



May 19, 2026
Mayor and Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Re: Rezoning Application – 512 Pembroke Street (Matullia Lands at Rock Bay)

Mayor & Council,

On behalf of Matullia Holdings Limited Partnership, an economic development partnership of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, we are pleased to submit this application to rezone the Matullia Lands at Rock Bay from Marine Industrial (MI-1) to a site-specific Comprehensive Development (CD) Zone.

Indigenous Context

The proposal marks the next chapter in a much longer story: one that is important to acknowledge, and that sets the context for considering this application.

- These lands were once a traditional *ləkʷəŋən* place of gathering and trade.
- The *ləkʷəŋən* peoples were unjustly displaced from these lands by early settlers.
- The lands were subsequently used for over a century for industrial purposes, resulting in devastating environmental degradation and contamination, while economically benefiting non-Indigenous peoples.
- The lands were remediated, yet
 - Still have significant environmental constraints due to the contamination, and
 - Were left with very challenging geotechnical (development) conditions.
- Matullia (Songhees & Esquimalt Nations) purchased the lands at market value despite this history.
- The lands are now subject to a renewed, Indigenous-led revitalization effort that begins to restore *ləkʷəŋən* autonomy, culture, and placemaking on this important site in Victoria's harbour.
- The City is now in a position to acknowledge this history while taking a meaningful step in reconciliation.

Additional rationale, details, plans, and illustrations are provided in the accompanying Rezoning Report, which expands on the brief rationale and design intent summarized in this letter.

Description & Key Features

The Matullia Lands encompass approximately 3.1 hectares on the Upper Harbour along Rock Bay, between Government Street and the shoreline. The proposal envisions a multi-phase redevelopment organized around three Development Areas (DA-1, DA-2, and DA-3), supported by a coordinated zoning and density structure. Together, the Rezoning and Development Plan define land use, building form, and public-realm improvements across all phases of redevelopment.

Key proposal features include:

- **A Phased Development Plan** that facilitates an incremental development that balances early economic activation with long-term site transformation, while clarifying the delivery of amenities and improvements.
- A development approach consisting of **Foundations**, which represent the core commitments of this application, and aspirational **Possibilities**, which will continue to be pursued on the site over time.
- **Zoning Amendment:** from MI-1 to a new Comprehensive Development zone that enables mixed-use, employment-forward development while supporting Indigenous-led stewardship and placemaking.
- **Density:** up to 4.0 FSR across the site, distributed through a flexible Density Framework that allows transfers among Development Areas to respond to site and market conditions.
- **Height:** low rise (6 storeys) with up to 18 storeys in select locations (within DA-1 and DA-2).
- **Uses:** light and marine industrial, flex and maker spaces, cultural, institutional, and limited retail uses, along with conditional upper-storey residential or hotel use (DA-1 and DA-2 only).
 - Ground and podium floors are to be primarily dedicated to employment or cultural functions.
 - Residential and hotel use is highly conditional and must be compatible with existing and future employment uses.
- **Public realm:** a continuous Waterfront Pathway, the Gathering Point plaza, a new public park, and pedestrian connections between Government and Store Streets and the waterfront.
 - An **internal, multifunctional private street** that serves core operational needs while also accommodating pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Phased **frontage improvements** to Pembroke and Government Streets, consistent with City standards, while also integrating *ləkʷəŋən* cultural elements.

This rezoning establishes the foundation for a phased, mixed-use, Indigenous-led redevelopment that celebrates *ləkʷəŋən* culture, strengthens the City's working harbour, and advances reconciliation in action.



Alignment with City Policies

The proposal aligns with the **Victoria 2050** Official Community Plan (OCP) by:

- Supporting reconciliation through Indigenous-led development and cultural expression.
- Enabling strategic departures from the Urban Structure concept for Indigenous-led projects to support self-determination, place-based design, and reconciliation outcomes.
- Retaining and intensifying employment lands to build a diverse, resilient economy.
- Enabling complete communities with walkable design and mix of uses.

The application is also consistent with the Industry, Arts and Innovation (IAI) District Plan (2025) and the Rezoning & Development Policy (2025), advancing creative and light-industrial activity alongside cultural uses and a connected public realm.

Rezoning Rationale

The attached Rezoning Report provides a detailed rationale and design intent beyond what is summarized in this letter.

The Marine Industrial (MI-1) zone recently adopted by the City provides a more flexible framework for industrial and creative employment uses for the site. However, it does not provide the adaptability or breadth of uses and forms needed to realize the comprehensive vision for the Matullia Lands.

Additionally, beyond the key community amenities identified above, the rezoning will deliver the following **benefits**:

- **Reconciliation in Action** – Demonstrates Indigenous leadership in city building through Songhees and Esquimalt stewardship, governance, and design.
- **Frontage and Off-Site Improvements** – Upgrades along Government, Pembroke, and Store Streets will enhance safety, accessibility, and connections to surrounding neighbourhoods.
- **Restoration, Remediation, and Climate Resilience** – Incremental transformation of a remediated industrial site into a model of sustainable, climate-resilient urban redevelopment.
- **Economic Development, Innovation, and Employment** – Creates long-term opportunities for training, entrepreneurship, and jobs through a mix of industrial, cultural, and creative uses, while contributing to the broader economy through employment space, investment, and tax revenue.
- **Public Access** – Ensures the waterfront and internal network of streets and plazas remain open, welcoming, and connected to the broader Harbour Pathway.
- **Industrial Water Access** – Maintains marine industrial access to support ongoing employment and a working waterfront consistent with the Nations' economic vision.

Impact Mitigation and Compatibility

The proposal complements adjacent industrial activities and planned redevelopment in the area.

- **Industrial Continuity:** Early phases retain active industrial operations, including the Heidelberg Materials lease, maintaining employment and ensuring a gradual transition to permanent employment-oriented development.
- **Transportation:** The Transportation Impact Assessment confirms no major impacts, with localized intersection improvements recommended.
- **Public Interface:** New public access and amenities will be introduced in a phased manner, ensuring compatibility and thoughtful design integration with ongoing industrial activities.
- **Environmental Performance:** Shoreline restoration, stormwater management, and green infrastructure will mitigate impacts and enhance the site's overall ecology.
- **Residential Compatibility:** A set of comprehensive conditions of use – and corresponding design guidelines – for residential or hotel use will be required, mitigating potential impacts

Minimal off-site or neighbourhood impacts are anticipated.

Closing

The Matullia Lands represent a generational opportunity to return Indigenous stewardship to Victoria's working harbour and further reconciliation. This proposal balances economic revitalization, Indigenous autonomy, cultural expression, and environmental restoration, creating a new model of urban redevelopment rooted in Indigenous stewardship and long-term partnership.

We respectfully request Council's consideration and support for this rezoning application, which would enable the Nations to advance their shared vision for reconciliation, prosperity, and connection at Rock Bay.

Sincerely,

Evan Peterson
Principal, Barefoot Planning + Design
evan@barefootplanning.com
250.216.8402

On behalf of Matullia Holdings Limited Partnership (Songhees & Esquimalt Nations)