

Marianne Alto – Mayor
Jeremy Caradonna, Susan Kim, Matt Dell, Stephen Hammond,
Krista Loughton, Dave Thompson, Marg Gardiner and Chris
Coleman – Councillors
City of Victoria

**RE: Development Permit Application – 2300, 2310 & 2312
Douglas St.
4 Storey Industrial Building**

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

We are submitting this letter along with our development permit application for a four-story industrial building in the Burnside Gorge neighborhood. Our goal is to propose a high-quality and attractive building that addresses short/medium term needs of the area, while offering flexibility in the long-term uses of the building. We appreciate your time and consideration in reviewing our proposal.

1 DESCRIPTION OF OUR PROPOSAL

Our proposed development is situated on the northwest corner of Douglas Street and Queens Avenue in the Burnside Neighbourhood. It comprises three legal lots with a total area of 1,500 square meters (16,150 square feet). We envision a four-story industrial building with light manufacturing spaces on the ground floor facing Douglas Street. These spaces will be adaptable, ranging from 335 to 2,534 square feet, and comprise over 61% of the floor area on the ground floor. They will accommodate various tenant needs conforming to the existing M-1 Limited Light Industrial District. The building will also include enclosed at-grade parking accessed from the southwestern portion of the site off Queens Avenue.

The remainder of the building will accommodate a self-storage business, which will be accessed from a building lobby off Queens Street. A number of design choices were made to ensure that this space is viable for alternative uses at later

stages in the building's life-cycle. Furthermore, by constructing two levels of basement we are able to considerably improve the utilization of the relatively confined site area.

Inspired by stacked shipping containers commonly found in industrial environments, our building design incorporates selected glazing to animate the street frontages and support potential future uses. The landscape design of the proposal complements the building's aesthetics, with a focus on the Douglas Street and Queens Avenue frontages. Native and adaptive species will be planted along the building face, providing a soft transition to the adjacent public realm. Additionally, decorative paving areas will mark the building entry points, and temporary bicycle parking will be available under the building canopy along the Douglas Street frontage, near one of the building entrances.

The street frontages align with the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP) catchments for Douglas Street and Rock Bay. In accordance with these guidelines and the Burnside Neighbourhood Plan, two large-canopy street trees will be retained along Douglas Street, and two medium-canopy street trees will be added along Queens Avenue. These trees will be supplied with their required soil volumes via soil cells. Site furniture will be placed at the Douglas and Queens intersection, creating a seating node within the expanded boulevard and sidewalk space.

2 PROJECT BENEFITS AND AMENITIES

Our proposal offers several social, economic, and environmental benefits to the City of Victoria. Socially, the development will provide small-scale light manufacturing/production spaces and that offer excellent exposure to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. These spaces will support the creative and artistic/entrepreneurial segments of the local community, providing additional venues for conducting business.

Economically, the project will generate various benefits during both the pre- and post-construction periods, including:

- Economic benefits to local businesses and service providers during the construction phase.
- Creation of numerous full-time light manufacturing employment opportunities within the units provided on the ground floor.
- Generation of several full-time managerial and operational jobs through the self-storage business.
- Support for local businesses in need of off-site storage.
- Enhancement of the neighborhood's overall safety and attractiveness.

Furthermore, this project will address the acute shortage of available storage spaces in the city. The scarcity of storage facilities and the resulting high rental rates have negative economic and social impacts, as business and retail customers are currently compelled to travel longer distances to the outskirts of the city in search of vacancies and affordability.

Lastly, the proposed development will remediate a brownfield urban parking site and transform it into a distinctively designed building. Environmental contamination resulting from past industrial uses will be properly disposed of, and the new building will feature an enhanced building envelope and sophisticated mechanical systems. For a comprehensive list of the "Green Building Features," please refer to Section 7 of this letter.

3 NEIGHBOURHOOD

The immediate neighborhood comprises industrial properties on Queens Avenue, retail-industrial establishments on Douglas Street, and some residential buildings further back from the site. The adjacent properties include an existing U-Haul storage building to the east, an ice and water outlet to the north, and a furniture store diagonally located on the southeast.

In consideration of the neighborhood, our urban design concept aims to strengthen the street experience and engage the public with an activated pedestrian environment, particularly along Douglas Street. We have incorporated new trees, improved landscaping, and streetside furniture to enhance the public experience.

4 DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

The property resides in Development Permit Area 10A: Rock Bay, and as such incorporates the design and development permit guidelines for that area, and the Downtown Core Area Plan more generally. Having said that it is worthwhile to highlight some of the specific guidelines that we have addressed, particularly where it was a result of consultation with various stakeholders.

Early in the design development stage, we solicited feedback on our preliminary designs from the Burnside Gorge Community Association. While the feedback was generally favorable, they offered a number of constructive comments that were incorporated into the submitted design, all of which are consistent with several of the Building Design Guidelines in the DCAP:

- Reducing the building height to conform with the existing M-1 zoning bylaw and DCAP policy 6.127.
- Adding additional glazing to the upper façades of the building to improve the viability of alternative future uses.
- Modifying the grade elevation along Douglas Street to create a more open store-front appearance with additional glazing and entrance doors.
- Enhancing the northern façade with more decorative cladding, despite the eventual zero-lot-line interface with the neighboring property.

Moreover, consultation with the Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department of the City of Victoria led to further improvements in our design, such as:

- Considerable changes to the building configuration to include active industrial uses along the Douglas Street frontage.
- Relocating the prominently glazed elevator to the interior of the building and expanding active industrial uses on the ground floor along Douglas Street, in accordance with DCAP policy 3.48.
- Revising the Douglas and Queens corner profile of the building to create a more dramatic projection.

Lastly, the design was favorably received by the Advisory and Design Panel, and we have incorporated their recommendations concerning the colors used on the ground level of the building.

5 TRANSPORTATION

As a part of the design process, we commissioned a study by Bunt & Associates to assess the appropriate vehicle and bicycle parking provision for the property.

For vehicle parking, the study concluded that the 19 spaces provided in our proposal are more than sufficient for the proposed uses. This number falls below the prescribed rate for warehouse / light industrial uses in the City of Victoria Zoning Bylaw (71 spaces), and we are seeking a variance to address this shortfall. However, the number provided is consistent with the prescribed rate in other municipalities that specifically contemplate the low parking utilization of self-storage buildings.

In light of the combined bicycle / bus lane along Douglas Street, we have implemented additional Transportation Demand Management strategies. For short-term bicycle parking, we have provided 6 spaces near one of the entrances

along Douglas Street, which meets the requirements of the zoning bylaw. We have also provided long-term bicycle parking facilities to accommodate 6 bikes (of which 4 are required). The facilities include space for a cargo bicycle and offer charging and end-of-trip facilities. Lastly we will provide transit passes for employees to encourage the use of public transportation.

6 HERITAGE

Our proposal does not have any heritage impacts.

7 GREEN BUILDING FEATURES

The self-storage portion of the building consists of semi-heated spaces with low heating and cooling demands. Here is a breakdown of the green features for each building system:

Mechanical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heating and Ventilation (Storage Area): High Efficiency Natural Gas Fired Condensing Rooftop Air Handling Unit (91%) with economizer/heat recovery. - Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (CRUs & Office Space): High-efficiency Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) system (COP 4.2). - Proper air distribution tests will be conducted to test, adjust, and balance the air distribution system. - All motors (fan/blower/ECM/compressor) will be of high efficiency to reduce total electrical consumption.
Plumbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heat Pump Domestic Hot Water Heater with electrical backup and integral packaged controls. - Ultra low-flow plumbing fixtures.
Electrical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LED Lighting Fixtures. - Occupancy/vacancy sensors.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lighting control system for automatic dimming, vacancy sensing, time clock control, and daylight harvesting. - Light levels will meet recommended standards and exceed ASHRAE requirements for LPD (Lighting Power Density) - External LED luminaires will have full cut-off to reduce light pollution. Light level calculations will ensure compliance with city requirements. - Rooftop photovoltaic system roughed-in at a minimum. - Level 2 EV Charging Stations in 10% of parking stalls.
HVAC Control System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct Digital Control system that allows for - Decreased operating costs - faster response times - energy savings

8 INFRASTRUCTURE

The proposed development will provide a number of improvements to the infrastructure in the immediate vicinity. The Douglas Street frontage only requires partial reconstruction, and the developer will be responsible for any deterioration that results during construction. The Queens frontage will require complete redevelopment.

Transportation planning, in collaboration with the City of Victoria Engineering Department and Bunt & Associates, has ensured that the design accommodates the narrowing of the Queens intersection to facilitate bulbs at the corners. This design improvement provides a shorter crossing distance for pedestrians, enhancing safety and increasing landscape area. The intersection geometry accounts for the navigation of a WB17 (Tractor and Trailer). The City has indicated the potential for full signalization of the intersection around 2024, aligning with the project redevelopment timeline. Civil

engineering plans have been developed collaboratively with the City to accommodate the future works.

Storm drain service is available via the municipal storm drain system, and sanitary sewers are available on the property. New connections will be established, and old service connections will be decommissioned. Sanitary sewer flow attenuation has not been requested or anticipated at this time.

New water services, both for domestic use and fire prevention, are anticipated. The City provides two separate water main networks for this purpose. The fire suppression system requires a higher pressure connection, while the domestic connection will come from the lower-pressure domestic system.

9 SUMMARY

We have submitted a proposal that we believe offers a striking improvement to the neighbourhood and conforms to the goals and objectives of the local community. It offers high utilization of the site and addresses short/medium term needs of the area, while offering flexibility in the long-term uses of the building.

We appreciate your time and consideration in reviewing our proposal. The entire project team looks forward to presenting this application and advancing the review process with the Mayor, City Council, City Staff, and the surrounding community.

Respectfully,



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