

# Planned 10-storey office tower on theatre site goes to hearing

**ROXANNE EGAN-ELLIOTT**  
Times Colonist

A proposed 10-storey office tower at Yates and Blanshard that would replace Capitol 6 Theatres is moving ahead to a public hearing.

The site at 808-812 View Street, 1205-1225 Blanshard Street and 805 Yates Street currently houses small commercial units in addition to the theatre.

Jawl Properties is proposing a 10-storey office building with ground-floor commercial space, with three levels of underground parking, including about 144 stalls and 120 bike parking spaces.

Councillors voted unanimously Thursday to move the project forward to a public hearing.

Mayor Lisa Helps said the project sends a "strong vote of confidence" in the future of downtown as the city continues to recover from the effects of the pandemic.

Coun. Geoff Young said council heard there are clearly negative impacts to tenants in an adjoining building to the east and concerns about the proximity to the 19th-century St. Andrews Cathedral, which is across the street, but the proposal is a compromise in the limited space of the property.



Artist's rendering of a proposed 10-storey office tower at Yates and Blanshard St. JAWL PROPERTIES

"I think the proposal is about as good as we can expect to get, given those constraints," he said.

The proposal is "thoughtfully approached and well-designed," said Coun. Jeremy Loveday, and would create positive economic opportunities if built.

"I'd be remiss to not mention feeling a little sadness about the movie theatre and I think there would be many people in the community who would feel the same way," he said.

Ian Sutherland, chair of the Downtown Residents Association land use committee, said if the proposal goes forward, he

expects it will be a well-built and attractive building, providing more office space downtown.

The project mostly complies with the city's core-area plan, and issues raised by the land-use committee were mostly minor, he said, such as a footprint that's slightly larger than what's currently approved and concerns about impacts on the "visual prominence" of the cathedral.

"I think there's an argument to be made that it might be crowding the cathedral a bit," he said.

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Mayor and council

We don't need any more office blocks there are already lots of empty spaces.

What we do need is affordable housing which you continue to reject.

I suggest councilors live in tents on street corners without their cell phones, food deliveries or comforts of office for 30 days just to understand what it's like to face homelessness.

Putting up with theft, addicts and loonies continually while stuffed shirts plan more bike lanes and waist money of absurdity.

James Cooper

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Nicole Matthews [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 26, 2022 6:39 PM  
**To:** Public Hearings  
**Subject:** Rezoning Application 00791 Comments

To whom it may concern;

I have lived on the 10th floor of 819 Yates Street facing Yates and Blanchard for almost two years. I am a baker and my boyfriend does warehouse work and we just barely meet the \$2500 monthly rent on our 600ft apartment - but it's worth the price to be able to get glimpses of the water and have afternoon and evening sun while being able to house our cat. If the 10 story development goes through at the location of the Capitol 6 Theatre we will lose 80% of our view of this beautiful city and put the entirety of our apartment on display for the offices they plan to build.

Should this development go through I believe all west facing apartments in Yellow on Yates from floors 3 - 10 would lose their views or privacy, this means somewhere between 10 - 24 apartments would be left in the dark or forced to vacate.

I urge the development to put a limit on the buildings height to the 3 or 4 stories the current Capitol 6 Theatre occupies. Especially since everything above the ground floor of this new development will be ambient empty office space to ruin Victoria's skyline further.

Yours,  
Nicole Matthews