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May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

Mayor and City Council  
Victoria City Hall  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, British Columbia  
V8W 1P6

Re: Development Variance Permit Application  
Bank of Commerce Building - CGI Tenant Wall Sign  
1175 Douglas Street, Victoria

Dear Mayor and Members of City Council,

Manulife Real Estate (Manulife) is the owner of a Commercial Office Building municipally known as 1175 Douglas Street. The building is one of only five Class "A" office buildings in Victoria.

Kramer Design Associates (KDA), are writing on behalf of Manulife Real Estate to request minor variances from Bylaw No. 14-097 (the "Sign Bylaw") to permit the erection of two identical tenant identification fascia signs affixed to the 13<sup>th</sup> storey / mechanical penthouse of 1175 Douglas Street. The proposed signs would display the brand icon of one of the building's two principal tenants, CGI Group Inc. (CGI), and would replace two of the four CIBC tenant signs currently erected on the building.

In addition, and to compensate for the decrease in exposure CIBC will experience, a digital sign featuring static messaging is proposed for on the Northwest corner of the building. The proposed digital sign would feature only first-party static content (non-moving images), with a minimum hold time of 30s, and with a higher percentage of the timeshare being dedicated to CIBC. This solution was arrived at after discussion with City of Victoria personnel.



Figure 1.1: Existing Conditions



Figure 1.2: Proposed Signage

### Background

The subject property is a 13 Storey Commercial Office Building located in the heart of the financial and business district of Victoria, in a Core Business sub-designation. KDA has worked with Manulife to develop an updated signage program for the property, in order to better represent tenants and more effectively serve the public. In regards to signage, the subject property is located in an Arterial Commercial Sign zone, and the proposed signs are Fascia Signs and Suspended Signs, which are both permitted in such a sign zone.



### Background (con't)

The minor variances required for the implementation of the proposed signage program are as follows:

- a) allowance for the total aggregate area of signs on the North, South, East, and West elevations to exceed the maximum sign ratio indicated for the sign zone. The proposed variance would allow CGI's brand to be installed on the upper tower level / mechanical floor, replacing two of the existing CIBC signs, and providing similar exposure for both primary building tenants.  
It should be noted that the proposed replacement of the existing CIBC signs with CGI signs would affect a decrease in Total Display Surface area of 12.06 m<sup>2</sup>, which brings the concerned elevations closer to compliance with the Sign Bylaw.
- b) Allowance for the Display Surface Area of a fascia sign to exceed 9 sq. m. The proposed size of the two CGI signs (to 12.5 sq.m each) allows for a visually consistent appearance with the existing CIBC wall signs. From an architectural perspective, the size of the proposed CGI signs is limited to match the maximum spread of two window bays, which in turn matches the width of the current CIBC signs.

### Official Plan Compliance

The proposed CGI fascia signs contribute to the Official Community Plan Value of "Downtown Vibrancy" (Official Community Plan of Victoria, 3.9) by reinforcing Downtown Victoria as a vibrant and engaging centre for business.

CGI is a longstanding Canadian company, employing over 70,000 people in 400 locations worldwide and actively expanding their workforce in Victoria. The company is publicly traded on the TSX and NYSE. As a net creator of jobs within the Core Business sub-designation, KDA asserts that is reasonable that CGI should have visual brand representation of their office premises.

The approval of this Development Variance Permit Application would be in keeping with Official Community Plan directives for Economy in that it would support the function of the urban core as the primary regional centre of employment (Official Community Plan of Victoria, 14 (f)), by maintaining and enhancing it with high-quality facilities. It would also attract jobs by promoting an image of a vibrant, diverse, and creative city (Official Community Plan of Victoria, 14.1).

The proposed signs would also respect Victoria's character by complying with land management directives, as CGI is an advanced technology company, located in a designation intended for the advanced technology economic sector (Official Community Plan of Victoria, 14.19 & Figure 17).

### Impact to Adjacent Premises

The proposed CGI signs would be internally illuminated dimensional characters displaying CGI's company name and brand identity, and would be installed on wall the 13<sup>th</sup> storey of the subject property, replacing two of the four existing CIBC signs.

The size, construction, and location of the proposed CGI signs have been carefully considered to offer equal salience to the existing CIBC signage, and would not negatively affect the area by causing undue visual impact.

The proposed digital sign on the Northwest corner of the property was arrived at as an appropriate solution after discussion with City personnel, and would feature only static content (non-moving images/copy) with a hold time of 30s minimum. This sign is an improved and less wasteful solution for the display of temporary messages, such as available office space, and also can feature semi-permanent messaging representing tenants. Due to only displaying static content, this proposed sign would maintain consistency with existing signage in the corridor.





### Impact to Adjacent Premises (con't)

The images below compare the view from Fort St. before and after the change to the tower signage, and the existing signage on the Northwest Corner versus the proposed signage.



Figure 3.1: Current view of SE Corner from Fort St.



Figure 3.2: Proposed CGI sign replacing CIBC sign.



Figure 3.3: Current view of NW Corner.



Figure 3.4: View of NW corner showing proposed signage.

### Variance Provisions

An approval requiring variance relief was granted in 2013 allowing for the erection of the existing CIBC Signs on the property. The presently requested variances require less overall relief for overages in Sign Display Surface Area than those granted in 2013, and are less of a departure from the Sign Bylaw. KDA asserts that there is clear precedent for the granting of the presently-requested variances.

The below chart identifies the minor variances required to implement the proposed tenant fascia signage.

| Sign No.                  | Codes         | Bylaw   | Variance Requested   |
|---------------------------|---------------|---|--|
| TWS-2,<br>TWS-4,<br>DCS-1 | 14-097 9 (1)  | No sign shall be installed or added on a building or property where the area of the proposed sign, when added to the aggregate area of all other signs lawfully displayed, exceeds the permitted maximum sign ratio indicated for each sign zone. | Allowance for the erection of two signs (TWS-2 and TWS-4) (replacing existing signs), on the East and West elevations, and allowance for the erection of a digital sign on the NW corner of the building, and with faces on the North and West elevations. |
| TWS-2,<br>TWS-4,<br>DCS-1 | 14-097 33 (1) | The sign allowance permitted in the Arterial Commercial Sign Zone is a 1 to 1 ratio requirement.  | Allowance for the erection of three fascia signs which would cause the aggregate area of all signs to exceed the 1 to 1 ratio requirement. (By less than it is currently exceeded in 2 of 4 cases)   |



### Variance Provisions (con't)

|                  |               |   |  |
|------------------|---------------|---|--|
| TWS-2,<br>TWS-4, | 14-097 33 (2) | A fascia sign shall not have a display surface exceeding 9 sq.m. (96.88 sq ft). | Allowance for the erection of two fascia signs with display surfaces of 12.15 sq.m. (requested additional area allowance of 3.15 sq.m. per sign) |
|------------------|---------------|---|--|

### Conclusion

The addition of the proposed signs would be in keeping with the Official Community Plan directives and values, and would maintain the character of the area as a Core Business sub-designation, and there is strong precedent and strong Official Plan support for the granting of the requested variance relief.

Please find the following enclosed as part of this application

1. A copy of the completed application form and checklist
2. A copy of the completed and signed Owner's authorization form
3. Drawing Package including Site Plan, Building Plans, and renderings

Please contact the undersigned should you require any further information.

Sincerely,

Brian McCall / Sr. Associate & Project Manager, KDA

cc. Kathryn J. Ireland, Property Director, BC, Manulife Real Estate, Vancouver  
 Paula Wright, Leasing Director, BC, Manulife Real Estate, Vancouver  
 Phil Sibbald, Senior Property Manager, Colliers International, Victoria  
 Jeremy J. Kramer / Principal & Creative Director, KDA  
 Grayson Shnier / Industrial Designer, KDA

## Appendix A – Reference from Official Community Plan of Victoria

URL: <http://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/community-planning/official-community-plan.html>

Updated: July 13, 2017

Accessed: February 28, 2018

### 3.9, Section 3: Vision, Values and Goals

#### Under “Plan Values”

- 3.9 **Downtown Vibrancy:** Reinforce the regional role of Downtown Victoria as a vibrant, engaging centre for employment, living, arts, culture, entertainment, tourism, and business.

### 14 (f), Section 14: Economy

#### Under “Broad Objectives”

- 14 (f) That the function of the Urban Core as the primary regional centre of employment, learning, arts, culture, entertainment, recreation and specialty retail is maintained and enhanced with high quality facilities, services and events.

### 14.1, Section 14: Economy

#### Under “City Image”

- 14.1 Work with partners to attract jobs, residents and visitors to Victoria by promoting a new image as a vibrant, diverse and creative city in a maritime setting, while retaining the importance of heritage, history and tradition in defining Victoria's character.

### 14.19, Section 14: Economy

#### Under “Employment Lands”

- 14.19 Consider the place-based conditions for economic sectors generally as described in Figure 17 in support of Victoria's economic structure, as identified on Map 14.

Figure 17: Urban Place Designations – Economic Guidelines, Section 14: Economy

| Designation   | Economic Sector   |
|---------------|---|
| Core Business | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Transportation and warehousing</li> <li>› Public administration</li> <li>› Finance, insurance, real estate</li> <li>› Advanced technology</li> <li>› Healthcare services</li> <li>› Tourism and visitor services</li> <li>› Arts, culture and entertainment</li> <li>› Residential goods and services (retail, commercial and community services)</li> </ul> |