



September 24, 2025

Downtown Residents Association
Community Association Land Use Committee (CALUC) 300-722 Cormorant
Street
Victoria, BC, V8W 1P8

**RE: 617 BROUGHTON STREET PRE-APPLICATION COMMUNITY
CONSULTATION**

Dear CALUC Members and Community,

Acting on behalf of GWL Realty Advisors, we are writing to introduce a proposed mixed-use development at 617 Broughton Street in Victoria's Historic Old Town District.

This letter provides an overview of the project ahead of the rescheduled October 15th, 2025 CALUC meeting. The meeting was originally scheduled for September 9, 2025 but was postponed. In an effort to engage the community in early September, the applicant held an Open House to gather preliminary feedback and inform the community of the proposed development. The rescheduled October 15th, 2025 CALUC meeting welcomes the community again and invites your feedback on the preliminary design and community integration approach.

Current Site and Opportunity

Fronting Broughton, Gordon and Courtney Streets in Old Town, the site currently houses a three-storey parking structure above ground-floor retail. The site sits directly west of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church (924 Douglas Street), a designated heritage property, creating an important contextual relationship for our design.

Development Overview

This underutilized, car-centric space presents a significant opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the continued development of downtown Victoria. As such, our proposal transforms this parking structure into a vibrant mixed-use development that addresses Victoria's housing needs while enhancing the urban fabric.



The proposed 13-storey (47-metre) building features two 11-storey wings extending eastward, connected by a substantial 4,831-square-foot outdoor amenity area above the first floor. Key Project Elements:

- Housing: 265 new purpose-built rental units, including 56 family-friendly two and three-bedroom units (21% of total)
- Commercial Space: 21,315 square feet of ground-floor retail with active frontages on Broughton, Courtney, and Gordon Streets, plus the new plaza
- Public Amenity: 6,264-square-foot public plaza that creates an enhanced interface with St. Andrew's Church
- Parking and Access: Two below-grade levels providing 74 vehicle spaces, loading facilities, and bicycle parking, accessed via Courtney Street
- Resident Amenities: 1,562 square feet of indoor amenity space (Level 11) and 17,800 square feet of outdoor amenity space across Levels 2, 7, and 12
- The development achieves a Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of 6.6, creating significant housing density in this central location.

Planning Context and Design Response

While our proposal exceeds the height and FSR limits outlined in the Zoning Bylaw and Official Community Plan (OCP), it does so thoughtfully and in alignment with broader planning objectives. The development strongly supports the OCP's vision for complete, sustainable communities by delivering much-needed rental housing in a transit-accessible, pedestrian-focused, downtown location.

Building Height: While it is proposed to be taller than the five-storey height limit in Old Town, the proposal's 13-storey height aligns with nearby precedents like the Sovereign across the street at 608 Broughton Street, while respecting the established skyline hierarchy—we've carefully designed the massing to maintain Victoria's characteristic "saw-tooth" skyline through strategic setbacks and height variations that integrate seamlessly within the existing built context.

Heritage Integration: The massing of the building is focused on the western edge of the site, limiting the view of the proposed tower from Douglas Street and providing space and air around St. Andrew's. Masonry cladding and recessed balconies and windows reference common Edwardian design approaches from the surrounding context.



Public Realm: The new public plaza provides a new strong public space in the Old Town that will be active by up to two retail units facing onto it. The creation of the plaza also significantly enhances the church's setting, providing space to view aspects of the rear of the church currently hidden by the parkade's ramp structure.

Community Benefits: This development delivers substantial community value:

- Housing Supply: 265 new rental units addressing Victoria's housing shortage, with a significant family housing component
- Public Space: New plaza enhancing the heritage church setting and expanding downtown's public realm
- Economic Activity: Comprehensive ground-floor retail creating jobs and street vitality, and 265 new households to support local downtown spending on goods and services
- Urban Design: Architecture that respects heritage context while bringing contemporary functionality to an underutilized site

Moving Forward

We value community input as this project evolves through the design development process. Your feedback at the upcoming CALUC meeting will help ensure our proposal reflects community priorities while delivering needed housing and public space improvements within Old Town.

We look forward to our discussion on October 15th and to working collaboratively with the community as this project advances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Tinney', with a stylized, flowing script.

Jonathan Tinney
Principal

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