



FAIRFIELD GONZALES
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
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Mayor and Council, City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

January 28, 2020

Re: Petition for the Formation of a new Gonzales Neighbourhood Association

Dear Mayor and Council,

The Fairfield Gonzales Community Association has learned of the request by another organization to become recognized as the neighbourhood association representing the Gonzales area and residents. The Board of the FGCA is writing to City Council to voice our opposition to this petition. The FGCA has served both Fairfield and Gonzales neighbourhoods for forty-five years with integrity and commitment, and we believe that residents will be best served by us continuing to do so.

As the association currently representing this area and those residents, we find it disappointing that this group of Gonzales residents did not approach the FGCA to discuss those issues they suggest warrant the formation of a new neighbourhood association nor advise us of their intent with a copy of their petition to Council.

It is the Board's understanding these residents have indicated they are not being well represented by the FGCA and that specifically the FGCA's CALUC is predominantly made up of Fairfield residents and does not best serve the Gonzales area. While the composition of the CALUC is not predetermined based on neighbourhood residency of its members, the Board is committed to ensuring CALUC members have the best interests of the committee, our community, and the City at heart and has undertaken extensive work to improve the transparency of CALUC membership selection processes. This has included an application process and selection criteria that not only considers related competencies, but also the diversity of our neighbourhood.

We are concerned that an organization that appears have a strong or polarized agenda regarding community development may do a disservice to the City's development consultation processes as well as to the greater Fairfield Gonzales community. As you are aware, the role of the CALUC is not to take sides with respect to development proposals but instead to facilitate communication within the community and in turn fairly and accurately report those results back to the City. The FGCA is careful to maintain civility and promote open communication in all of our CALUC community meetings and is proud to know our CALUC reports to the city are well-received.



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As mentioned, community planning, including the role of the CALUC, while very important, is only one of many services the FGCA provides to the Fairfield Gonzales neighbourhoods and to the city in general. Besides being the largest out of school child-care provider in Victoria, the FGCA offers many youth and adult oriented programs, sponsors and promotes community events, facilitates community gatherings and provides many resources equally for residents of the Fairfield and Gonzales neighbourhoods. I would invite the Mayor and Council to review our website if they would like to become more familiar with the truly broad scope of services FGCA provides.

For the past forty-five years we have welcomed and continue to welcome the participation of other organizations in civic life; indeed, it is one of the cornerstones of building vibrant and healthy communities. We ourselves support many other community organizations by providing them with resources such as volunteers, services, and meeting spaces. However, given the circumstances surrounding the current petition before Council the Board of the Fairfield Gonzales Community Association cannot support nor endorse the petition for the formation of a separate Gonzales Neighbourhood Association. Furthermore, we formally request that the City include the FCGA in any discussions pertaining to the creation of a new neighbourhood association that would potentially impact the FGCA, or those services and residents to whom the FGCA is currently responsible to represent.

We appreciate your consideration of this important issue and we would be pleased to discuss the matter further.

Yours truly,

Don Monsour,

President

cc. Victoria Community Association Network, and its members
cc. Gonzales Neighbourhood Association



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