

# NORTH PARK TRANSITION HOUSING

**Parking Study** 

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Watt Consulting Group (WATT) was retained by Christine Lintott Architects Inc. to conduct a parking study for the proposed transitional housing development at 1048 North Park Street in the City of Victoria. It is intended that the development will house people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and that proposed residents will be moving from an existing transitional housing facility operated by Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA). The purpose of this study is to determine the parking demand for the site and identify parking management and transportation demand management strategies to help the applicant manage and reduce the expected parking demand.

## 1.1 SUBJECT SITE

The current civic address of the proposed development is 1046-1048 North Park Street in the City of Victoria (see Figure 1). It is zoned R-91: North Park Residential District. 1046 is currently a vacant multi-family parcel and 1048 has a single-family dwelling located on the parcel.



FIGURE 1. SUBJECT SITE



### 1.2 SITE CHARACTERISTICS & POLICY CONTEXT

The following provides information regarding services and transportation options in proximity to the site at 1048 North Park Street. In addition, the City's planning policies pertaining to housing and homelessness and parking management are summarized.



#### **CITY & REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

The City of Victoria Official Community Plan (OCP)¹ contains policy direction on several topics including housing and homelessness. These policies encourage the City to work with other partners to address housing insecurity and homelessness, as well as to increase the supply of crisis, transitional, supported, and non-market rental housing. Most relevant to this project, the OCP includes the following policy for transitional, supported, and non-market rental housing:

 13.22 – Encourage flexible design features in new emergency shelters and transitional housing to adapt to the changing shelter and housing needs of residents.

The OCP also contains specific policies on transportation and mobility with the goal of reducing fossil fuel dependence and prioritizing pedestrian, cycling, and transit modes. In particular, the plan includes the following relevant parking management policies:

7.11 – Consider managing parking throughout the city, employing a broad array of parking management strategies including sharing of parking facilities, location-efficient regulations and pricing, unbundled parking, parking associations, overflow parking plans, improved user information, parking and mobility management, car-sharing, and reduced parking requirements, as appropriate.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> City of Victoria Official Community Plan. Available online at: https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Planning~Development/Community~Planning/OCP/Up~to~date~OCP~and~Design~Guidelines/OCP\_WholeBook.pdf



- 7.12 Review and update the Zoning Bylaw to consider reductions in parking requirements where:
  - 7.12.1 Geographic location, residential and employment density, housing type, land use mix, transit accessibility, walkability, and other factors support non-auto mode choice or lower parking demand; and,
  - 7.12.2 Activities and circumstances of land uses, structures or buildings include the provision of a comprehensive suite of permanent on-site alternative travel supports and active transportation infrastructure, including such things as short-term and long-term bicycle parking facilities including shower and locker facilities, ridesharing, car-share co-ops, payroll transit passes and other automobile trip reduction measures.



#### **SERVICES**

The subject site is within 350 m (about a 5-minute walk) of several commercial and personal amenities including a grocery store, pharmacy, restaurants, and retail stores. There are also several parks and recreational facilities nearby including Royal Athletic Park (300 m, about a 4-minute walk) and Central Park / Crystal Pool & Fitness Centre (800 m, about a 9-minute walk). Furthermore, the North Park neighbourhood is adjacent to Downtown Victoria where many other stores and services are available.





#### **TRANSIT**

The proposed development is well-connected to transit, with bus stops for Route 24 (Cedar Hill / Admirals Walk) and Route 25 (Maplewood / Admirals Walk) one block from the site on Cook and Caledonia. These routes provide 30-60 minute service between about 6:30 am and 11:30 pm, Monday through Friday, and connect with Admirals Walk Shopping Centre, Cedar Hill Rec Centre, and Saanich Centre.

The site is also 400 m (about a 5-minute walk) from the following routes:

- Route 6 (Royal Oak Exchange / Downtown). This route travels along a key corridor and includes service to downtown Victoria, Saanich Centre, Royal Oak Shopping Centre, and Broadmead Village. It is a designated Frequent Route that provides 15 minute or better service, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Routes 27 and 28 (Gordon Head / Majestic / Downtown). These are also designated Frequent Routes providing 15 minute or better service, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Friday. They connect with Downtown Victoria, Shelbourne Plaza, University Heights Shopping Centre, and Gordon Head neighbourhoods.
- Route 2 (James Bay / South Oak Bay / Willows). This route connects James Bay with Oak Bay via Downtown Victoria. It provides service every 10-30 minutes from about 6:30 am to midnight, Monday through Friday.

The City of Victoria OCP contains policies that support public transit, including the provision of rapid transit and frequent transit service. These policies include prioritizing public transit over general purpose traffic in rapid and frequent transit corridors (7.14.4), undertaking a study of options to provide potential cross-town priority frequent transit service connecting major destinations (7.14.5), and working with BC Transit to integrate new local transit service into neighbourhoods (7.14.6).





#### **WALKING**

With a walk score<sup>2</sup> of 91, the subject site is considered a "Walker's Paradise" and daily errands do not require a car. It is centrally located and within walking distance of several key services, as outlined above. There are sidewalks on both sides of North Park Street and the surrounding road network, as well as crosswalks at key intersections (including a pedestrian-activated signal crosswalk at North Park Street and Cook Street). Furthermore, one of the OCP's strategic directions for the North Park neighbourhood is to enhance pedestrian connections with Downtown and the Douglas Street rapid transit corridor (21.20.4). This will make it even easier to access shopping and services by foot.



#### **CYCLING**

The subject site has a bike score of 99, indicating that it is in a "Biker's Paradise" and daily errands can be accomplished on a bike. While North Park Street does not have designated bike facilities, the site is one block from a shared-use neighbourhood bikeway and 1-way protected bike lane on Vancouver Street, which provides north-south connectivity and is part of the City's growing all ages and abilities (AAA) cycling network. The Vancouver Street corridor connects with 2-way protected bike lanes on Pandora Avenue and Fort Street heading westbound towards destinations in Downtown Victoria, as well as east-west painted bike lanes on Johnson Street and Yates Street. Additionally, the eastbound portion of Fort Street is planned to receive bike route enhancements in 2022 that will include protected bike lanes and intersection safety improvements.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> More information about the site's Walk Score is available online at: <a href="https://www.walkscore.com/score/1048-n-park-st-victoria-bc-canada">https://www.walkscore.com/score/1048-n-park-st-victoria-bc-canada</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> More information about the City of Victoria's AAA Cycling Network and the Fort Street improvements is available online at: https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/streets-transportation/walk-roll-transit/cycling/current-projects.html



# 2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

# 2.1 LAND USE

The proposed development will include 39 dwelling units intended for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The residents of the new development will be moving from an existing transitional housing facility at 929 Burdett Avenue in Fairfield, operated by Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA).

The land use will be Rest Home – Class C, which is defined as follows:

"a facility in which food, lodging and support are provided with or without charge to more than twenty persons, other than members of the operator's family, who, on account of age, infirmity or their physical, mental or psychiatric condition, are given personal care or life skills support, but does not include a facility in which persons are detained as prisoners pursuant to judicial process."

The housing will be operated by an experienced, non-profit housing operator that will staff and manage the building 24/7 and provide building residents with support services, including medical health services, mental health and addictions services, meals via a shared dining area, laundry, and security.

A total of six employees are expected at the facility (four during the day and two at night, with overlap during shift changes).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> City of Victoria. Schedule A – Definitions. Available online at: https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Planning~Development/Development~Services/Zoning/Bylaws/Schedule%2 0A.pdf



# 2.2 PROPOSED PARKING SUPPLY

#### 2.2.1 VEHICLE PARKING

The proposed parking supply is 1 stall intended for staff. A multipurpose 11 X 4.1 m loading zone will also be provided for delivery vehicles and other short-term visitors.

#### 2.2.2 BICYCLE PARKING

The applicant is proposing to include 12 long-term secured bicycle parking spaces and 6 short-term bicycle parking spaces. Staff showers will also be available.

# 3.0 PARKING REQUIREMENT

### 3.1 VEHICLE PARKING

The City of Victoria's Schedule C Zoning Regulation Bylaw (no. 80-159) identifies the bylaw parking requirements for the site. Based on the bylaw, the most applicable use to the proposed development is "Transitional Housing and Emergency Shelters", which is defined as follows:

"a staffed facility, open year round, that provides temporary accommodation for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, and may include food and support services." 5

The minimum off-street parking requirement for "Transitional Housing and Emergency Shelters" is 1 space per 80m² floor area. Applying this requirement to the proposed development (1472 m² floor area), the site would be required to provide a total of <u>18</u> off-street parking spaces.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> City of Victoria. Schedule C, Zoning Regulation Bylaw (no. 80-159). Available online at: https://www.victoria.ca/assets/Departments/Planning~Development/Development~Services/Zoning/Bylaws/Schedule%2 OC.pdf



Therefore, with the proposal to provide 1 parking space, the applicant is short 17 parking spaces.

### 3.2 BICYCLE PARKING

The site is not required to provide any bicycle parking, therefore the applicant is exceeding the requirement by 12 long-term and 6 short-term spaces.

# 4.0 EXPECTED PARKING DEMAND

Expected parking demand for the site is estimated in the following sections to determine if the proposed supply will adequately accommodate demand. Expected parking demand was estimated based on transportation patterns at the current facility at 929 Burdett Avenue, which has the same walk score as the subject site (91) and is also located near the downtown core. Data from other supportive housing facilities in the Victoria Region was also used.

### 4.1 RESIDENT PARKING

The proposed development will include 39 permanent purpose-built studio supportive housing units intended for people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. Based on discussions with the applicant, none of the tenants at the current facility own a vehicle and the conditions that qualify a resident for service from VIHA usually precludes vehicle ownership.

To increase the rigor of the analysis, outreach was conducted with ten supportive housing facilities in the Victoria Region with a similar focus on those at risk of or experiencing homelessness. In total, data was collected from three supportive housing providers, as follows:

- Pacifica Housing
- Victoria Native Friendship Centre
- Victoria Cool Aid Society



Table 1 provides a summary of the representative sites.

**TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIVE SITES** 

Name of Facility	Address	Operator		
Clover Place	3293 Douglas Street	Pacifica Housing		
Camas Gardens	950 Humboldt Street	Pacifica Housing		
Medewiwin	360 Gorge Road East	Pacifica Housing		
Waterview	246 Gorge Road East	Pacifica Housing		
Siem Lelum	110 Gorge Rd East	Victoria Native Friendship Centre		
Queens Manor	710 Queens Avenue	Victoria Cool Aid Society		
Mike Gidora Place	749 Pandora Avenue	Victoria Cool Aid Society		
Pandora Apartments	1153 Johnson Street	Victoria Cool Aid Society		
Johnson Manor	757 Pandora Avenue	Victoria Cool Aid Society		
Swift House	467 Swift Street	Victoria Cool Aid Society		

All of the supportive housing facilities confirmed that the majority of their tenants do not own a vehicle or drive; however, some tenants do own vehicles and either park offstreet or on-street depending on parking availability. **Table 2** provides a summary of the vehicle ownership rates among the representative sites. The average vehicle ownership was 0.05 vehicles per unit ranging from 0.00 to 0.17 per unit. Applied to the subject site, this results in an expected resident parking demand of <u>2 spaces</u>.

**TABLE 2.** RESIDENT PARKING DEMAND AT REPRESENTATIVE SITES

Name of Facility	Number of Units	Total Vehicles	Vehicles Per Unit	
Clover Place	18	Unknown		
Camas Gardens	44	3	0.07	
Medewiwin	26	1	0.04	
Waterview	49	6	0.12	



Siem Lelum	41	7	0.17
Queens Manor	36	1	0.03
Mike Gidora Place	45	0	0.00
Pandora Apartments	32	0	0.00
Johnson Manor	20	0	0.00
Swift House	49	0	0.00
		Average	0.05

## 4.2 EMPLOYEE PARKING

Typical staffing numbers at the current site are four staff during the day and two at night, with a maximum staff level of six due to overlap during shift changes. Staff currently carpool and the typical staff parking demand is reported to be 2 spaces. The proposed development at 1048 North Park Street is anticipated to follow a similar staffing pattern to the current site.

Employee parking demand was also collected from the representative supportive housing sites. The total number of staff at any one time ranged across the representative sites. Most of the facilities have staff on-site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Part-time staff were also reported to work at the facilities in shifts at different times of the day. Driving mode share for staff ranged from 20-100%, with most of the sites reporting that the majority of their staff drive and require parking. The average driving mode share among staff was 76%, although one site noted that some drive part time and walk or cycle other times. Applied to the subject site, this results in an expected staff parking demand of <u>5 spaces</u>.



### 4.3 VISITOR PARKING

Visitor parking in supportive housing facilities is typically intended for two groups: (1) community support organizations / partners and (2) maintenance vehicles. Community support organizations are on-site at different times of the day providing a range of services to residents including health and treatment services, food delivery, and employment / job skills training, for example. In some cases, residents can expect personal visitors, however, this is not common based on the surveyed sites.

The existing site reported that visitors are typically at the facility during evenings and weekends. The site receives weekly curbside garbage/recycling pickup, weekly kitchen deliveries with a standard cube van, periodic ambulance service, and regular pickups by HandyDart.

Most of the representative sites provide visitor parking spaces that are intended for community support organizations. Further, most confirmed that on any given day community support organizations are on-site providing a service. Table 3 shows the number of peak visitor vehicles by representative site. This data indicates the total number of visitors expected on-site at any given time. The average visitor parking rate is <u>0.08 spaces per unit</u>. Applied to the new development, this results in <u>3 parking spaces</u>.

**TABLE 3.** VISITOR PARKING DEMAND AT REPRESENTATIVE SITES

Name of Facility	Number of Units	Peak Visitor Vehicles	Vehicles Per Unit	
Clover Place	18	3	0.17	
Camas Gardens	44	4	0.09	
Medewiwin	26	3	0.12	
Waterview	49	3	0.06	
Siem Lelum	41	Unknown		
Queens Manor	36	2	0.06	
Mike Gidora Place	45	1	0.02	



Name of Facility	Number of Units	Peak Visitor Vehicles	Vehicles Per Unit	
Pandora Apartments	32	1	0.03	
Johnson Manor	20	2	0.10	
Swift House	49	2	0.04	
		Average	0.08	

# 4.4 SUMMARY OF EXPECTED PARKING DEMAND

Based on the analysis, the total expected parking demand for the site is <u>10 spaces</u> (see Table 4). Therefore, the expected parking demand is 9 spaces greater than the proposed supply of 1 space.

**TABLE 4. SUMMARY OF EXPECTED PARKING DEMAND** 

User Group	Units / Quantity	Expected Parking Demand			
500, 5,00p	omio, quarret,	Rate	Total		
Residents	39 units	0.05 / unit	2		
Employees	6 staff	0.76 / staff	5		
Visitors	39 units	0.08 / unit	3		
	Total F	10			



# 5.0 ON-STREET PARKING ASSESSMENT

On-street parking observations were completed to determine parking availability nearby the subject site. Counts were completed on the following nearby street segments where on-street parking is allowed (all streets have time restrictions that are noted in Table 5):

#### North Park Street

Cook Street to Vancouver Street, both sides. In addition to 2hr parking on both sides of the street, there is a General Loading Zone (2 spaces, 15 min. max) and Passenger Zone (2 spaces, 3 min. max) on the south side of North Park Street across from the subject site.

#### Vancouver Street

o North Park Street to Caledonia Street, east side

#### Caledonia Street

 Vancouver Street to Cook Street, south side (Residents Only section of this segment was not included in the count)

### Cook Street

o Caledonia Street to North Park Street, west side

Observations were completed at 9:00 am, 1:00 pm, and 9:30 pm on Tuesday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 to determine peak parking conditions. The morning and afternoon counts were intended to capture the peak parking conditions for retail / commercial / office uses while recognizing that some businesses may have been closed or had staff working from home due to COVID-19. The evening count was intended to capture the peak residential parking conditions when residents of the surrounding area are anticipated to be home with some parking their vehicles on-street.

An approximate total of 51 on-street parking spaces were observed (see Table 5). On-street parking utilization was 71% during the morning, 61% during the afternoon, and 39% during the evening. The parking conditions in the 2hr zones on North Park Street—where visitors / staff of the proposed development would most likely seek parking—were 56-83% occupancy during the morning, 50-56% during the afternoon, and 39-44% in the evening. Vehicles in the General Loading Zone and Passenger Zone on North Park Street ranged from 1-3 vehicles across 4 spaces.



**TABLE 5. SUMMARY OF ON-STREET PARKING ASSESSMENT** 

Street				Parking Supply	Vehicles Observed					
		Side	Restrictions		9:00am, June 22, 2021		1:00pm, June 22, 2021		9:30pm, June 22, 2021	
				(spaces)	Vehicles Observed	Occupancy	Vehicles Observed	Occupancy	Vehicles Observed	Occupancy
		N	2hr, 9am- 6pm, Mon- Sat	18	15	83%	10	56%	7	39%
	Cook- Vancouver	S		18	10	56%	9	50%	8	44%
North Park Street		S	General Loading Zone 7am-6pm, Mon-Sat (15 min. max)	2	2	100%	1	50%	1	50%
				Passenger Zone (3 min. max)	2	1	50%	1	50%	0
Vancouver Street	North Park- Caledonia	Е	2hr, 8am- 6pm, Mon- Sat	3	2	67%	3	100%	0	0%
Caledonia Street	Vancouver -Cook	S	2hr, 9am- 6pm, Mon- Sat	3	2	67%	2	67%	1	33%
Cook Street	Caledonia -North Park	W	1hr, 8am- 6pm, Mon- Sat	5	4	80%	5	100%	3	60%
				51	36	71%	31	61%	20	39%



On-street parking management practices recommend a target on-street occupancy rate of 85%, especially in downtowns or neighbourhoods in proximity to downtown. This is a commonly used number in the industry that represents an optimal balance between supply and demand, where parking supply meets demand but is not oversupplied. When parking utilization is greater than 85%, there is a higher likelihood that vehicles will spend more time circling the block to search for parking (i.e., "cruising for parking"), which can exacerbate traffic congestion and result in driver frustration.

The on-street parking observations indicate that the number of available on-street parking spaces ranges from approximately 15-29 throughout the day, with a peak occupancy rate of 71% in the morning. Overall, this indicates that the on-street conditions in proximity to the subject site can accommodate some spillover from the proposed development (see also Section 6.2.2 for recommendations related to on-street parking to minimize impact on immediate neighbours).

# 6.0 DEMAND MANAGEMENT

The expected parking demand for the site is 10 parking spaces. The applicant is providing 1 parking space, which results in a shortfall of 9 spaces. As a result, it is recommended that the applicant consider parking management and transportation demand management (TDM) approaches to reduce parking demand.

## 6.1 TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT

TDM is the application of strategies and policies to influence individual travel choice, most commonly to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel. TDM measures typically aim to encourage sustainable travel, enhance travel options, and decrease parking demand. The following strategies are recommended for the applicant.



#### 6.1.1 PROVISION OF BICYCLES

With the provision of 12 long-term bike parking spaces, it is recommended that the applicant purchase 4 bicycles for the development and provide them to the residents on a first-come, first-served basis. The provision of bicycles can provide residents with greater transportation choice and allow them to access destinations that are beyond a comfortable walking distance. It should also be noted that the current site at 929 Burdett Avenue does not have secure bicycle parking or showers and it is expected that providing these amenities at the new site will encourage cycling among both residents and staff, reducing parking demand.

### 6.2 PARKING MANAGEMENT

One approach to parking management is providing space to accommodate the anticipated demand. However, the other approach is to manage demand to fit the available supply. Three strategies are recommended to the operator of the site to manage parking demand.

### 6.2.1 PRIORITIZING CAR FREE TENANCY

Even though the vehicle ownership rate among future tenants is anticipated to be low, it is recommended that through the application process for supportive housing, the tenancy screening process state that the building does not provide tenant parking. Given the site's proximity to services and transportation options, future tenants will be able to access day-to-day needs in a car-free manner. The applicant could provide information about the various amenities and services within walking distance along with information about the transit services in proximity to the site.

#### 6.2.2 MANAGEMENT OF ON-STREET PARKING FOR VISITORS AND STAFF

As indicated in Section 4.3, visitor parking in supportive housing facilities is typically intended for two groups: (1) community support organizations / partners and (2) maintenance vehicles. The analysis determined that the peak visitor parking demand is 0.08 spaces per unit, or 3 spaces.



As noted during the on-street parking assessment, 2hr parking is available on North Park Street and there is a General Loading Zone across from the site that visitors may be able to use. There is also a limited number of spaces on Vancouver Street, Caledonia Street, and Cook Street in proximity to the site. To avoid potential conflicts on these surrounding streets, especially Caledonia which is partially designated as Residents Only, it is recommended that the future operator of the building actively communicate to visitors that they park on North Park Street. The parking occupancy on North Park Street was observed as 50-56% during the weekday afternoon and 39-50% during the weekday evening. This indicates that parking is available that could be utilized on a temporary basis by visitors at the future development.

Additionally, two of the staff will be working during the night when on-street parking is not limited to 2hrs. This means that they can utilize on-street parking if needed, reducing the staff parking demand from 5 spaces to 3 spaces.

#### 6.2.3 COMMUNICATING STAFF PARKING POLICY

A staff parking demand of 3 spaces exceeds the proposed supply by 2 spaces. To mitigate this demand, the applicant should communicate to future staff that there is only 1 staff parking space available and encourage the use of bicycles, walking, or transit to get to work.

There is also a City-operated surface parking lot at 940 Caledonia Street (about 450 m or a 5-minute walk from the site) that contains 220 stalls, in addition to the Johnson Street Parkade 1 km away (about a 13-minute walk). These could be viable options for staff who drive and require longer-term parking.



# 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development at 1048 North Park Street will include 39 permanent, purpose-built studio supportive housing units intended for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It will include four daytime staff and two nighttime staff, with a maximum of six at any one time. Residents of the building will receive several support services including medical health services, mental health and addictions services, food, laundry, and security. These support service providers would typically use "visitor" spaces.

Expected parking demand for this development was estimated based on parking data from ten other supportive housing facilities on Vancouver Island. The data indicate that peak parking demand for the site is 10 spaces (2 resident, 5 employee, and 3 visitor), which is exceeds the proposed supply by 9 spaces.

Transportation patterns at the existing supportive housing facility at 929 Burdett Avenue were also considered. Currently, none of the tenants at the facility own a vehicle and there are typically only 2 staff vehicles on-site at any one time.

Parking management and TDM approaches are recommended for the applicant's consideration. These include [a] the provision of bicycles for residents, [b] prioritizing car-free tenancy through the application process, [c] communication and management of on-street parking for visitors and evening staff, and [d] communicating the staff parking policy / limited amount of staff parking on site and taking measures to encourage commuting by other means. Committing to all these measures is anticipated to reduce the overall parking demand at the site and support the provision of 1 off-street parking space. Based on the on-street parking assessment, there is available on-street parking in the surrounding neighbourhood both during the weekday afternoon and evening. As such, any spillover from the site is not anticipated to result in a negative impact on the neighbourhood.



# 8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the applicant:

- 1. Purchase and provide at least 4 bicycles for residents;
- 2. Commit to parking management approaches including:
  - a. Prioritizing car-free tenancy;
  - b. Working with the future building operator to ensure that visitors and evening staff are informed about where to park on-street if there are no available off-street spaces; and
  - c. Communicating to future staff that only 1 staff parking space is provided and recommending alternatives.