

# Meeting Summary for JBNA Zoom Meeting

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## Quick recap

The June JBNA General Meeting covered updates on the community and a presentation on reciprocity trusts for Indigenous History Month. The city council approved rezoning plans for a large downtown Victoria area to create an industry, arts, and innovation district, with discussions about heritage preservation and parking concerns. The conversation ended with a presentation on the Reciprocity Trust's work to facilitate voluntary payments to Indigenous nations, followed by discussions about infrastructure improvements and community consultation needs in James Bay.

## Next steps

- Councillor Dell: Report on a motion for Federal Government advocacy regarding cruise ship regulations and shore power investment
- Councillor Dell: Follow up with city staff regarding traffic concerns at Blanchard Street and Belleville intersection, particularly about adding left turn signals
- Councillor Dell: Follow up with city staff regarding Simcoe Street parking and sidewalk concerns raised by residents
- JBNA Board: Plan community engagement process with city representatives regarding Simcoe Street modifications, involving both residents and businesses
- JBNA Board: Schedule a presentation from GVHA for early fall regarding cruise ship operations
- JBNA Board: Schedule presentation about emergency preparedness
- JBNA Board: Schedule MP for a future presentation once he's settled in his role
- JBNA Community Coordinator: Follow up regarding the Irving Park labyrinth

## Summary

### Opening Remarks

Keira, filling in for Trevor, led the June JBNA General Meeting, providing a land acknowledgment and outlining the agenda, which included updates on the Belleville Terminal Redevelopment Project and a presentation on reciprocity trusts.

### **Councillor Dell: Arts and Culture Initiatives, Cruise Ships, Neighbourhood Grants & Simcoe St. Parking**

Matt Dell shared updates on various arts and culture initiatives, including a new grant program for artists to use vacant downtown storefronts, efforts to preserve downtown movie theaters, and plans to revitalize the busking strategy with new stages and electronic tipping. The conversation ended with a call for questions related to arts and culture, with Matt inviting further input on these initiatives.

The city council approved rezoning plans for a large area in downtown Victoria to create an industry, arts, and innovation district, with unanimous support from council. Matt explained that the area, north

of Chinatown and south of Hillside Mall, will be redeveloped with four new zones to encourage industrial, innovative, and arts businesses. Additionally, the council approved a major development project by Reliance, which will include a new six-story Victoria Art Gallery and other light industrial spaces. Kirk raised concerns about preserving heritage architecture in James Bay, particularly highlighting the potential loss of character in the neighborhood.

A community member discussed the 26-year-old labyrinth in Irving Park, and Councillor Dell suggested applying for a neighbourhood grant to support community events. The group also discussed cruise ship issues, with Councillor Dell planning to draft an advocacy motion to the Federal Government for stronger regulations and shore power investment. Councillor Dell suggested having a representative present to the neighborhood association about the Greater Victoria Harbor Authority's work.

The group discussed concerns about the permanent removal of parking on Simcoe Street between Menzies and Government Streets to widen the sidewalk, which would affect local businesses, delivery trucks, and residents of Beckley Farm Lodge. Kirk raised issues about the city's lack of consultation, while a community member supported the wider sidewalk and noted that the current space was rarely congested with traffic. Keira acknowledged the opposing views and mentioned that the initiative was introduced during COVID-19 to improve social distancing and mobility.

A member raised concerns about traffic congestion and safety at the bottom of Blanchard Street, particularly regarding bus routes and left-turn lanes. The group also discussed earthquake preparedness, with Councillor Dell noting that city staff work with Island Health to assess vulnerable populations and buildings. Kirk highlighted the importance of preserving heritage housing for artists and the need for adequate emergency access. The conversation ended with a discussion about the city's plans to upzone other areas to mirror James Bay's density, raising concerns about protecting James Bay's unique character.

### **Reciprocity Trusts: Indigenous Land Payment Model Presentation**

Dorothy, the Communications and Engagement Coordinator for Reciprocity Trusts, presented on the organization's work to facilitate voluntary payments from residents and businesses in the Capital Regional District to Indigenous nations whose lands they occupy. She explained the 1% model, where contributors pay 1% of their property taxes, rent, or profits annually, and highlighted that over 290 contributions totalling \$165,000 have been made since June 2023. Dorothy emphasized the importance of recognizing and addressing colonial history through actions like the Reciprocity Trusts, which aims to restore ecological and cultural health in shared spaces.

The meeting covered several topics, including tax-free donations, monthly payment options, and historical land use issues in James Bay. Dorothy explained that contributions are tax-deductible and outlined different payment methods for monthly donations. A community member raised questions about generational wealth and land ownership, which Dorothy addressed by discussing historical treaties and the need for fair contributions from all wealth levels. The conversation ended with information about upcoming community events and praise for the presentation and meeting management.