

February 17, 2023

City of Victoria
No.1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC
V8W 1P6

Attn.: Mayor & Council

**Re: 1516 Camosun Street, 1270 & 1286 Pandora Avenue Rezoning and Development Permit Application
Revision 3**

Cascadia Architects is pleased to assist H Development to submit this Rezoning and Development Permit application for the construction of a 5-storey 46-unit residential building. The site is comprised of 3 properties: 1270 Pandora, 1286 Pandora, and 1516 Camosun. The details of the proposal described in this application carefully respond to the relevant OCP directions, Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan, and City of Victoria Design Guidelines for Multi-Unit Residential. In preparing this application, the design team has received preliminary input from neighbours, City planning and engineering staff, and specialist consultants including a certified arborist, landscape architect, and civil and geotechnical engineers. The public consultation and review process to date includes the following meetings:

- Neighbours Group Meeting – April 1, 2021
- Planning Meeting - Victoria Parks and Transportation – July 23, 2021
- Neighbours Presentation - July 8, 2021
- Formal CALUC presentation – December 2, 2021
- Planning Meeting post DP R1 – October 19, 2022
- Advisory Design Panel – November 22, 2022



Meaningful changes to the design were implemented after each of these consultations including:

- Angling the building
- Stepping of the massed form vertically
- Parkade entrance location and Pandora streetscape
- Locations of ground floor entries
- Increased articulation along Pandora
- Pulling parkade back from West property line to allow for large trees not over the parkade
- Detailed design of balcony railings to minimize overlook between properties

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- Added benches and features along the sidewalks of Pandora and Camosun
- Revising the location of the PMT
- Revision of the main lobby path design to create more of a presence on the street
- Revision of the corner condition at Pandora and Camosun in response to engineering feedback
- Revision of tree design in the boulevard on Pandora in response to Parks feedback
- Revision of planting plan along West boundary in response to ADP comments
- Additional detail about privacy mitigation and overlook in response to ADP comments

Further changes to the design have been made in response to comments from the latest submission. These changes are itemized outlined in a separate letter included in this submission and identified on a bubbled set of revised drawings.

Existing Zoning, Site Characteristics, and the Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan:

The three parcels encompassed by the proposal are 1725m² in total area. They are currently zoned as R3-2 Multiple Dwelling District lots. Located in a designated Urban Residential area of the Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan, the proposal neighbours an existing 4-storey buildings along its west, 3-storey building on its north and single-family dwellings across the street to the east a mix of 2-storey commercial building across Pandora Avenue to the south.

Description of the Proposal:

The proposed development is a 46-unit building with a mix of studios, 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom and 3-bedroom units. By providing a variety of unit sizes, with some larger units having generous secure outdoor areas via large balconies and terraces, this project will help to support a diverse population including families in a walkable neighbourhood with easy access to goods and services. The building steps from 3 stories at the north and south up to 5 storeys at the center of the site. The building also sits at an angle to the property lines (and neighbouring buildings to minimize overlook conflict and noise reverberance and maximize light and views. The material expression and massing reference the many buildings found in the area, including the many ground-oriented units accessed through extensive front garden spaces. The architecture expresses a refined exterior palette using high-quality, durable, and traditional finishes including bronze finish metal cladding, clear glass windows, and horizontal cementitious siding.

The primary design initiatives which reference the **Official Community Plan and Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan** can be summarized as follows:

- The proposal reflects the intent of the Official Community Plan as well as the Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan with a height of 5-storeys, underground resident parking, and a density (FSR) of 2:1.
- The massing and material finish have been crafted to suit the neighbourhood's mix of multi-unit buildings and traditional single-family homes.
- This building bolsters Fernwood as a neighbourhood with a significant portion of Victoria's single family and multi-family housing stock with units of varying size appealing to a diversity of tenants.
- This proposal introduces ten ground-oriented units which increases the visible activity and community connection around the building.
- Through thoughtful massing, with upper levels stepping back and terracing, the building provides transition from the multi-unit buildings on the west and north of the avenue towards the traditional residential part of Camosun to the east.

- Contributing to Fernwood's active transportation network, this proposal provides more bicycle parking than required and a ground level bike room to promote the use of cycling and provide occupants and visitors with easy and secure access to bicycle storage.
- With deep planters and 11 additional trees (remove 15 existing, replace with 26 new), this project will bolster the city's urban forest.
- This proposal strives to bridge between the neighbourhood's historic context and a modern future, providing strong architectural design that is compatible in character and quality with the Fernwood context.

Design and development guidelines:

The project responds to the guidelines laid out in the City of Victoria's **Design Guidelines for Multi-Unit Residential, Commercial & Industrial Development** in the following areas:

Massing & Siting:

The building steps back from Pandora Avenue, matching the apparent height of neighbouring buildings to maintain the character and continuity of the street 'wall' while also providing a livelier urban connection to the street than the older multiunit buildings along Pandora. The garden entry typology of the building at grade matches similar traditional single family and rowhouse buildings in the neighbourhood and presents a friendly face to the street with trees and landscaping along the West, East and South sides of the building. While the building is 5-storeys at the center of the lot, the south and north ends of the building step to 3 storeys. The building's stepped massing and laneway serve to reduce the apparent scale of the building from the street and maximize the views and sunlight for neighbouring properties. The vertical stepping is combined with stepping in plan as well. The setbacks along the site vary significantly. On Camosun Street the closest setback is at Pandora (2.1m) and steps back and forth to 8.2m at the most northern edge of the site to match the neighbouring building setback. On Pandora the setback ranges from 1.2m to 2.7m. In the lane the setback varies from 3.6m at the north end of the site to 9.4m at Pandora. In this way it is designed to fit in with the varied scale of its immediate neighbours, while creating terraces with outdoor space for tenants and opportunities for potted landscaping and play areas at upper floors. By strategically setting upper floors back where it is beneficial for neighbouring buildings, this building concentrates its mass where it is best suited.

Streetscape/ Relation to street:

A level of underground parking is accessed on the Northeast end of the property beside the ground level parking of the neighbouring building to the north along Camosun.

In response to the OCP Design Guidelines Section 2 which states "residential use at street level should have strong entry features and building designs that encourage interaction with the street" (2.4), the building street frontage at grade has been carefully designed: The building's main entrance is reached through a landscaped entry courtyard with a wood canopy structure which "enable(s) sunlight penetration to ... open space" at the center of the site and frontage (as per items 3.3 and 3.5 of the design guideline. Also fronting the landscaped front courtyard is the glazed front of the bike room, which has a direct and convenient connection to the street. Inclusion of 10 ground-oriented units with exterior doors, gardens and patios increases the ground-level activity. The five units with separate entrances to the street in particular respond to guideline 2.5.1 which notes that "individual entrances with direct connections the public sidewalk are encouraged".

Raised landscape planters around the building feature integrated benches and lighting to illuminate pathways for safety and visibility. This lighting will be shielded and kept at a low mounting height to avoid glare and light pollution to neighbouring units and properties. A landscape feature at the corner of Pandora and Camosun (specifics to be determined) provides a moment of visual interest and a further contribution to the creation of a high-quality public realm. The planters at grade are mirrored with the built-in balcony planters and larger planter screens on the rooftop decks. These balcony and rooftop planters provide both increased greenery and increased privacy between neighbours.

Exterior Finishes:

The building draws on historical inspiration in a site-specific response to achieve an elegant and timeless expression that addresses the OCP guidelines for exterior finishes which state that “exterior building materials should be high quality, durable and capable of weathering gracefully”.

The building’s materials reflect the architectural features of the neighbourhood and will enhance the public realm along Pandora and Camosun via the quality of design, materials, and detailing. Durable, horizontal cementitious cladding reflects the traditional wood siding palette of the neighbourhood homes, and metal façade panels create a variety of expression around the building, in keeping with the guideline that “quality materials used on the principal façade should be continued around any building corner or edge which is visible from the public realm”. The soffits under the balconies and overhangs continue these materials to create a sense of material cohesion and spatial continuity. These materials also create “rhythm and visual interest” as desired by the design guidelines. There are also vertical picket metal railings with integrated planters on each of the balconies, adding greenery and a finer grain of detail around the building. The ground level of the building will also have steel column supported wood canopies at the main entrance and at the entrance to the lane, as well as over a portion of the bike parking, adding warmth through the foregrounding of human scale natural materials.

Raised planters provide ample green space and soil depth to maximize tree size, contributing to Victoria’s urban forest and the design complements the mature landscaping and historic architectural character of the Fernwood neighbourhood.

Transportation and Infrastructure:

The project is well situated and fully serviced by City of Victoria infrastructure. Schools, parks and recreation facilities are all located within walking distance of the site. In addition, the nearby work and shopping opportunities available both downtown, Harris Green, and along Fernwood Road make this site suitable for an increased population density. This population will be well serviced regarding transportation options, including immediate proximity to transit routes on Pandora Avenue as well as vehicle and bicycle parking and storage provisions.

The project will include 40 resident underground parking stalls accessed off Camosun. The parkade entrance has been located for easy access, keeping most of the traffic away from the traditional residential homes east of the site. The parkade also allocated space for 3 scooters or motorcycles to encourage alternate forms of transportation. Long-term bicycle parking is in a bike room at ground level which serves as a point of interest for the building. With 59 standard long-term bicycle stalls including 2 cargo bike stalls, these provisions will service individuals as well as family cyclists. Short-term bicycle parking is in front of the building, by the bike room and under an overhang to provide shelter for visiting cyclists. There is also a ground floor bike kitchen and dog/bike wash station for convenient access for tenants.

Project Benefits and Amenities:

This project will bring 46 new units of mid-range condo housing stock to the city. With a terraced design that suits the neighbourhood and an added back lane, the building will contribute significantly to the green space on the street and around the edges of the site. The parkade is designed to allow for large trees on undisturbed soil at the west side of the site. While 15 trees are being removed, 26 new trees will be planted, contributing 11 new trees to the urban forest.

Safety and Security:

The creation of resident population is the primary factor in creating a safe pedestrian environment, through the placement of 'eyes on the street', and in this design all areas of the site are overlooked in good proximity by multiple dwelling units. Ground floor units have individual front doors and patios, re-enforcing the sense of the street and landscaped areas as active and shared space. There is also a common indoor/outdoor space adjacent to the main entrance on Camosun. Site lighting illuminates the areas between buildings with ambient light to promote safety and visibility of landscaped areas. It is important to note that this lighting will be shielded and kept at a lower mounting height to avoid glare and light pollution to neighbouring properties.

Green Building Features:

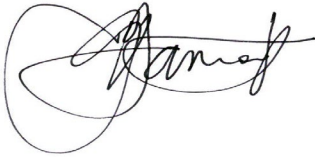
The following is a list of green building initiatives that will be deployed within the project:

- Meeting Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code.
- Storm water retention along west side of property.
- Densification in an existing urban location, utilizing existing infrastructure.
- Directly metered suites with multiple thermostatically controlled heating zones within each residence.
- Solar Ready Conduit from Electrical Room to roof.
- LED lighting throughout.
- All appliances EnergyStar® rated.
- Project has a communal outdoor living space.
- Low-VOC paint in all interior areas.
- Low flow plumbing fixtures used throughout all units.
- Secure, heated bike storage at ground level with cargo bike and e-bike parking.
- A bike wash station and repair stand are to be in at grade bike room.
- Provide electrical outlets for electric bicycle charging locations within bicycle storage.
- Rough-in electrical for future electric vehicle charging stations.
- Heat Recovery Ventilation for the building.
- High efficiency centralized domestic hot water boiler system.
- Construction waste diverted from landfill during construction through smart on-site waste management.

In preparing this development permit application package the team has carefully considered community concerns, the relevant OCP objectives, the Fernwood Neighbourhood Plan and Multi-Unit Residential Design Guidelines. The design is responding to the neighbouring properties and proposes an elegant and timeless architecture that responds to the unique character of the location. We believe that it will add to the strength and character of the Fernwood neighbourhood, and we look forward to presenting this project to ADP and Council. If you have any questions or require further clarification of any part of this application, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

CASCADIA ARCHITECTS INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damant', with a large, stylized circular flourish on the left side.

Gregory Damant, Architect AIBC, RAIC, LEED AP
Principal

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Johannknecht', with a large, stylized circular flourish on the left side.

Peter Johannknecht, Architect AIBC, RAIC, LEED AP
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House Consultant, Principal