

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

City of Victoria first to adopt PlaceSpeak proposed land use change notification system

VICTORIA, BC - (May 15, 2015) PlaceSpeak announced today the launch of a new, free service, which allows residents to be notified online about proposed land use changes within their immediate area. PlaceSpeak will use its unique ‘geolocation’ process to send notifications directly to residents who want to know what is being planned for their area and will ensure they are well informed and properly engaged in the decision-making process. Victoria is the first city in Canada with this new service.

“Residents are interested in what is being proposed and built in their neighbourhoods, and it’s important that information is at their fingertips,” said Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps. “These new tools build on our commitment to open government and to finding innovative ways for citizens to engage with City Hall and with their neighbours.”

Free, open and user-driven access to public information is an important foundation for local governments who seek to deepen and broaden citizen engagement in their communities. IN 2014, the Open Data BC conducted a survey of the the Most Wanted Municipal Datasets in Canada. PlaceSpeak has focused its efforts on three of those datasets namely: 1. Rezoning permit applications; 2. Land use changes and 3. Development permit applications. Our vision is to provide easier access to information so that citizens may better informed about proposed changes in their neighbourhoods.

“We are delighted that Victoria will be the first city to enable PlaceSpeak to deliver open data notifications to its residents”, said PlaceSpeak founder and CEO, Colleen Hardwick. “Keeping residents informed is the first step toward a more engaged community. Hopefully, we will see other municipalities throughout British Columbia following this example of proactive outreach”.

About PlaceSpeak

PlaceSpeak is a location-based public consultation platform. Its mission is to authenticate the online consultation process in an open, transparent, verifiable, and defensible manner. It solves the problem of how to consult with people online within specific geographical boundaries. PlaceSpeak has been developed with the support of the National Research Council of Canada IRAP program.



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