



Urban Development Institute—Victoria Summer 2009 Newsletter

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President's Message—Travis Lee

Thank you for welcoming me as the new President of UDI Victoria. The last month has been a whirlwind of activity and I am pleased to let you know our chapter board has the depth and experience to deal with multiple issues at once. Kudos to Glen Wilson for rebuilding the chapter over the last few years. I hope to keep the momentum going.

This newsletter denotes the end of our season. There are no events in July and August but we look forward to welcoming you back in the fall.

Already planned for September is our regular monthly luncheon meeting—this time looking at the economic outlook in a talk entitled, "Look Both Ways Before You Cross the Bottom Line." Mike Thompson, a well-known figure at Royal Roads University and former Senior Manager, Business Development for TD Commercial Banking will be our speaker.

Members can expect another opportunity to network in the fall after the unanimously positive feedback we got for our member only "Summer on the Terrace" event held June 4th. Venues are being discussed and we'll have news on that sometime in August.

We're very pleased to announce a UDI Victoria Development Tour will take place on September 30th, 2009. You'll be met by the developers, architects and other significant leaders on projects from Saanich to Victoria to the Westshore and back. Be prepared for an all-day event that will take you inside the decision-making process and show you projects that are on the leading edge of residential and commercial design. Registration for that event will be limited. Watch for our flyer in August for final details.

See You in September.

**The UDI Victoria Office Is Closed
Until Thursday, July 23rd, 2009 at 10am
Enjoy The Summer!**

Dates to Remember

September 23rd, 2009 at Noon—1:30pm

Embassy Inn, 520 Menzies Street

"Looking Both Ways Before You Cross the Bottom Line: An Economic Outlook"

\$30 Members \$40 Non-members and Guests

All registrations payable unless cancelled 48 hours in advance.

udivictoria@shaw.ca

September 30th, 2009 - Full-day Event

UDI Victoria Development Tour

Contact udivictoria@shaw.ca for details in August.

October 21st, 2009 at Noon—1:30 pm

Embassy Inn, 520 Menzies Street

Speaker TBA

All registrations payable unless cancelled 48 hours in advance.

udivictoria@shaw.ca

The rest of the fall schedule will be announced in August.

HPO's New Online Services

The Homeowner Protection Office (HPO) has launched two new online services. The first allows Licensed Residential Builders and home warranty insurance providers to register and enroll new homes more easily and efficiently. The second is an online subscription service for individuals.

The new online registration system for new homes service is fast and easy to use. Licensed builders are able to register new projects with the HPO and pay the related HPO fees online at any time, with wait times eliminated. The new home information is electronically transferred to the builder's home warranty insurance provider.

Once a project has been enrolled and electronically sealed by the licensed builder's warranty provider, the builder can then download and print the New Home Registration Form on 8.5" x 11" paper to obtain a building permit from local government. In addition to registering new projects, licensed builders will also have access anytime to their records of construction activity and electronic copies of their approved forms.

HPO encourages licensed builders to set up an online HPO account in order to take advantage of these new benefits. If a licensed builder does not yet have a user account or password, they can contact the HPO at 604-646-7050 or toll-free at 1-800-407-7757 and select Option 1 for Licensing. An information bulletin as well as an animated demonstration of this new online service is available in the *What's New* section of the HPO website at www.hpo.bc.ca.

In addition, developers, builders, homebuyers and others can now subscribe to the HPO's free online publications such as *Builder Insight*, the *Building BC* newsletter and *Maintenance Matters*. Subscribers will be notified by email when a new bulletin or newsletter is available. To subscribe to this service, go to <http://www.hpo.bc.ca/Publications/Emailsubscriptions/index.php>. In an effort to be more kind to the environment, future HPO publications will only be available online.

HPO continues to be committed to providing fast, efficient and up-to-date services to support licensed builders and others involved in the residential construction industry.

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Victoria

The City of Victoria has introduced a new **Green Power Tax Exemption Bylaw**. Though not yet passed at the time of writing, UDI Victoria applauds the city's effort to encourage developers to include "green power" in their projects. Doing something new is risky and we appreciate the support for innovation.

We've asked for a revision to the description of a green power facility from one that "supplies at least two separate buildings **each** of which has achieved a LEED certification of silver or better..." or "are substantially equivalent" (emphasis ours) to one that supplies "green power" to more than one building.

The reasoning here is developers do not have control over the building or renovation of the building(s) next to them but could still build a "green power" facility that serves them.

The First Draft of the Urban Forest Master Plan has been released and is available for review online at http://www.victoria.ca/cityhall/departments_compar_rbnfrs.shtml.

UDI Victoria has been an active part of the steering committee for the plan and invites you to read the draft and send us your comments. We've already noted some minor problems with "us and them" language but we're pleased to note those will be changed through the editing process before the next draft is released.

The steering committee reminds readers that the draft is an overview document, a wish list, and is not an action plan. The action plan will be developed through further consultation over the next three or four months.

See the website above for more details.



Saanich

Saanich's Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Committee has recommended to council that a \$1,500 **Affordable Housing Amenity Contribution** be made by developers for every new home start in Saanich. Unfortunately, that \$1,500 would be added to the cost of the new home and the new homeowner would have to add it in their mortgage. UDI Victoria is keenly aware of the affordable housing and housing affordability issues in our area and continues to engage in conversation with other stakeholders equally concerned about these issues.

Saanich has also begun working on an **Urban Forest Strategy**. They've held numerous consultation sessions, ran a detailed survey online this spring. As always, their website offers excellent information about their efforts: <http://www.saanich.ca/resident/parks/UrbanForestStrategy.html>.

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