



## Planning and Land Use Committee Report

For the meeting of December 11, 2014

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**To:** Planning and Land Use Committee **Date:** November 27, 2014  
**From:** Charlotte Wain, Senior Planner – Urban Design  
**Subject:** Rezoning Application #00464 for 1001 Blanshard Street

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### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that Committee forward this report to Council and that Council instruct staff to prepare the necessary *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* Amendments that would authorize the proposed development outlined in Rezoning Application #00464 for 1001 Blanshard Street, that the first and second reading of the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw* Amendment be considered by Council and a Public Hearing date be set.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present Council with information, analysis and recommendations regarding a Rezoning Application for the property at 1001 Blanshard Street. The proposal is to increase the range of uses permitted in this zone.

The following points were considered while reviewing this Application:

- The proposal is consistent with the *Official Community Plan, 2012* (OCP).
- The proposal is consistent with the *Downtown Core Area Plan, 2011* and *Cathedral Hill Precinct Plan, 2004*.
- The proposed uses are based on the permitted uses within the existing CA-4, Central Area Commercial Office District, with the addition of an educational facility and kindergarten.
- Parking requirements will be subject to the regulations of Schedule C in the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*.

The proposal would bring the property's zoning more in line with the objectives of the OCP by allowing a broader range of uses than what is currently permitted in the Zone. Staff recommend that Council advance this Application to a Public Hearing.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Description of Proposal**

This Rezoning Application is to increase the range of permitted uses in the existing CHP-OB District, Cathedral Hill Precinct Office Building District. The current Zone is quite restrictive in terms of permitted uses and the intention is to enhance the owner's ability to lease the existing building, as an interim measure, until an overall redevelopment scheme is advanced. The proposed uses are based on the permitted uses within the existing CA-4, Central Area Commercial Office District, with the addition of an educational facility and kindergarten. Additional proposed uses include:

- the production and sale of bread, cakes and other bakery products
- chartered banks
- residences, restricted to the second and higher storeys of a building, provided that the entire first storey is used for purposes other than residential
- transient accommodation and transient accommodation accessory uses
- rental businesses
- restaurants
- retail sales, other than gasoline and automotive fuels
- theatres, auditoriums, gymnasiums and other places of recreation or worship
- dry cleaning, clothes pressing or both (with restrictions)
- clubs
- hospitals, private hospitals, nursing homes, intermediate care facilities and community care facilities
- educational facility
- kindergarten.

The maximum height and density are proposed to be maintained, consistent with the current Zone, at 22.5m and 2:1 floor space ratio (FSR).

### **Sustainability Features**

The subject site is located within close proximity to the Downtown and frequent transit routes along Fort Street. Alternative modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transit are therefore supported in this location.

### **Land Use Context**

The area is characterized by office, retail and restaurant uses.

Immediately adjacent land uses are:

- North (along Blanshard Street) – restaurants and retail
- South (across Broughton Street) – The Royal Theatre
- East (along Broughton Street) – offices
- West (across Blanshard Street) – restaurants and retail.



## **Existing Site Development and Development Potential**

The site is currently occupied by a vacant office building, which was formerly used by VanCity Credit Union. Under the current Zone, the range of uses is restricted to office buildings, accessory uses for office buildings, high tech establishments and call centres. The maximum FSR under the current Zone is 2:1 with a maximum building height of 22.5m.

## **Proposed Zoning**

The Application is limited to the introduction of additional uses and minor adjustments to the setback requirements based on the CA-4, Central Area Commercial Office District. All other regulations will be consistent with the current CHP-OB Zone, Cathedral Hill Precinct Office Building District. This includes maintaining the maximum height and density, consistent with the current Zone, at 22.5m and 2:1 floor space ratio (FSR). At present, vehicle parking is legally non-conforming, with provision for eight surface stalls. The proposed Zone would be subject to the off-street parking regulations in Schedule C of the *Zoning Regulation Bylaw*.

## **Community Consultation**

Consistent with the *Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) Procedures for Processing Rezoning and Variances Applications*, the applicant has consulted the Fairfield-Gonzales Community Association at a Community Meeting held on October 20, 2014. No members of the public attended the meeting. A letter from the CALUC is attached to this report.

## **ANALYSIS**

The following sections provide a summary of the Application's consistency with the relevant City policies and regulations.

### **Official Community Plan (2012)**

The Application site is located within the Core Residential Urban Place Designation as outlined in the *Official Community Plan (OCP)*. This designation identifies residential, mixed-use, commercial, visitor accommodation, institutional and home occupation uses as being appropriate.

While the Application site is located within the Fairfield neighbourhood, it borders the Downtown Core Area, which is located across Blanshard Street. The OCP identifies a vision for the Fairfield Neighbourhood that provides an appropriate transition from the Downtown Core Area to the established residential areas.

Generally, the OCP envisions a density of 3:1 FSR for those parts of the Core Residential area west of Quadra Street and this includes the subject site. The proposal is to retrofit the existing building to suit a new tenant, until such a time that the surrounding parcels can be consolidated for comprehensive redevelopment. A change in density is therefore not proposed as part of this rezoning. The Application proposes to retain the existing potential density of 2:1 Floor Space Ratio (FSR), which is in keeping with the density policies of the OCP.

## Downtown Core Area Plan (2011) and Cathedral Hill Precinct Plan (2004)

With respect to the local area plans, the *Downtown Core Area Plan, 2011* (DCAP) and the *Cathedral Hill Precinct Plan, 2004* (CHPP) apply to the subject site. Within the DCAP, the subject site falls within the Core Residential Mixed District and "Cross Town Concept", which envisions higher-density commercial buildings along Blanshard Street and Fort Street. Non-auto-oriented commercial uses such as restaurants, grocery stores, convenience stores, medical clinics and personal service businesses are supported within this area to provide services to the local community. Active commercial and retail uses are encouraged at street level along Blanshard Street and Fort Street to encourage pedestrian activity.

The CHPP similarly identifies the future land use of the subject site as "Mixed Use/Office/Residential (with ground-floor retail or professional services)" in an area of "Anticipated Redevelopment". Similar to DCAP, land uses that encourage pedestrian activity at the street level are supported, such as restaurants, cafes, retail, personal services and residential.

The proposal is consistent with the objectives set out in the DCAP and CHPP.

### CONCLUSIONS

The Application proposes to add a range of permitted uses, which would bring the property more in line with the objectives of the OCP and the DCAP in terms of creating pedestrian-friendly streets through active uses at the street level. The proposed uses are considered appropriate in this location. Staff recommend that Council approve this Application.

### ALTERNATE MOTIONS

That Council decline Rezoning Application #00464 for 1001 Blanshard Street.

Respectfully submitted,

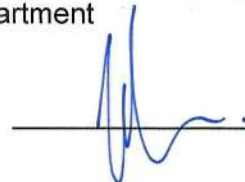


Charlotte Wain  
Senior Planner – Urban Design



Deb Day, Director  
Sustainable Planning and Community  
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

  
Jason Johnson

Date:

  
December 2, 2014

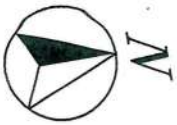
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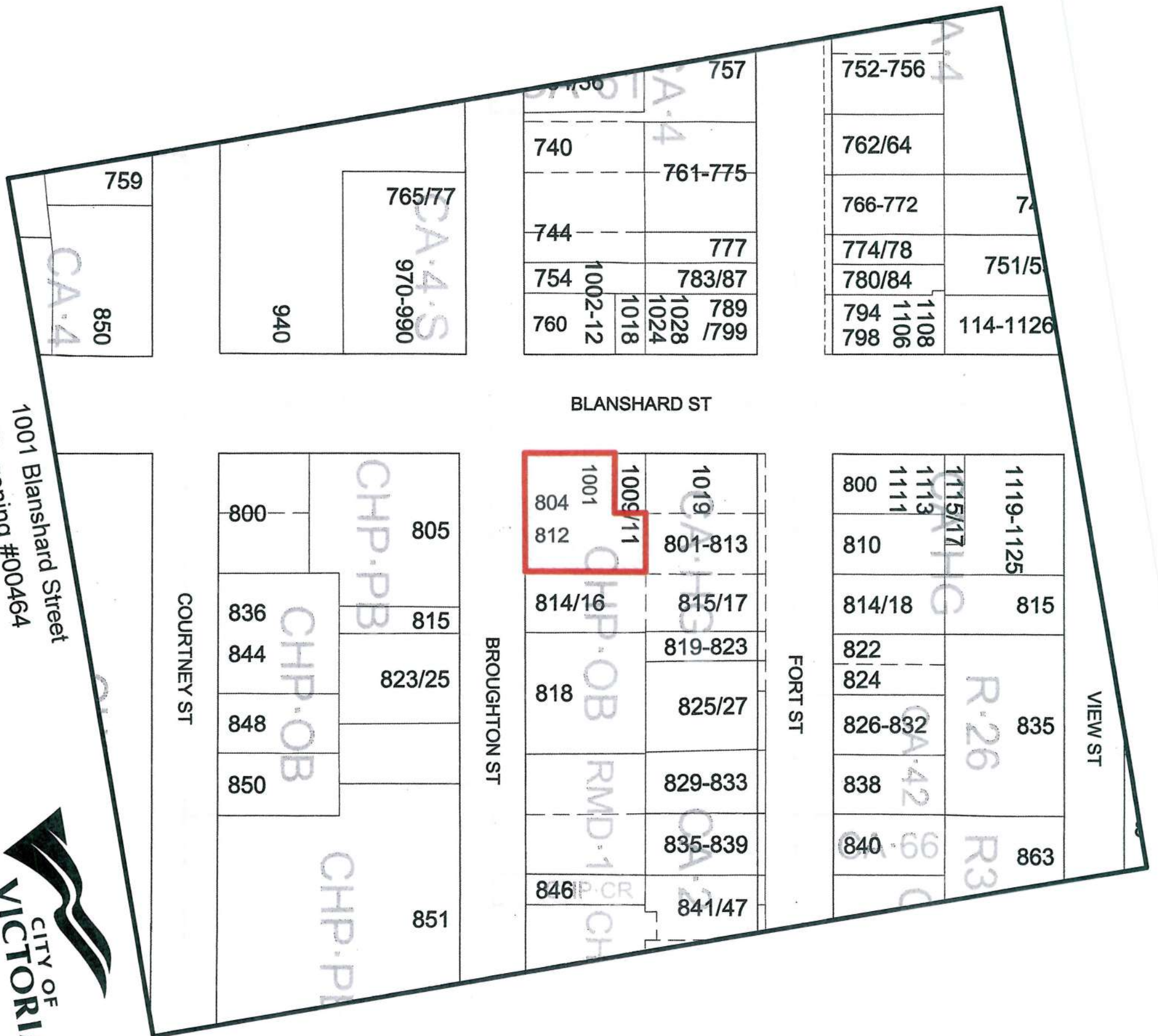
## List of Attachments

- Zoning map
- Aerial photo
- Letter from applicant, dated November 13, 2014
- Letter from Fairfield and Gonzales Community Association Meeting on October 20, 2014.





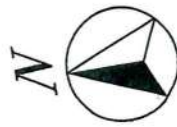
1001 Blanshard Street  
Rezoning #00464  
Bylaw #







1001 Blanshard Street  
 Rezoning #00464  
 Bylaw #







# Application for ReZoning: 1001 Blanshard

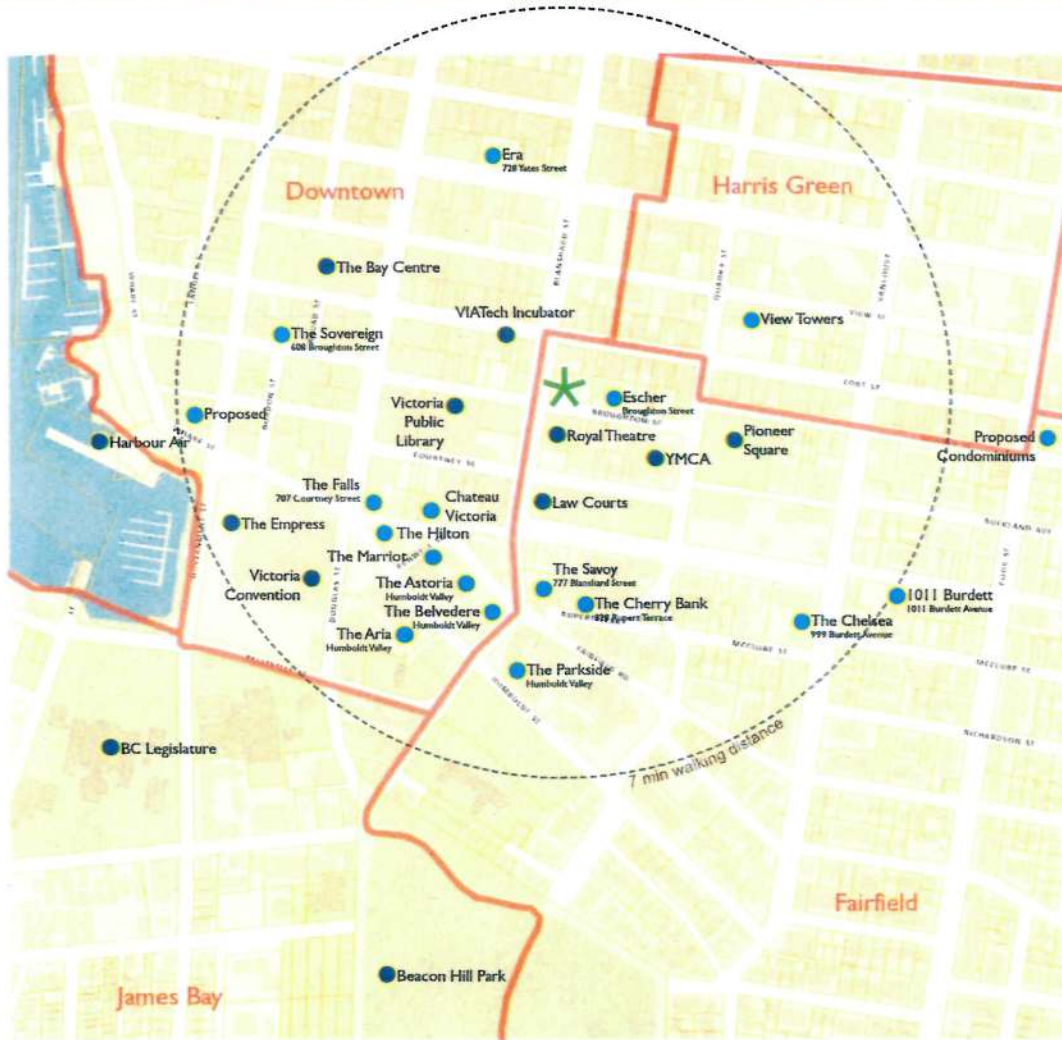
Updated November 13 2014



FORT  
REALTY LTD.

CASCADIA ARCHITECTS  
DAMANT + JOHANNKEFCT

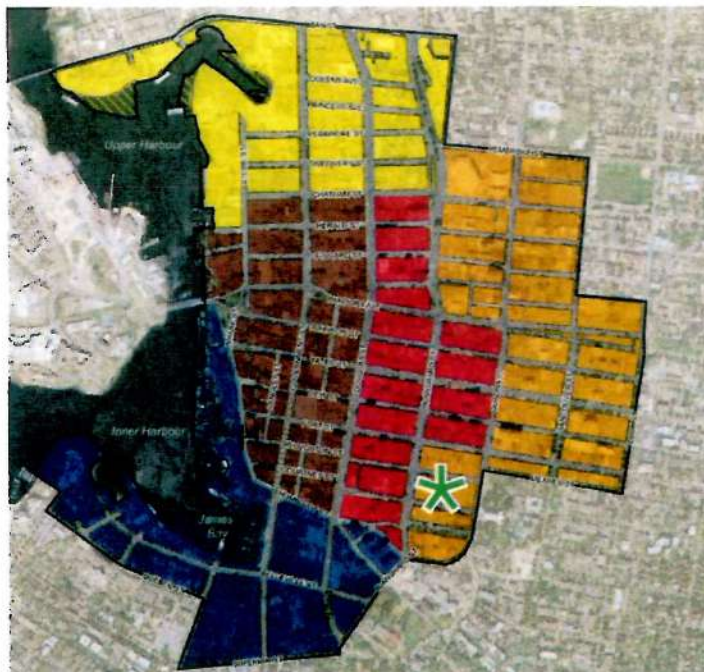




-  1001 Blanshard Street
-  Large Residential & Hotel Buildings
-  Landmarks

## MAP 4 Districts

-  Downtown Core Area
-  Central Business District
-  Historic Commercial District
-  Inner Harbour District
-  Residential Mixed-Use District
-  Rock Bay District



15 September 2014 (*Updated 13 November 2014*)

City of Victoria  
No 1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

Attn.: Mayor and Council  
Re: Rezoning Application for 1001 Blanshard Street

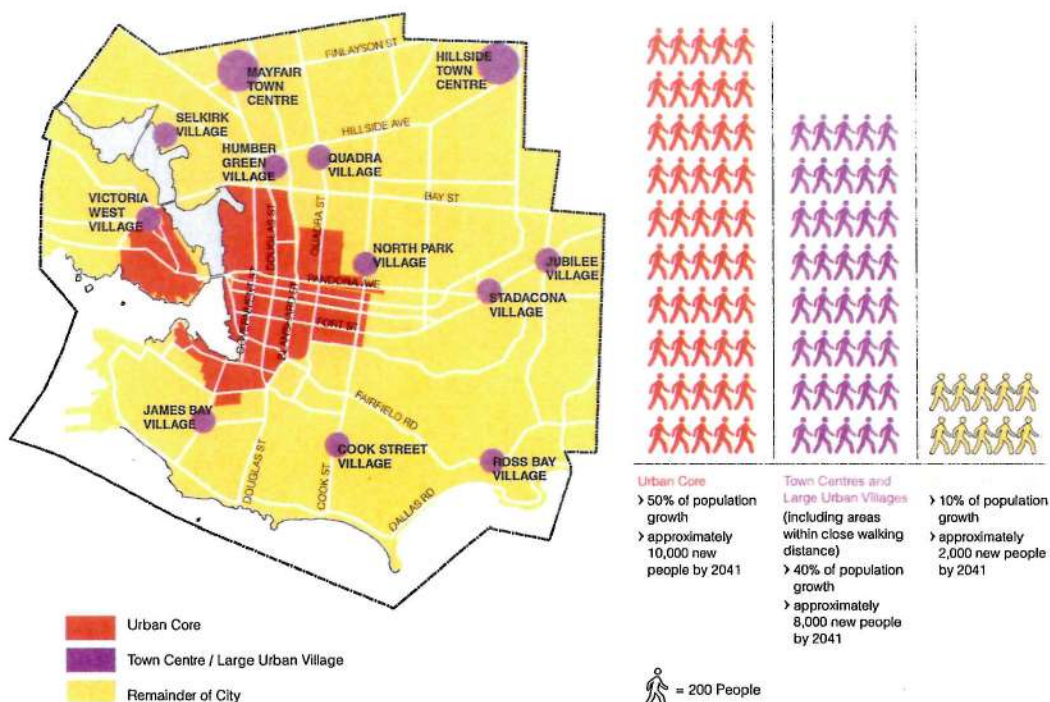
Dear Mayor and Council,

Fort Realty Ltd. is making application to the City of Victoria to rezone 1001 Blanshard Street in order to expand the range of uses permitted for the site. The application is in support of the objectives of the Official Community Plan and the Downtown Core Area Plan, and is part of Fort's vision for the adjacent group of properties that they own.

### Neighbourhood Context

1001 Blanshard Street is located on the northeast corner of Blanshard and Broughton Streets, at the south end of the revitalized Fort-Blanshard retail and restaurant district. The district serves the residents of Victoria's downtown and the adjacent neighbourhoods of Fairfield, James Bay, and Rockland.

In 2012 Fort Realty began working with Cascadia Architects to develop a comprehensive improvement plan for its properties at the corner of Blanshard and Fort Streets. This improvement plan is based on Fort Realty's Triple Bottom Line approach, encompassing people, planet, and prosperity. The plan's primary objective is to create a pedestrian-friendly environment that fosters a healthy commercial setting, and contributes to the diversity of the urban fabric of Victoria's downtown community.

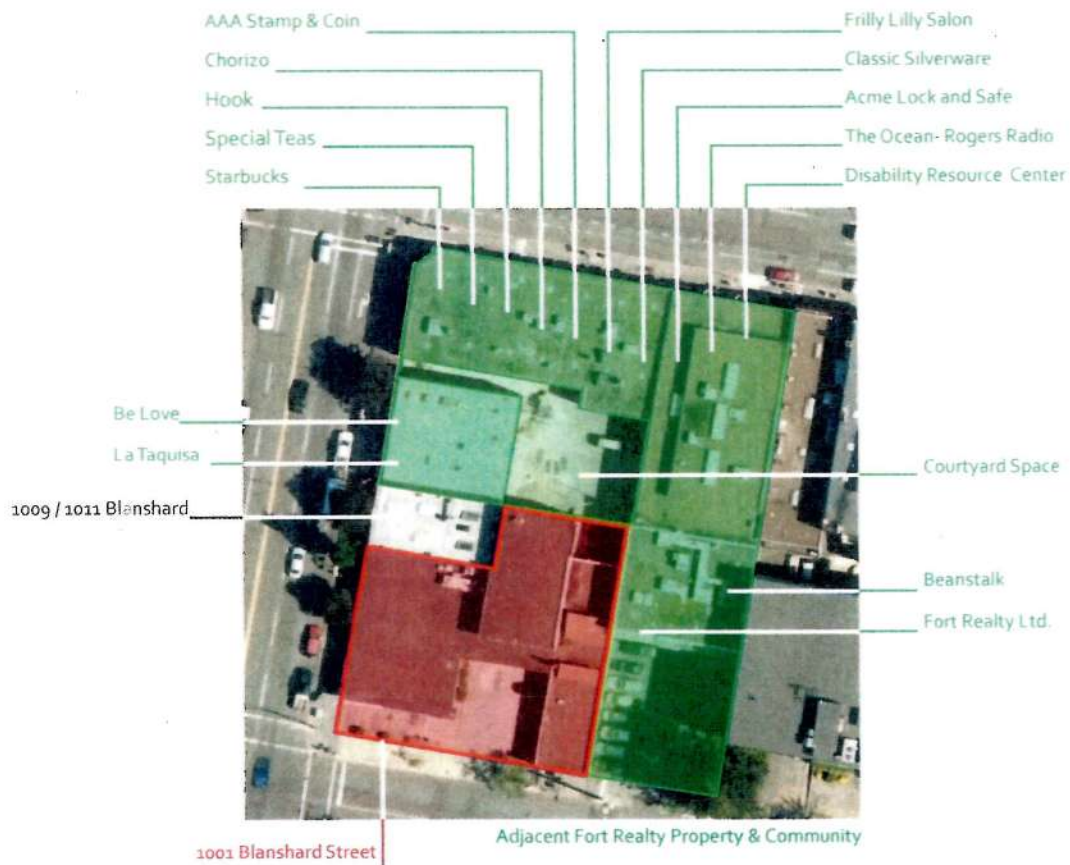






# APPLICATION FOR REZONING 1001 Blanshard Street Victoria BC

801 - 817 Fort Street (existing Fort Realty property - Facade renewal design rendering and completed building)



1001 Blanshard Street - view from SW



1001 Blanshard Street - view from SE



Initial design work has developed a concept of retail and restaurant uses surrounding a revitalized courtyard, which could serve as a community venue for festivals, events, or restaurant seating, while enhancing pedestrian through-block connections.

Over the past two years Fort Realty has begun implementing this plan, completing several renovations at 801-813 Fort and 1017/1019 Blanshard, and building up a lively and textured commercial streetscape. The company has curated a mix of locally-owned and operated restaurant tenants on the block. It has updated the original brick-clad carriage yard at the center of the property by adding trees, alley lighting, and a number of sustainability-focused features, including permeable paving stones and bioswale gardens to process rainwater run-off from the roofs of the renovated buildings. On-going projects include partnering with the restaurant tenants and other promoters to host events such as community movie nights, Food Eco District gardens, and public festivals within the courtyard.

In April 2014 Fort Realty Ltd. purchased the property at 1001 Blanshard Street and, as illustrated by the aerial site plan included here, the addition of this parcel of land to their current holdings represents a significant opportunity to strengthen and expand their ongoing work to revitalize the block.

#### Rezoning application rationale

The current CHP-OB zoning of 1001 Blanshard permits only office and accessory uses. This restrictive use no longer reflects the city's vision for the site as expressed in the Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP), nor Fort Realty's vision for the overall site. These plans envision a dynamic and vital mix of uses to support growth in the downtown core.

In the long term, Fort Realty intends to consolidate its ownership of the properties along this block (1009 / 1011 Blanshard are not owned by Fort Realty), and at that point will seek to redevelop the integrated block at the higher densities contemplated in the OCP and DCAP. In the short term however, while the work of acquiring the properties is on-going, it is intended to generally maintain the existing building structure at 1001 Blanshard, with only minor alterations potentially being undertaken as needed to suit the requirements of a yet-to-be-confirmed tenancy.

At this time, Fort Realty is seeking to lease 1001 Blanshard to a business that will make active use of this corner site, animate the courtyard as a public space, and contribute more effectively to this hub of local businesses serving the growing residential community. **Therefore, with the goal of broadening the possible uses within the existing building structure, the applicant requests a re-zoning to permit the uses of the CA-4 zone, with the addition of kindergarten, and with no change to the site's current density at this point.**



801 - 817 Fort Street (existing Fort Realty property - Facade renewal design rendering and completed building)





The broader range of uses that will be permitted by this re-zoning is comparable to the CA-HG zone which now applies to the properties on the northern half of the block, and which has allowed Fort Realty to cultivate the vibrant mix of tenants and services on that property.

With no confirmed tenant at this time - the possible uses and tenants being contingent on the outcome of this rezoning - a Development Permit application is not included as part of the submission. Fort Realty intends to make a separate DP application at such time as a future tenant lease and related scope of renovations are confirmed. Parking provisions are also best addressed in specific terms at the DP stage, and so the proposed re-zoning will continue to apply the City's Schedule C requirements for parking to the site, as per the current condition.

### Applicant profile

Fort Realty is a third generation, family-owned and operated business based in Victoria. The firm focuses exclusively on property ownership, management, and development, and is committed to creating and managing space that contributes: dynamic built environments that help businesses to flourish, and enhance the community as a whole. As a local landowner and developer, Fort Realty invests for the long term, and works to build collaborative relationships in all its business activities. The firm is committed to building high quality, sustainable, and beautiful buildings that will perform for a half century or longer.

In conclusion, while it is Fort Realty's intention in the long term (once all the properties on the block have been consolidated into a unified parcel) to redevelop the overall site as a higher-density mixed-use project, it does not make sense to undertake a significant change to 1001 Blanshard Street in the short term. Fort Realty does intend to extend to the site their current program to improve this group of properties, and as part of that process hereby submits this application for rezoning to expand the permissible uses for the site.

### 1001 Blanshard Street SUMMARY STATISTICS

ZONING SUMMARY	EXISTING SITE	EXISTING CHP-OB Zone	PROPOSED ZONE
Use	-	Office, Hi-Tech., Call Center	As per CA-4 + KINDERGARTEN
Site Area	12,458 sq.ft	-	-
FSR	0.82:1	2:1 allowed	maintain 2:1
Allowable Height	7.5m	22.5m	maintain 22.5m
Setbacks			
Street Boundary	0m	2m	0m
Sideyard	0m	-	0m
Parking	8 stalls provided	As per Schedule C plus loading facility	As per Schedule C

**Minutes of Community Meeting  
Planning and Zoning Committee  
Fairfield-Gonzales Community Association (FGCA)  
October 20, 2014**

**Members of FGCA Planning and Zoning Committee present:**

George Zador (chair), Paul Brown, Jim Masterton, Bill Rimmer

**Subject Property:**

1001 Blanshard St. (rezoning application #00464)

This meeting has failed to generate any interest from the public, despite of the 427 notices mailed out by the City. Other than the presenter, no one else came!

The project involved only an application for expanded commercial use of the property. It is our view that such a project should not be in the same stream of approval process as one involving construction, or significant rezoning.

The waste of our time, as well as the proponent's and the corresponding staff time and cost for the City is regrettable.

This is the type of project that the earlier held Development Summit had identified as one that could perhaps be handled by City staff, without going through the full process involving Council.