

597 Montreal St., 205 Quebec St., and 210, 214 & 224 Kingston St.
Letter to Mayor and Council
Summer, 2023

OCP Amendment, Rezoning and Development Permit Application
Mixed-Use Residential Building with a Purpose-Built Daycare

Submission By:



July 17th, 2023

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

Attention: Mayor Alto and Victoria Council

Re: Montreal and Quebec – Updated Submission for Rezoning and Development Permit
Property Addresses: 597 Montreal St., 205 Quebec St., and 210, 214 & 224 Kingston St.

On behalf of Mike Geric Construction, D'Ambrosio Architecture + Urbanism, Murdoch deGreeff Landscape Architecture and our entire project team, we are pleased to present you with the resubmission of our application for the proposed redevelopment of the surface parking lot bordered by Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets in James Bay.

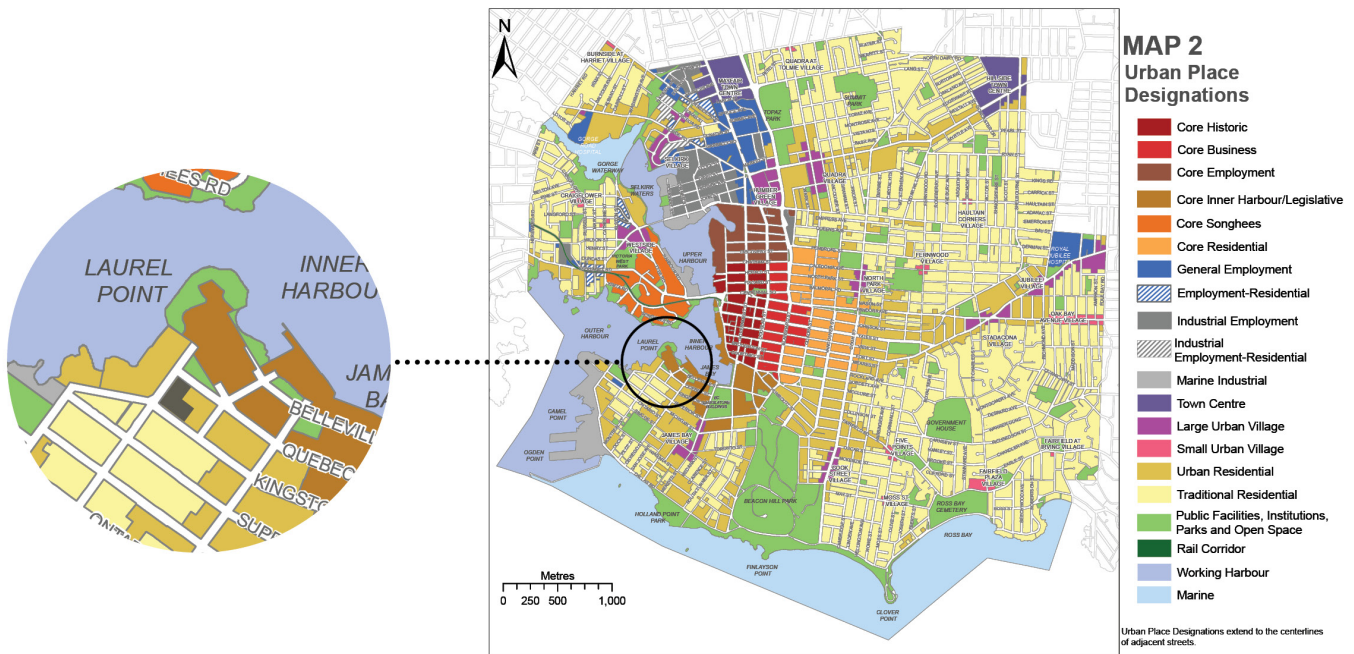
As a trusted local development and construction company, we understand the significance of this location and have established project principles to ensure our application, community consultation and approach are thoughtful and inclusive while also meeting the needs of our growing City and dynamic region.

Project Overview

The project provides a long-awaited reimagining and redevelopment opportunity of this prominent James Bay location that for decades has been an under-utilized asphalt parking lot. Further to the housing, public realm and placemaking contributions provided by this proposal, our density will provide approximately \$400,000.00 in additional annual property tax revenue to the City (based on City of Victoria mill rate and 2022 land values.)

The proposed development was designed with a focus on three pillars – Housing, Placemaking and Transportation & Safety. The table below summarizes the development's main attributes and further details and cost analysis of our comprehensive Community Amenity Contributions will be provided ahead of First Reading.

HOUSING	PLACEMAKING	TRANSPORTATION/SAFETY
Creation of 112 New Homes:	Public Corner Plaza & Cafe	Crosswalk @ Quebec/Montreal
1-Bedroom (36 + 2 Studios)	Signature tree @ Kingston St	AAA Bike Lanes
2-Bedrooms (34 Condos, 1 Townhome)	Lush landscaping and redesigned street frontages (40 NEW Trees)	Improved Visibility & Pedestrian Safety
3-Bedrooms (32 Condos, 9 Townhomes)	Neighbourhood & Multigenerational Connections	Traffic Calming Improvements along Quebec and Montreal Streets
\$700,000.00* cash contribution to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve * 30% of the overall land-lift amount per the Inclusionary Housing and Amenity Policy	Childcare Centre (rent free) & Community / Volunteer Space	2 MOD0 Carshare EVs
Adaptable Homes	\$200,000.00 in local Public Park Enhancements	



Policy Context

The subject property is in the James Bay neighbourhood, on the boundary of the Core Inner Harbour area. While in the OCP the properties are identified as 'Urban Residential', the proposal takes a nuanced and site-specific approach: the architectural design makes a transition in building massing and character between the Core Inner Harbour and James Bay Residential areas.

In the OCP, these are categorized as two districts with characteristics summarized as follows:

	CORE INNER HARBOUR/ LEGISLATIVE	URBAN RESIDENTIAL
BUILT FORM:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-5 storeys adjacent to the harbour. Up to approximately 15 storeys in select locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-3 storeys Up to approximately 6 storey multi-unit buildings.
PLACE CHARACTER FEATURES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal building & site design to respect the form and character of signature landmarks Formal public realm of wide sidewalks, pedestrian promenades, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variable yard setbacks with primary doorways facing the street. Variable front yard landscaping, boulevard and street tree planting.

	regularly spaced tree planting, and formal squares and greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-street parking and collective driveway access to rear yard or underground parking.
USES:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public institutional and assembly. Commercial, including office, retail, and visitor accommodation. Recreation and tourism-related uses. Multi-unit residential and mixed-use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground-oriented multi-unit residential. Low to mid-rise multi-unit residential.
DENSITY / FLOOR SPACE RATIO:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally up to 1:1 Increased density up to a total of 4:1 may be considered in strategic locations for the advancement of plan objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally up to 1.2:1 Increased density up to a total of approximately 2:1 may be considered in strategic locations for the advancement of plan objectives.

In a well-designed city, the experience of places does not stop at geo-political or policy boundaries that are invisible to the eye. The urban design goal of this proposal is to realize the full potential of this James Bay site. The design is custom fit to the unique location that, while being an integral part of the Laurel Point neighbourhood, is an active part of Victoria's Legislature Precinct and Fisherman's Wharf tourism district. To be successful, the project must help reconcile the scale and character of the waterfront development along Quebec and Montreal Streets, with that of the single-family houses to the South. The proposal integrates these widely varied adjacencies by making the scale transition between them, with townhouses and a mixed-use apartment building, within its property boundaries.



Aerial context view with OCP Urban Place Designations

Planning Context

The site's adjacency to the higher density waterfront area suggests the proposed 3:1 FSR is reasonable for a development that advances key objectives in the OCP. This density is mid-way between the maximums anticipated in the OCP for Urban Residential and the Core Inner Harbour categories. We believe that the land-use, urban design and streetscape objectives do not stop in the centre of the street where the local plan does. For the public, these considerations need to be thoughtfully blended into the fabric of the neighbourhood and we believe that this plan and this proposed density achieves just that. At this quantitative density, the project can achieve a greater number of policy objectives, positive attributes, and public amenities, including:

Housing Amenities

- Range of housing types and sizes from studio to 3-bedroom and ground-oriented townhouses that contribute to more than 40 three-bedroom family-sized dwellings.
- Enhanced accessibility in residential units with several adaptable condominiums and townhouses designed to accommodate residential lifts.
- Cash contribution to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve.

Neighbourhood Placemaking Amenities

- A dedicated neighbourhood childcare space located on the Montreal Street frontage with rear courtyard (playground) space.
- Service commercial space at the ground level for gathering, neighbourhood program use and placemaking.
- Employ a universal public realm design to create accessible open space for people of all ages and abilities.
- Allocation of commercial meeting space for up to 12-hours per week of free not-for-profit and neighbourhood association meeting / activity use(s).

Urban Design

- Integration of high-quality urban design, architecture, and landscape
- Enhanced public realm & placemaking, including a public social space
- Dedication of land at the corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets for the creation of a public gathering space for neighbourhood placemaking and improved sight lines around this prominent corner.
- The design and construction of a safe, lit crosswalk at the corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets.
- Positive contribution to the Inner Harbour / James Bay skyline by creating a striking design while carefully framing the view corridors within the Legislative Precinct.



Sketch view from across the Harbour

Transportation and Safety

- Underground parking, meeting expected parking demand for all uses on the site (refer to the Parking Study for proposed Transportation Demand Management strategies).
- The creation of additional, safely placed on-street lay-by parking stalls along Quebec and Montreal Streets.
- Provision of 2 publicly accessible EV car-share vehicles, located for neighbourhood access.
- Creation of a visual Statutory Right of Way across the inset corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets.
- Addition of a publicly available level-2 EV car charger along the Quebec Street frontage.
- Create impetus for City of Victoria consideration of a speed limit reduction between Quebec and Montreal Streets (i.e. reduce from 50 km/h down to 30-35 km/h).
- Install rapid flashers at a newly proposed crosswalk at the corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets.
- Enhanced bike facilities, including:
 - Charging for e-bikes
 - A tenant bike repair station
 - Protected bike lanes and connectivity to the City's contemplated north – south AAA network

Public Park and Pathway

- Completely redesigned enhanced adjacent public street-frontages along Montreal and Kingston Streets which includes:
 - Protected cycling infrastructure
 - Protected boulevard trees, innovative rain gardens and landscape planting
 - Separated sidewalk and enhanced pedestrian realm
 - Animated public gathering space at a proposed plaza at the corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets
 - Existing above ground utility lines on Montreal Street rebuilt underground
 - Addition of street furniture and legislative precinct lighting standards
- A new pedestrian Montreal St. crosswalk connecting west toward the David Foster Harbour Pathway and the newly reimagined Peter Pollen Waterfront Park
- Creation of a significant 'feature tree' at the corner of Montreal and Kingston Street
- Design and deployment of a cycling and pedestrian network connection between the newly adopted James Bay AAA cycling network and the existing Inner Harbour connectivity network.
- Contribute enhancements to offsite public spaces such as the David Foster Harbour Pathway and/or Peter Pollen Waterfront Park.
- Off-site improvements of the dated Montreal Street storm water facilities.

While the project achieves the broader policy objectives in the OCP, the proposal does move beyond the level of development anticipated in the James Bay Neighbourhood Plan - which was adopted in 1993 - with an increased amount of housing and a wider mix of uses and public benefits. Accordingly, the project makes progress toward other key strategic directions of the local area plan, including:

- Adding to the variety of housing types and tenures for a range of age groups and incomes, with a focus on family-sized housing.
- Contributing to the neighbourhood's heterogeneity of land use, housing types and character.
- Providing a high-quality design and public realm condition, which both complements and enhances the overall neighbourhood.
- Improving pedestrian and cycling public infrastructure as an enhanced gateway to and from the Victoria Harbour.
- Framing historic Victoria and Legislative Precinct view corridors.

The density increase is requested considering the project's contribution to these neighbourhood amenities and municipal goals. The increase is also rationalized by how successfully the design responds to the site's unique adjacencies and mitigates impacts of the proposed density on the surrounding older multi-family developments (detailed in 'Design and Development Permit Guidelines' below). We have also engaged in a formal land lift analysis process with the City of Victoria. Our proposal will meet the cash-in-lieu requirement for funds provided to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund and will exceed the in-kind CAC requirements for parks, open spaces, and infrastructure / AAA transportation safety improvements.



Townhouses fit the neighbourhood scale on Kingston Street

Neighbourhood & Impacts

Our focus is to create a high-quality mixed-use development that makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood based on the three pillars of optimizing housing, placemaking and transportation & safety.

To that end, the proposed local café and childcare centre, (identified by neighbours as desirable and welcome uses to the area), are positioned and designed to provide positive services and activity to the neighbourhood. It is expected that the people using the new spaces will foster a vibrant, multi-generational social character for the surrounding sidewalks and proposed corner plaza. Along with other aspects of the design guided by Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, users of these new facilities will provide visual oversight to Charles Redfern Park, and thereby encourage more positive activity there.

Community Consultation

To date, we have held three open house events. In-person events were held on our site on August 17 & 19, 2021 and an online meeting was held on November 23, 2022. We have also met with hundreds of our neighbours and stakeholders throughout the city to share our vision and gather feedback, which we have collected through surveys, conversations and correspondence.

Our 2021 survey to residents received more than 100 responses. More than 70% of respondents indicated support for redevelopment of the parking lot and confirmed the importance of key project attributes: a mix of residential unit types, adequate vehicle parking, improved pedestrian safety and comfortably scaled building frontages on the street edges.

There was a positive response to the mixed-use aspects of the project, in particular the proposed corner café, and to the pedestrian-focused urban design approach to the public realm. Concerns were raised around density and building height, with respect to potential view, shadow and traffic impacts to the surrounding neighbourhood.

Based on this ongoing feedback with neighbours and the City, various aspects of the proposal have been adjusted:

Vibrancy. The commercial space at the corner of Montreal & Quebec Streets was further developed as a neighbourhood café space with an expanded outdoor patio and public square while improving sight lines at this prominent corner;

Continuity. The property at 224 Kingston Street was added to the subject property in response to suggestions that the project would be improved by extending the low-rise portion and increasing the number of townhouses;

Context. The majority of proposed townhouses were adjusted to include residential lift capacity in order to reduce barriers and enhance accessibility;

Homes for People. A number of the residential units were replanned to both design for family-friendly housing options as well as adaptable design standards, to better design a complete neighbourhood and to best support people aging-in-place; and

Reduce Impact. The building's massing was adjusted to have a lower podium height, with the tower reshaped to have a more tapered form, oriented North/South to reduce shadow and view impacts on the surroundings.

Need, Demand and Benefits

The project team reviewed several key documents in assessing demand for housing and childcare in James Bay including the City of Victoria's Housing Needs Assessment (2020) and the Childcare in Victoria Report from Urban Systems (October 2020).

Housing Needs Assessment

Projected number of new households needed by 2025 is estimated to be 2900, with owner households projected to grow more quickly than renter households. The project addressed projected demand with a focus on a range of homes sizes (62% studios to 2 bedrooms) while ensuring adequate provision of larger family homes as well (38%).

Another key area of need identified in the report was affordable housing. We are proposing a significant financial contribution to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to support the continuing delivery of City grants for the development and retention of affordable rental and home ownership projects.

Childcare

There is a minimum waitlist time of 1-2 years for childcare spaces in Victoria and James Bay has the third highest rate of unmet demand for licenced childcare (250 spaces). To address this critical need, we are proposing 49 childcare spaces for infant/toddler and preschool children and are seeking a non-profit partner to operate the childcare centre. Our intent is to design a ground-level indoor and outdoor courtyard space that is programmable, desirable, and flexible so that we can attract a high-quality not-for-profit provider. As part of this development application, Mike Geric Construction will provide the selected provider with rent on a cost-recovery basis to support the viability of a new and much-needed childcare centre.



Montreal streetscape at the entrance to the Childcare Centre

Public Interest

The Northern edge of James Bay's low-density housing area is dominated by tourist services and the associated vehicle traffic. While tourism is an important economic driver in the City, its impacts must be balanced with the comfort and safety of residents.

This proposal seeks to support both the local residential and tourism experience by contributing a landmark building to the harbour skyline that is uniquely of James Bay; at the same time, the project provides needed housing and comfortable social space for the neighbourhood. The human scale, active uses, ample beautiful furnishings and rich landscaping will greatly improve what is now a desolate corner parking lot.

Public Realm and Safety

The high-quality integration of intentional programming, landscape architecture and urban design is intended to create a neighbourhood magnet for multi-generational activity for the foreseeable future. This proposal seeks to expand and improve upon the current 'abrupt' sidewalk and streetscape condition, by dedicating a significant amount of ground level space and creating an interesting, active and protected public realm on all street frontages. We are also integrating a series of timeless street furniture, street lighting and rainwater management components throughout the public realm.

The inset plaza space at the corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets is a key design feature that emerged from our neighbourhood consultation. Our design team has worked to create a space that activates this street corner, creates an interesting outdoor gathering hub for neighbours and residents, improves sight lines with the establishment of a visual statutory right of way and creates a visual gateway for residents and visitors entering the City of Victoria.



View of the corner plaza at Montreal & Quebec Streets

In addition to our proposed on-site streetscape enhancements, we are also proposing a significant number of off-site improvements. These include the further expansion of the City's AAA protected bike lane facilities along Quebec and Montreal Streets, the addition of a pedestrian activated flashing crosswalk across Montreal Street and a comprehensive series of visual, pedestrian and vehicular flow improvements at the busy corner of Quebec and Montreal Streets. Finally, this project will create an impetus for the City's review of speed limits in the area. Our traffic consulting team will continue to provide technical feedback and support through this review.

Parks and Open Space

In addition to the dedicated public realm space, this project will provide a significant amount of relief or buffer between the existing townhomes on Quebec and Kingston Streets by introducing an outdoor playground and amenity space at the ground level. This open space will include a significant amount of landscape planting and the expansion of our proposed rain garden network. The playground space will primarily serve the proposed childcare provider; however, we will explore additional users and partnership opportunities with the neighbourhood and community as this application progresses.

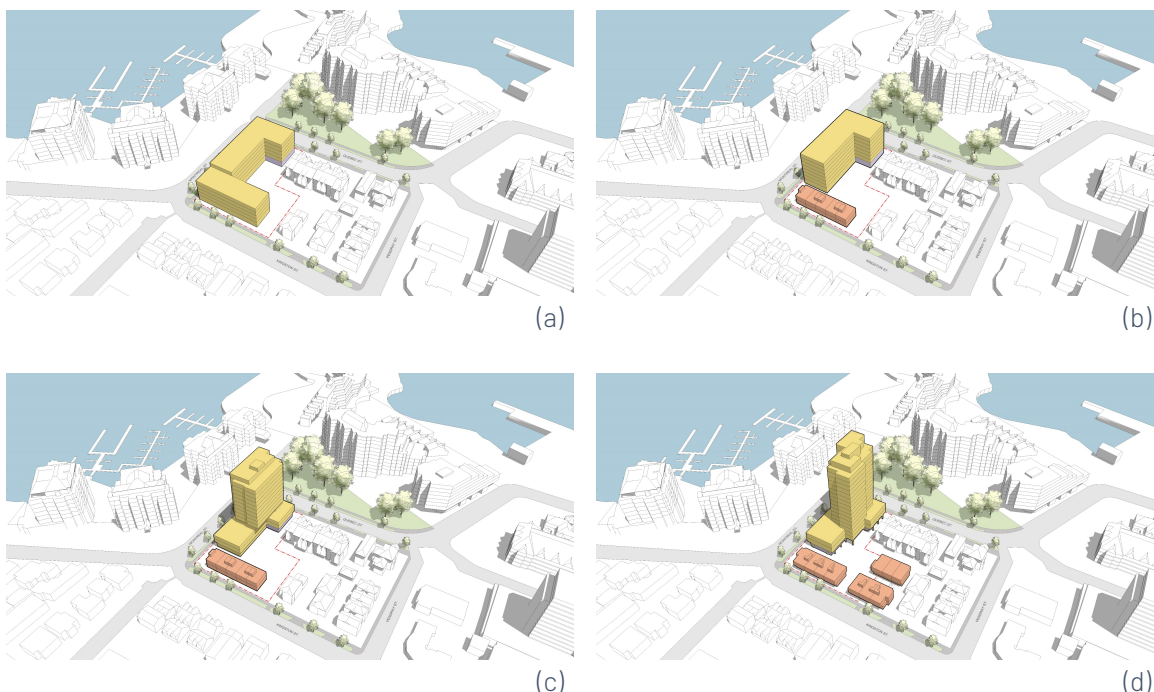


Landscape & Public Realm Precedents

Beyond our on-site dedications and improvements, we are proposing a financial contribution to the City of Victoria's Local Amenity Fund with the intent to further local James Bay waterfront park objectives such as the completion of the David Foster Harbour Pathway and/or Peter Pollen Waterfront Park or Charles Redfern Parks. This significant pathway and these park spaces define the James Bay waterfront for neighbours and visitors alike. We believe that connection and enhancement of this space will provide current and future neighbours with a significant legacy.

Design & Development Permit Guidelines

The project is comprised of four distinct buildings: one mixed-use tower and three groups of two and three-storey townhouses. The tower is positioned on the Northern corner of the site, proximate to the taller buildings along the waterfront. The townhouses are located along the Southern boundary of the site, reflecting the height and scale of the houses and townhouses across Kingston Street. Through the distribution of the building floor area and height on the property, the architectural forms make an effective transition from the Inner Harbour District to the Urban Residential area.



*Sequence of massing studies illustrating the proposed density shaped into four building forms:
(a) 6 storey perimeter block; (b) 8 storey mid-rise with townhouses; (c) 14 storey podium / tower with townhouses; (d) 17 storey podium / tower with townhouses.*

A relatively slender tower form lands on a 3-storey base; while the podium is scaled to define a comfortable street frontage on Montreal and Quebec Streets, the tower footprint is shaped to align with compass North. This orientation narrows its shadow and reduces its view impact on the surrounding apartment and townhouse buildings. Through numerous design iterations, potential shadow and view impacts were identified and it was determined that these are most effectively mitigated by a compact but tall building form. These modifications resulted in a sculptural architectural composition that will be an attractive addition to the skyline. We hope that, in the words of the OCP, the new buildings will “enhance the visual identity and appearance of the City”.

The project takes an urban approach to building form, both in the sculptural aspects of the tower massing and, even more critically in this location, in how the building and its functions meet the ground level. Through the synthesis of architecture, landscape architecture and urban design, the project will integrate with and enliven the surrounding social space of the City, being the public rights-of-way, streetscape and landscape

of adjacent properties. The building podium is where the transition between the vertical tower and the public ground plane is made and what predominantly will be experienced by people; the podium defines and gives scale to the street space. What enlivens the streets and adjacent spaces is the activity of those that inhabit and use the spaces within. Above the ground floor, windows and balconies are cut into the brick facades, in a circular and rectangular pattern that give the facades a human scale and a playful, distinctive character. The circular motif is carried around to the facades of the lower scaled townhouses.

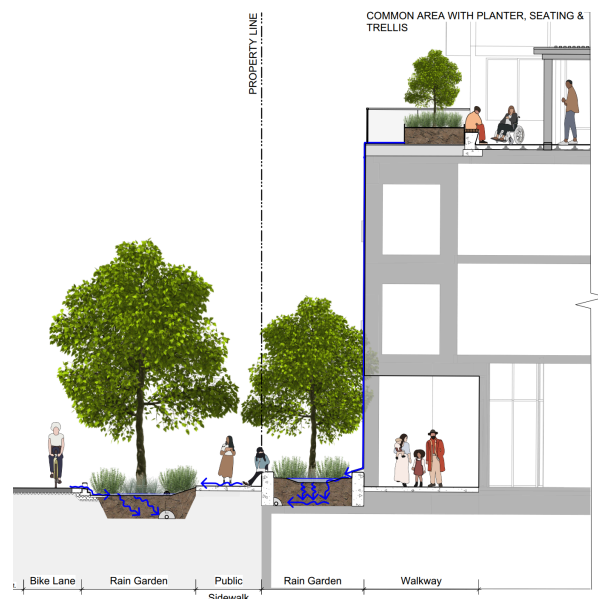
The palette of colour and material is contextually responsive, picking up on the textures and tones of the Inner Harbour District and historic buildings of brick and stone. Similar to the adjacent brick clad residential buildings the podium is clad in clay brick; however, the selected colour is a lighter, warm 'wheat' colour, complemented by warm wood-toned soffits. The tower is clad in larger-scale cementitious panels with a limestone-grain finish, referencing the materiality of historic buildings in the area. These panels help to visually lighten the tower and accentuate the shadow play on its angled form. The townhouse clusters continue with brick walls, however there it is integrated with wood cladding and soffits for a more domestic character. The townhouses and podium are further softened by the integration of extensive landscaped planters, which wrap around the buildings on Kingston Street and help to define public outdoor areas along Montreal and Quebec Streets.

Site Design & Landscape Architecture

An integrated design approach has been used for the site to create a high-quality public realm that incorporates the seven best practices identified in the City's Downtown Public Realm Place, providing quality green spaces, leveraging opportunities to enhance urban forestry values and integrating rainwater management.

The landscape plan includes a variety of plaza and seating spaces, a play area for a childcare center and a variety of pathways to provide pedestrian connectivity through the site. The plaza area at the intersection of Montreal and Quebec Streets includes built-in benches, covered patio seating and bicycle parking. Hard surface materials for this space will consist of materials from the Inner Harbour Character Area from the Downtown Public Realm Plan, including granite pavers and basalt entry banding with a sandblasted street name insert. The parkade structure has been pulled back at the intersection of Kingston and Montreal Streets to create a space for a specimen tree planting area on grade.

Streetscape curb bump-outs along Montreal Street and Quebec Street help calm traffic, provide a safe pedestrian realm and add green space and stormwater management to the road right-of-way. Amenity plantings along these sidewalks, including within rain garden areas, will help scale and frame the pedestrian environment around the proposed development. The townhomes along Kingston Street use grade separation, low landscape walls and amenity plantings to delineate private spaces from the public sidewalk.



Montreal Street streetscape cross section

The landscape plan also proposes a series of rooftop amenities for residents. This includes private patio spaces defined by planting areas as well as shared amenity space with a variety of seating areas, fire pit and other features for residents. This amenity area will contribute to the connectivity of residents with each other while offering fantastic viewing opportunities to the surrounding landscape.

Urban Forest

The integrated design team for this project has used the City of Victoria's Urban Forestry Master Plan as a guide and will incorporate tree values in a proactive manner. A key element of the landscape plan is the renewal of the urban forest. Proposed new tree plantings will re-establish urban biodiversity and offer improved habitat value in the long term. The plan includes 40 new tree plantings (small, medium and large) with four large trees on municipal frontages and 12 small tree plantings in the roof top planting areas. Generous soil volumes provided in the design, including a signature tree planted directly in the ground at Kingston and Montreal Streets will support these trees long into the future.

Transportation



The new buildings are well-located to advance Victoria's priorities for multi-modal travel, having a Walk Score of 72 ('Very Walkable'), Transit Score of 69 ('Good Transit') and Bike Score of 88 ('Very Bikeable'). Within a convenient 15-minute walk of the services and amenities of Fisherman's Wharf, the James Bay Village and Capital Park. The future residents will be also, of course, very well located for access to outdoor recreation facilities and parks. Walking, rolling and cycling will be supported around the new buildings with landscape and special paving, integrated with enhancements to foster social interaction.

James Bay Plan annotated to show a 15-minute walking radius from the proposal site.

Vehicle Parking

A total of 142 parking spaces are proposed for the development, located within two levels of underground parkade. Parking is organized as 107 residential spaces for the main building, 13 spaces exclusively for townhouse residents, 5 spaces for daycare staff parking, 2 stalls for car share vehicles and 15 stalls for shared use between residential and commercial visitors.

The project's parking requirements were analyzed based upon bylaw standards and research of available local data. The findings of this analysis are summarized as follows:

Land Use	Bylaw Standards		Expected Demand	Proposed Supply
	'Other' Area	Core Area		
Residential Condominium (102 units)	131	107	107	107
Residential Townhouses (10)	14.5	10	12	13
Day Care (312m ²)				
• Staff			5	15 (shared between complimentary uses)
• Visitors	4	3	10	
Commercial Retail Unit (152m ²)	4	2	2	
Café (85m ²)	5	1	3	
Residential Visitor	11	11	11	
Car Share (Modo)	-	-	-	2
Total	169	134	150	142

The proposal is located on the edge of the 'Core Area' and has several characteristics of a Core Area development, such as walkability and proximity to employment, services, transit and cycling infrastructure. Analysis of local parking data suggests expected parking demand is most closely aligned with Core Area parking rates. To ensure parking is managed responsibly, the design optimizes the space available within the two levels of underground parkade. Parking for complimentary uses (residential and commercial visitors) will be combined for efficiency, leading to an aggregate number of stalls that exceeds the anticipated vehicle demand. Furthermore, the project will provide enhanced bicycle storage and MGC is providing two carshare vehicles on the property (a benefit to building residents but also to the larger community).

In addition to the off-street parking provisions, the project will incorporate parking spaces within the public rights-of-way on Montreal and Quebec Streets. A total of 4 on-street, layby parking spaces will be available for short-term loading (of particular importance to the childcare centre and café) as well as public use along Montreal Street.

Traffic Impact Analysis

Traffic counts at adjacent intersections (*Pendray Street / Quebec Street, Quebec Street / Montreal Street, Montreal Street / Kingston Street, and Kingston Street / Pendray Street*) were collected at peak hours and adjusted to account for traffic reductions related to COVID. These intersections were found to operate at a Level of Service 'B' with no queuing issues. Traffic modelling demonstrates the proposed development will not impact the level of service for these intersections and will not cause queuing issues along the network.

AAA Bicycle Facility Improvements

A 2-way AAA bicycle lane has been designed for Montreal and Quebec Streets that will further promote an active mode shift in the area. The frontage works have been designed to allow for the potential extension of the AAA bicycle facilities for better integration with the City's future plans for the nearby Belleville terminal.

Public Safety Improvements

We have designed the public plaza at Quebec and Montreal Streets to ensure improved site lines at the corner and will offer a Statutory Right of Way to secure this visual improvement in perpetuity. A new marked crosswalk with rapid flashers is also planned for this corner to connect to the David Foster Harbour Pathway and improve pedestrian safety in the area.

Infrastructure

The residents and users of the proposed new buildings will be well serviced with access to and from all three streets, allowing the design to make optimal use of the property both above and below ground. Electrical service will come from Montreal Street, with equipment located underground (rather than a conventional Pad Mounted Transformer at street level). As part of the development, the overhead power lines on Montreal Street will be relocated underground, thereby improving the appearance of the area.

Integrated Rainwater Management

Rain gardens and rain planters have been integrated into the design to manage runoff from the building roof areas where feasible. On street rain gardens treat municipal road runoff within planted boulevards in the road right of way. These rainwater features will clean and slow storm water delivery to the city's storm drain network and sensitive downstream habitat. Water from the building and roads and healthy organic soil of the rain gardens will support the local urban forest while sustainably managing stormwater.

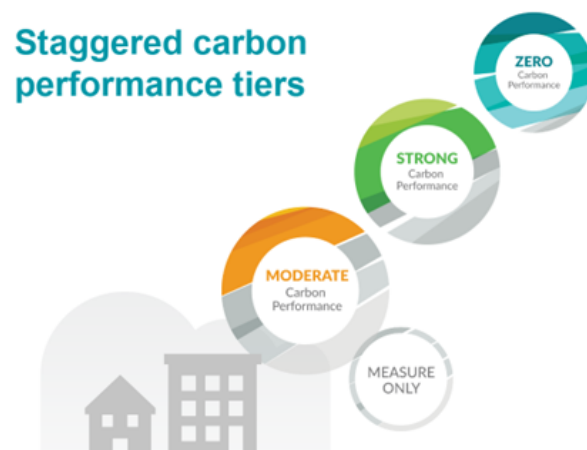
Water Conservation

Landscape plantings will include native and appropriate non-native plants that are adapted to site conditions, climate, and design intent. The use of native vegetation and pollinator species promotes regional identity and a sense of place, supports biodiversity, reduces pesticide use, and supports water conservation by minimizing the use of potable water for irrigation. A high-efficiency irrigation system will be used to reduce water demand in the landscape. Rooftop planters would similarly be irrigated with a high efficiency drip irrigation system.

Environment

A fundamental principle of environmental sustainability is to optimize resources by minimizing the negative impact of people. This means accommodating more people and their needs in locations that reduce the consumption of arable land and optimize utilities distribution and transportation networks, all toward reducing resource consumption and waste. Housing more people in compact and efficient ways in urban areas is a fundamental strategy to sustainably accommodate population growth.

Naturally, the proposed new buildings' construction, technical systems and operations will comply with current Building and Energy Codes as well as incorporating best practices in energy conservation and limiting of greenhouse gas emissions. Accordingly, the main building (the Montreal daycare space, commercial/retail corner at Quebec and Montreal Street and the residential tower) will be designed to meet Step 2 of the Energy Step Code and the townhouses will be designed to meet Step 3.



Key benefits related to BC Step Code and Zero Carbon Step Code as identified by the City of Victoria, are as follows:

Health and Comfort – Studies have shown that high-performance homes are more comfortable and healthier, because they effectively manage temperature and fresh air throughout the building.

Less Energy, Lower Bills – The Step Code improves energy efficiency and lowers energy bills compared to homes and buildings with similar systems designed under the BC Building Code.

Improved Sound Envelope – Residential dwellings will be less impacted by the noises of the harbor and other adjacent uses due to the improved envelope performance.

Climate Leadership – Mike Geric Construction is prepared to work with the City to expedite our building's mechanical systems to exceed the City's Zero Carbon Step Code. We will eliminate all major Natural Gas home and business heating, hot water and cooking systems from our plans to ensure we are exceeding the City's ambitious 2024 Permit timelines.



View of the proposal looking South on Montreal Street

Conclusion

The proposed redevelopment project at Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets embodies the principles and aspirations as stated in the Official Community Plan and the Capital Regional Growth Strategy. The addition of new housing proposed also contributes to redressing the housing shortage in the South Island. New condominium apartments and townhouses will contribute to the spectrum of housing affordability, availability of family-sized housing, improvement of multi-modal connectivity and mobility, and contribute to the economic health of the community with significant development investment. The location and forms of the new housing comply with Regional / Smart Growth Principles of compact urban settlement, safe & complete communities.

This project is an important step in building the future City of Victoria, contributing to the beauty and character of BC's Capital 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."*

Thank you for your careful review of this application. We look forward to continuing our work with the community, City staff and Council to deliver this significant building and much-needed housing and community benefits.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Geric
Mike Geric Construction