



Community Builders – Building Communities



AUGUST / SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

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CARE AWARDS

The 2025 CARE Awards Finalists have been announced – visit www.careawards.ca for the full list! For tickets, contact Debra at admin@vrba.ca The People's Choice Award Contest display at Hillside Centre is Sept 1 to 14 with promotions in the Times Colonist & CFAX1070. The **CARE Awards gala** is at the Fairmont Empress Hotel on **Friday, October 3**. Thank you Built Green Canada (**Gold**), Cantu | Phylrich (**Gold**), FortisBC (**Gold**), Hourigan's Flooring (**Gold**), ICBA (**Gold**), McLaren Properties (**Gold**), Slegg Building Materials (**Gold**), Trail Appliances (**Gold**), Travelers Insurance Company of Canada (**Gold**), Victoria Real Estate Board (**Gold**), Centra Windows (**Silver**), Coast Capital Savings (**Silver**), Professional Home Builders Institute (**Silver**), Westeck Windows and Doors (**Silver**), Times Colonist (**Media**), CFAX1070/CTV (**Media**), Yellow Sheet Construction Data (**Media**) for sponsoring in 2025! There is still time! Take a moment to consider sponsoring the industry's premier housing awards! The popular and industry-leading CARE Awards magazine featuring Gold winners will be distributed by the Times Colonist. Support our sponsors supporting the CARE Awards!

Gold Sponsors



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TIMES COLONIST



NEW MEMBERS / APPLICANTS

Please welcome new VRBA members:

Carfra Lawton LLP – Ryan Butler and Amos Comeau

Annual VRBA Membership Renewal Fees are now due! Please contact Debra at admin@vrba.ca & thank you for your support!

VRBA GENERAL MEETING – WED SEPT 10

VRBA will hold our General Meeting/Election Lunch, Wednesday, September 10 at the Gorge Vale Golf Club, 1005 Craigflower Rd. FREE PARKING!

Our speaker is Jock Finlayson, Chief Economist, ICBA and Senior Fellow of the Fraser Institute. Jock will discuss the economic conditions for new housing in BC.

Agenda

11:30 am – Registration

11:45 am – Welcome

11:50 am - Election

12:00 noon - Roundtable Introductions & Lunch

12:30 pm – Speaker: Jock Finlayson, Chief Economist, ICBA

1:30 pm – Adjourn

Members: \$65 + GST incl lunch

Non-members: \$95 + GST incl lunch

To reserve your seat, fill out the attached registration form and submit to Debra at admin@vrba.ca

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BC BUDGET CONSULTATION REPORT HIGHLIGHTS VRBA RECOMMENDATIONS

In June, VRBA provided several recommendations to BC's Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to assist housing supply and affordability. Their report says:

"The Victoria Residential Builders Association advocated for implementing regional planning for housing and associated infrastructure, particularly in areas such as the Capital Regional District that have several municipalities. The organization also recommended creating a single, uniform energy and building code in every municipality."

"The Victoria Residential Builders Association recommended reducing and capping development cost charges and amenity agreements, which they noted make many projects unaffordable to build."

"The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government: Maintain programs supporting municipal infrastructure and regional planning and review development cost structures to allow for reduced or flexible fees..."

It is now up to the provincial government, in cooperation with municipalities, to address the challenges and help improve regional planning and housing affordability.

PROVINCIAL ADVISOR OBSERVATION RE: OAK BAY IMPORTANT FOR BUILDERS

On behalf of members, VRBA reviews policy issues and reports on housing including the Provincial Advisor's Report on Oak Bay. [An important observation by the provincial advisor is on Pg 28:](#)

"While watching videos of Council considering specific variances, we repeatedly observed public input and Council discussion that strayed far away from the issue properly in front of Council to other aspects of the development. Many

comments were about issues that were a right under the zoning bylaw and, therefore, not properly in front of Council. This practice also creates significant risk for Oak Bay.

In watching the videos of some Oak Bay Council meetings where variances are being considered, a fair-minded person could conclude that Council made decisions to deny a variance for reasons that had little or nothing to do with it. Instead, the decision was made based on considerations about the development proposal, a right under zoning. This invites an opportunity for an applicant to pursue a Judicial Review of Council's decision if they feel that Council's denial of the application of the variance was made for reasons other than the circumstances of the variance itself.

To this end, we recommend that until variances are delegated to staff, whoever chairs a Council or committee meeting is diligent in ensuring that public comments and Council debate are strictly about the issue in front of Council and do not expand to include other concerns and objections that are not up for discussion or decision. It concerns us that some decisions that were supposed to be about variances ultimately were made for issues that had nothing or little to do with the variance. We believe this is a sufficiently important recommendation that the Province continue monitoring this. It is not unreasonable to recommend that, given a report already written and guidelines already prepared, this change could happen within 90 days."

[On May 22, 2025 the Minister issued a directive:](#)

*"For Oak Bay, the district must:
amend its Development Application Procedures bylaw to delegate minor variances to municipal staff by Jan. 31, 2026, which is consistent with past municipal staff reports and is a practice used in many other jurisdictions"*

Take note if you have or had a variance application submitted to Oak Bay or any municipality

UPCOMING SEMINAR: DEVELOPING SMALL-SCALE HOUSING DENSITY FOR BUILDERS

VRBA is planning a day-long seminar to help builders develop small-scale housing density including duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in our region. The seminar is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, Nov 4, 2025 at a cost of about \$100 per person, including lunch. Location TBA. The seminar will be submitted to BC Housing for CPD approval. More info to be provided to VRBA members via email.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 1 – People's Choice Award Contest Display at Hillside Centre

Sept 3 – VRBA Duffer Hockey Starts

Sept 10 – VRBA General Meeting/Lunch at Gorge Vale Golf Club: Speaker – Jock Finlayson, Chief Economist, ICBA

Sept 24 – Builders Council: Speaker – Peter Drobina, Federal Real Estate Taxation, Ryan ULC

Oct 3 – 2025 CARE Awards Gala at Fairmont Empress Hotel – tickets now on sale!

Nov 4 – Seminar – Developing Small-Scale Housing Density for Builders

VRBA BUILDERS COUNCIL – WED SEPT 24

On Wed Sept 24 at 12 noon, Builders Council presents a Zoom presentation on GST issues by Peter Drobina Senior Manager, Federal Real Estate Taxation, Ryan ULC. This includes qualifying criteria for the GST rebate for rentals constructed on or after Sept 14 2023. All are welcome!

Contact Debra at admin@vrba for the Zoom link. This meeting has been approved by BC Housing, Licensing and Consumer Services for one hour CPD for builder licensing.

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HARTLAND LANDFILL PRODUCING RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS FOR FORTISBC



The Capital Regional District (CRD), working together with FortisBC Energy Inc. (FortisBC) and Waga Energy Canada, has started producing Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) at a new facility located at the Hartland Landfill. The Hartland Landfill RNG facility is Vancouver Island's first RNG facility.

Originally announced in 2020, the nearly \$32 million Hartland Renewable Natural Gas facility, utilizing Waga Energy's WAGABOX® technology, is designed to produce a maximum of 360,000 gigajoules of RNG annually, reducing the capital region's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by up to 475,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide over the next 25 years. Landfill gas, released from decomposing waste, is captured and then injected into FortisBC's gas system.

The facility aligns with the CRD's commitment to address climate change within their operations and across the region and is an example of how FortisBC is working with local governments to develop renewable and lower carbon gases. Waga Energy will operate and maintain the facility on the CRD's behalf for 25 years. FortisBC will pay a fixed price per gigajoule for the RNG and will be responsible for the costs associated with injecting the RNG into its gas distribution system.

FortisBC constructed an RNG interconnection station and a pipeline connecting the landfill to its existing gas system. Hartland Landfill, owned and operated by the CRD, serves over 460,000 people and generates approximately 10 percent of the GHG emissions in the region.

www.fortisbc.com/about-us/news-events/media-centre-details/2025/05/22/hartland-landfill-producing-renewable-natural-gas-for-fortisbc



GREATER VICTORIA HOUSING STARTS UP 29%

CMHC reports Greater Victoria's 2,920 housing starts from January to July 2025 are 29% higher than the 2,259 starts in 2024. The vast majority are condo/apts representing 83% of new housing – mostly projects that were in the hopper a year, two-or-more ago. Despite the increase in starts, construction costs continue to be enormously high due to govt costs like DCC's, ACC's, permit fees, regulatory hurdles and slow approval processes.

New single-family homes at 158 are down 5%. Duplexes/row housing are up 77% over last year. Year-to-date, Langford leads in new home construction at 1,066 units followed by Victoria 594, Saanich 571, Colwood 344, Sooke 143, Esquimalt 95, Oak Bay 45, Central Saanich 17, Sidney 12, North Saanich 11, View Royal 2, Highlands 1, Metchosin 0.

Presently 48% of the CRD's new housing is in two West Shore communities – Langford and Colwood. Langford also has the largest number of new single family, semi-detached and row units (duplexes, townhomes also known as missing middle), followed by Colwood.

Municipalities clearly not pulling their weight are View Royal, Metchosin, Highlands, North Saanich, Central Saanich, Sidney. North Saanich declined to meet with BC's housing ministry staff to discuss the municipality missing their housing targets and deficiencies in their reports.

VRBA / ICBA BENEFITS PLAN

VRBA has partnered with the Independent Contractors and Businesses Association ICBA to launch our own group benefit plan providing competitive rates and great service in group health, dental, retirement and other benefits.

The VRBA Benefits Plan is powered by ICBA Benefits, a company specializing in benefits for the construction industry, with customized options to meet your company's needs.

Need a plan? We can help you find a cost-effective option. Already have a plan? We can review the performance of your current benefit plan to find opportunities for improvement and cost savings. Email sales@icbabenefits.ca to learn about next steps.

PREFERRED GOLD CORPORATE RATES FOR VRBA MEMBERS AT ACCENT INNS AND HOTEL ZED

VRBA members get **Preferred Gold** corporate rates at accentinns.com/ & Hotel Zed hotelzed.com/. For the promo code, contact Debra at admin@vrba.ca.



EDUCATION & TRAINING



Murray Frank's Building It Right Courses buildingitright.com 65 CPD points available online! Also have a look at Course in a Box for 20 CPD points buildingitright.com/course-in-a-box.html

Murray's latest new course is called The Phoenix – Designing and Rebuilding Our House of Tomorrow. Register here [Phoenix via ThunderTix](#) [Also book a cruise with their CPD at Sea!](#)

Professional Home Builders Institute: [Online courses](#) and core competencies approved for BC Builder Licensing are available at the Professional Home Builders Institute. **VRBA members get a 15% discount!**

ICBA: A wide selection of online courses, many CPD approved, from the Independent Contractors and Businesses Association including Construction Law, Drawings, Profitable Contracting, Construction Management, Employment Standards, etc. Visit [Upcoming Courses & Events - Independent Contractors and Businesses Association](#)

Victoria Residential Builders Association
#1 – 3690 Carey Road, Victoria, BC V8Z 4C2
Phone: 250.383.5044 Fax: 250.383.9423 email: admin@vrba.ca
Websites: www.vrba.ca and www.careawards.ca
Visit us on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter): [@vicbuilders](#) has over 5,000 Followers!