



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of August 4, 2022

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** July 21, 2022

From: Karen Hoese, Director, Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Subject: Development Permit No. 000609 for 2659 Douglas Street

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council consider the following motion:
 - a. That Council authorize the issuance of Development Permit Application No. 000609 for 2659 Douglas Street, in accordance with:
 - i. Plans date stamped July 7, 2022.
 - ii. Development meeting all *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* requirements.
 - b. That the following item is secured in a legal agreement and registered on title to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development:
 - i. Larger size dwelling units suitable for households with children, including: seven, two-bedroom; seven, two-bedroom + den; and six, three-bedroom rental dwelling units.
 - c. That the Development Permit, if issued, lapses in two years from the date of this resolution.
2. That Council advance this matter for ratification and issuance at the August 4, 2022 daytime Council meeting.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Relevant Development Permit considerations relate to the application's consistency with design guidelines.

Enabling Legislation

In accordance with Section 489 of the *Local Government Act*, Council may issue a Development Permit in accordance with the applicable guidelines specified in the *Community Plan*. A Development Permit may vary or supplement the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* but may not vary the use or density of the land from that specified in the Bylaw.

Pursuant to Section 491 of the *Local Government Act*, where the purpose of the designation is the revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted, a Development Permit may include requirements respecting the character of the development, including landscaping, and the siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and other structures.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations for a Development Permit application for the property located at 2659 Douglas Street. The proposal is to permit form and character changes to a recently approved six-storey, multi-unit residential building and minor changes to an approved addition to the heritage-designated Scott Building.

The following points were considered in assessing this application:

- The subject property is within Development Permit Area 7A, Corridors. This DPA encourages commercial uses along corridors and high quality architecture, landscape and urban design to enhance the streetscape appearance, strengthen commercial viability and encourage pedestrian use. The proposal is consistent with these design objectives.
- The subject property is within the Humber Green Area, which is considered a Special Planning Area in the *Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan* (BGNP, 2017). The Plan encourages a pattern of smaller storefronts at ground level along Douglas Street, with a minimum three-storey streetwall. The proposal is consistent with these urban design principles.
- The proposed changes to the six-storey residential building comply with the applicable design guidelines and are sympathetic to the heritage-designated Scott Building.
- The applicant is proposing to add 146 new rental dwelling units in Humber Green Large Urban Village. Residents would have access to a large central courtyard and rooftop amenity space, live in close proximity to shops and services and public transit, and be located within walking distance to the downtown core. This development is largely unchanged from Council's 2020 approval, however, the unit mix has changed slightly to add more larger units.

BACKGROUND

Description of Proposal

The proposal is to permit form and character changes to a recently approved six-storey, multi-unit residential building and minor changes to an approved addition to the heritage-designated Scott Building. Specific changes include:

Six-Storey Building

- stepping back the sixth storey from the primary streetwall and the northeast corner of the building
- using dark grey and textured light grey metal cladding to reduce perception of massing
- replacing wood cladding with a light grey metal cladding on balcony insets
- replacing angled wall balconies on the east and south elevations with rectangular balconies
- replacing glass guardrail systems with metal railings on balconies

- adjusting window and balcony placements along the east and south elevations
- increasing the size of the rooftop mechanical penthouse
- slightly reducing the building width and increasing the side yard setback by approximately 60 centimetres.

Addition to Scott Building

- replacing wood cladding with a light grey metal cladding on balcony insets
- modifying the design of the angled covered south lobby entrance to make it flush with the exterior wall and removing one small, ground level window on the south elevation
- replacing a double window with a single window on the second storey of the east elevation
- increasing the size of the elevator overrun and rooftop mechanical equipment.

This application is fully compliant with the CR-DH Zone, Douglas-Hillside District, and does not require variances.

Land Use Context

The area is characterized by a mix of commercial and residential uses.



Figure 1. Aerial photo of subject property

Existing Site Development and Development Potential

The site is presently under-construction with a vacant three-storey heritage-designated building. Under the CR-DH Zone, Douglas-Hillside District, the property could be developed as a six-storey mixed-use or multi-unit residential building.

Data Table

The following data table compares the proposal with the CR-DH Zone. As noted above, the application is consistent with the zoning.

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	CR-DH Zone
Site area (m ²) – minimum	4804	4800
Density (Floor Space Ratio) – maximum	2.50:1	2.50:1
Total floor area (m ²) – maximum	12,006.00	12,010.00
Height (m) – maximum	19.50	19.50
Storeys – maximum	6	n/a
Site coverage (%) – maximum	62	62
Open site space (%) – minimum	27	27
Setbacks (m) – minimum		
Front – Douglas Street	0**	0
Rear (east)	5.27	5.25
Side (north) – Hillside Avenue	3.66 (new) / 0.00 (existing)	0
Side (south)	5.02 (new) / 3.00 (existing)	5 (new) / 3 (existing)
Parking – minimum		
Residential	53	53
Commercial	25	25
Visitor	10	10
Bicycle parking stalls – minimum		
Long-term – Residential	184	178

Zoning Criteria	Proposal	CR-DH Zone
Short-term – Residential	15	15
Bicycle parking stalls – minimum		
Long-term – Commercial	8	8
Short-term – Commercial	24	9

Active Transportation

The applicant is still providing 192 long-term bicycle parking spaces and increasing the supply of short-term bicycle parking spaces from 24 to 39. 40 long-term bicycle parking spaces would be designed for cargo and electric bikes, which were secured in a legal agreement at the time of rezoning.

Public Realm

The applicant is supplying a new bus shelter on the Hillside Avenue frontage, which was secured in a legal agreement at the time of rezoning.

Relevant History

On August 6, 2020, Council approved a rezoning application and development permit application to allow for an addition to the existing Scott Building and the construction of a new six-storey multi-unit residential building. Council also approved the heritage designation of the portion of the Scott Building (approximately 50% of the building) being retained in the development. The applicant informed staff that the approved six-storey building became financially unfeasible to construct in its current form due to an increase in construction costs and a change in market conditions. This resulted in the applicant bringing forward this new proposal for the six-storey building presented in this application.

Community Consultation

Consistent with Council's *Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variance Applications*, since this is a Development Permit without any variances, there is no requirement to refer the application for consultation.

ANALYSIS

Official Community Plan: Design Guidelines

The *Official Community Plan, 2012* (OCP) identifies this property within Development Permit Area 7A: Corridors, which strongly encourages commercial uses along corridors and high quality architecture, landscape and urban design to enhance the streetscape appearance, strengthen commercial viability and encourage pedestrian use.

The design guidelines encourage new building facades, especially those facing streets, to be well-designed and articulated with human-scale architectural features that create visual interest for pedestrians. Special attention to rhythm and pattern of existing building facades and architectural elements in the surrounding context is also strongly encouraged.

continues to incorporate some architectural elements from the Scott Building in the modern additions and new building. The architectural elements on the modern addition of the Scott Building, include the extension of the storefront glazing, applying new light-coloured brick material on the recessed portion of the east elevation, flat rooflines, matching cornice lines and window shape. The new building includes a flat roofline, and high-quality metal and wood cladding. The window style and placement are also sympathetic to the Scott Building and its addition.

Where two or more buildings are located on a single site, the design guidelines strongly encourage a comfortable separation space for residential units, with consideration for window placement, sunlight penetration to residential units and adequate spaces for landscaping. The building articulation along the east elevation of the Scott Building and the slender design of the new building continue to allow for some generous separation distances ranging from approximately 10m to 18m. These adequate separation distances also allow for sunlight penetration to residential units and the central courtyard area.

To create a sense of community on-site in accordance with the design guidelines, the applicant is proposing a central courtyard area for residents and visitors. It is framed by the buildings and there is easy access from Douglas Street and Hillside Avenue. This usable, attractive and well-integrated space would include tree planting, outdoor seating, chess and ping pong tables, and raised planters. By removing the centre of the existing building at the upper two levels, it has also created an internal-facing courtyard, which would include amenities such as a barbeque station, table and chairs, lounge seating, a lawn picnic area, and soft landscaping. An amenity room on the ground floor of the new multi-unit residential building, which opens onto the central plaza, is also being proposed.

The majority of parking is provided underground. Four parking spaces would be located at the rear of the site and not visible from Douglas Street or Hillside Avenue. The applicant has designed the surface parking in such a way that it looks like an extension of the courtyard with the application of decorative surface treatment and new trees to screen the parking spaces, which is consistent with the design guidelines.

Accessibility

No accessibility improvements are proposed beyond what is required through the *British Columbia Building Code*. The proposed courtyard and the pathways surrounding the proposed buildings are designed to be accessible.

Sustainability

As indicated in the applicant's letter dated March 25, 2022 the following sustainability features are associated with this proposal:

- Step 1 of the BC Energy Step Code
- tapered overhangs on balconies to prevent summer solar gain and maximize winter solar exposure
- building retention for its exterior assemblies, structural systems and finishes where appropriate
- construction of a new transit stop and subsidized transit program for residents
- two modo car share vehicles on-site and car share memberships for residents
- 38 new on-site trees.

Housing

Since this application is only for a Development Permit, housing tenure and affordability considerations cannot be required. However, in the original Rezoning Application, the applicant entered a housing agreement to secure the dwelling units as rental in perpetuity. The application would add approximately 146 new (this is net new) residential rental dwelling units, which would increase the overall supply of housing in the area and contribute to the targets set out in the *Victoria Housing Strategy*.

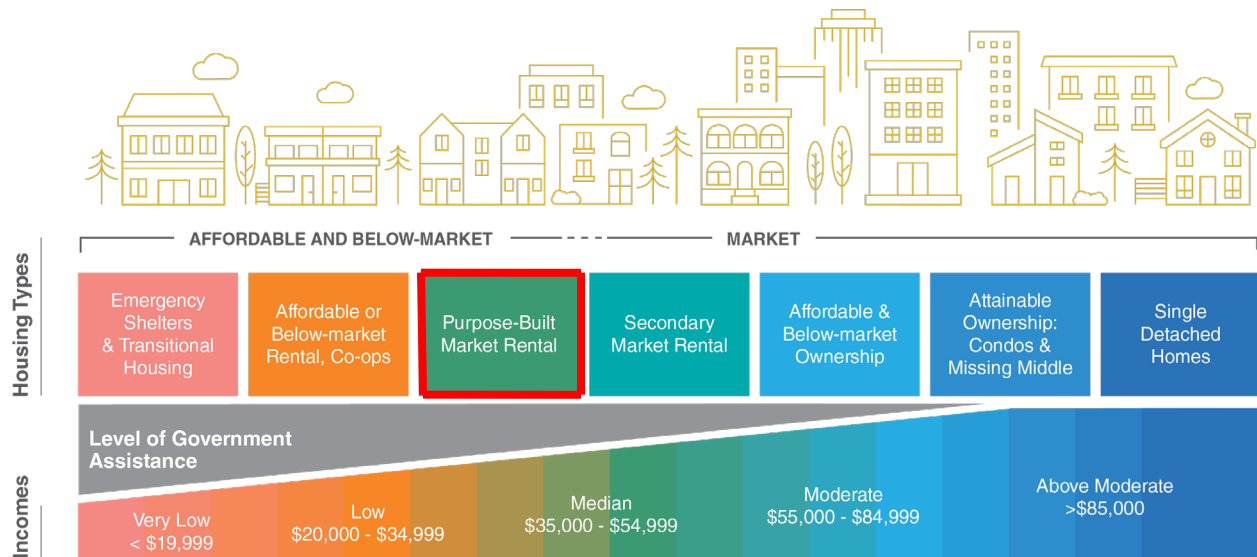


Figure 1. Housing Continuum

Housing Mix

At present, there is no policy that provides targets regarding housing mix and unit type is not regulated or secured. However, the OCP identifies a mix of units as an objective and identifies the need for a diverse range of housing units including family housing. The applicant has increased the number of larger sized units from 18 to 19, including the addition of three-bedroom units, in the revised proposal. The number of one-bedroom and one-bedroom plus den has been decreased to allow for this change. The following table compares the original and proposed unit mix:

Unit Type	Approved Unit Mix	Proposed Unit Mix
Studio	16	16
One Bedroom Loft	6	6
One Bedroom	83	82
One Bedroom + Den	27	23
Two Bedroom	18	7
Two Bedroom + Den	1	6
Three Bedroom	0	6

The applicant is willing to secure the larger size units (two and three dwelling units) in a legal agreement to the satisfaction of the Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.

Tree Preservation Bylaw and Urban Forest Master Plan

Two existing municipal trees shall be retained, one on the Hillside Avenue frontage and the other on the Douglas Street frontage. Five new municipal trees are proposed in irrigated planting pits, four on the Hillside Avenue frontage and one on the Douglas Street frontage. One on-site apple tree and one birch tree would be impacted by the construction of the underground parkade, and as a result these two trees would have to be removed. The existing trees are subject to the previous *Tree Preservation Bylaw*, and therefore they are considered undersized and not protected under the bylaw. The applicant is proposing to plant 35 new trees at-grade, many of which will be small canopy trees as a result of being located above a parkade. In addition, three new small trees are proposed on the upper storey interior-facing courtyard of the existing building. A total of 38 new trees would be planted on the site.

The addition of new trees and increased canopy cover is a benefit to the area, which exhibits low canopy cover. This is consistent with the objectives of the City of Victoria's Urban Forest Master Plan. The enhancement of the urban forest on public and private land is also supported in the OCP.

Other Considerations

Development Permit applications are generally referred to the Advisory Design Panel (ADP) for review and feedback. ADP reviewed the original Development Permit Application; however, given that the proposed changes are only related to building step back, exterior finishes, window size and placement, and balcony designs, staff feel that these changes are not significant enough to refer the application back to ADP. The proposed design changes are sympathetic to the heritage building and the building form remains unchanged.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposal to make design modifications to the six-storey, multi-unit residential building and the addition to the heritage-designated building are consistent with the design guidelines. This proposal will enhance the overall character of the neighbourhood by adding 146 new residential rental dwelling units, new village commercial uses and making improvements to the public realm. Staff recommend that Council consider authorizing issuance of this development permit.

ALTERNATE MOTION

That Council decline Development Permit Application No. 000609 for the property located at 2659 Douglas Street.

Respectfully submitted,

Leanne Taylor
Senior Planner
Development Services Division

Karen Hoese, Director
Sustainable Planning and Community
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

- Attachment A: Subject Map
- Attachment B: Aerial Map
- Attachment C: Plans date stamped July 7, 2022
- Attachment D: Letter from applicant to Mayor and Council dated March 25, 2022.