

Quebec and Montreal Mixed Use Residential

Official Community Plan Amendment, Rezoning and Development Permit Application

Letter to Mayor and Council

Spring, 2024

Proudly Submitted By:



May 29, 2024

Attn: Mayor Alto and Victoria Council

Cc: Ms. Karen Hoese

Director of Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Mr. Robert Bateman

Senior Planner

City of Victoria

1 Centennial Square,

Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Re: Montreal and Quebec – Revised Submission for Rezoning and Development Permit

597 Montreal St., 205 Quebec St., and 210, 214 & 224 Kingston St.

Mike Geric Construction and our project team are pleased to present the application resubmission for the proposed redevelopment of the above referenced properties, bordered by Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets in James Bay.

As a local development and construction team, we understand the significance of this location and have established project principles to ensure this proposal, in its delivery of housing and community space, will provide significant value for both the immediate neighbourhood and more broadly for the City of Victoria. While maintaining the foundational project principles, the revised proposal thoughtfully responds to feedback provided by the City's Committee of the Whole on the July 27th meeting and subsequent discussion with the City's planning department.

We have listened to the feedback, worked diligently with our team, and have revised our proposal to reflect the following updates:

- 1. Reduction in Height** – Council astutely observed that the proposed building height of 17-storeys was the most significant resounding concern from the neighbourhood. Our updated application has reduced the building height by 3-storeys to a total of 14-storeys.
- 2. Reimagined Townhouses** – Our team has redesigned the Kingston Street block of townhouses to increase our townhouse offering from 10 to 12 townhouses following feedback to include more family households and to better reflect the design inferences provided by the City's Missing Middle zoning policy.
- 3. Commitment to Family Homes** – MGC is prepared to commit via covenant to 11 of the 12 townhomes being offered as three-bedroom family dwellings and that another 15% of the tower dwelling mix will be two and a half (two bedroom plus den) or three-bedroom family-oriented homes.
- 4. Maintaining the Commitment to Housing, Public Realm and Daycare** – While the building massing has been adjusted in response to community and municipal feedback, the proposal has been re-shaped to maintain our commitment to build nearly 3.0 : 1 FSR

of new housing, neighbourhood commercial and public realm amenities, inclusive of a purpose-built indoor and outdoor daycare space for the James Bay Neighbourhood.

- 5. Site Pathway Refinement** – The ground-level site pathway has been refined by MDI landscape architecture to reflect feedback to provide amenities on site for residents and their pets. The refined on-site path, which includes additional bench seating and a pet-friendly landscaped border, will help ensure that this development contains its uses and does not create undue stress on existing municipal park amenities.

While we have made some significant changes to this proposal in working to address the City's feedback, the fundamental attributes of this proposal have been upheld. These project attributes include:

- 1. Creating a Landmark Building** – this location is a key gateway for pedestrians, cyclists, and tourists alike. The project's visibility from both the streetscape as well across the Victoria skyline is significant and the building massing, character and public realm offering are designed to create a positive linkage between the City's "Legislative Precinct" and the James Bay residential neighbourhood.
- 2. Define an Exceptional Public Realm** – the proposal's street frontages take a 'complete streets' approach, delivering significant public benefit by going above and beyond the typical road classification standard. The proposal integrates active frontages, public seating and gathering spaces, landscaping and a AAA cycling lane to create a public realm which is beautiful, safe and people-oriented.
- 3. Create Homes for People** – the application offers 105 new homes of varying sizes, layouts and tenures. Housing diversity and accessibility is a key component of this proposal with a focus on larger-format family-oriented multi-family housing.
- 4. Provide A Responsible Built Form** – while the tower has been re-shaped to be more similar in height to surrounding buildings, the amended proposal maintains the key design considerations that reduce impacts on neighbouring homes (with respect to views, solar access and wind).

Project Overview

The proposal 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, this development will provide approximately \$400,000.00 in additional annual property tax revenue to the City (based on City of Victoria mill rate and 2023 land values).

The proposed development was designed with a focus on contributing to the community in three pillars: Housing, Placemaking and Transportation & Safety. The table below summarizes the development's main attributes and further details of our comprehensive Community Amenity Contributions can be found in the attached "*Community Amenity Summary*".

HOUSING	PLACEMAKING	TRANSPORTATION/SAFETY
105 New Homes (total 108 created)	Public Corner Plaza & Cafe	Crosswalk @ Quebec/Montreal
1-Bedroom (37 + 2 Studios)	Signature tree @ Kingston St	AAA Bike Lanes
2-Bedrooms (41 Condos, 1 Townhome)	Lush landscaping and redesigned street frontages (40 NEW Trees)	Improved Visibility & Pedestrian Safety
3-Bedrooms (16 Condos, 11 Townhomes)	Neighbourhood & Multigenerational Connections	Traffic Calming
Adaptable Homes	Childcare Centre (rent free)	2 MODO Carshare EVs
	Community / Volunteer Space	
	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.



Aerial context view with OCP Urban Place Designations

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

	CORE INNER HARBOUR/ LEGISLATIVE	PROJECT SITE	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, regularly spaced tree planting, and formal squares and greens 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variable yard setbacks with primary doorways facing the street. Variable front yard landscaping, boulevard and street tree planting. 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 policy boundaries that are invisible to the eye. While this unique location is an integral part of the Laurel Point neighbourhood, it's also 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 from tower to townhomes, within its property boundaries.

The site's adjacency to the higher density waterfront area suggests the proposed 3:1 FSR, mid-way between the maximums anticipated in the OCP for Urban Residential and the Core Inner Harbour categories, is reasonable for a development that advances key OCP objectives. Considerations for land-use, urban design and streetscape objectives need not stop at the local plan boundary, but rather can be thoughtfully woven into the neighbourhood fabric. At this

quantitative density, the project can achieve a significant 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 two-plus bedroom family-sized dwellings.
- Enhanced accessibility in residential units with several adaptable condominiums designed for inclusivity and aging in place.
- Significant cash contribution to the City's Affordable Housing Grant Fund.

Neighbourhood Placemaking Amenities

- A dedicated neighbourhood childcare space located on 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 meeting space allocated for use by the James Bay Community Project.

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 Street 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 variety, striking design, and carefully framing the view corridors within the Legislative Precinct.



Perspective of the proposed building from Bastion Square

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 EV car-share vehicles (MODO), 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 include:
 - 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 under ground
 - Addition of street furniture and legislative precinct lighting standards
- A new pedestrian Montreal St. crosswalk connecting west toward the David Foster Harbour Walkway and the publicly anticipated 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 Walkway and/or Peter Pollen 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 and further details of our comprehensive Community Amenity Contributions can be found in the attached "*Community Amenity Summary*".



Rhythm of townhouses along Kingston Street

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 gathered 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, various aspects of the project were adjusted during the 2021-2022 application process, including:

- 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;
- 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;
- The majority of proposed townhouses were adjusted to include residential lift capacity in order to reduce barriers and enhance accessibility;
- A number of the residential units were replanned to adaptable design standards, to better accommodate people aging-in-place; and
- 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.

Following additional feedback from the public and direction from the City of Victoria Committee of the Whole on July 27th, 2023, our proposal was amended to:

- Reduce our overall proposed height from 17-storeys to 14-storeys or 49m in height;
- Increase the number of family-oriented townhouse-dwellings.
- Commit to providing 15% of multi-family homes, as two bedroom plus den or three bedroom dwellings.
- Refining the internal pathway to provide additional seating and a residential pet area.
- Evaluating our dwelling-layouts to ensure that, with the changes in height and tower design, the design will comply with the impending BC building code structural changes.

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.



View of the corner plaza at Montreal & Quebec Streets

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 repair 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 Street 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.

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.



Landscape & Public Realm Precedents

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.

Beyond our on-site dedications and improvements, we are proposing a financial contribution to the further development and completion of the David Foster Walkway and/or Peter Pollen 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.



Montreal Street lobby (left) and street level view of the townhomes along Kingston Street (right)

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 is pivoted off the street grid to align with compass North. This position narrows its shadow and will reduce its view impact on the surrounding apartment and townhouse buildings. Through numerous design iterations it was determined that shaping the tower as a narrow but tall form helped to identify and then mitigate the shadow and view impacts. 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 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.



Rendering of the Commercial Space and Podium from Quebec Street

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 Plan, 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.

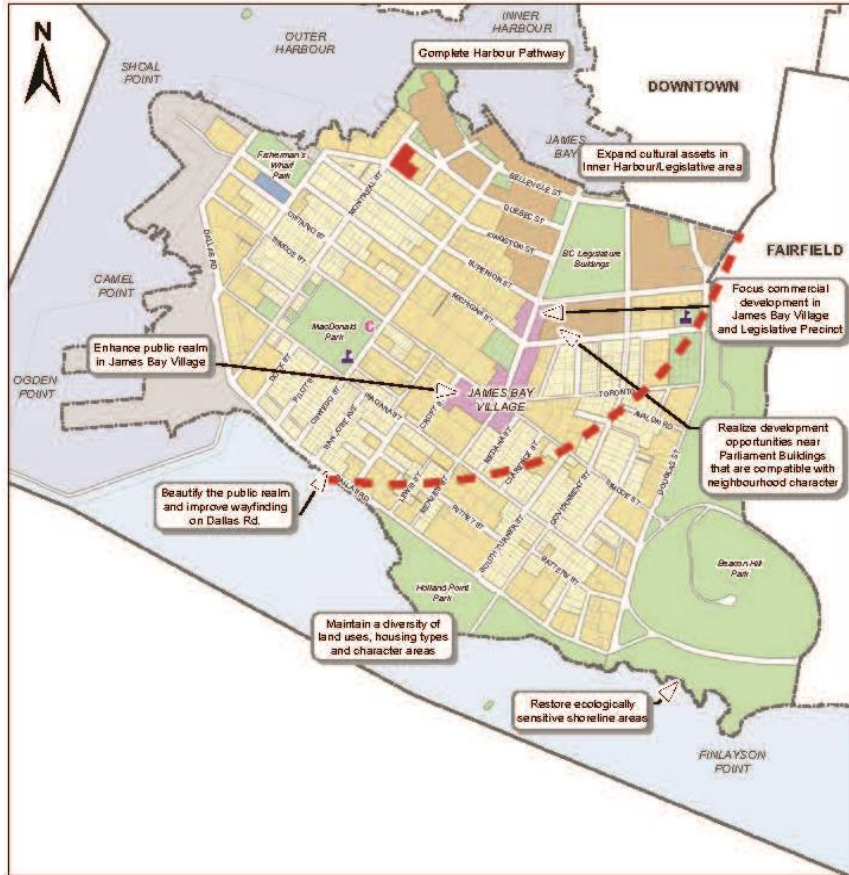
Streetscape bulges along Montreal Street and Quebec Street help calm traffic, provide a safe pedestrian realm and add green space and stormwater management to the road right-of-way. Amenity plantings along these sidewalks, including within rain garden areas, will help scale and frame the pedestrian environment 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.

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 views 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 will support these trees long into the future.

A recent exploratory root dig at the eastern property line revealed that the parkade construction will not negatively impact the neighbouring strata's protected rear-yard tree. This is verified in a supplemental arborist report.



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

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'). The new homes will be located within a convenient 15-minute walk of services and amenities at 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.

Vehicle Parking

A total of 141 parking spaces are proposed for the development, located within two levels of underground parkade. The accompanying parking study by Watt Consulting Group details the anticipated parking demand and the proposed transportation demand management strategies to align demand with the available number of stalls. To ensure parking is managed responsibly, parking stalls will be shared between complimentary uses (residential and commercial visitors).

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've designed the public plaza at Quebec and Montreal 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 Waterfront 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 planting bulges in the road rights-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 utility distribution and transportation networks, all toward reducing resource consumption and waste. This means that 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, 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 – Buildings account for 50% of Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions, and the Step Code aligns with the City and Province's target of new construction becoming "net-zero energy ready" by 2032.



Conclusion

The redesigned redevelopment proposal for Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Streets has been refined to reflect the feedback provided by the City and neighbours while still working to embody the principles and aspirations as stated in the Official Community Plan and the Capital Regional Growth Strategy. The proposed addition of new housing will be a significant contribution to redressing the South Island housing shortage. New condominium apartments and townhouses will add family-sized housing and support the spectrum of housing affordability. This proposal's significant development investment will contribute to the economic health of the community. The location and forms of the new housing comply with Regional / Smart Growth Principles of compact urban settlement, safe & complete communities.

This project is a 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

President and CEO

Mike Geric Construction

Appendix A: Community Amenity Summary

Following our significant stages of neighbourhood engagement, discussions with several advocacy groups and community leaders, and feedback from the City of Victoria, Mike Geric Construction is pleased to resubmit the following Community Amenity Contribution proposal. The items listed above are to be secured via 219 Covenant at the time of bylaw registration. The overall intent of this submission is to best align the City of Victoria’s Inclusionary Housing Policy (2023) update with the significant number of priorities established by this neighbourhood, the opportunities that this specific redevelopment represents, and the previous inclusionary housing policy that guided this application during the initial zoning submission.

The Quebec and Montreal Official Community Plan amendment, zoning bylaw amendment and Development Permit application works to activate three major Council priorities: **Housing Diversity, Placemaking and Transportation & Safety.**

Mulholland Parker Land Economists has estimated the base value for the site using BC Assessment data for the properties as presently zoned.

The land-economists consultant proformas for the Site as full market strata for the residential and has assigned a nominal market rent for the daycare space at \$20 per square foot which is consistent with other analyses undertaken for the City. When comparing the supported land value for all market strata to the base value, the estimated land lift we arrive at is \$3.07 million, 75% of which would be a total Community Amenity Contribution of \$2.3 million.

The development application well exceeds the recommended amenity contributions suggested by the consultant due to the daycare contribution and the number of additional on and off site in-kind contributions. Therefore we are proposing a slightly reduced contribution to the Affordable Housing Grant Fund: 20% instead of the traditionally expected 30%.

City Allocation	MGC Proposal	Contribution Value *	Priority	Fund Description
30%	20 %	\$460,000.00	Affordable Housing	Provided as a cash amenity contribution to the Victoria Housing Reserve fund to assist in the development of affordable housing.
70 %	100 %		Community Amenities	Monetary and work in lieu contributions to enhance the public realm surrounding this property and to create community connectivity opportunities through the provision of a daycare and gathering space.

** The proposed contribution values equate to 20 % of the recommended upshot amenity contribution and over 100 % of the recommended upshot in in-kind contributions.*

Summary Table

Below is a summary of our Community Amenity Contribution proposal.

Community Amenity Item	
Housing Diversity	
1	Cash-in Lieu to the City of Victoria Affordable Housing Reserve Fund
2	Family-oriented housing mix protected by a restrictive covenant at time of zoning adoption.
Placemaking	
2	Minimum 1,650 square feet of dedicated, purpose-built not-for-profit indoor childcare space starting with a 10-year lease at free rent
3	Design, dedication and construction of an enhanced public realm and pedestrian network along Quebec, Montreal and Kingston Street frontages
4	Contribute to the Community Amenity Fund with the intent to further David Foster Harbour Pathway, sc̓amaθen / Peter Pollen Waterfront Park and/or connectivity improvements
Transportation and Safety	
5	2 x EV-charged and publicly accessible MODO car share vehicles with 2 charging stations
6	Design and implementation of a new AAA protected cycling network along Quebec and Montreal Street frontages
7	Design and construction of a safe, lit cross walk at Quebec and Montreal Street
Additional offsite improvements	
8	Replace City's failing Montreal Street storm water facilities
9	Undergrounding of BC Hydro lines on Montreal Street

Appendix B: Height and Massing Rationale

Following the 2023 Committee request to reduce the building height and maintain the general floor area and units, we studied a number of iterations of building massing and site placement. We maintained a similar building placement with a reduced height for a number of reasons:

- The current design afforded us a version of now three story 'missing middle' townhouse forms. We would have lost this tenure of housing had we reduced the height further in the tower and placed excessive height towards Kingston Street;
- The three-storey townhouses on Kingston Street provide a stronger transition towards the more traditional neighbourhood condition as is supported in the City's Official Community Plan;
- The townhouses benefit from both North and South solar access, in comparison to a low-rise apartment building along Kingston Street that would situate 50% of the units as North-facing – less viable for daylighting;
- The tower form still enables a broad range of unit-mixes, including an above market-average number of two, two and a half and three bedroom dwellings;
- The proposed tower form articulates to provide necessary housing and density while articulating away from neighbouring properties. D'Ambrosio has illustrated that this form is the lowest impact option from a view corridor, shadow and massing perspective.
- The interior courtyard space affords the necessary playground area to facilitate a daycare outdoor space which conforms to Island Health standards;
- The point-tower placement of density provides a more pedestrian-oriented sense of place with only a three storey podium. Further, the predominant placement of density above the podium favours greater street-facing setbacks which provides a more well landscaped, safer and highly amenitized public realm.

The consequent page includes a massing study conducted by D'Ambrosio Architecture and Urbanism which breaks down placement of Floor Space Ratio (FSR) on the site. This compares the current site condition to various height and massing layouts. The study also shows the previous (17-storey) application and current (14-storey) application for context.

