



**MAKOLA
DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES**

July 25, 2025

City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6
VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Attention: Mayor Alto and Council

Re: Rezoning and Development Permit Application - 2580 & 2582 Vancouver Street, Victoria

Dear Mayor Alto and Council,

On behalf of the Victoria Native Friendship Centre, M'akola Development Services is pleased to submit this Application for Rezoning and Development Permit for our Indigenous, affordable housing development at 2580 and 2582 Vancouver Street in the Hillside-Quadra neighbourhood. The proposed building will be operated by the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC), a non-profit, Indigenous-led organization who serves and supports the well-being of urban Indigenous people. M'akola Development Services will be acting as the project lead for this development.

M'akola Development Services is requesting approval for the following:

- A Zoning Bylaw amendment to rezone the subject sites from **R-2 (Two Family Dwelling District)** to the **Comprehensive Development (CD-site specific) Zone**.
- A Development Permit for the project, which falls under **DPA 16A: General Urban Design**.

This letter serves as an introduction to the application package, and includes the following details:

- Project Summary
- Amendment to the Zoning Bylaw
- Application for Development Permit
- Compliance with Community Plans
- CALUC Meeting
- Project Funding and Financing
- Closure

Thank you for your consideration to support this affordable Indigenous rental housing project.

Sincerely,

Bronwyn McLean

Regional Director | M'akola Development Services
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Attachments:

1. Application Form for Rezoning
2. Application Form for Development Permit
3. Letter of Owner Authorization
4. Set of Plans, including:
 - a. Architectural Plans
 - b. Landscape Plan
 - c. Civil Servicing Plan and Design Brief
 - d. Survey Plan
 - e. Mechanical Plan and Report
 - f. Electrical Plan and Report
 - g. Structural Report
5. Arborist Report
6. Energy Model Report
7. Building Envelope Report
8. Geotechnical Report
9. Landscape Onsite and Offsite Estimates
10. Title Search
11. Archaeology Data Report
12. Site Disclosure Statement

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

The Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) is proposing a 6-storey affordable rental housing development at 2580 and 2582 Vancouver Street in Victoria, BC. This new project will provide 40 units of much-needed, culturally appropriate, independent housing designed specifically to serve Indigenous youth aging out of care, young families, and Elders.

The building will offer a mix of studio, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, three-bedroom, and four-bedroom units, addressing a significant gap in the availability of family-oriented Indigenous housing in the city. Emphasizing inclusivity and accessibility, the design incorporates 25% accessible units and 25% adaptable units to ensure long-term livability for tenants with a range of mobility needs. This project will apply to BC Housing's Community Housing Fund and will provide rental housing at a mix of affordable rental rates.

At the heart of the development is a south-facing central courtyard that offers a communal, culturally supportive space for residents to gather and connect. The ground floor will include shared amenities such as a communal kitchen, dining and lounge area, laundry facilities, and office space for part-time VNFC programming staff—fostering a strong sense of community and well-being.

This development will also include significant Indigenous-designed artwork that provides visual interest through variation in the design and articulation of the building façade.

Transportation and active mobility are also supported through the inclusion of an underground parkade with 18 vehicle stalls, as well as 55 long-term and six (6) short-term bicycle parking spaces, and five (5) scooter stalls.

This project represents VNFC's deep commitment to creating safe, accessible, and culturally grounded housing that meets the intergenerational needs of Indigenous peoples in Victoria.



Figure 1: Aerial view rendering of the proposed development.

1.1. SITE CONTEXT

The subject site is located at 2580 and 2582 Vancouver Street, Victoria, within the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan. This site is close to an abundance of services, amenities, transportation options, and parks which encourage healthy living, community connections, and support overall tenant wellbeing.

The subject site is also adjacent to Quadra Village and is located within 0.5km of community centres, grocery stores, parks and health services. There are several nearby BC Transit routes on Quadra Street and Hillside Avenue, including Frequent and Express Services. Nearby active transportation options include shared and AAA (All Ages and Abilities) bike lanes, and the Galloping Goose regional trail. Refer to Table 1 below for additional site details.

Table 1: Site Details

Site Details	
Site location	2580 & 2582 Vancouver Street
Legal description	LOT 1, SECTION 4, PLAN 964, VICTORIA PID 001-723-472 LOT 2, SECTION 4, PLAN 964, VICTORIA PID 008-135-398
Current registered owner	Victoria Native Friendship Centre
Surrounding land use	Multi-family apartments, single family dwellings, commercial, retail, institutional
Proximity to public transportation	Bus stop = 0.2 km, Modo Carshare = 0.1 km
Proximity to public amenities	Library = 1.7 km; park = 0.4 km
Proximity to commercial services	Grocery store and Pharmacy = 0.2 km; bank = 0.4 km; fitness centre = 0.8 km; shopping centre = 2.0 km
Utilities	All utilities available

1.2. ABOUT THE OWNER AND OPERATOR

The Victoria Native Friendship Centre is the largest multi-service urban Indigenous organization in Victoria, dedicated to promoting and supporting the well-being of Urban Indigenous people. VNFC and the City of Victoria share common goals in expanding affordable, Indigenous, and multigenerational housing options across the region.

VNFC's existing housing initiatives foster a sense of belonging and provide culturally safe, relevant programming and encourage a healthy living environment through holistic approaches. As the owner and operator of both safe, affordable and subsidized housing, VNFC provides a range of housing options that support Elders, students, individuals and families.

In this proposed development, 90% of the homes will be studio, one- and two-bedroom units to support Urban Indigenous youth and Elders. The remaining units will consist of three- and four-bedroom homes to support young families and intergenerational living. The subject site is highly suitable for young people and families, with close access to frequent transit routes, parks, recreation centres, schools, and a range of other essential services and amenities.

2. AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING BYLAW

The subject site is currently zoned as R-2 Two Family Dwelling District, which permits uses such as one- and two-family dwellings. M'akola Development Services is requesting to rezone the subject site to a **Comprehensive Development (CD-site specific) Zone** to allow for the residential uses and density levels as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Proposed Zoning

Proposed Comprehensive Development Zone	
Permitted Uses	Multi-Family Residence
Maximum Lot Coverage	63%
Maximum Density	2.80
Maximum Height	23.5 m (6 storeys)
Minimum Front Yard Setback (North)	0.82 m
Minimum Rear Yard Setback (South)	5.61 m
Minimum Side Yard Setback (East)	1.31 m
Minimum Side Yard Setback (West)	0.51 m
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 Residential Parking Stalls • Three (3) Visitor Parking Stalls • 55 Long-Term Bicycle Parking • Six (6) Short-Term Bicycle Parking • Five (5) Scooter Parking

The proposed development prioritizes a central courtyard design, which serves as the heart of the building that fosters community connection and a strong relationship to the land. This design approach directly reflects the community feedback received during the engagement events. Access to outdoor space was identified as a high priority by participants. To support this courtyard-priority approach, minimal street setbacks are requested as part of this application.

This application further requests a variance of six (6) residential parking stalls and one (1) visitor parking stall. The proposed variance is consistent with vehicle parking uptake rates in comparable affordable housing projects and supports the affordable rental status of the project by avoiding costly underground parking.

2.1. TENANT ASSISTANCE PLAN

A Tenant Assistance Plan has been drafted and will be implemented for the existing tenants at 2580 and 2582 Vancouver Street, in accordance to City of Victoria's Tenant Assistance Policy. Please note that tenant relocation outreach will be initiated once the project has received formal BC Housing funding approval to minimize tenant disruption. Once funding is received, tenants will be notified of the redevelopment plan and will be provided with the Tenant Assistance Policy, Tenant Relocation Guide, and Tenant Request for Assistance Form. Communications will remain open and ongoing as the project moves forward. Once all municipal approvals have been obtained, tenants will be issued a formal four-month Notice to End Tenancy. VNFC will work with tenants to ensure the Tenant Assistance Plan addresses tenant needs appropriately and in line with the City of Victoria's Tenant Assistance Policy.

3. APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

The proposed development falls within the Development Permit Area **DPA 16A: General Form and Character**. The proposed building has been designed to be consistent with the City of Victoria's policies, good urban design principles, and the objectives of the Official Community Plan. The project is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area, adjacent to the Quadra Large Urban Village and urban place designation.

Specific project details speaking to design, public safety, sustainability, transportation, and infrastructure are below.

3.1. GENERAL DESIGN

- VNFC is proposing a 6-storey Indigenous affordable rental building with 40 homes, 25% of which will be adaptable and 25% fully accessible.
- Building articulation achieved through variations in material and design.
- Indigenous art feature is planned for the building façade.
- Ground floor amenities will include a communal kitchen, dining and lounge area, shared washroom and laundry facilities, office space for part-time VNFC programming staff, and a culturally appropriate Big House for ceremonial and cultural gatherings.
- South-facing central courtyard that features natural seating and play elements.
- The residential entrance at the corner of Kings Road and Vancouver Street will be bordered by soft landscaping to enhance the streetscape.
- A ground-level mobility room will provide secure bike and scooter storage with convenient access to the street.



Figure 2: Rendering of the proposed development from the corner of Fifth Street and Kings Road.

3.2. INDIGENOUS DESIGN AND PUBLIC ARTWORK

VNFC will engage an Indigenous Artist to lead the design and coordination of the Indigenous design elements and public art pieces proposed for this development.

3.3. CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

- The project will be built to BC Step Code 4 and Net Zero standards, incorporating cooling for thermal comfort.
- Building features include high performance glazing, fixed shading elements, and LED fixtures throughout.
- Each residential unit has been designed to allow natural cross ventilation.
- EV-ready infrastructure provided for all vehicle stalls.
- Daylighting strategies have been optimized to reduce mechanical dependence for lighting and ventilation.
- Rain gardens will be installed along two boulevard frontages for stormwater management.
- Drought-resistant, native pollinator plantings are prioritized for landscape resilience and cultural significance.

3.4. TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

The site is well-served by multimodal transportation options. Frequent transit service is available along Quadra Street, with two bus stops located within 200 meters of the site. Kings Road features shared and AAA (All Ages and Abilities) bike lanes, further enhancing accessibility to active transportation options. The site is also in close proximity to the Douglas Street corridor, providing convenient access to the RapidBus route and the BC Ferries Connector.

The proposed development includes one (1) level of underground parking, accessed off Fifth Street, with 15 stalls designated for residents and three (3) stalls for residential visitor parking. Based on M'akola Development Services' extensive experience working with affordable housing providers, parking demand for affordable rental projects is typically lower in developments that are well-served by transit and nearby services compared to what is required under standard zoning bylaws.

To support active transportation, the project also includes 55 long-term and six (6) short-term bicycle parking spaces, along with five (5) designated scooter parking spaces.

3.5. INFRASTRUCTURE

The project team is actively working with City staff to assess infrastructure capacity and determine any necessary requirements.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH MUNICIPAL PLANS AND POLICY

The proposed development complies with the City of Victoria's Official Community Plan (OCP) and the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan. A more detailed review of the municipal plans and policies are included in Appendix A.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

VNFC conducted several community engagement sessions with their membership to gain insight on the types of housing that was needed. The core vision for this project places the needs of Urban Indigenous peoples at the heart of the building and feedback from these sessions is incorporated through the design, ensuring that the proposed development meets the needs of the community.

One engagement session with Urban Indigenous Youth, focused on three main ideas: Safety, Connectedness, and Skills. This allowed VNFC to learn about the lived experience of a few young people and what how to create a space that allows them to thrive. Taking a holistic approach, questions included:

- When you think of the population that we're creating this for, what does safety look like?
- What do we need to keep in mind to create this sense of community and connection to culture?
- When you think of the skills you need as a first-time adult, what would've made it easier to know?

The community engagements offered by VNFC were trauma-informed and offered the space for youth to express their needs, wants, concerns and questions about housing. Having a space where Urban Indigenous Youth, Elders and young families have access to community, culture and safe, affordable housing is critical to provide individuals the opportunity to thrive.

Key themes that emerged from the engagement sessions included:

- Safe building design that promotes natural surveillance, with "eyes on the street" and features that enable the community to self-monitor.
- Access to safe and protected green space
- Play space for young families at the center of the building
- Opportunities for community connection and interaction
- Request for indigenous artwork and other cultural signifiers
- Individual front doors to enhance a sense of space and ownership

VNFC has and will continue to be involved with project design, providing input during design reviews to ensure the building meets the original design intent. This was done by providing a programming direction for the project in terms of what is important for the Indigenous community for both common area and residential spaces. For example, scooter parking is not Bylaw required but recognizes end user mobility needs given Elders are one of the key demographics to be living in these

homes. Additionally, the Big House provides a culturally relevant space that can be used for ceremony or intergenerational sharing.

6. CALUC MEETING

On June 24, 2025, the proposed development was presented to the Hillside Quadra Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC). Members of the project team attended the meeting to respond to questions from neighbours and community members. response from the community was overwhelmingly positive, with strong support for both the project and VNFC joining the neighbourhood. These types of community responses are both heartwarming and a positive indicator of the net benefit to the community. CALUC will be submitting a letter of response to Mayor and Council, as well as Planning Staff.

7. PROJECT FUNDING & FINANCING

VNFC secured funding from the National Indigenous Collaborative Housing Inc. and private donors to purchase the subject site. Additional predevelopment funding was obtained through CMHC's Housing Challenge Stage 2, allowing the project to advance through early planning and design phases.

VNFC intends to pursue further funding through BC Housing's Community Housing Fund (CHF) to support the next phases of development, including Building Permit submission and construction. Access to CHF funding is critical as it enables the inclusion of deeply affordable and rent-geared-to-income units within the proposed development.

These coordinated funding efforts demonstrate VNFC's long-standing commitment to creating culturally grounded, community-focused housing. To realize this vision, timely rezoning is essential. The CHF funding application process is highly competitive, and prolonged timelines will jeopardize the project's ability to secure this funding, compromising VNFC's ability to offer affordable rental units and diminishing the project's overall impact.

8. CLOSURE

Given the surrounding land uses and proximity to key amenities, the subject site is well-suited for increased residential density. The proposed residential building and site design align with the City of Victoria's policy objectives and will meaningfully contribute to the community by introducing 40 much-needed affordable rental homes for Indigenous youth, Elders and young families. This development addresses a critical housing gap in Victoria and supports the City's broader goals of equity, inclusion, and housing affordability. VNFC is eager to advance the project, and securing rezoning and development permit approvals is a significant first step as it unlocks project funding and secures affordability for much-needed rental homes.

APPENDIX A – COMPLIANCE WITH MUNICIPAL PLANS AND POLICY

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

The OCP situates the subject site within the Urban Residential Place Designation, surrounded by Mixed and Traditional Residential, Large Urban Village and Public Facilities, Parks and Open Space designations. Permitted land uses within the Urban Residential designation include commercial, industrial and multi-family residential developments which aim to promote energy and water conservation and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Built form in Urban Residential areas is envisioned as a variety of low- and mid-rise buildings ranging from three to six storeys featuring landscaping and street tree planting to create residential character in the public realm.

The City of Victoria recognizes the barriers that local First Nations and urban Indigenous communities have, and continue to face, demonstrating the need for a genuine commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. The proposed development supports urban Indigenous youth aging-out-of-care, Elders, and young families by providing them with safe, accessible, culturally supportive and affordable housing, which aligns with the OCP.

The following OCP Land Management and Development policies (page 40) further support the proposed development:

Item 6.8: Where a site or area is providing primarily non-market housing, achieving (*sic.*) heritage conservation objectives, or other significant public benefit, development can depart from the guidelines established for Urban Place Designations, if the development is consistent with City policies, good urban design principles, and the objectives of this plan, and is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area.

Item 6.9: Site specific development can depart from the guidance established for Urban Place Designations if the development goes through a rezoning, is supported by the local area plan, is consistent with City policies, good urban design, good urban design principles, and the objectives of this plan, and is responsive to the envisioned context of the surrounding area.

Alignment with OCP Objectives

The proposal supports several key goals of the OCP, including:

- Seek opportunities to partner and collaborate with the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations on placemaking initiatives.
- Having a mix of housing, services, facilities and programs encourage and support a socio-economically and culturally inclusive community.
- Considering the needs of children, youth and older adults in planning initiatives, specifically those related to land use, housing, transportation, parks, facilities and community services.
- Working in partnership with senior levels of government for the provision of non-market housing.

- Supporting a range of housing types and tenures across the city and within neighbourhoods to meet the needs of residents at different life stages, household compositions, and abilities.
- Encourage partnerships that address the need for affordable non-market housing for households with children.
- An emphasis on establishing housing units directed toward specific groups in core need.
- Encouraging buildings adjacent to sidewalks to maximize entrances at ground level to support active land uses and provide interest for pedestrians.
- Integrate off-street vehicle parking in a way that does not dominate development or streetscapes.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through compact land use patterns, high building performance measures for new building construction, and the BC Step Code.

City of Victoria Planning Staff have indicated that an OCP amendment is not required for the proposed development.

Overall, the proposed development is well aligned with the OCP's policy direction, including its land use, urban design, and sustainability principles. It delivers significant public benefit in the form of non-market housing, confirming its consistency with policy frameworks.

HILLSIDE-QUADRA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

VNFC's proposed development is well-aligned with the vision and objectives of the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan (2022). The site is located in an area dedicated to supporting diverse housing choices and is adjacent to Quadra Village, a large urban village. The intersection of Kings Road and Quadra Street, known as the heart of the village, is envisioned as a unique and accessible area, including the integration of current and future public spaces in the area to supposed users of all ages, abilities, incomes, and interests. Access to various multi-modal transportation options such as the AAA bicycle network and Frequent Transit bus services further support the neighbourhood's transportation into a connected, livable and inclusive residential area.

The proposed development supports several key goals of the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan:

- Considers the needs of urban Indigenous households when planning for housing forms and amenities.
- Creating opportunities to add a mix of housing in and near the village that supports people of different incomes, lifestyles, and household types.
- Integrate housing for a variety of households and incomes into mixed-use developments, including rental-tenure housing and non-market or affordable housing.
- Contributes to an enhanced public realm through thoughtful and attractive design.
- Promotes transit-oriented development along a Frequent and Rapid Transit corridor.
- Mitigates the effects of increased density by incorporating public amenities.
- Includes structured or underground parking to minimize surface-level impact.
- Offers shared outdoor amenity spaces that enhance livability for residents.
- Showcases Indigenous art in the built form.

Overall, the proposal is consistent with the land use policies and urban design principles outlined in the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Plan.