



## Letter to Mayor and Council

**September 26, 2023**

Mayor Marianne Alto  
Members of City Council  
**City of Victoria**  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor and Council,

**Re: 819-827 Fort Street (Project Name “825 Fort”)**  
**DPV00244 Variance Request To Increase Building Height and Add 14-Residential Suites**

Please accept this letter on behalf of 825 Fort Holdings Ltd as our response to Council’s stated commitment to find ways to provide housing and aid in its affordability, including working with industry to find creative ways in which to do so.

Following the rezoning and DP approval of 825 Fort Street, the project achieved approval under the CMHC “Rental Construction Financing Initiative” (RCFI) program. RCFI is CMHC’s program for private housing with the deepest levels of affordability, energy use and greenhouse gas emissions and accessibility criteria. Our commitments for 825 Fort achieve the deepest level of affordability, for the greatest percentage of suites for the longest term (21-years) available under the program.

Given this, we are proposing a DP Variance to the building height and parking requirement that will increase the number of homes delivered through this RCFI approved project. The resulting 11-story building would include 119-studio, 1-bed, 2-bed, and 3-bed homes. These 14-suites represent a 13% increase in the rental housing on this site.

The building height variance includes a variance of the “rooftop structure” to a height of 6.2m. This exceeds the provisions of the RMD-2 zoning bylaw, which indicates a maximum rooftop structure height of 5.0m above the main roof. The proposed “rooftop structure” height of 6.2m includes the “elevator overrun” required for an elevator appropriate for a building and population of this volume, and an elevator stop on the roof that enables universal accessibility to the common amenity deck.

“825 Fort” includes a significant common amenity space on the main building rooftop. This amenity space includes a barbeque area, various eating and seating areas, an area for yoga/exercise, a dog exercise area, and tenant planting gardens. It is fully wheelchair accessible, with an elevator stop to this level.

The height variance also allows for changes to the roof design to accommodate a central cooling system for all the building’s homes. We believe that this is consistent with the goal of providing highly livable homes for rent in Victoria’s high density residential district. I also note that the updated DCAP allows 12-story buildings in this location.



This represents an opportunity for Council to add 14-rental homes in downtown Victoria in a project that is underway in a location that permits the requested height, and where financing agreements with CMHC legally obligate the project in its affordability, energy use and GHG emission reductions, and in its delivery of homes that are accessible, adaptable, and designed with “universal” principles.

**For reference, 825 Fort Street includes the following:**

- Retention and restoration of 2-designated heritage facades (819 and 825 Fort)
- Seven 3-Bedroom homes

**CMHC RCFI “Rental Construction Financing Initiative” commitments achieved at 825 Fort Street include:**

**1. Affordability in 2-forms:**

- a. Initial lease up must be at no more than 90% of appraised rents for the entire rent roll, and
- b. 20% of the suites plus 10-additional suites will be affordable.  
If 119 suites approved, the building will include 34-affordable suites (28.6% of the total).

Affordable suites will be leased for no more than 70% of 30% (21%) of CMHC median household income. (This is the deepest level of affordability under CMHC’s RCFI program).

Affordability item b) will remain for a term of 21-years.

**2. Accessibility:**

- 10% of the suites will be accessible
- In addition, 2-suites will be fully adaptable
- In addition, 2-suites will be designed with universal accessibility

**3. Energy efficiency and GHG emissions:**

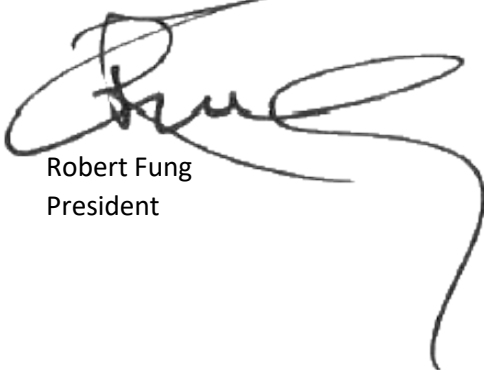
- The building design is over 15% more energy efficient and greenhouse gas emissions are more than 15% less than the 2015 model building code.

We are hopeful that this project will assist the city in achieving its goals of increasing delivery of housing supply, while also providing affordability, accessibility, and energy efficiency.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

**825 FORT HOLDINGS LTD**

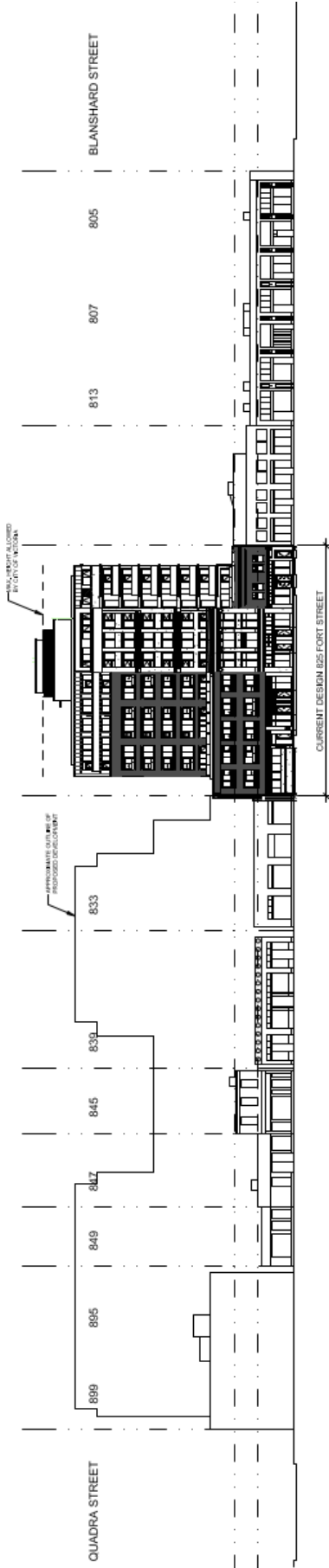


Robert Fung  
President

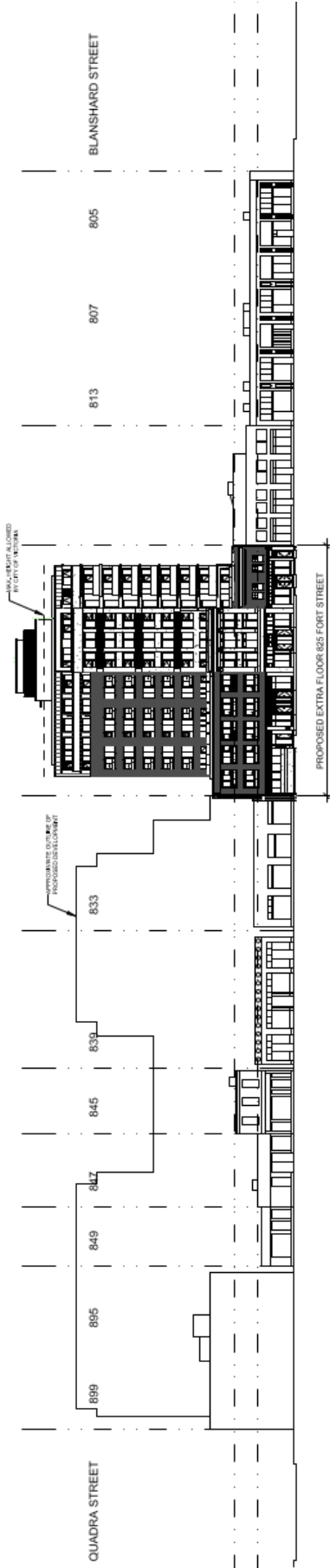
S A L I E N T



**The Salient Group** #225 – 209 Carrall Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 2J2  
T: 604.660.5536 F: 604.660.5574 E: [info@thesalientgroup.com](mailto:info@thesalientgroup.com)



1 NORTH ELEVATION - FORT ST 800 BLOCK - CURRENT DESIGN  
 A300 SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"



2 NORTH ELEVATION - FORT ST 800 BLOCK - PROPOSED EXTRA FLOOR  
 A300 SCALE: 1/32" = 1'-0"