



Capital Region Housing Corporation
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September 26, 2019

Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC, V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

Re: Proposed Caledonia Redevelopment

The proposed development site consists of assembling nine under-utilized properties. The assembled parcel will span from Gladstone Avenue to Grant Street. The property at 1211 Gladstone Avenue currently holds three attached townhouse buildings with 18 units. The property at 1209 North Park Street currently holds a two storey 4 unit house. The remaining seven properties are vacant brownfield lots. All nine properties will be consolidated into a single parcel for the purpose of this affordable housing project. The consolidated lot offers an ideal opportunity to replace of the existing 22 units on the site with 154 units.

The proposed development abuts single family homes, Haegert Park and the Compost Education Centre to the west, Spring Ridge Commons, single family homes and the Fernwood Community Centre to the north, the Victoria High School track to the east, and apartment buildings to the south.

The proposed site layout includes five separate buildings, consisting of three 3-3½ storey attached townhouses, one 5 storey apartment building, and one 4 storey apartment building. The townhouses are positioned at the north end of site, adjacent to single family lots. The apartment buildings are positioned towards the south end of site, adjacent to the Vic High track, Haegert Park and neighbouring apartments along Grant Street. Massing was carefully considered to maximize the use of the site without disrupting the character of the neighbourhood. The sole 5 storey building is located between North Park Street and Vining Street. This section of site does not border residential properties. The 4 storey apartment building is located at the south section of site. At the top floor, the building steps back on all sides to reduce the massing effect, as seen from street level.

The School District 61 (SD61), BC Housing and the City of Victoria have signed a letter of intent and letters of authorization to facilitate with rezoning application and subsequent land swap. The land swap and lot consolidation are subject to successfully rezoning the property. The final agreement will see the SD61 as the sole owner of the consolidated lot and the Capital Region Housing Corporation signing a new 60 year lease agreement.



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The consolidated lot will require rezoning from the current R-K and R-2 zones to a site specific zone. The proposal increases the allowable density from an FSR of up to 0.6:1, allowing for up to 78 units, to 1.29 which would allow for the proposed 154 units.

The request for additional density on this site is warranted in view the significant need for affordable housing and in response to the City's Strategic Objectives. The proposed development will fully respect the City's policies and guidelines. Furthermore, the project will achieve the Energy Performance Benchmark as set out in B.C.'s Energy Step Code and in keeping with City of Victoria's energy reduction targets. However, the proposal requires an Official Community Plan amendment to change the land use designations from Traditional Residential and Parks to Urban Residential.

On-site parking will be limited to approximately 109 underground stalls. This parking arrangement satisfies the City Schedule "C" bylaws for affordable housing projects. There will be two separate underground parkade entrances, accessed from Caledonia Avenue and Grant Street.

Considerable design changes have been integrated into the current design as a result of the feedback received from existing tenants and community members. Highlights include eliminating an apartment building and replacing it with an additional townhouses block, increasing the connectivity of the site, and changing the scale of buildings.

Executing on the need to address a very low vacancy rate across the City, this application meets several goals and initiatives set out by the City of Victoria, SD61, BC Housing, and CRHC. This proposal is compelling and supportable as it increases the supply of affordable housing, is compatible with existing land use in the immediate area, and is centrally located to a number of key amenities.

Sincerely,

Paul Kitson
Manager, Development, Capital Region Housing Corporation