

Oct. 17, 2025

Dear Mayor and Council,

Below is a summary that was submitted in July of this year. Nothing significant has changed in the last three months other than the timeline which is now 19, rather than 16, months since the pivot to include a residential component. Rather than preparing to move people into a newly constructed building next year, we remain months away from approval to even construct the building. Given the current housing situation in Victoria, it is bewildering that it will take 2+ years to receive approval to add a residential component to a previously-approved building.

July 15, 2025

Summary for Mayor and Council

Given how busy COV Council is, below is a brief bullet point, chronological summary of the proposal. More detailed letters submitted over the past 16 months are available.

- Commercial building approved in Nov. 2021
- Building Permit for approved building submitted in Apr. 2022
- Pivot to mixed-use building reducing the commercial space and adding 32 rental homes in Mar. 2024
- Over past 16 months, extensive work and collaboration with staff resulting in a multitude of revisions. Nonetheless, sticking points remain:
 - Height. A reduction in height below 6 storeys means a reduction in homes and threatens feasibility. Given the current housing situation, we are perplexed why staff are suggesting a reduction in homes. There is a 6-storey building currently under construction across the street. The difference in impact between the approved 4-storey building and the proposed 6-storey building is negligible, if existent.
 - Density. See above.
 - Setbacks. Current setbacks are equal to or greater than those associated with the previously-approved building.
 - Road dedication. Not required for the previously approved building, but now required. The building adjacent (Biscuit Factory) is built to zero lot line and the recently approved development just south of us did not provide road dedication. The road dedication is unnecessary and very limited in usefulness.
 - Tree replacement. There are no trees on the subject property (paved parking lot). Again, this was not requested for the previously approved building and is problematic given space restrictions. Nonetheless, as advocates for green features we have included an abundance of green features into the proposal that were absent from the approved building (i.e., 3 very large planters with trees on the only decks that can support such large planters, a reasonably-sized planter for every home, green roof).
- Benefits
 - 30 homes (reduced from 32 to include 3-bed homes)
 - Below market component

- 3-bedroom family-oriented component
- Sidewalk and boulevard extended well beyond our frontage to connect to the bike path.
- EVC station on Russell Street
- Car provided for that EVC station

Not only are we proposing the construction of 30 homes in a transit-oriented location, meters from the bike path and within walking distance to the core, we are providing an affordable component and building a sidewalk and boulevard to the bike path (well beyond our frontage). Further, we are building an EVC charging station and providing a car for the station. These community amenities will cost well over \$100,000 (not insignificant for such a small project) and impact feasibility in today's construction environment.