

January 17, 2022

To the Burnside Gorge Community,

**RE: Application to Rezone 710 Caledonia & 1961 Douglas Street**

In partnership, Chard Development Ltd. (on behalf of 710 Caledonia Equity Limited Partnership) and BC Housing are pleased to present this proposal for a new development in Victoria's Burnside Gorge neighbourhood. The proposal consolidates the properties located at 1961 Douglas Street and 710 Caledonia Avenue – bound by Douglas, Caledonia and Discovery – into a socially conscious, inclusive community comprised of three distinct buildings over a shared podium with a large urban plaza.

Building A – positioned at the northeast corner of the site along Discovery – will provide 16-storeys of below-market rental homes to be owned and operated by BC Housing. At 21-storeys, Building B will offer purpose-built market rental homes atop commercial retail, a restaurant, a childcare facility, and a large grocer. Building C will combine market condominium homes above retail and office space in response to the intensive employment guidelines of the Rock Bay District. This 21-storey building will occupy the eastern edge of the subject site along Caledonia. All required parking for the development will be located within the podium above and below-grade with separate entrances.

As outlined below, the proposed redevelopment is a unique opportunity for an inclusive, socially conscious development that directly responds to the housing affordability crisis by touching four levels of the housing continuum and creates an employment generating, 15-minute neighbourhood at the gateway into Downtown Victoria.

**PROJECT VISION**

Located on the edge of the City's proposed Innovation District, just a few blocks from the Upper Harbour, Phillips Brewery, Save-On-Foods Memorial Arena, the Victoria Public Market and historic Chinatown, this site marks the northern gateway to Downtown Victoria. The property is strategically sited between Douglas and Blanshard and intended to accommodate increased multi-use density under the Downtown Core Area Plan (DCAP). It has excellent access to public transit and is positioned to become a core employment hub and residential centre.

The vision for this development is to provide a progressive, complete community that aims to meet the needs of all residents through diverse housing options, employment space, community-serving retail, childcare, public open space, and multi-modal transportation options. The scale and articulation of the site permits a holistic approach to the public realm and interior landscaped areas with connections that would not be possible without the property consolidation.

A diverse mix of housing options are being proposed including purpose-built market rental (approximately 167 units), below-market rental (approximately 167 units) and market condominium (approximately 167 units) for a total of 501 housing units in the development. The development will provide community-oriented commercial, and office uses – including office space, a restaurant and the largest grocery store within a 1000m radius. Other proposed features include a community childcare facility, urban plaza, extensive private landscaped space, an end-of-trip bike facility and separated amenity space for each building.

Through a relationship with BC Housing – and a concurrent rezoning application for 722 & 726 Discovery Street – residents of the existing temporary housing at 1961 Douglas Street (the Capital City Center Hotel) will be relocated

to newly constructed, permanent modular housing within their known neighbourhood. Communication with these residents has already begun, and all need to be rehoused prior to demolition or development of the subject site.

Guided by proven urban planning principles and socially conscious objectives, we believe this proposal delivers a diverse mix of housing, employment space and community benefits that will appeal to a broad range of Victoria residents.

## **COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

The proposed mixed-use development contributes responsible densification by meeting public and private needs and demands. Specific community benefits are outlined below:

### **A Diverse Range of Housing**

With one third of the proposed housing intended as below-market rental – and a full two thirds positioned as purpose-built rental – this community will welcome a range of age groups, family structures and income levels. In tandem with the concurrent application for 722 & 726 Discovery Street, the proposed development offers housing types that reach four levels of the housing continuum.

### **A Public Plaza and Public Realm Improvements**

The corner of Douglas and Caledonia will accommodate a 9,000 square foot public plaza that showcases the extensive grading of the development and includes seating, play space, meeting areas and extensive hard and soft landscape features. Activation of this corner will bring a new pedestrian-level presence to the neighborhood and complement existing, proposed and future uses. Further, through early discussions with the city, the development anticipates a full frontage replacement including a contribution to signalizing Douglas and Discovery.

Overall building design, access points, public areas and circulation have been designed to prioritize the safety and security of all users, at every scale of the development. Integration of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) has guided the overall approach to design to ensure security, comfort and quality of life.

The concept of the urban plaza is to provide a common access and act as a gathering place for the neighbourhood. All hard and soft landscape features on site are designed with CEPTED principals in mind to ensure that there are no hidden corners or areas that one cannot see around.

### **A Dedicated Childcare Facility**

The proposal addresses the significant need for childcare facilities within the City of Victoria through a purpose-built, 4,830 square foot private childcare facility. This will be located on the third floor of Building B and includes a secure outdoor play area.

### **Community-Serving Retail and a Large Grocer**

Retail space positioned around the public plaza is intended to include a restaurant, coffee shop and other community-serving uses. The larger, 30,000 square foot retail space will be occupied by a full-size grocery store anchor.

### **Employment and Economic Renewal**

The inclusion of 3 storeys of office space in addition to the childcare facility, community serving retail and large-scale grocer, will result in an employment centre within a walkable, transit-oriented community. This permanent, employment-generating space is estimated to generate over 1,000 jobs within 41,500 sf of office space, a 6,000 sf childcare facility, and 97,000 sf of community-serving retail space. Construction of the development will also result in the creation of over 2,000 jobs over the life of construction.

### **A Sustainable, Transit-Oriented, 15-Minute Neighbourhood**

The location, proposed uses and existing context of this new development provide residents, workers and visitors with access to most, if not all, of their day-to-day needs within a short walk, cycle or transit trip – a ‘15-minute neighbourhood’. To further encourage active forms of transportation, the proposal includes ample bike parking/storage, end-of-trip facilities, and improved pedestrian circulation (sidewalks, accessibility across the natural grades of the site).

Each component of the overall development will aim to either meet or exceed provincial and municipal energy requirements. Building A (below-market rental) will be fully compliant with BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards which meet BC Energy Step Code 3. Building B (market rental) will target LEED silver equivalency and/or certification and Building C (market condo) will meet BC Energy Step Code 2.

This redevelopment will result in a sustainable, inclusive 15-minute neighbourhood at the northern gateway to Downtown where Victorians will live, work and play.

### **SUMMARY**

In summary, we believe this project will serve the existing and future community by offering housing to a diverse range of residents, generating employment opportunities, providing community-serving retail and activating the public realm to improve comfort and quality of life in this area.

If approved, this project will result in an inclusive community that touches four levels of the housing continuum and firmly establishes the existence of a complete, 15-minute neighbourhood at the northern gateway to Downtown Victoria.

We look forward to feedback at the upcoming virtual CALUC Community Meeting on February 7, 2022. We encourage you to attend, appreciate your consideration and look forward to your comments and questions.

Sincerely,

**CHARD DEVELOPMENT LTD.**



Byron Chard  
President & CEO

**BC HOUSING**



Sean Rorison  
Senior Development Manager