



Corey Scott painting of Gonzales Bay

GONZALES COMMUNITY GREEN MAP

Gonzales Neighbourhood

The beautiful community of Gonzales lies between the Victoria neighbourhoods of Fairfield and Rockland to the west, South Jubilee to the North and the District of Oak Bay to the east. Gonzales's population of approximately 4,200 residents puts it in the mid-range of neighbourhood populations in Victoria: Fairfield 11,600 vs South Jubilee 2,200.

The neighbourhood is special because of the quiet, tree-lined streets, diverse houses with gardens, variety of park spaces (from Gonzales Hill to Pemberton Park), commercial stores and businesses along Oak Bay Avenue; and a concentration of stores and services at Fairfield Plaza which serve local residents and citizens throughout the city. A number of larger institutions, schools, nursing homes and churches, also serve Gonzales.

Gonzales has the second highest percentage of tree canopy in Victoria with 50 hectares (ha) or 37% of the neighbourhood. Rockland has the highest at 58 ha or 45% of the neighbourhood.

Gonzales is named for Spanish explorer Gonzalo Lopez de Haro, First Mate of the Spanish ship Princesa Real, who helped chart the waters around Vancouver Island in 1790.

Glenlyon Norfolk School

An all-girls school dedicated to a rigorous education in academics, arts and values, Norfolk House School (NHS) was founded by Miss Dora Atkins and Miss Julia McDermott in 1913. Following several years of transition and growth, NHS moved in 1932 into what is now known as the Main Building on the Pemberton Woods Campus. That same year, Major Ian Simpson established Glenlyon Preparatory School for boys, which moved in 1935 to the current Beach Drive Campus.

In 1986 the schools joined together offering education for students in Kindergarten through to Grade 12. Currently the Middle and Senior Schools on the Pemberton Woods Campus offer Grades 6 through 12, and the Junior School on the Beach Drive Campus offers First Steps (for children age 3) through to Grade 5.

Proposed Gonzales Migration Corridor (Blue Shading)

The map's shaded blue area was created after several community mapping sessions and in consultation with local biologists. Criteria for the location of the corridor is abundance of trees, size of lots, height of land and linkage to Rockland and the Lieutenant Governors House (of which the large lot and relatively undisturbed land is home to important bird, plant and small mammal species). Research on Threatened and Endangered species found within a kilometre of this proposed corridor are listed on the Gonzales website

<https://www.gonzalesna.ca/community-mapping>. The fact that this area may contain threatened and endangered species as well as many Garry Oak trees means that this information should be taken into consideration for any future development

Pemberton Park

At just over two hectares, Pemberton Park has something for everyone: forest trails, playground, baseball diamond with large backstop and bleachers, dog off-leash area, and washrooms. The southeastern side of the park has a pathway through the Douglas fir, big leaf maples and horse chestnut trees. Locals enjoy walking through the park trying to spot resident barred owls. The large grassy field is used by Bays United Football Club and Beacon Hill Baseball and Softball. Just beyond the ball field is an off-leash area that is much loved by local dogs and their owners.

The park was named for the civil engineer and surveyor JD Pemberton of the mid 1850's. His home stood for almost 100 years at the corner of St. Charles and Rockland and he called it *Gonzales*. Gonzales Road derives its name from the house. More is written on his life story on the other side of this map.

Margaret Jenkins Elementary School is the heart of Gonzales. It is roughly in the centre and the catchment is bigger than the neighbourhood boundaries, thus all children within Gonzales borders are directed to go to this school. The striking brick building was built in 1913-14 in response to large increases in school enrolments in Victoria. The building design has been described as "... a dignified Dutch gable theme, with much decorative brickwork, including recessed panels, and an imposing central front entrance".

Margaret Jenkins was extremely active in the community. She was a school trustee, social reformer, political organizer, church worker and woman's suffrage activist as well as being the mother to 13 children. In 1897 she was the first woman elected to the Victoria School Board and she served on it until 1919.

École Margaret Jenkins School currently operates as a dual-track English and French Immersion Elementary School.

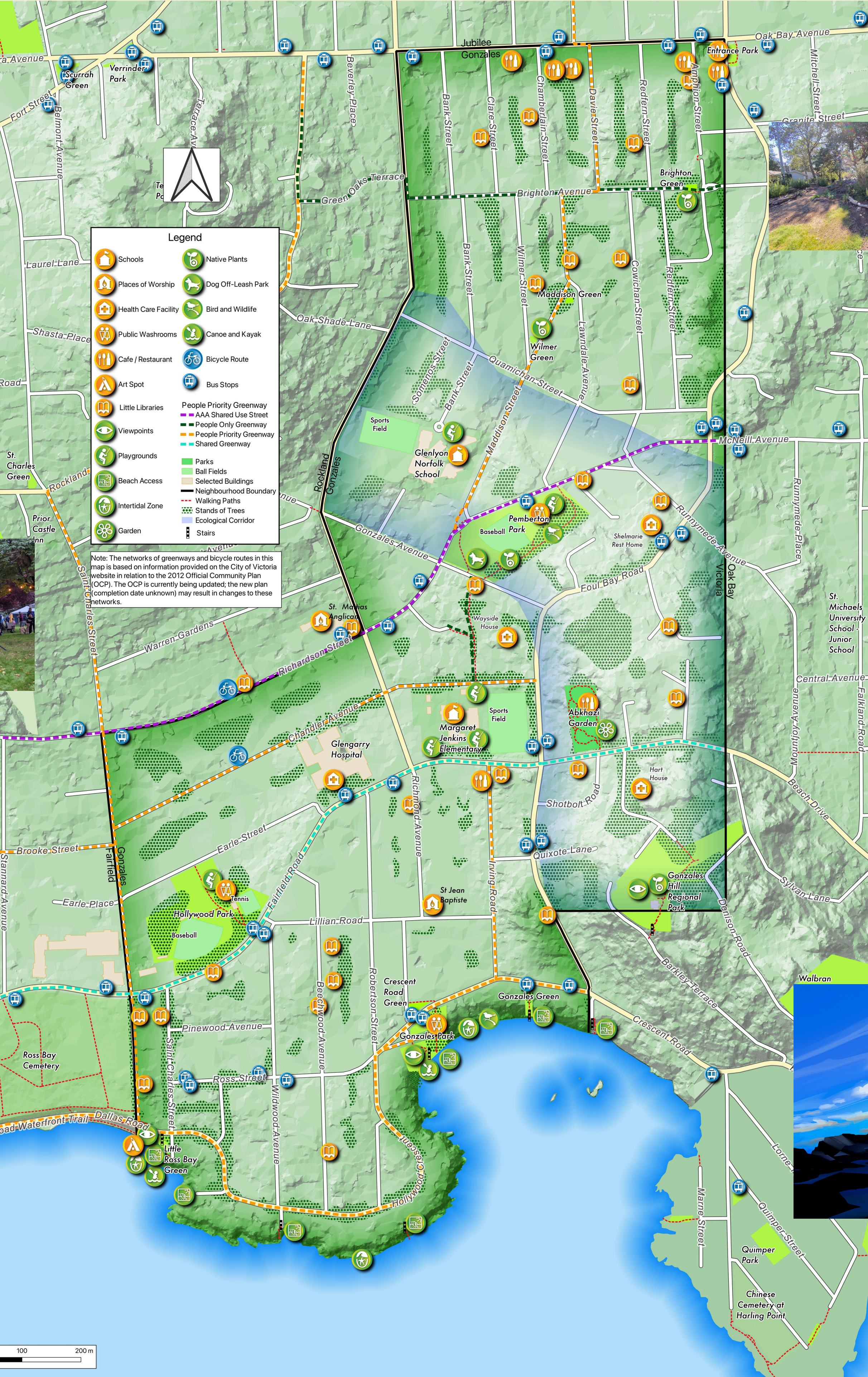


École Élémentaire Margaret Jenkins Elementary School

Hollywood Park is a beautifully landscaped park covering two and a third hectares. It has two well used tennis courts, ball diamonds also used by Beacon Hill Baseball and Softball, washrooms and a wonderful playground set away from busy Fairfield road. Friday nights are a great time to go watch a ball game in the summer and enjoy food from the concession stand. Watching a game from the stands is like watching a field of dreams; the location is impressive. And while gazing off toward the stand of magnificent Douglas fir toward the south, you may notice the resident eagles at their lofty nest site.



Hollywood Park



Gonzales Beach

Depending on wind direction and speed, Gonzales Beach can either be Victoria's greatest sunbathing and hanging out beach, or the scene of some of the heaviest winds along the South Island coastline. More often than not, regardless of the time of year, the views of the US Olympic mountains and the Juan de Fuca Strait are stunning.

The beach is a federally listed Migratory Bird Sanctuary and as such dogs are limited to being on leash in the winter and not allowed at all in the summer. eBird.org lists 141 bird species that have been observed at the beach. Harbour seals and elephants seals can also be spotted at times along with occasional river otter.

For three days in November 1969, a significant storm battered the Gonzales shoreline. Because of this the city built a retaining wall around most of the bay to prevent further erosion or loss of property the following summer.

For the past 25 years on December 21, *Solstice*, locals have put out tea lights and paper bags from 6 pm on. When the tide is very low you may be able to walk around to the Chinese Cemetery at Harling Point. At these times the beach is particularly stunning with all the tea lights twinkling to the furthest point of the beach.



Senior Facilities

Gonzales has four facilities providing senior and mental health care. Two are affiliated with Vancouver Island Health authority: **Shelmarie and Glengarry Hospital**; and two that are independent: **Hart House and Wayside House**. Three facilities are housed in historic houses: Shelmarie, Hart House and Wayside House; so they blend in well with the neighbourhood. Glengarry is a large facility on Fairfield Road and is situated on a flat part of the neighbourhood so there are often residents strolling or being pushed around the streets of south Gonzales taking in the air and smelling the flowers.

Brighton Green

Tucked into the junction of Brighton Avenue and Amphon Street is a native-plant meadow featuring three iconic Garry oaks estimated to be 100 years old. The restoration of this meadow was inspired by Victoria Parks' staff person Thomas Munson, who promoted the urgent need to revive and protect the less than 4% Garry oak ecosystem remaining in the region. Prior to restoration efforts, the site had been dominated by invasive grasses and Spanish Bluebell. Neighbour Monique Genton has spent five years and over 1,200 hours of volunteer effort removing invasive species. By restricting pedestrian and bike traffic to designated paths, re-introduced native plants are thriving including the iconic blue-flowered Camas, whose bulbs were an essential food source for First-Nations people.



Maddison Green

This story describes how a community has cared for and protected a small, but well loved green space in the Gonzales neighbourhood. The first section of the 900 Block of Maddison Street starts at the intersection of Quamichan and Wilmer Street and then runs north to where it joins Lawndale Avenue. It looks like a small country lane and is located in the heart of what was once one of the most extensive areas of the now threatened Garry Oak ecosystem on Vancouver Island. Residents of the lane have cared for the big oaks, on both privately owned properties and public land for a long time.

The late Jim and Esme Thornton carefully gardened around the huge oaks and wild flowers on their property for over 50 years. Across the street, long time neighbour Mrs. Margaret Perry also provided an excellent example of individual stewardship. She began watching over the city-owned grove of oaks and wild flowers adjacent to her property, on the corner of Maddison Street and Lawndale Avenue, when she bought her house in the 1960's. She, Graham Whincup and other neighbours successfully opposed a proposal to develop the oak grove in the 70s.

In 1996, Mrs. Perry bought the grove of oaks next to her property from the city and then donated it back to the city so that it could be turned into a park. The city passed a bylaw in the same year to reserve the area as one of the city's smallest parks (0.03Ha). *(the full write up on this part of Gonzales can be found at www.gonzalesna.ca)*

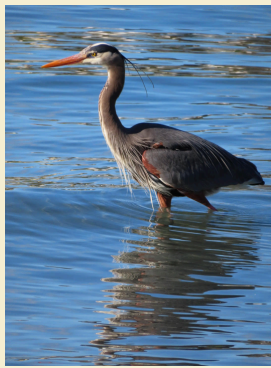


Abkhazi Garden

Peggy Pemberton-Carter met Prince Nicholas Abkhazi, in Paris in 1922. Prince Nicholas, the last surviving son of an ancient line of Kings of Abkhazia on the Black sea, had been living there in exile since escaping the Bolshevik Revolution. The Prince and Princess settled in Victoria, began to develop their one-acre property and build their home. They continued to improve the garden throughout their forty years together. Stated for a townhouse development in 2000, The Land Conservancy purchased the property to preserve the elaborate garden, the legacy of the Abkhazis. The gardens and teahouse now are open to the public year-round.



Dale Hitchcox art Gonzales Observatory



Gonzales Hill Regional Park offers stunning ocean views from the highest point of land (66m) on the south coast of Vancouver Island, and rocky knolls from which to appreciate them. The sunset views over downtown Victoria and the distant Sooke Hills are particularly spectacular. The Observatory found there was constructed as a climate station for the Dominion Meteorological Service in 1912-13 but also served as a site for seismological recordings and astronomical observations, and for providing accurate time measurements to mariners. Today there are no staff on site to record measurements, but automatic recording equipment still measures weather and seismological activity. The weather station was well known as the only site in Canada which had experienced entire years without a freezing temperature.

The 1.8 ha park is operated by the Capital Regional District (CRD), and provides habitat for Garry oak trees and a variety of rare plants and animals. It is also a launching off point for turkey vultures on their yearly migration south.



St. Jean Baptiste Paroisse Francaise

We welcome donations to continue our work for the neighbourhood. Donations can be made via e-transfer to: gonzalesneighbours@gmail.com