

From: L H
Sent: December 11, 2024 10:38 AM
To: Marianne Alto (Mayor); Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor); Chris Coleman (Councillor); Matt Dell (Councillor); Marg Gardiner (Councillor); Stephen Hammond (Councillor); Krista Loughton (Councillor); Susan Kim (Councillor); Dave Thompson (Councillor);
Public Hearings
Subject: Re: 50 Government Street Proposal

To: Mayor and Council,

December 11, 2024

Re: 50 Government Street

I am writing to you concerning the proposal for 50 Government Street in James Bay. It has been a lengthy process before council, and I know that the developer has made some changes to the original proposal.

What is now being proposed is still a concern for the community. It still does not fit in with the character and form of the neighbourhood. I understand that this property can accommodate multi-unit residences however, I urge Mayor and council to not move ahead with such a large building. It does not respect the rights and privacy of neighbours, is in the middle of the street not on a main road such as Dallas Road which is more suited to this size of structure. It also does not fit in with the heritage character of the street and especially the bordering heritage conservation zone. Please encourage multi-use residences that fit this style and more of an appropriate size. As the city grows, so does the importance of our tourism sector and the historical aspect of this neighbourhood is vital to this industry.

In summary, I urge you to please not consider this proposal. Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Frances Hurrell

James Bay resident

Alicia Ferguson

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: Urgent -- 50 Government and 135-139 Menzies.

If the City and this Council truly believes in "One City One Plan" — please present this alternative amendment to 50 Government and 135-139 Menzies.

As the James Bays LAP was last revised 1993 — the Fernwood was in 2022. Only seems fair that the same parameters are applied to both neighbourhoods before voting on these buildings as it presented in the applications, and as James Bay has been without an updated Local Area Plan, I would strongly urge you to present a motion stating that:

In lieu of any effort of the City over the past 31 years to update the James Bay Local Area Plan, while the new OCP is in development, in the interim the City will adopt the guidelines established in the recently (2022) updated Fernwood Village Plan and have the sentiment and rules that were recently updated in this similar historic neighbourhood applied equivocally to James Bay.

And a second motion stating that as such:

All decision on the 50 Government Street and 135-139 Menzies developments should be temporarily postponed until staff has the opportunity to evaluate these applications under the updated Fernwood/James Bay development guidelines.

And a third motion:

The James Bay Village, south of the Five Corners deserves the same protection and consideration as the protections proposed for Fernwood Square in the recently updated (2022) Fernwood LAP.

Respectfully,
Kevin Youck
135 Medan Street

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: RE: 50 GOVERNMENT ST: COMMENTS ON REVISED OEZA PROPOSAL OF April 15, 2025

From: John Dewhirst
Sent: June 10, 2025 4:51 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: 50 GOVERNMENT ST: COMMENTS ON REVISED OEZA PROPOSAL OF April 15, 2025

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

We wish to comment on the current Oeza Development Plans for 50 Government Street of April 15, 2025, revised in response to the COTW decision of December 12, 2024. We are Carolyn Sadowska and John Dewhirst, [REDACTED] of 50 Government. Our comments focus on 41-43 South Turner, but many apply also to the other properties adjacent to 50 Government and to the local neighbourhood.

We speak with some exasperation: this is the FIFTH proposed version that we have had to review. None have effectively resolved its impacts on the sunlight, privacy and quiet enjoyment of neighbours and the City Brand. As citizens and taxpayers, we question why such a constantly defective proposal has been tolerated for five attempts—all at considerable time and expense to City staff, Mayor and Council, and neighbours.

Despite the direct input of City staff and a great many insightful comments from neighbours, the current revised Oeza proposal fails to overcome its profound shortcomings. Disappointingly, many difficulties in the previous four Oeza proposals persist in this current proposal. Some are made worse. Most stem from this hard fact: *the 50 Government St. lot is too small to counteract the impacts of its proposed oversize 5-storey development.*

Whereas all previous multi-storey, multi-residential developments in the neighbourhood have effectively mitigated impacts on neighbours, the current proposed development of 50 Government fails to do so. Most difficulties stem from the fact that the proposed setbacks are too small to reasonably mitigate the impacts. Instead of proposing a design that effectively counteracts the impacts of the proposed oversize building on its undersize lot, the current proposal imposes its defective design on the adjacent neighbours, robbing them of sunlight, privacy and quiet enjoyment.

We ask the proponents to deal with their own design shortcomings of their own lot: *to design **beneficially** within the limitations of their own lot space.*

Misleading precedents in the current Oeza proposal

To justify placement of its oversized 5-storey multi-residential building at 50 Government, *within* a streetscape of two-storey homes, the Oeza proposal depicts ambiguous precedents of 3-storey to 6-storey multi-residential buildings in James Bay (Page RZ-004). Specifically for comparable height justification, the proposal depicts nearby 34 South Turner, a 7-storey 13-unit residential building at the corner of South Turner and Rithet (Page RZ-200). Also nearby, in the lower 600 block of Battery Street, are three 3-storey apartment buildings.

The proposal misleadingly considers only the height of the multi-storey, multi-residential precedents, thereby omitting the other precedent key contextual criteria that the proposed development fails to achieve:

1. All the precedent 3-storey to 6-storey, multi-residential buildings have proportionately large enough setbacks to nullify impacts on neighbours. For example, the nearby precedent of 34 South Turner—touted in the proposal—is built on three lots and placed on a street corner. The setbacks of 34 South Turner, together with its street corner location, completely nullify impacts of blocked sunlight, light pollution, intrusion, and noise.
2. The precedent large multi-storey, multi-residential buildings are not forced into a character streetscape of family homes, but instead are placed at the end of the street, or on a street corner, or amid other multi-storey, multi-residential buildings.
3. The precedent 3-storey apartment buildings placed in the character streetscape are not excessively higher than the neighbouring two-storey family homes. The apartment buildings also are reasonably set back. Thus, their impacts on neighbours are insignificant. The nearby 3-storey apartment buildings in the lower 600 block of Battery Street are typical examples.
4. The unusual precedent of 139 Clarence Street, a 12-storey condo building placed in a character family residence streetscape, is setback from its neighbours by at least the width of one lot, thereby greatly reducing impacts.

In sum, the proposed development for 50 Government Street focuses selectively on height of precedent multi-storey, multi-residential buildings, but fails to include the other interrelated key criteria integral to the design and placement of those precedent buildings.

In short, the current (and past) proposal for 50 Government has referenced precedent multi-storey, multi-residential buildings, but failed to apply critical contextual design from those precedent examples to the proposed development for 50 Government.

Impacts of the Current Proposed Development on 41-43 South Turner

The current proposed development for 50 Government fails to counteract the impacts from its 5-storey building too oversized for its undersized lot. The proposed oversized 5-storey building is a 13.88 m (45.5 ft) wall which stretches essentially across the whole width of 50 Government near the west (rear) property line. Moreover, the proposed tree plantings along the rear property line eventually will form another “wall” as high as the proposed oversized 5-storey building.

The current proposal is unable to counteract its impacts on 41-43 South Turner with respect to: sunlight, art studio, protected laurel and other plantings, privacy, quiet enjoyment

1. **Loss of morning sunlight throughout the year.** The proposed rear setback of 5.65 m (18.5 ft) is completely ineffectual to counteract the great loss of sunlight. The Shadow Study (Page RZ-007) clearly shows that the 5-storey building will block the morning sunlight for 41-43 South throughout the year. This will impair the functioning of a purposefully designed art studio, impact our backyard plantings, and spoil our quiet enjoyment.
2. **Light pollution from 18 windows.** The proposed 5 storey building will have 18 windows only 5.65 m (18.5 ft) from the rear property line. The setback is too small to counteract the light pollution.
3. **Invasion of privacy.** The proposed 5.65 m (18.5 ft) setback is ineffectual to provide privacy from the 4-storeys (17 windows) that look over 41-43 South Turner.
4. **Loss of quiet enjoyment.** The proposed small green space within the short setback of 5.65 m (18 ft.) along the rear (west side) of the building is designed for the use of its residents, who are estimated at 42 persons (Page RZ-003). Groups gathering in this confined green space along the rear fence will impact our quiet enjoyment.
5. **Impairment of art studio.** The loss of morning sunlight throughout the year will impair the function of our art studio, which is used almost every day. This art studio is not a garage or some non-descript outbuilding as depicted in the current and previous Oeza plans. The art studio was professionally designed and built under City of Victoria permit in 1993. It has a skylight facing east (toward 50 Government) for essential morning sunlight. The Shadow Study (Page RZ-007) clearly shows that the proposed 5-storey building will block morning light to the studio throughout the year.

The proposed plantings of three European Beeches (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Riversii') along the rear of 50 Government also will cut off morning light critical for function of our art studio, which relies on its skylight facing east where the Beech trees are proposed. The proposed European Beech typically grows to 50-60 ft (15.24 m to 18.29 m) with a spread of 40-50 ft (12.2 m to 15.2 m) (see www.gardenia.net).

6. **Failure of Oeza proposal to protect qualified mature laurel.** The current Oeza plan makes no provision to protect our mature laurel, which qualifies for protection under the Tree Protection Bylaw. The laurel, more than 30 cm DBH, grows 1.14 m (3.75 ft) from the property line and overhangs 50 Government. The current Existing Site Plan (Page RZ-008) erroneously places the laurel several metres farther west so that the whole laurel and its spread are incorrectly contained entirely within 41-43 South Turner. The current Proposed Site Plan (Page RZ-003) depicts the laurel more accurately, but fails to specify protection for it, whereas the neighbours' trees are protected.
7. **Failure of current Oeza proposal to update post-COTW review information.** The previous (4th) Oeza proposal for 50 Government reviewed by the COTW on December 12, 2024, provided no protection for the laurel. After the COTW review, two City staff examined the laurel. They measured the laurel and told us it qualified it for protection. Several weeks later, a technician retained by Oeza inspected the laurel, but he did not report his findings to us. Oeza has failed to put the updated information about the laurel into the current plan.

The current Oeza Planting Plan L1.1 specifies protection for our neighbours' trees and their root systems, but *none* for our laurel, which qualifies as a protected tree. In fact, the current Overall Site Plan (Page LO.1) omits the laurel, but shows the neighbours' trees and canopy spreads along the north and south sides adjoining 50 Government.

8. **Impacts of Proposed Plantings.** The proposed plantings along the rear of 50 Government will further block morning sunlight, thereby impairing the function of the art studio (see #5 above). The current Oeza plans propose a row of three European Beeches (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Riversii') across the art studio and laurel. The PLANTING PLAN-LEVEL 1 (Page L1.1) depicts the Beeches, each with a spread of about 2.5 m (8 ft), planted in a row close to the rear property line and contained within 50 Government. However, the plan omits to depict the eventual mature size of the European Beech. It typically grows to a height of 50-60 ft with a spread of 40-50 ft (see www.gardenia.net). They will be comparable to the proposed 5-storey building. The mature spread of the European Beech will expand into the canopy of our laurel and its root system. The shadow cast by the wall of Beeches will block morning sunlight to our art studio and to our nearby shrubs and other plantings.

Compromise of Heritage Value and the City of Victoria's Brand

The current proposal undermines the City of Victoria's Brand. For many years, the City has invested considerably in policies and finances to promote architectural heritage as the distinctive City Brand to attract tourists and support local businesses. The City established a registry program to protect and maintain valued heritage buildings. The neighbourhood of 50 Government is a heritage drawing card for visitors and local businesses. Two Registered Heritage Houses, 41-43 South Turner and 54 Government, are directly adjacent on the west and north sides respectively of 50 Government. Nearby are a number of other Registered Heritage Houses. The streetscape is largely early 20th century. This locality area draws many visitors on foot, architectural students, and carriage tours—the City Brand in action!

The current proposal devalues the City Brand:

1. The proposed oversize 5-storey building placed tightly in a streetscape of two-storey early 20th century buildings is entirely out of character and scale for the vintage streetscape. Detracts from the heritage character of the neighbourhood.
2. The proposed 5-storey building compromises the heritage value and setting of the two registered heritage houses (41-43 South Turner and 54 Government) directly adjacent to 50 Government. Why should owners of registered heritage houses commit to maintain and protect them when the adjacent proposed development will compromise their heritage setting and the City investment?
3. The proposed architectural style, particularly the mansard roof, is alien to the early 20th century architecture of the streetscape and neighbourhood. The style of the proposed building detracts from the two adjacent Registered Heritage Houses, nearby Registered Heritage Houses, and the early 20th century streetscape.

Yours truly,

John Dewhirst and Carolyn Sadowska

June 10, 2025

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 Government Street - out of line with community

-----Original Message-----

From: Jared Kelly
Sent: December 7, 2025 6:51 PM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Cc: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government Street - out of line with community

Hello,

I'm just following up because the back and forth on 50 Government Street is becoming very taxing on the neighbourhood. It does not meet the bylaws and is out of line with the neighbourhood. If approved, this huge tower would have clear line of sight right down into our backyard where my young children play. We bought into this neighbourhood in Victoria for a reason. If developments like this go forward, I can't see a scenario where we don't move our young family outside of the city limits. What we need is more medium density with 2-3 bedroom options. To bring more families and long term residents. This achieves the exact opposite.

I hope you will make the right decision and continue rejecting this proposal until it meets the zoning bylaws.

Regards,

Jared Kelly
57 South Turner Street

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 G0vernment proposal

From: CY SUNDERLAND
Sent: December 7, 2025 4:46 PM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 G0vernment proposal

I want to register my disapproval for the latest 50 Government proposal. It is simply too large for the lot ,too high for the neighbors, and does not fit the neighbourhood... In addition the developer has made very little attempt to engage the community for feedback on his proposal. Thank you for your consideration. Cy Sunderland 235 St. Andrews Street.

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 Government St Proposal (again!)

From: Gayle Nelson
Sent: December 8, 2025 10:06 AM
To: Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jaradonna@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Matt Dell (Councillor) <mdell@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca>; Krista Loughton (Councillor) <kloughton@victoria.ca>; Susan Kim (Councillor) <skim@victoria.ca>; Dave Thompson (Councillor) <dave.thompson@victoria.ca>; Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>; Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government St Proposal

Hello again,

I have written to you before and at this point I know that the Planning Department is the first stop for the 50 Government St proposal. I feel it is still relevant to reach out to you because **last December, as a Committee of the Whole, you sent the proposal back for improvements. But it has come back worse - it is higher, bigger and denser - with requests for four major variances.**

Given the fact that this proposal has gone through 8 iterations and remains far out of compliance, our neighbourhood is very concerned with the way the developers are wasting City staff time, Council time and citizen's tax dollars. As a community we have done a ton of research and we are basically appalled at the intransigence and greed of Oeza Developers (the proponent).

I thought you might be interested to see the website on the 50 Government St proposal created with input from a number of members of the community. Contributors include an engineer, an anthropologist, a lawyer, a business/investment policy analyst, a former provincial civil servant, a land use planner and human rights specialist.

<https://www.50government.com/>

We have circulated the website to over 80 people in the James Bay neighbourhood. For over two years, these individuals have been working to ensure that any new development at 50 Government St increases density in a sensible way. To us that means in a way that respects the rights of homeowners in adjacent properties, fits with the character and scale of the neighbourhood and does not make a mockery of the City's own design guidelines and the new OCP.

The website has also been sent to the Director of Planning and the planner responsible for James Bay.

Best regards
Gayle

Gayle Nelson
54 Government St

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 Government Street proposal

From: Patricia Hollister
Sent: December 9, 2025 6:19 PM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>; Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government Street proposal

Please reject the newest 50 Government St proposal. Bigger is not always better.

Thank you.

P Hollister

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
To: Rob Bateman
Subject: RE: 50 Government St. Development Proposal

From: Susan Aylard
Sent: December 9, 2025 7:55 PM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Cc: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government St. Development Proposal

Hi,

I am writing to register my opposition to the proposed redevelopment of 50 Government St. in James Bay. The proposed building is way too tall and large for the lot and immediate neighbourhood and will negatively impact the heritage character of this neighbourhood both for the locals who live and visit and for the tourists who come through on foot, by bike and by horse-drawn carriage.

What is probably even more important at present, is that the city needs to stop encouraging the tearing down of older, more affordable buildings to build new ones which will command significantly higher prices and rents.

Yours sincerely,
Susan Aylard

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 Government Street and 600 Dallas

From: Deb Hull
Sent: December 10, 2025 2:52 PM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>; Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Cc: Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAalto@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Matt Dell (Councillor) <mdell@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca>; Krista Loughton (Councillor) <kloughton@victoria.ca>; Susan Kim (Councillor) <skim@victoria.ca>; Dave Thompson (Councillor) <dave.thompson@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government Street and 600 Dallas

Dear Ms. Hoese and Mr. Bateman,

I did not support much of the OCP update for many reasons. I would ask the City to at least abide by the zoning bylaws that were established as part of the process.

The 50 Government Street proposal is asking for too much. If built, the project would stick out like a sore thumb and make a mockery of the process. The developer is:

- Requesting a variance for 2 more storeys
- Requesting a variance for 4.6 metres (15 feet!) more height
- Requesting a variance for a reduction of more than 5 metres (over 16 feet!) for **each** side setback
- Requesting variance for a reduction of 2.3 metres (7.5 feet) in rear setback
- Requesting variance for a reduction in off-street parking from 21 to 2

If the City allows these variances, it will make a mockery of the OCP process and send developers the message that it's a free for all. Why even have zoning bylaws if they are just ignored?

What the updated zoning bylaw allows on this lot:

- 3 storey building
- 12 metre height
- 7.5 metre side setbacks (would be 9 metre if higher than 3 storeys)
- 8 metre rear setback, or 25% of lot depth, whichever is greater

Instead, they are proposing:

- 6 storey building
- 16.6 metre height
- 1.55 and 2.19 metre side setbacks
- 5.65 metre rear setback

Their justification for their request for a variance to allow such narrow side setbacks is that such setbacks exist elsewhere in the neighbourhood (for two storey buildings!). Setbacks are important both for livability and for reducing fire risk. If approved, this building will not be very livable for the occupants and will significantly decrease livability for the immediate neighbours. It would look ridiculous on the streetscape.

Even if this many units were allowed with the zoning, which is not the case, 21 off-street parking spaces would be required. They are proposing 2. This is on a street where there is very limited street parking (one side of the street only, and many existing houses have suites, which means there is very little street parking available). Most people still have cars. It is ridiculous to assume that no one moving into the building will have cars. Check out this recent Reddit discussion about the lack of parking: <https://www.reddit.com/r/VictoriaBC/comments/1pekq5z/parking/>

From the beginning, this developer has done nothing to engage with neighbours. They paid \$1.6M for an existing four-unit apartment building, which is way too much money if they were planning to demolish the building and redevelop the lot, but that is not my problem or the City's. They evicted the tenants, and the mother and two sons (who are the development company) moved in. There was no attempt to engage with neighbours. Ironically, despite their touting a "car free lifestyle", all four+ parking spaces at the rear of the existing building are being used for parking by the developers, and they still park two vehicles on the street, one of which is often parked on Battery Street in a residential only zone because there is no room on Government Street.

For 600 Dallas I had initially indicated in the City survey that I supported the project. If commercial is required because of the new OCP and zoning bylaw, I would like to withdraw that support. The minimal setbacks proposed for this orphan lot can only be supported because of the generous setbacks that were required for the condo building that surrounds the lot. If a bar or restaurant or other noisy commercial activity is to be housed in the building, I believe that more generous setbacks should be required so that the immediate neighbours in the condo building are not harmed more than they already will be because of the windows and balconies peering in on their units. Having to live with noise as well would make it intolerable.

I live at 36 Government Street so I am not directly affected but I care about my neighbours.

Sincerely,

Deb Hull

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 Government Street

From: michael mullins
Sent: December 11, 2025 2:18 PM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>; Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Cc: Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAAlto@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Matt Dell (Councillor) <mdell@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca>; Krista Loughton (Councillor) <kloughton@victoria.ca>; Susan Kim (Councillor) <skim@victoria.ca>; Dave Thompson (Councillor) <dave.thompson@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government Street

Dear Ms. Hoese and Mr. Bateman

While I found the recent OCP process problematic for a number of reasons, I support the objective of ending the constant spot zoning that has been occurring. I am therefore hoping the new OCP is indeed a "firm line" when it comes to new residential development in the city. Oeza Developments' revised application for 50 Government Street however is a significant test in this regard.

The enormity of this new proposal is even more monstrous than the previous one given the lot size. Sound residential planning and design requires adequate setbacks for buildings to provide reasonable standards of light, quiet and privacy to neighbours. The new zoning by-law requires building of this size to have side setbacks of 9 meters. Instead, they're asking for 1.55 meters!

Two important conditions imposed on the proponent by the COTW at its 12 December 2024 meeting were:

1. improving the massing transition to surrounding buildings, and
2. Reducing impacts on neighbouring properties.

This proposal is worse than the previous, already egregious one. We now have a proposed building 16.565 meters in height (versus 15 meters under the previous proposal), with an FSR of 2.13 (versus 1.9). On the north side of the development the building will rise to a height of 54 feet just 5 feet from our property line and extend for much of our property's backyard.

I also note that the BC Fire Fighters Association and Victoria's Fire Chief have raised serious fire safety concerns over tall wooden multi-unit residential houses. The Association's Building Code Working Group has strongly recommended a maximum height of 3 stories to allow fire department ground access to all individual dwelling units, unless all units can be always reached by fire department aerial apparatus. The height of the proposed development and the limited setbacks being requested will undoubtedly make this fire safety requirement difficult to achieve.

I therefore encourage you to resolutely reject this proposal.

Best regards
Michael Mullins
54 Government Street

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: 50 Government St

-----Original Message-----

From: Shirley Roberts
Sent: December 11, 2025 7:57 AM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>; Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>; Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAlto@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government St

I strongly object to the proposed development at 50 Government. It is too large for the site, & with only one interior staircase it is quite unsafe, this developer is wasting staff & council time to say nothing of taxpayers dollars.

Shirley Roberts
402-660 Battery St.
V8V 1E5
Victoria, BC,
Sent from my iPad

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
To: Rob Bateman
Subject: RE: Reject seventh plan for 50 Government Street

From: rosamund mclean
Sent: December 15, 2025 10:00 AM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: Fwd: Reject seventh plan for 50 Government Street

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **rosamund mclean**
Date: Mon, Dec 15, 2025 at 9:58 AM
Subject: Reject seventh plan for 50 Government Street
To: <KHoesse@victoria.ca>

Karen Hoese
Director of Planning for the City of Victoria

Hi Karen:

Again and again numerous residents in James Bay have commented on the fact that this 50 Government Street proposed plan (before City Council for the seventh time!) is not affordable.

Developers are using the phrase 'housing crisis' to push their own agenda. Proposed units at 50 Gov't St would be the size of a closet.

Ozea Developers (Mike and Dan Jones, Renta Lang (who sometimes goes by the name Sophie Smith) don't care about the James Bay neighbourhood, are not listening to residents only wishing to satisfy their own future greed, collecting high rents.

Everyone in the planning department and those around the table at city council need to work together to reject this plan once and for all.

An acknowledgement of this email would be appreciated so that I least know you have read it.

Rosamund McLean
property owner in James Bay

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
To: Rob Bateman
Subject: RE: Please Reject the current 50 Government St Redevelopment Proposal (REZ00861 and DPV00251)

From: Adele Haft
Sent: December 18, 2025 6:14 AM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: Please Reject the current 50 Government St Redevelopment Proposal (REZ00861 and DPV00251)

Dear Rob Bateman, Senior Planner for James Bay,

I urge you to REJECT the current 50 Government St redevelopment proposal for the following reasons:

(1) The applicant now proposes a 6-storey building (5-storeys + basement: see PRB, Plans_Revised_Bubbled, 4 Nov 2025, pp.10ff.). However, in his Letter to Mayor and Council (LM&C, 4 Nov 2025, p.1/8) and in the PRB (p.3/18), he says the building is five storeys and fails to mention the basement, which the PRB reveals to be at least as tall as a person at ground level near Government St and a full storey as it continues west alongside neighbouring properties (p.14/18). Furthermore, this building will have 17 units, 2 more units than in his 7th proposed building that was already too large. Surrounded by 1- and 2-storey homes on Government and South Turner (e), *the property's lot size—586 sq metres previously zoned for a single home or duplex—remains far too "constrained" (p.3/16) for his ambitions and belies his contention that it is "modest in form" (LM&C, p.1)*. City Staff has repeatedly recommended *against* the applicant's proposals (paraphrasing City Staff recommendations: FOI request) and the neighbourhood continues to voice strong opposition to these proposals (<https://www.jbna.org/50-government-st-development/>).

(2) The property is neither in James Bay Village nor on Dallas Road, yet *special zoning and five extraordinary variances are still being requested for the building's setbacks* (PRB, p.3/18). For a building of this size, side setbacks are slashed from 9.0 m minimum to 1.55 m on the north and 2.19 m on the west; the rear setback is reduced from 8.0 m to 5.65 m; and street frontage is drastically reduced from 30 m minimum to 17.5 m. A major parking variance is also requested: instead of the 21 spaces required, 2 spaces are proposed.

(3) The PRB says the building is 16.565 m tall and thus complies with the maximum height of 17 m for a five-storey building (p.3/18). As with the number of storeys reported, there may be a sleight of hand here. According to the elevation drawings, the building's height is being measured by subtracting its average grade of 17.750 m from the parapet height of 34.315 m. *But if the basement's floor of 17.042 m is subtracted from the parapet height of 34.315, the height would be 17.273 m.* Whether the building height is 17.273 m/56'8" (non-compliant) or 16.565 m/54'4" (compliant), however, it will still be 3-4 m taller than the 24 June 2025 proposal of 13.88 m/45 ft (PRB, p.4/28) and will tower over and overshadow neighbouring homes. On the north side, the building's vertical wall rises 54+ ft straight up and its 19 windows and doors (p.13/18) will deprive long-time residents of privacy and the healthy enjoyment of their gardens, while offering nothing but noise, light pollution and other very real problems. So will the 54+ ft vertical wall that rises straight up on the west (rear) side with its 21 windows and doors as well as the expanded outdoor area. With 54 potential residents occupying seventeen 1- to 3-bedroom units (PRB, Code Analysis, p.16/18: four 3 bedrooms; two 2-bedrooms; eleven 1-bedrooms), there will be little outdoor space for children's play (architect's LM&C, 4 Nov 2025, p.5/8). The proposal may call for sprinklers, but the building's *single stairway* and potentially combustible materials (PRB, p.16/18) coupled with minimal setbacks and step-backs/transitions pose a fire hazard for neighbouring homes and a serious challenge for evacuating residents.

Mid-size and large multi-unit buildings are best located on corner lots with large setbacks to minimize such impacts.

(4) The proposal assumes that the 54 new residents will live car-free. But there is no legal way to demand that occupants NOT own cars. *With only 2 parking spaces on the lot*, rather than the 21 required (PRB, p.16/18), 50 Government residents will park on *already narrow and over-crowded Battery and Government Streets*. The architectural drawings (PRB, pp.1, 5, 16/18) fail to show that vehicles currently park cheek-to-jowl on both sides of Battery St and on the east side of Government St. (No parking is permitted on the west side due to the new bike lane.) Government St will not magically empty of cars when new residents flood into 50 Government, as diagram 4 on p.16/18 suggests. The resulting overparking will create an even more treacherous situation at this T-junction than already exists for cars, pedestrians, bikes, and horse carriages. Not to mention the kids who enjoy skateboarding down Battery Street...

(5) The property is located at the base of the Battery St Heritage Conservation Area AND beside two heritage homes on the 0-100 block of Government St, whose own HCA application is currently stalled. Although the proponent makes no mention of either, the City itself has an investment in this neighbourhood that attracts tourists and cruise ships—as exemplified by Council’s recent direction that Staff consider making James Bay itself an HCA. Yet the proposed building, while capitalizing on these attractions, doesn’t fit the scale or character of the present or potential HCAs showcased by tour operators as examples of James Bay’s rich history. Moreover, a survey conducted by neighbours and based on city data reveals that 70% of properties in the area are already multi-unit. In terms of “gentle density, housing diversity, and affordability” (LM&C, p.1/8), *the neighbourhood does more than its share to offer truly affordable housing to a diverse and inclusive population while nevertheless remaining a destination*. In fact, James Bay itself is already a model of densification, as the President of the JBNA Trevor Moat has testified before Council on 15 September 2025 (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DUqzh9MdgKNY1zs51X01WHIRDRvsR3J/view>). Council’s instruction to City planners to consider all of James Bay for HCA status should include pausing proposals that request variances, as well as pausing any applications within proposed HCAs until staff have reported back and Council has made decisions on HCA boundaries.

(6) The property itself already has four units and four sets of residents in accord with needed densification goals for single family lots. Those residents face eviction, an increasingly alarming and under-reported result of demolishing older, affordable rental stock. No mention of helping evicted tenants financially is made in this current plan. Aside from the two units offered in the City’s RTE Program, it is unlikely that the rental units will be affordable to most students, seniors, and income-challenged individuals and families. For instance, my niece, a grad student at UVic, shares a 2-bedroom unit in a charming small apartment house a block from Beacon Hill Park for the price of the 1-bedroom listed under 50 Government’s RTE Program. That’s double what she pays now and not “transformative” for the very people this proposal purports to help. Furthermore, she and each of her roommates own a car.

(7) A proposal of 6-8 units, within existing guidelines, might be an appropriate way to gently densify this lot located in the *middle of a block* on the quiet southeast edge of James Bay. Nevertheless, on public television the applicant has cited financial necessity for failing to meet zoning bylaw requirements. Or implied that his extraordinary variance requests for such a large building ought to be similar to those of his one- to 2-storey neighbours (e.g., “Variance requested to permit setbacks similar to nearby buildings”) or are forced upon him by the City (“The proposal requires setback variances due to the limitations imposed by the property’s frontage requirements”): PRB, p.3/18). Such excuses don’t justify repeated non-compliance and the willful wasting of Council, City planning, and taxpayers’ time and resources. Or challenging OCP-2050, which offers to streamline approval IF the proponent stays within the applicable zoning bylaw without demanding several extraordinary site-specific variances in return. Approving this project would not only defeat the purpose of the new OCP, it would also encourage others to build oversized buildings on too-small lots...to the detriment of the very communities that make our great City vibrant and attractive. Council’s direction to planning staff to consider all of James Bay for

HCA status should include pausing proposals that request variances, as well as pausing any applications within proposed HCAs until staff have reported back and Council has made decisions on HCA boundaries.

Thank you, as always, for your support and commitment to ensuring that any (re)development of 50 Government St creates housing that preserves our historic neighbourhood *and* benefits the City.

Wishing you a well-deserved holiday and Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Adele J. Haft

202-660 Battery Street

Kerri Wood

From: Development Services email inquiries
Subject: RE: Comment: 50 Government and the erosion of public trust - Victoria Times Colonist

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Koyl
Sent: December 22, 2025 8:26 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Comment: 50 Government and the erosion of public trust - Victoria Times Colonist

Dear Mayor and Council.

That a project like this would even be entertained within a quiet residential community in James Bay is beyond my understanding.

I wish to register my strong disapproval for any projects like this. And yes, trust in the process, particularly as this project is requesting spot zoning, is a key element here.

James Bay is already tremendously dense. Why would something like this even be considered? I hope that in the New Year, all of you will reconsider some of your past approved monstrous buildings, like the one currently under construction on Menzies Street, and realized that you are ruining the fabric of the James Bay Community. And that this slap in the face to the neighbours on Government Street, South Turner and Battery Street will not be given the green light to proceed.

If it does, you can expect a number of us to be protesting at the worksite with placards and taking this issue to the Times Colonist and to the Globe and Mail. I for one will be part of that. This project will be a tipping point.

Sincerely,
Mary Koyl, 122 Clarence Street - property owner and tax payer - James Bay

https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.timescolonist.com%2Fopinion%2Fcomment-50-government-and-the-erosion-of-public-trust-11653730%3Futm_source%3DTimes%2BColonist%2BHeadline%2BNews%26utm_campaign%3D51ec648f5c-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAGN%26utm_medium%3Demail%26utm_term%3D0_d22ba5c6e6-a978a9ba3c-97932406%26mc_cid%3D51ec648f5c%26mc_eid%3D09073b2854&data=05%7C02%7Cmayorandcouncil%40victoria.ca%7C40682dbdc9814788aac08de4176ca85%7Cd7098116c6e84d2a89eedb15b6c23375%7C0%7C0%7C639020175643405289%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiwlLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMlslkFOLjoiTWFpbCIsIldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=UFyP2aMfpSZsEn%2FiYnZFdo03FVYo0nBPnyYl6eJqIss%3D&reserved=0

From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: Development Proposal - 50 Government Street
Date: March 5, 2026 12:27:06 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)

Senior Planner

Planning and Development

City of Victoria

1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6

T 250.361.0292



The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation.

From: Lynda Cronin [REDACTED]
Sent: January 29, 2026 10:49 AM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Cc: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Subject: Development Proposal - 50 Government Street

Dear Mr. Bateman:

We would like to register our strong opposition to the proposal to redevelop 50 Government Street. Below are earlier e-mails we have sent to Mayor and Council in this regard.

In addition to the issues noted below, it is clear that this latest proposal is significantly out of compliance with the new OCP General Urban Design Guidelines and local Zoning Bylaws. Moreover, the bad faith demonstrated by this developer in refusing to follow recommendations from both the Planning Office and Council demonstrates an ongoing disregard for the James Bay community and the city as a whole. On this basis, we believe that this project should simply be rejected.

Yours truly,

Lynda Cronin & Peter Heap

614 Niagara Street
Victoria, BC V8V 1H9

Lynda Cronin

Sent: September 23, 2024 11:14 AM

To: 'mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca' <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>

; '50gov.get.it.right@gmail.com'

Subject: Development Proposal - 50 Government Street

Dear Mayor Alto and Council Members,

Below is a copy of an e-mail we sent you in April 2023 regarding the proposed development at 50 Government Street. We have followed developments around this proposal in the intervening period and remain strongly opposed to this over-sized and inappropriate design. Despite some tinkering around the edges, there is no substantive difference between the original proposal and the new re-design. While arguably slightly better looking than the original, the proposal remains ridiculously oversized for this lot and continues to pose significant privacy, shade and noise issues for neighbours.

We urge you to reject this proposal and, instead, to support responsible developments which enhance the character of the neighbourhood, respect the rights of neighbours to sunlight and privacy, and support the provision of affordable family housing in James Bay.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lynda Cronin & Peter Heap

614 Niagara Street
Victoria, BC V8V 1H9

From: Lynda Cronin

Sent: April 18, 2023 3:14 PM

To: 'mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca' <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>

Cc: 'developmentservices@victoria.ca' <developmentservices@victoria.ca>; 'Peter Heap'

Subject: Development Proposal - 50 Government Street - What were they thinking?

Dear Mayor Alto and Council Members:

You have only to look at the picture of this proposed development to realize how much of an insult it is to the James Bay community. In fact, when this design was first dropped in our mailbox, we honestly thought it was a joke...that no one could seriously be proposing to inflict this brutal monstrosity on the lovely streetscape that is the first block of Government Street.

We were unable to attend the CALUC meeting on April 12 but watched the recorded session the following day. After listening to all the articulate and intelligent comments and concerns of our neighbours, we cannot understand why Council would waste a moment of its time even considering this proposal. It is so obviously out of scale with the neighbourhood, disrespectful of its immediate neighbours and, as a possible precedent-setter, potentially harmful to the future of James Bay and the City of Victoria as a whole.

Please stop this development-for-profit, spot-development madness now, and let's do some serious community-driven planning to make our city a better, more liveable place for everyone.

Yours truly,

Lynda Cronin & Peter Heap

614 Niagara Street

Victoria, BC V8V 1H9

████████████████████ ■
████████████████████

From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: 50 Government St. proposal
Date: March 5, 2026 12:26:24 PM

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6
T 250.361.0292

The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation.

-----Original Message-----

From: Derek Hawksley <[REDACTED]>
Sent: January 28, 2026 11:42 AM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government St. proposal

Warm Greetings Rob Bateman,

I write with concern about the latest of the many proposed developments at 50 Government. Although the designs have changed in small ways as well as the style over time. they have never address the primary concern of the immediate neighbours and the neighbourhood in general. That concern being that proceeded building is still too tall for a single residential lot and that there is not enough setback from surrounding houses and the street.

I've often wondered why there has never been a serious below grade element proposed to reduce overall height.

If my memory is correct, this design does not address the past concerns raised in planing review and I question the developers sincerity and good faith in finding a mutually agreeable solution.

Sincerely, Derek Hawksley

128 Government St.

From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: 50 Government Street development
Date: March 5, 2026 12:26:44 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)

Senior Planner

Planning and Development

City of Victoria

1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6

T 250.361.0292



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From: Antonio Tsui [REDACTED]
Sent: January 28, 2026 2:35 PM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Cc: Tom Hunt [REDACTED]; Sau Fun Tsui [REDACTED]
Subject: 50 Government Street development

We are the homeowners of South Turner Street, James Bay Area. The followings are the key main reasons that we strongly against this ridiculous proposal:

Reasons for Opposing the Proposed Six-Storey Development at 50 Government Street, Victoria, BC

1. Loss of Sunlight to Adjacent Properties

The proposed height and massing would significantly reduce natural sunlight to neighbouring homes and buildings,

negatively affecting livability and enjoyment of surrounding properties.

2. Overdevelopment of a Small Lot

A six-storey structure represents excessive density for a lot of this size and is out of scale with the existing built form of the area.

3. Impacts on Privacy

The height and proximity of the proposed development would result in increased overlooking and loss of privacy for nearby residents and surrounding neighbourhoods.

4. Erosion of Heritage Character and Urban Fabric

This proposal is incompatible with the historic and heritage context of Government Street and James Bay. It would undermine the architectural cohesion, character, and cultural value of an area defined by older and heritage buildings.

5. Lack of Meaningful Neighbour Engagement

Neighbours' concerns and opinions appear to have been inadequately considered in the development process, contrary to the principles of community-based planning.

6. Dismissive Attitude Toward Community Input

During an early phone conversation, the property owner indicated that the project had strong backing and would proceed regardless of neighbourhood opposition. This conveyed a dismissive and uncooperative attitude toward community concerns.

7. Absence of Good-Faith Consideration for Neighbour Impacts

Based on interactions to date, there appears to be little genuine intention to address or mitigate the impacts of this project on surrounding residents, raising concerns about the developer's commitment to responsible and respectful development.

Property owners:

Antonio Tsui

Tom Hunt

San Tsui

From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: 50 Government St.--Oeza Development Plan of January 19,2026
Date: March 5, 2026 12:26:52 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)

Senior Planner

Planning and Development

City of Victoria

1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: January 30, 2026 5:39 PM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Cc: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government St.--Oeza Development Plan of January 19,2026

Dear Mr. Bateman,

We would like to comment on the most recent Oeza Development Plan dated January 19, 2026, to be submitted to the Committee of the Whole for approval of variances. We (Carolyn Sadowska and John Dewhirst) live in a Registered Heritage House at 41-43 South Turner Street. Our lot directly adjoins the west (rear) side of 50 Government Street.

This most current revised Oeza proposal (the 7th?), despite numerous repeated insightful comments from your office and from the James Bay neighbourhood, remains essentially unchanged and unworkable. All our previous detailed comments on every previous Oeza proposal for 50 Government still apply. Rather than reiterate them in

detail, we would like to note salient points:

1. The root of all the problems with the current plan (and the previous ones) is that the proposed building is too oversized for its lot to mitigate its significant impacts on the neighbours and streetscape. The current proposed development is still at the expense of the neighbours. Instead of proposing effective setbacks and fewer storeys, the development robs the immediate neighbours of sunlight, privacy and quiet enjoyment. Moreover, the proposed oversize, out-of-character building in the middle of a heritage, historic streetscape and neighbourhood devalues the City of Victoria's investment in its heritage brand.
2. The proposed building will block the morning sunlight at 41-43 South Turner throughout the year. This will impact our garden plantings, the quiet enjoyment of our backyard, and the operation of a purposefully designed dedicated art studio built under City permit in 1993. The art studio (labelled as a "garage" in the Oeza plans) relies on morning light, and is used almost every day. The proposed 5-storey building and the proposed plantings along the west side (rear) of 50 Government will rob the studio of critical morning light.
3. The proposed plantings along the west side (rear) of 50 Government also will impact our mature bay laurel protected under Tree Protection Bylaw No. 21-035. Your planning personnel confirmed its protected status on site last spring. The current and previous Oeza plans protect the neighbour's trees along the south side of 50 Government, but either omit or misplace our protected laurel, and do not specify any protection for it. The proposed tree plantings along the rear of 50 Government will directly impact the laurel's root systems and ultimately its canopy. *How can the proposed development protect our bay laurel when the plans omit or mislocate the laurel and do not stipulate any protection?*
4. Placement of the proposed oversize, out-of-character 5-storey building in the middle of a surviving historic streetscape of 1.5 and 2 storey heritage and period buildings undermines the City of Victoria's heritage as the City Brand. The neighbourhood of 50 Government is a surviving pocket of heritage in James Bay. Two Registered Heritage Houses (54 Government and 41-43 South Turner) adjoin the north and west sides of 50 Government. Three other Heritage Houses are nearby on Government Street. The proponent's 50 Government Street is located in a proposed Heritage Conservation Area that was applied for in December, 2022, and is still under consideration by the City. If the proposed development of 50 Government is approved, it will detract from the present Registered Heritage Houses and from the proposed Heritage Conservation Area

under consideration. Moreover, approval of the proposed development will cause owners to question the integrity and value of the City's heritage protection program. Why would anyone want to register a Heritage House if an oversize, out-of-character, inappropriate building can be constructed with ineffective variances next door?

We hope these comments may be useful.

Carolyn Sadowska and John Dewhirst
41-43 South Turner Street
Victoria, B.C. V8V 2J5

January 31, 2026

Rob Bateman, Planner – James Bay
City of Victoria

Halli MacNab, Owner
40 Government St.
Victoria, BC
V8V 2K3

Dear Mr. Bateman,

I am writing to express my significant concerns about the proposed development at 50 Government Street, Victoria. This is further to letters I wrote and sent to the Mayor and Council September 27, 2024, February 18, 2024 and April 8, 2023 with reference to the same property, in which I expressed concerns about the proposed development (by the same developer, different development) at the same address.

As explained in my previous letters, I practiced Engineering and was in the construction industry for 15 years. I am not opposed in any way to development. Having said this, I am looking for a development to be the right fit to receive my support. The proposed development is not the right fit for many reasons, as outlined below.

- The current building has 4 units. The proposed development has 17 units. I understand the need to increase density and housing in Victoria and have no arguments. However, this proposal does not seem like “gentle densification”, but like “too much, too fast”. Spreading smaller increases in density (for example, 8 units total at this location?) across the entire city seems like it will achieve the same result and will be the right fit.
- The overall shape and size of the proposed development does not fit in with the existing neighbourhood, which consists of houses and apartment buildings, all with appropriate heights (most 3 stories or less) and setbacks.
- The proposed development requires many variances. Street frontage (17.5m proposed vs 36m required), the setbacks (both sides, back and front) and the number of parking spaces – are a few of the variances that would be required for the proposed development at this location.

- The combination of the overall height of the proposed building and the reduced setbacks would mean that the proposed development would TOWER over the neighbouring houses which are 1 and 2 stories. The proposed building would be over 5 stories high, and 5 and 7 feet away from the lot lines at the side lot lines.
- The size of the proposed building will result in privacy issues and shading for many adjacent houses, windows and yards. This will definitely affect resale opportunities and value.
- The proposed number of parking spaces does not make any allowance for visitors or workers. Parking on the street is already an issue in this area. Many workers cannot access the buildings they need to.

I live 2 properties south of the proposed development in a designated heritage house at 40 Government St, and I have lived here for 21 years. The development would affect the neighbourhood and my property values negatively.

The proposed development does not have my support. Another development at this location, if it was the right fit, would.

Thank you for reading my concerns.

Best regards,

Halli MacNab
Owner, 40 Government Street

February 1, 2026

Rob Bateman, Senior Planner
City of Victoria

Karen Hoese, Director of Planning
City of Victoria

Re: Proposed development at 50 Government Street, Victoria

Dear Mr. Bateman and Ms. Hoese,

I am writing to share my concerns and **sincere opposition** to the proposed development at 50 Government Street. I live in and own my home 2 doors from this project and have lived here for 10 years. Thank you for reading this letter - I know it's a tad long, being slightly over one page.

I am NOT opposed to increased density to accommodate a growing city. However, I join my neighbors in pointing out that there is tremendous opposition to THIS development with two main points:

1. **Too many variances** are proposed – the building size and occupancy simply does not fit the lot.
2. The building is way out of character in what is considered a “**character neighbourhood**”. It does not fit the style of this unique area – one being considered for designated heritage, and is under review for such official designation.

TOO MANY GROSS VARIANCES: The developer is asking for variances in **height, footprint, size, density, setbacks, frontage, greenspace, and parking.**

Footprint: A quick view of plans, aerial view looking down on the lot, it is clear the building takes up more than the **maximum 55%** required.

Setbacks: variances requested include **rear setback 29% smaller** than zoning, Side setbacks (average of the two numbers) variance requested is **58% smaller** than zoning.

Frontage: variance requested is **41% smaller** than zoning requires.

These are not minor little variances being requested. They are massively out of alignment with zoning and wrong for this small lot. It does not take a degree in city planning to recognize that the project is just way too big and dense for the lot. It severely crowds and towers over neighboring homes on three sides, invading privacy in windows, overlooking yards, and casting huge shadows over 2 of the 3 adjacent properties. It is just too big! The developer boasts catering to car-less occupants, however we all know the chances of 99% of occupants being without a car are slim. They will try to park on the street. I will remind you there is parking on only ONE side of the street on Government street in this AND neighboring blocks. Parking is a problem already. Adding more cars (leaving no room for visitors or service people) will be burdensome to all the residents who live here.

OUT OF CHARACTER FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD: James Bay is well known for its architectural history and neighborhood charm, and brings huge crowds of tourists from all over the world to tour the streets, adding revenue to the city. To allow this developer to turn a blind eye to zoning and style of building (including relationship to other buildings) in this heavily heritage area would be devastating and disrespectful to the community. Cramming an oversized building (huge frontage and setback variances) between heritage homes is an assault on the senses. It diminishes property values and destroys continuity.

I apologize for pounding the drum, but for the past 3 years, the developer has been asked repeatedly to change the plans to fit the OCP, the zoning for the lot, and the neighborhood. He has been on zoom calls with dozens of people (the largest crowd ever) joining the JBNA, asking him to listen to our concerns. He has continued to ignore the feedback received from neighbors and residents here, as well as feedback from the city planning office. At this point, I honestly do not think he can be trusted because he is not listening. Rather, he is continuing to put forth the same plan of overbuilding in the hopes of wearing down those in charge of approving it. I ask that you not fall into that category.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Stone, Owner
40 Government St.
Victoria, BC, V8V 2K3



From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: 50 government street
Date: March 5, 2026 12:27:14 PM

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)
Senior Planner
Planning and Development
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6
T 250.361.0292

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-----Original Message-----

From: Marion Siegel [REDACTED]
Sent: February 3, 2026 10:08 AM
To: Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>
Cc: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 government street

I write to voice my objections to the proposed building at 50 government street. The developer has consistently tried to force plans that are not in keeping with the neighborhood. The proposed building is too high and too close to neighboring heritage houses. The developer has shown no interest in even maintaining sidewalk access as although he pruned the encroaching hedge, instead of cutting it back to allow mobility devices to pass, he only pruned to make his proposal sign more visible. He is negotiating in bad faith by trying to force Council to accept his sleight of hand minute changes to the design.

Please do not grant approval for this monstrosity.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: Comments on the 50 Government St. Proposal
Date: March 5, 2026 12:27:21 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)

Senior Planner

Planning and Development

City of Victoria

1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6

T 250.361.0292



The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation.

From: Bob & Becky Vander Steen [REDACTED]
Sent: February 8, 2026 10:31 AM
To: Marianne Alto (Mayor) <MAlto@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Caradonna (Councillor) <jcaradonna@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Matt Dell (Councillor) <mdell@victoria.ca>; Marg Gardiner (Councillor) <mgardiner@victoria.ca>; Stephen Hammond (Councillor) <shammond@victoria.ca>; Krista Loughton (Councillor) <kloughton@victoria.ca>; Susan Kim (Councillor) <skim@victoria.ca>; Dave Thompson (Councillor) <dave.thompson@victoria.ca>
Cc: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>; Karen Hoese <KHoese@victoria.ca>; Jocelyn Jenkyns <JJenkyns@victoria.ca>, [REDACTED]
Subject: Comments on the 50 Government St. Proposal

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are writing to formally register our strong opposition to the current development proposal for 50 Government Street.

Firstly, as residents of 58 Government Street, located just two doors from the subject property, we find it concerning that the proponent, who lives at the property, has not reached out to us once during the two-year duration of the various applications. This lack of engagement underscores the broader failure to conduct meaningful community consultation.

The current submission, representing the tenth iteration of plans for this site, continues to disregard the clear guidance provided by both the community and Council. Our opposition is based on several critical issues:

- **Extreme Variances and OCP Non-Compliance:** The developer is requesting significant variances that undermine the Official Community Plan (OCP). This includes a requested side setback of only 1.55m where 9m is required, and a rear setback of 5.65m instead of the required 8.6m. Such drastic deviations are not minor adjustments; they represent a fundamental dismissal of the standards intended to protect neighborhood character and livability.
- **Massing and Height:** Despite previous Planning and Council feedback, the current proposal for a 6-storey building (5.5 storeys above ground) remains inappropriately sized for a lot with only 17.5m of frontage—far below the 36m street frontage required by the City bylaws for a building of this scale. This height and massing will dwarf adjacent heritage properties and significantly impact the privacy and sunlight of neighboring residents.
- **Inadequate Parking:** The proposal suggests only one visitor stall and one car-share space for 17 units, despite a requirement of 19 spaces. While supporting car-free options is admirable, the scale of this reduction is unrealistic for the area and places an undue burden on existing neighborhood infrastructure.
- **Safety Concerns:** The reliance on a single-stair egress design raises legitimate fire-safety concerns that have not been adequately addressed. The 1.55 m side setback (Bylaws require 9m for this side orientated building) makes access by ladder vehicles impossible, further limiting escape options in the event of a fire.
- **Disregard for Community Consultation:** The history of this application shows a pattern of non-consultative submissions. Rather than refining the project to align with City policy, many of the successive revisions have increased the negative impacts. This repetitive cycle, with nine separate planning submissions, is a poor and wasteful use of the limited City staff resources and exhausting for affected residents.
- **A long list of additional issues:** A detailed review of the proposal plans, pointing out many additional concerns, can be found [here](#).

Approving this development would set a damaging precedent, signaling that the OCP and established zoning bylaws can be bypassed through persistent, non-compliant applications. We ask that Council uphold the integrity of the City's planning framework by denying this application.

Thank you for your time and for considering the serious concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Bob & Becky Vander Steen
58 Government St

From: [Rob Bateman](#)
To: [Development Services email inquiries](#)
Subject: FW: 50 Government Street
Date: March 5, 2026 12:26:42 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Rob Bateman, MCIP, RPP (he/him)

Senior Planner

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The City of Victoria is located on the homelands of the Songhees Nation and the Xwsepsum Nation.

From: philip smith [REDACTED]
Sent: January 2, 2026 9:12 AM
To: Rob Bateman <rbateman@victoria.ca>
Subject: 50 Government Street

Please don't accept the plans for 50 Government Steet. We live next to the house behind 50 Government Street. We won't be able to see the sunrise, we won't have any privacy and all the houses around 50 Government Street will have there land values drop. Further, the lot isn't big enough for building that size. Finally, the owner should have to follow all the same rules as everyone else for a single family/duplex lot.

Thank you
Philip Smith