

January 16, 2019

Ms. Andrea Hudson  
Assistant Director, Community Planning  
City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, British Columbia  
V8W 1P6

**Re: Revised Rezoning and Development Permit Application – PARC Victoria**

**Applicant Address:** 829/831, 835, 841/847, 849, 839/895/899 Fort Street and 846 Broughton Street, Victoria, BC

Dear Ms. Hudson,

PARC Retirement Living (PARC) is pleased to provide revisions to our September 19, 2017 rezoning and development permit application. The revisions represent a dramatic shift from the original design. We have taken the Planning Department's and the Advisory Design Panel's constructive feedback into account and created a building that is contextual and historic in its response to the surrounding neighbourhood. An extensive public consultation process as well as several design meetings with various stakeholder groups impacted by the proposed development were undertaken to confirm the proposed revisions responded to their comments.

The revised design remains an innovative and intergenerational mixed-use community hub, enhanced by a reduced massing and various articulated heights. Updated Architectural and Landscaping drawings are attached with this letter.

In the past 18 years PARC has successfully completed four sustainable and unique seniors' independent residences, with a fifth currently under construction. If approved, the Victoria PARC project represents its sixth; most integrated, intergenerational mix to date. It is designed with community input and Victoria's strong emphasis on social inclusion and community wellness.

The revised mixed-use proposal will include the following:

- 266 rental units including

**PARC Communities  
Management Ltd.**

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- 191 Independent Seniors accommodation complete with services (nutritional meals prepared on site, transportation provided, wellness consultation, housekeeping, seniors specific fitness, entertainment, security and first aid response)
- 61 Rental suites (not age specific) – Fort building, with their own entrance. An agreement is being negotiated with the Greater Victoria Housing Society to have these units at their disposal. These suites will be changed to independent senior suites after five years or after original tenant departures.
- 14 suites with an affordable housing subsidy, resulting in paying 40% of the total fee for comparable suites and services. The subsidy duration will be 12 years.
- At-grade Commercial retail units of varying sizes totaling 1,000m<sup>2</sup>.
- Licensed Childcare for 36 children with public access from Fort Street.
- Medical Offices with public access from Fort Street.
- Several multi-purpose rooms available to the community with their own public access from Fort Street.
- Seniors specific fitness centre, accessible to the public at certain times, with public access from Fort Street.
- Victoria Conservatory of Music Centre for Music Wellness (all ages) with public access from Fort Street.
- Various dining venues designed for residents but accessible to the public at certain times.
- Several accessible themed roof gardens and green roofs designed for resident enjoyment and leisure.
- Internal vegetated and covered courtyard surrounding the amenities accessible to residents year long.
- A central exterior courtyard and green roofs that provides vegetated visual and physical connections to nature for those living and working in adjacent buildings, residents, their guests, and staff.
- Designated public rest areas and two small public urban plazas along Fort, Quadra and Broughton Streets.
- Public, staff and resident parking below grade.
- Covered and concealed loading bays and maneuvering aisles to access these bays.
- End of trip bicycle storage, workshop and showers.

## Project Description

The proposed mixed-use development is located on a site comprised of nine legal lots, sloping slightly downward from south to north, at the intersections of Fort, Quadra and Broughton streets in downtown Victoria. The total site area is 5,164m<sup>2</sup>.

Utilizing the site's expansive size, the proposed design creates a single building that is visually broken down into multiple components of varying masses, heights and materials. This design approach responds to the context and heritage character of the neighbourhood. The articulation and variation of the building components provides a respectful response to the existing building scales and heights along Fort and Quadra Streets.

The proposed development is comprised of three low-rise buildings (Fort, Fort & Quadra, and Broughton) interconnected by two bridge buildings (Fort and Quadra) of lower height. These elements wrap around an extensively vegetated central exterior courtyard and are covered with green roofs to provide visual and physical connections to nature for those living and working in adjacent buildings.

The three low-rise buildings have a distinct base, middle and top portions, a nod to the classical architecture present in Victoria, while the bridge buildings have a more contemporary language and land on the street, with their top floor recessed.

The bridge buildings are lowered to allow light to penetrate the site and allow views out and through the site from neighbouring buildings.

The two-storey base creates a prominent street wall that respects the lower scale and the, historic character and unique shops that populate Fort Street. A large setback occurs at the bridge building along Fort Street to create a small public urban plaza.

Stone is used for the base of the mid-rise buildings. Brick, disposed in a modern pattern, is used for the mid-rise building middle portion. The two mid-rise buildings on Fort Street use one shade of brick, while the mid-rise on Broughton Street uses a different shade of brick. The floor of the mid-rise buildings is setback top and a window wall system, complete with transparent and back painted spandrel elements, creates a light volume.

The bridge building on Fort Street is clad in small ceramic tiles, a nod to the tiles used in heritage store fronts along that street, on the lower floor and with terracotta panels on the upper floors.

The bridge building on Quadra Street is composed of a storefront glazing system to ensure maximum transparency, allowing the public to see into the building and the users of the building to have views of Pioneer Square and Christ Church Cathedral. The upper floors of this building are clad with the same terracotta panels as on Fort Street, but in a different colour.

The use of traditional stone, brick, and tile is done in a contemporary manner, while terracotta is a contemporary material set in a traditional manner.

Proposed uses are divided by floors to provide an efficient, functional and secure environment:

- The ground floor will contain several commercial units along Fort Street. The main entrance to the seniors' residence is located on Quadra Street with several amenities located in and around this entrance. A coffee shop and casual dining area will be provided for residents and the public.
- The second floor contains the childcare, medical offices, multi-purpose rooms, leisure amenities and dining amenities. There is also a large accessible planted roof deck and an interior covered courtyard. This second floor will be accessible to the public at certain times of the day.
- The remainder of the floors contains rental units. The eighth floor has smaller amenity spaces including activity gardens with a variety of activities for the residents.

Access to covered parking and loading is via Broughton Street with additional curbside drop-off zones located at Quadra Street (main entrance to the residence) and Fort Street (public entrance to the different public amenities and the inter-generational rental suites).

Marzolf & Associates, on behalf of PARC Retirement Living, have led additional community consultation since our September 2017 submission. The continuous feedback has been relayed to the project team, informing us and including changes where possible. PARC hosted a second voluntary Open House on January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018, inviting its list of 325 neighbours and stakeholders. The voluntary Open House, directly following a PARC sponsored Chamber/Tourism mixer, was attended by an additional 50+ people.

A second formal CALUC meeting was well attended on February 1, 2018. Letters from this meeting and notes taken at the meeting were submitted to the City the week following this meeting.

### **Neighborhood Context and Heritage Sensitivity**

The form and character of the proposed building responds to the guidelines of the Victoria Downtown Core Area Plan and local commercial area.

Existing buildings on site are not heritage designated or registered buildings, however the Fort street façade has been modulated both at retail and above retail levels to respond to the boutique retail character of Fort Street. The Broughton low-rise building has been moved away from the corner of Quadra and Broughton Street to open this corner to Pioneer Square.

The proposal is mindful of the Christ Church Cathedral and Pioneer Square. A public plaza is proposed at the intersection of Quadra and Broughton Streets to allow the public to sit and view both these Victoria landmarks. A second small urban plaza is proposed along Fort Street to create a break in the continuous street wall along that street and allow the public to rest under a canopy. Street trees are being added along Fort Street to soften the streetscape.

### **Design and Development Permit Guidelines**

The proposed development is strongly aligned with the City of Victoria's 13 Strategic Objectives. Under the Official Community Plan (OCP), the site is within the downtown core area plan (DCAP), located in Fairfield neighborhood and bounded by Harris Green neighborhood to the immediate north on Fort Street. The site also falls within DPA-7B (HC) on Fort Street and DPA 14 (Cathedral Hill precinct) facing Broughton Street.

The proposed building is slightly over the 30-meter height outlined in the OCP and DCAP requirements. However, the additional height is not visible from the street as the top floor is set back from the face of the lower floors. The various setbacks outlined in those documents are respected in the revised proposed development.

### **Project Benefits, Amenities & Green Building Features**

The proposal will offer social, economic and environmental benefits to the City of Victoria.

Socially, it will support seniors' independence by meeting key needs such as suites designed to meet seniors' needs, extensive common areas, group activities, music wellness, delicious and nutritional cuisine, 24-hour security and safety, tailored fitness and health & wellness consultation.

These features are part of the all-inclusive service package. The neighborhood is very walkable and offers numerous amenities and services attractive to residents, and their family and friends. The proposed development aims to be a community hub that serves residents and the wider community. The property's "built features" will provide opportunities for the public's use and enjoyment, encouraging intergenerational connection and support.

Planned streetscape improvements include Public Art based on Fort street public art requirements and guidelines. PARC is seeking to engage local First Nations artists to undertake this project, respecting the history of the site. This approach was successfully implemented at our Cedar Spring's residence located in North Vancouver.

The public realm of the development has been integrated with the City of Victoria's public beautification planning. Part of this includes sidewalk widening, burying of the hydro lines, public places to rest, animated storefronts and street trees to create a strong and memorable street level experience. Two public urban plazas are proposed, one along Fort Street and the other at the corner of Quadra and Broughton Streets.

As part of PARC's commitment to invest in the communities where they operate, the development proposal will include 14 affordable housing units with complete Independent Living services. PARC has successfully used this model at its North Vancouver Cedar Springs' residence with non-specific suites to protect resident privacy.

PARC has a long-standing practice of making its community spaces available for not-for-profit groups for free, providing catering in some instances. This is all part of becoming integrated into the neighborhood and creating a community "hub" while adding to the vitality of an intergenerational community. The dining amenities, some leisure amenities and multi-purpose rooms will also be made accessible to the public, like spaces in a hotel, further increasing the connectivity of the project to the community and neighbours.

Economically, the project will provide significant benefits:

- Strengthening of community partnerships and sponsorships,
- Creation of a public, all ages Centre for Music Wellness,
- Employment of retirement residence management and staff,
- Enhancement and activation of boutique retail along Fort Street,
- Provision of a licensed childcare,
- Addition of medical offices and a wellness center.

PARC's investment in this project is estimated to exceed \$170M in capital investment and generate 60 full-time equivalent employees with an estimated annual payroll of \$4M.

Environmentally, the proposed development is targeting a LEED Gold certification and zero carbon emissions. This will ensure a sustainable development and the integration of energy conserving technologies that result in lower greenhouse gas emissions. Having achieved LEED Gold certification on its last two developments, PARC is a recognized industry leader in implementing green building design, construction and operation strategies to reduce carbon output. PARC Victoria has engaged Morrison Hershfield, a Sustainability Design Consultant, to guide the project design. The proposed redevelopment will remediate a brownfield urban site and transform it into

a significantly “greener” space, complete with enhanced building envelope, energy efficient mechanical systems, green roofs and accessible roof gardens. The Sustainable Design Report is included in the application.

Victoria based Westbridge Group Valuation Partner prepared a report for PARC which illustrates that between 2015 and 2017, the 75+ aged population in Greater Victoria will grow by an estimated 981 people (or 3%). By 2022, this population segment is projected to increase by 3,721 people and by 2027, a further 10,080. This accelerated increase within the 75+ demographic will continue for the foreseeable future.

While all seniors may not choose to move into a retirement community, historic data shows that approximately 7.9% of the 75+ aged population will move into Independent Living residences like PARC. This means that by 2022, 294 people in the 3,721 people aged 75+ will likely move into an Independent Living residence. This number of potential residents increases by another 796 by 2027.

The current and projected inventory of retirement community suites (including PARC’s 268 Independent Living suites) will exceed the initial projected demand for these suites at construction completion in 2021.

## **Transportation**

The proposed development is conveniently located at the intersections of Fort, Quadra and Broughton streets.

This central location offers easy foot, bicycle, scooter and transit access. The proposed development is located on the new Front Street Bike Path. Start/end-of-trip bicycle facilities for people working in the building will be provided in addition to the required bicycle parking outlined in Schedule C. A total of 52 Class 1 bicycle spaces and 15 Class 2 bicycle spaces are being provided.

Parking for 185 vehicles is provided. PARC has traditionally provided 0.35 stalls per seniors’ rental units in past projects and is using the same ratio for this project. This has provided sufficient parking for both residents and staff. Breakdown of parking stalls is as follows:

- 93 stalls for residential.
- 27 stalls for residential visitors.
- 11 stalls for at-grade commercial units.
- 3 stalls for childcare.
- 6 stalls for medical office.
- 45 stalls available to the public.

The vehicle parking supply is considered appropriate for the project and its local urban context. Part of the parking supply for the residential units will be used by PARC staff and not add to existing parking shortages in the neighbourhood. A Traffic Study completed by Bunt Traffic Consultants estimates that due to the planned uses of the building, the increase in traffic to and from the property will be minimal. Access to the parking and loading is designed off Broughton Street, adjacent to the parking access ramp of the Escher Building. To be mindful of neighbours and avoid excessive noise, all loading and truck maneuvering will occur within the covered site.

The project will also provide a variety of transportation options to its residents, including scooter parking for seniors' use, a shuttle bus (for seniors independent living) and staffed driving services for individual appointments.

Thank you for your consideration. We are looking forward to presenting this revised proposed development to the City's various committees and receiving their feedback and input. We are also looking forward to presenting the revised design to the Advisory Design Panel.

We are very honoured to be a part of Victoria's future and welcome the opportunity of serving its residents through our proposed development.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell Hobbs  
VP Development & Construction  
PARC RETIREMENT LIVING

Cc: **CITY OF VICTORIA – PLANNING DEPARTMENT** –Merinda Conley, Alec Johnston, Joaquin Karakas, **BESHARAT FRIARS Architects** - Helen Avini Besharat, **Marzolf & Associates** - Julie Marzolf, Rick Marzolf; **PARC RETIREMENT LIVING** - Rainer Muller, Tony Baena, Patrick Schilling