

City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W, 1P6

May 1, 2020

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

RE: Hudson Place Two – 1700 Blanshard Street
Development Permit with Variances Application No. 00106
WAIVER REQUEST - Opportunity for Public Comment

Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

In light of the current and ongoing COVID pandemic, I am writing to respectfully request a waiver from the development permit requirement for an Opportunity for Public Comment by way of Public Hearing, to maintain the viability of this rental project. This request is not made lightly but rather a response to the possibility of approval delays resulting in, losing our CHMC financing. As a reminder, to the best of my knowledge, the land that this application is intended, is already zoned, and has no requirement for rental, nor affordability measures. The decision to build rental, and to work through CHMC to accommodate housing below typical market rates, has been made by Townline in an effort to best respond to the concerns that council have been trying to address, that being a critical shortage of rental housing, and most particular, below market rents.

We have received conditional approval for CHMC funding under their RCFI program, and one of their funding requirement's is to have a Building Permit. To attain a Building Permit, we require a Development Permit. If we cannot present our project at an Opportunity for Public Comment, our application is stalled and our project will stop. In this instance, even a month delay can be critical. The RCFI Program has proven very popular across Canada, and CHMCs mandate is to get the money out as soon as feasible. If we can not satisfy the financing condition of receiving a Building Permit in a timely manner, this funding could be redirected to another project else where in Canada.

We intend to build 245 rental suites, 227 of which are defined as affordable under the CMHC RCFI Program. Given the challenging environment caused by the COVID 19 crisis and that this project is an affordable rental application, we feel the waiver is a reasonable deviation from the standard public process. Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Kaye Kirshna has opened the door for Cities and Municipalities to forfeit the public input requirement in some conditions, and we interpret our project application fits into that framework. That said, we are confident that by continuing to working closely with City of Victoria Planning, Engineering and Legal departments we can achieve a high-quality rental building and fulfill a very important objective of Victoria City Council.

Thank you for considering this waiver request.



Rick Ilich
President