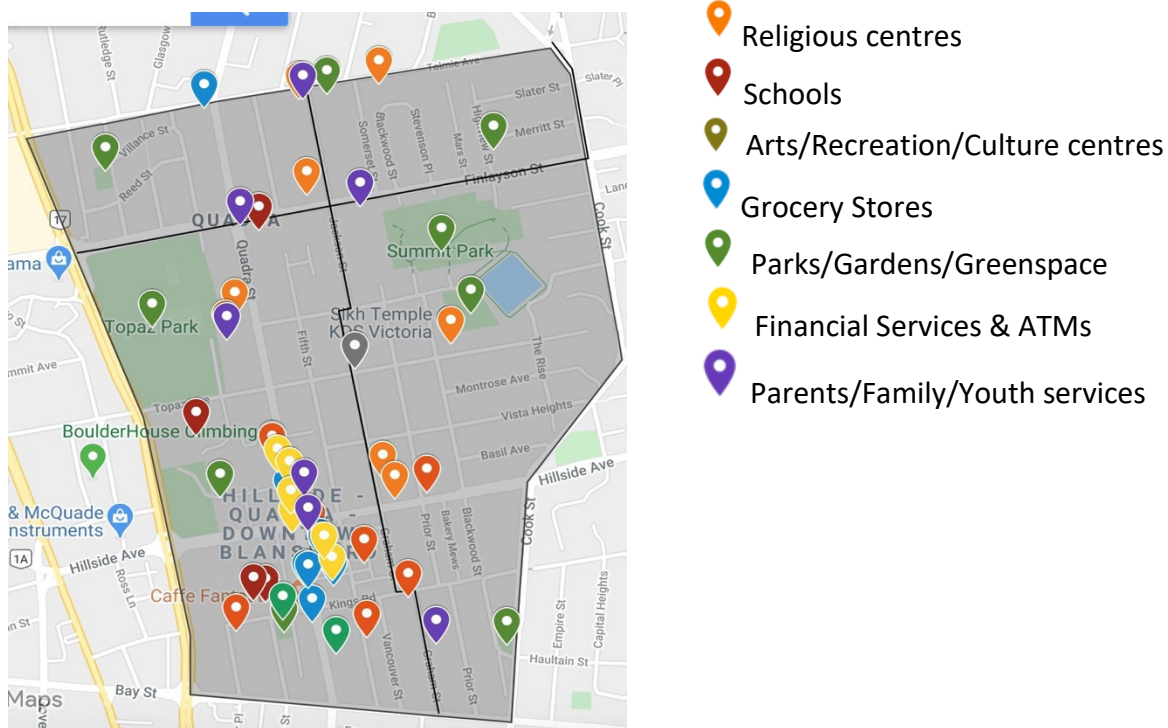


established in March 2020. In April, police reported police calls doubled in the area and extra resources were allocated to address on-going public safety concerns³⁸.

While we do not have specific rates or types of crime during the pandemic, the following crime statistics for the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood were compiled from the Victoria Police Department Crime Reports website³⁹ from January 1 to July 17, 2020. Theft and property crimes make up the highest percentage of crime, followed by disorders/disturbances and assaults.

Access to Services

To showcase the location of different services and amenities within the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood boundary, we have prepared an interactive [Hillside-Quadra Community Services map](#). Again, please note that we used the City of Victoria boundary with the western boundary being Blanshard Street. The services mapped include:



In illustrating the spread of services throughout the neighbourhood, the map shows that financial services/ATMs, grocery stores and arts/recreation/culture centres are the three services that are more concentrated within the core of Quadra Village. This is consistent with the findings in the [Village and Corridor Planning Early Engagement Summary report](#), which mentions an emerging ‘cultural corridor’ along Quadra Street. The four other services listed on the map are more well dispersed throughout the community.

It is important to note that the financial services in the neighbourhood are limited to a credit union, ATMs, and a Money Mart. There are no traditional financial services such as banks in the neighbourhood and most ATMs charge a service fee for cash withdrawals. The Community Savings Credit Union, at 2750 Quadra Street, has reduced hours weekdays and is not open weekends, making it less accessible for some residents.

We recognize that people living in Hillside-Quadra are not necessarily going to get all their services within that neighbourhood – they will leave the neighbourhood to access services. For example, Mayfair Shopping Centre is just outside of the Hillside-Quadra boundary on Douglas Street, with many services and amenities accessible there. Likewise, there is a Thrifty Foods just north of the boundary which includes delivery options that Hillside-Quadra residents would be able to access.

Because of the lack of spread of some of the core services within parts of the neighbourhood, and the busy streets which create barriers, additional commercial space in the north/north-west section of the neighbourhood offering arts/recreation/cultural services, groceries, and financial services, could be considered. However, it is recognized that there are many commercial developments on Douglas Street just outside of the boundary, so services and amenities are still within reach.

Transportation²

Transit routes are noted on the [Hillside-Quadra Transportation, Crime and Accident Reports Map](#). While 6 BC Transit bus routes do drive through the neighbourhood, only the #6 (Royal Oak Exchange/ Downtown) and #4 (UVic/ Downtown) offer frequent service through Hillside-Quadra along Quadra (north-south) and Hillside (east-west) respectively. The #24 (Cedar Hill/Admirals Walk) and #25 (Maplewood/Admirals Walk) buses stop at Hillside Ave. and Cook St., and the #10 (James Bay/Royal Jubilee) stops at the corner of Bay St. and Blanshard St.

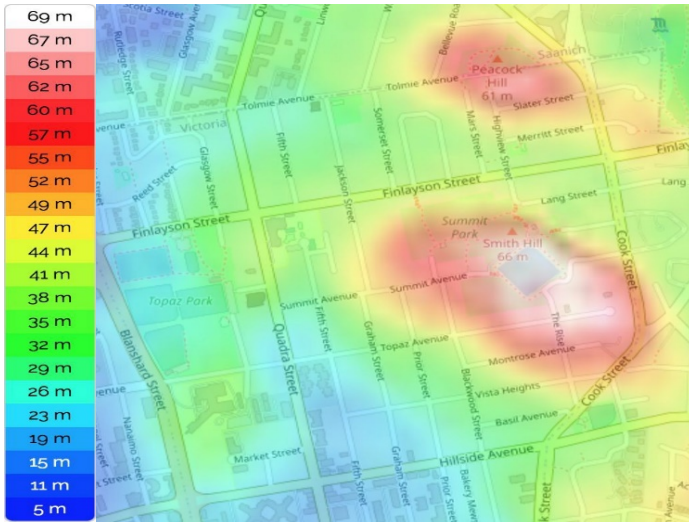
It is likely that many residents first must travel downtown to connect to transit services for greater access to places throughout the Greater Victoria area, including many places of employment. Foot or transit access directly to Douglas Street routes between Bay and Finlayson Streets to the Western Communities and peninsula destinations may take less or equal time for some neighbourhood residents.

Bicycle transportation can be quick and convenient in the City of Victoria, but the cost of bicycles and safe parking may be barriers to use. Bike routes are also included on this map to help showcase the number of safe active transportation routes within the neighbourhood. The bike routes on Finlayson



² We thank the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee for their significant contributions to this section about current Transportation issues.

and Blanshard streets have marked bike lanes. Finlayson is a major street with some uphill sections. Not everyone will feel confident or safe using bike routes on busy arterial roads. The North to South AAA (all ages and abilities) bike route on the other hand runs on local side roads of Jackson and Graham streets. Although they have no designated bike lanes, these streets are not as busy and run adjacent to the village corridor. This is listed as a designated bike route through the community providing users good access to the amenities and services of the neighbourhood.



Additional bike lanes are being proposed and considered for the region, such as on Kings Road. As its name suggests, the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood contains several hills, as indicated by the [topographic map](#) (left), so active modes of transportation can be difficult for seniors, small children, and those with varying abilities or levels of confidence.

Parks

The Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood includes 8 parks with a total of 42 acres of parkland. The region is home to Topaz Park which is the third largest park in Victoria, and Summit Park which protects a rare Garry Oak environment. Although the region has a suitable spread of greenspace and parkland with play equipment available for children ([7 out of the 8 parks have play equipment](#)), there is a lack of park space and equipment that is designed with the older youth and teen age demographic in mind. Facilities such as a skate park and bike pump track could be considered in future community plans. This would provide an affordable/minimal cost activity for the late tween/teens where currently none exist in the Hillside/Quadra region.

Topaz Park is also the only park facility with an off-leash pet area, public washrooms, and a sports field. Because Topaz is such a popular venue for sporting activities, it is often being utilized by sports groups from other neighbouring communities and towns. The only park in the neighbourhood that provides trails for nature walks is Summit Park. As the name suggests, it is higher in



elevation and can be difficult for some individuals to access. The region could expand on the allowable activities within the available parks to help enhance the variety of outdoor activity options available to visitors and appeal to a wider demographic. The need for more outdoor gathering spaces with trails and or greenspace which connects to the main community corridor would also be of benefit.

Conclusion

Hillside-Quadra is a unique neighbourhood. The area stands out as home to many young children, Indigenous people, single parent families and new immigrants. And it is home to many people who are struggling every day to afford Victoria's high cost of living. There are many services in the neighbourhood, including several places of worship and two large parks, but most services are concentrated in the Quadra Village area. Poor transit and other active transportation options, coupled with a hilly terrain, are likely to make accessing these services on foot quite difficult. When the neighbourhood level data is disaggregated even further, our analysis suggests that residents in the northwest corner of the neighbourhood, west of Quadra road, from Topaz Park to Tolmie Ave, might face more challenges.

The data presented in this report only scratches the surface in terms of offering an understanding of the inequities that affect residents' lives in Hillside-Quadra. A significant amount of the data here originates from Statistics Canada's 2016 census, and it is possible that much has changed since then. And it is important to do further investigation of some aspects of this report that have brought up new, possibly unexpected questions. For instance, we need a better understanding of the additional supports that might be needed for residents in the northwest corner of the neighbourhood. As mentioned earlier in this report, the data that have led us to identify some concerns about the residents of that section of Hillside-Quadra originate from the 2016 census, which uses different boundaries than the neighbourhood boundaries outlined by the City of Victoria. Therefore, we do not know the degree to which the data we are concerned about originates from within Hillside-Quadra, or from other neighbourhoods, including Burnside.

The disaggregation of data down to the neighbourhood level (at least) is an essential component to the use of an equity lens in community planning within Victoria. As we have demonstrated in this report, that data can help us better understand the needs of individual neighbourhoods, so that equity is considered every step of the way in all planning processes, including local area planning. By identifying specific groups, municipal governments and their community partners can tailor interventions to improve social inclusion by addressing specific barriers and forms of discrimination⁴⁰. Using disaggregated data can make systemic inequities in our society more visible, and that can lead to positive change. However, that same data, if collected, analyzed, reported or used inappropriately, can reinforce stigmatization, discrimination, stereotypes and racism. That can cause individuals and communities harm. Therefore, collecting and using disaggregated data needs to be accompanied by a process that supports the challenging and dismantling of structural factors (including racism) that underlie inequities⁴¹.

As the BC Office of the Human Rights Commission stated so eloquently in their report, *Disaggregated Demographic Data Collection in British Columbia: The Grandmother Perspective*, governments need to focus on developing respectful relationships with marginalized communities and groups, before and after data collection, analysis and reporting⁴². They also need to look beyond statistical or quantitative data to also include comments, ideas and stories gathered through community engagement methods,

including focus groups, community forums, advisory committee meetings, interviews and other creative techniques that go beyond traditional surveys⁴³. To truly understand the nature of people's lives in Hillside-Quadra and in all neighbourhoods of Victoria, including the barriers that they face every day, we need to combine data with the stories we hear through the Villages and Corridors planning process and through the development of strong partnerships with neighbourhood organizations and community champions. Understanding the circumstances of people's lives within one neighbourhood of a city is an essential component to the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs that will reduce inequities between and within neighbourhoods. Identifying and then eliminating those inequities will go a long way to enhance community health and well-being for all, and that is the ultimate goal of urban planning.

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