

# September

March 9 2023

City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square Victoria,  
British Columbia, V8W 1P6

September Architecture  
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Brendan Callander, Architect AIBC

RE: 2816 Irma Street Rezoning & Development Permit Proposal

Dear Mayor and Council,

On behalf of the owner of 2816 Irma Street, we hereby submit our design rationale in support of a rezoning and development permit application, for your review and consideration.

Included in this submission is a graphic design rationale including architectural drawings and a project brief which should be reviewed prior to this correspondence or in conjunction with this correspondence.

## **Description of Proposal**

A two and a half story residential development consisting of 6 ground-oriented homes that are thoughtfully arranged around a shared communal courtyard space.

Our design intention was to create a kind of habitat, a new neighbourhood in which the houses are loosely arranged around public spaces - pathways, plazas, and courtyards - in which this communal streetscape occupies as much area as the dwellings themselves creating both play areas for children and residents of all ages to enjoy. The proposed development maximizes a large and unusually shaped lot that is currently underutilized as a single-family dwelling. The homes themselves are intimately interwoven and architectural means are used to create privacy and a sense of the individual dwelling, each with their own private outdoor space and individual entrance.

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The proposal includes the following primary elements:

- 6 ground-oriented homes each at 132sqm with 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms and a private outdoor spaces.
- Shared public outdoor courtyard garden spaces.
- 6 off-street parking stalls each with EV charging (1/unit)
- 16 bike stalls (10 class A with EV charging and 6 class B)
- Housing suitable for families specifically ( 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, open living spaces + offices)
- Electric heating, cooling, and hot water.

## **Project benefits and amenities**

This proposal benefits the city of Victoria by providing much needed family-oriented housing. The proposed development maximizes a large and unusually shaped lot that is currently underutilized as a single-family dwelling. The arrangement of homes allows a maximization the site space creating a significant amount of shared communal greenspace for the tenants. This greenspace is the primary amenity, allowing for an abundance of diverse native plants and trees, habitat for birds and other wildlife, play areas for children, increases the urban forest canopy, adds usable garden areas, and provides residents with both private and shared outdoor living spaces.

## **Neighbourhood**

This proposal acts as a transition from the more dense developments along Gorge Road to the lighter density homes seen along Irma Street, bridging the gap between larger multi-family and single-family. Of the 6 homes, 4 have visible frontage from Irma Street allowing the development to fit to the existing neighbourhood context. Special attention has been give to ensure these homes facing Irma Street have entrances and windows facing the street to ensure a welcoming street presence.

## **Design and development permit guidelines**

This proposal furthers the priorities of the Gorge Community plan to provide housing diversity and access to green space, specifically with the ground oriented housing for families and functional private and semi-private outdoor spaces.

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## **Key Gorge Residential Sub-Area Land Use Policies**

- 12.2.6 - 3 bedroom units attractive to families
- 12.4 - FSR up to 0.8 and up to 1.0 with enclosed parking
- 12.4 - Ground oriented housing
- 12. 4 - Access to outdoor amenities
- 12.5.2 - Townhomes and other housing form which transition from Urban Residential are encouraged in Traditional Residential lots adjacent to urban residential areas.
- 12.7 -Townhome cluster with street facing units and front porches

## **Transportation**

The proposal features a total of 6 parking stalls, allowing for 1 stall per dwelling. Although this does not meet the vehicle parking standards of *Schedule C - Off-Street Parking*, we believe that given the restrictions of the sites size and shape and close vicinity to public transportation that this is sufficient. In addition each tenant will be provided with electric vehicle and e-bike charging capabilities. There are 10 proposed long-term class A bike stalls, with an additional 6 surface class B stalls. The location of the site is also conveniently located a short walk to public transit along Gorge Road.

## **Green building features**

This building is designed with the environment in mind, incorporating green features to reduce energy consumption and minimize its impact on the planet. Among these features are energy-efficient appliances that use less electricity, as well as electric heat pumps and boilers that provide a reliable and cost-effective source of heating and hot water. We prioritize the use of high-quality local materials, supporting our community and reducing transportation emissions. Our passive solar design techniques maximize natural light and heat, making the most of the sun's energy. These sustainable features promote a healthy and comfortable living space while minimizing our environmental footprint.

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We look forward to working with you as we progress throughout the approvals process.

Please consider our application in the context of the information provided below, in addition to our complete submission and accompanying documentation.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BCallander', written in a cursive style.

Brendan Callander, Architect AIBC