

Proposed
Friends of Ryan Greenway
Committee

Presented to
Oaklands Community Association

Date: January 13, 2005

1. Background

An undeveloped road allowance corridor, North Ryan (formerly Laurel) Street, runs the entire length from Oaklands School to the Jewish Cemetery, runs along side of Ryan Street, and is so far still owned by the city. The lower section boasts an impressive row of large Garry Oak trees, becoming very rare in the city. Part-way along the corridor at the Ryan Street Hill is the steep, rocky city-owned lot (1436 Ryan Street) with one of the very few remaining publicly-owned undisturbed habitats in the area that support the Garry Oaks and native plant species.

The City of Victoria has approved a Greenways Plan initiative to implement a city-wide connected network of bicycle and pedestrian pathways, including this road allowance, Ryan Greenway.

Dedicated residents and other concerned individuals wish to form a group, to be called "Friends of Ryan Greenway" to support the City of Victoria Greenways Plan, and specifically focus their efforts on the Ryan Greenway portion.

This proposal, indicating the group's mission, goals, and operational plans, is submitted to the Oaklands Community Association in request that the Association adopt the formation of this group as a committee of the Oaklands Community Association

2. Mission

To preserve, regenerate and maintain the natural ecosystems of the Ryan Greenway

3. Overall Action Plan

- Formulate and execute working plan, with stages, taking into account the considerations in Appendix.
- Ensure appropriate protection for the Greenway is in place through bylaws
- Raise funds to help support improvements
- Remove invasive plant species, and encourage/regenerate native plants
- Provide appropriate public access - lookout, bench, trail, stairs, sidewalk

- Initiate an ecosystem study for the Greenway
- Develop a maintenance system
- Coordinate efforts with and inform neighbourhood, Oaklands Community Association, City of Victoria council, other government agencies, educational and environmental institutions

4. Operational plan

- Report to the Oaklands Community Association
- Friends of Ryan Greenway Committee consists of general members, working committee and chairperson
- Updates submitted at least twice a year to the Oaklands Community Association Board of Directors and involve the membership through displays/presentations at appropriate Association functions.
- If required, Oaklands Community Association to set up a separate Ryan Greenways working fund

5. Implementation Stages

It is anticipated that the full implementation of the Ryan Greenway will take many years. Therefore, smaller stages that support the long-term goals and considerations are defined and completed.

5.1 Stage 1

1. Prepare a report for City Council that will:
 - Encourage the City to designate both the North Ryan road allowance and City-owned property at 1436 Ryan Street as “protected Greenway”
 - Address issues that might be brought forward by the City’s Property Manager in his report to Council.
 - Provide the City with information leading to the acknowledgement that both the lot at 1436 Ryan and much of the Greenway itself are prime Garry Oak environment that is desperately in need of preservation.

2. Build a team of knowledgeable and dedicated volunteers that will:
 - a) Designate areas of the Greenway and lot that are environmentally sensitive
 - b) Protect existing native plant species through pruning of dead branches and removal of invasive non-native plant species from environmentally sensitive areas
3. Improve site by:
 - Removing all litter
 - Removing all invasive plants (blackberry, broom etc.) except for barrier between the Garry Oak Viewpoint and the Garry Oak Meadow Sanctuary and possibly other purposes
4. Work with City to add the “Ryan Haven” and the “Ryan Lookout” and connecting trails and pedestrian access
5. Develop and distribute written educational material and also maintain website

5.2 Committee Longer Term Objectives

1. Prepare and advance a conceptual Greenway Development Plan (roads, sidewalks, parking, etc. that addresses competing concerns within the Ryan corridor).
2. Incorporate a comprehensive Native Plant Landscape Plan for the lot and the Greenway that meets the approval of both the local residents and the City.
3. In consultation with immediate residents, generally restore the Greenway to its original ecological status and offering it as a “case study” for similar projects, elsewhere.
4. Assist in every way possible to see the Ryan Street Greenway develop into a linear park that we can all enjoy and take pride in.

6. Appendix

Considerations for Regions of the Ryan Greenway

Lower Ryan Street

Heavily used area by general public among the large Garry Oak trees

- Enhance the ecosystem for the survival of the row of Garry Oak trees
- Ensure safety for school kids going to Oaklands School
- Provide for parking for churches
- Enable wheelchair and pedestrian accessible
- Make access bicycle friendly
- Use appropriate traffic calming methods

Garry Oak Sanctuary

Native Garry Oak sanctuary with limited public access

- Limit public access - create barriers, erect signs, and make trails narrow
- Remove litter and all invasive plants (blackberry, broom etc.) except those used for barrier purposes or other purposes
- With certain possible exceptions, remove all non-native plants
- Encourage existing and plant new native plants
- Survey and catalogue ecosystem progress

Ryan Hill Connector

Connects Lower Ryan Street region to Upper Ryan Street which is easily accessible by public

- Accommodate steep elevation difference with sidewalk, trail or steps
- Ensure the least amount of disturbance to ecosystem
- Make connector pedestrian accessible and accommodate strollers if possible
- Connect to Garry Oak Viewpoint and bench site.

Garry Oak Viewpoint

Special public accessible area to enjoy nature in a peaceful surrounding

- Encourage ecologically sensitive neighbourhood use
- Limit public access to designated trails
- Limited to lower Garry Oak Meadow Sanctuary
- Remove litter and all invasive plants (blackberry, broom etc.) except those used for barrier purposes or other purposes
- Create and maintain public accessible outlook and bench
- Provide public education of ecosystem

Upper Ryan Street

Provide a walkway on the north end of Ryan Street

- Address traffic and pedestrian safety issues
- Consider existing road allowance improvements in front of houses
- Identify, enhance and protect localized Garry Oak clusters and environments