



July 10, 2017

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

Re: Draft Burnside Community Plan

Dear Sirs,


We manage the property at 2333 Government Street for the owner 375121 B.C. LTD. We have been asked to let you know the owner's concerns and suggestions regarding the draft plan for the Rock Bay neighbourhood in the proposed new Burnside Community Plan.

Currently, under the existing zoning M2-I, we are able to have a variety of retail and commercial uses in addition to all the industrial uses allowed in the M2 zone. The proposed Neighbourhood Community Plan would down-zone the property by removing these. This is not acceptable to the owner. Government Street is one of the major entrances to the downtown core of Victoria and as such those properties that front Government Street should retain the ability to have attractive retail and commercial uses that would enhance the street-scape of this major entrance to the city core. Treating properties south of Pembroke Street differently than those south of Bay Street seems arbitrary and it is our suggestion that all properties on Government Street south of Bay Street be given the same zoning, allowing retail, commercial, industrial and limited residential uses.

In the past we have had hi-tech businesses as tenants. They were attracted to the area by the low rental rates for older buildings within the industrial zone. Most hi-tech companies in Victoria are start-ups and as such are looking for the lowest occupancy costs possible. The proposed Burnside Community Plan will stifle new construction of buildings in the area because the City's desired use of hi-tech tenancies will not happen in newly constructed buildings as the hi-tech companies won't be able to afford the rental rates for such space. Employees in these start-ups are usually interested in living close to their work; walking or biking to get there. In line with this thinking and to make it possible for property owners to build hi-tech space that makes financial sense (as that's the only way they will be built) we suggest that for every square foot of hi-tech space that is built a square foot of residential space be allowed on the floors above the lower two floors. This provision for some residential use would allow the construction of hi-tech space by giving the property owner the potential to offset the negative return on the hi-tech premises with the profit from the sale or rental of the residential premises. This will also help to address the shortage of residential accommodation that is currently a critical problem for the City.

We trust you will give serious consideration to our objections and suggestions. Thank- you.

Yours truly,
Sutton Advantage Property Management


Gilbert Gutfreund
Property Manager