

February 11, 2021

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

Re: Temporary Use Permit and Development Permit for 940 Caledonia Ave.

Mayor and Council,

This letter outlines the core content of our application for a Temporary Use Permit to build a transitional tiny home community at 940 Caledonia Avenue. We are requesting that 940 Caledonia Avenue be used as the site for this pilot project transitional tiny home community from March 2021 to September 2022, at the latest.

Project Overview

Hey Neighbour: Making Room, a collaboration between Aryze Developments and the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, is a transitional housing pilot project proposed for 940 Caledonia Avenue (the Royal Athletic Park parking lot). The proposed project includes 30 single-occupancy tiny home units built from repurposed shipping containers oriented in a private, enclosed community setting.

We are pursuing this proposal in support of the City of Victoria's March 31st deadline to ensure that everyone currently sheltering in parks is offered an indoor space so that 24/7 sheltering in parks can come to an end. All funds for the capital expenses of this project have been crowdfunded by the citizens of Victoria, along with contributions from local businesses and community organizations who seek to see some of our city's most vulnerable housed in safe, warm and secure conditions.

This community development will provide access to comfortable and safe housing, incorporate public art, and provide opportunities for residents to learn new skills and engage in social enterprises, like bicycle repair shops and community gardens, where they can share their talents and gifts, and participate in the community.

The community will be built in two phases. Phase 1 will include 15 homes and Phase 2 will see the final 15 homes be built. All auxiliary buildings will be a part of Phase 1, and gardening & bike repair space will be introduced in Phase 2.

Each unit in the community is approximately 87 sq. ft. and fully heated, ventilated and insulated for optimal breathability and livability. Designed to include a bed, side table, desk with chair, small fridge, and an armoire, all units are move-in ready and turn-key for the residents. Shared washroom and shower facilities will be located within the enclosed community, along with storage, flex space and on-site office space for the 24/7 operations staff. We are working on a partnership with the Anawim Housing Society to provide residents with access to shower and laundry services at their facility on 973 Caledonia.

The project details are as follows:

- Average Unit Size: 87 sq.ft.
- Single-occupancy 13'-3" tiny home units built inside 40ft x 8ft repurposed shipping containers (three units per seacan) with a 3'-6" small porch to grade with an overhead awning.
- Heated, insulated and ventilated for user comfort
- Include a window and door
- A monitored fire alarm system
- Intentionally setback 8m from the sidewalk at Vancouver Street to facilitate future programming opportunities in partnership with the North Park Neighbourhood Association

Site Design

The formation of the sea can containers was intentionally designed to limit inward visibility to ensure a safe and exclusive environment for the residents. This enclosed design is balanced with community art incorporated throughout the exterior facades, adding beautification to a central location in the North Park neighbourhood.

A gated and controlled single entry/exit maintains security for the community along with a secondary emergency exit, and two emergency vehicle access points ensure the site remains accessible when required.

Transitional Affordable Housing

Homelessness is not just what is visible on the street. It exists when individuals live in abandoned buildings, sleep under bridges, camp in parks, access emergency shelters, or couch surf.

The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness speaks to this range through the four kinds of homelessness identified in its definition, including people who are unsheltered, emergency sheltered, provisionally accommodated and insecurely housed. All of these living situations, from utterly homeless to precariously housed, put people at risk of poor physical, mental and social health.

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Company (CMHC) housing is considered to be affordable when a household spends less than 30% of its pre-tax income on adequate shelter. In addition, "the term 'affordable housing' can refer to any part of the housing continuum from temporary emergency

shelters through transitional housing, supportive housing, subsidized housing, market rental housing or market homeownership.”

Effectively addressing homelessness requires a range of approaches that are tailored to individual needs and are provided through a range of programs and services.

Our proposed project is purpose-built transitional housing with 24/7 on-site support, which means it is built to help its residents in gaining the stability, confidence and dignity to eventually seek out other housing options along the housing continuum.

Community Consultation

Community consultation has been a key priority for the transitional tiny home community since day one. The project was envisioned in partnership with the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness, and immediately upon launching the crowdfunding campaign on December 8th, we shared project materials with the community members sheltering at Central Park. Once we met 50% of our funding goals, we began preliminary design discussions with Our Place, who are the intended operations provider for the project, along with a presentation at a North Park Neighborhood Association meeting to gather feedback from nearby residents.

In summary, this proposed project is intended to provide a comfortable and safe transitional housing solution for some of our city’s most vulnerable. By incorporating thoughtful design elements, we aim to provide optimum livability for the new residents, all in the name of operational success. We look forward to the opportunity to realize this pilot project, and to make a positive contribution to the North Park neighborhood and the city of Victoria as a whole.

Sincerely,



Jared James
Development Manager
ARYZE Developments



Kelly Roth
Executive Director
Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness