



November 27, 2018

Mayor Lisa Helps & Council  
City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square Victoria BC  
V8W 1P6

**RE: 3020 Douglas Street and 584 Burnside Road East  
Application for Rezoning and Concurrent Development Permit**

Dear Mayor Helps & Council:

Victoria Cool Aid Society (Cool Aid), with TL Housing Solutions, is pleased to submit this application for the Rezoning and Development Permit approval for the above named property. Our proposal will see the creation of 153 units of affordable rental housing, in addition to 32,000 sf of commercial space, in a thoughtfully designed development that we have named Crosstown.

We envision Crosstown as an exciting new mixed-use development designed to put community first. Combining affordable rental units for working families, seniors and singles with commercial uses including daycare services, office space, and dynamic service retail, the project's goal is to provide meaningful neighbourhood connections. Crosstown's mandate reflects that of Cool Aid's, to provide inclusive and welcoming spaces with community at heart.

Appended to this letter you will find an accompanying Design Brief from the project's architect: Paul Hammond of Low Hammond Rowe Architects, which complements the project information below with an architectural design rationale.

## THE SITE

The proposed development is located on the west side of Douglas Street, and occupies a rectangular lot that spans between two arterial roads, Douglas Street and Burnside Road East, and is 2.5 km north of Victoria's downtown core. The property to the north is a car dealership owned by the Jim Pattison Auto Group, and the property to the south is BCGEU's head office. The site (formerly the Tally Ho motel) is currently occupied by a single three-storey building that accommodates 52 units of supportive housing, and an attached two-storey building that includes a commercial kitchen, lounge, dining area, and a

banquet hall complex. The remainder of the site is comprised of a very large, underutilized surface parking lot with access from Burnside Road.

The site is currently zoned *T-1 Limited Transient Accommodation* zone with a Temporary Use Permit in place to allow the operation of 52 units of permanent housing with supports in the existing motel on site. The site falls under the Development Permit Area 7A and under the General Employment designation with Limited Residential permitted on the Burnside frontage.

A phased redevelopment of the site is planned in order to accommodate the current housing operations at the Tally Ho. Under our plan, the current property, which extends from Burnside to Douglas, will be subdivided into two lots and developed in two phases - phase one fronting Burnside Road East, and phase two fronting Douglas Street. The application includes a blanket rezoning application to cover both phases of the property, and a complementary development permit application encompassing the first phase only. Meticulous thought has been given to ensuring connections between the two phases remains compatible, exemplified through the pedestrian and vehicular thoroughfares connecting Burnside Road with Douglas Street. The second phase of development, envisaged as a 6 storey commercial building complying both with the local community area plan and OCP requirements, is solely referenced in this application for rezoning purposes.

## **PHASE ONE PROPOSAL**

We are proposing a 6 storey building that includes ground floor commercial space, second floor daycare, office, and residential space, with 4 residential floors above and 2 levels of underground parking- all of which would encompass phase 1 of development for this property. A key feature is the large south facing plaza that will act as a medium for social interaction and gathering, and bring the multiple users of the site together with the community. The ground floor will be reserved mainly for commercial/retail use, including 4 live/work spaces in conjunction with one of the commercial retail units, as well as convenience retail-oriented commercial units fronting Burnside Road. The residential floors are accessed via two distinct lobbies with entrances located off the plaza. Phase 1 will be comprised of 153 affordable rental apartments and 32,000 sf of commercial space over 2 levels of underground parking.

To ensure the viability of the project's commercial spaces, Cool Aid has sought advice from local commercial real estate leasing professionals, and has engaged a retail consultant to complete a thorough analysis of local retail potential for the property. Given input from these professionals, Cool Aid feels confident that the commercial space as presented is suitably sized and oriented given the project's scale and mixed-use intent.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Cool Aid has made a concerted and ongoing effort to engage with the surrounding neighbours and City Staff during the concept plan design process, including:

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|-------------|--|
| February 10 | Community Meeting to outline community's vision for the site |
| February 17 | Community Meeting to outline community's vision for the site |
| April 19    | Meeting with immediate neighbours to review concept plans    |

May 5	Community Open House
July 9	Presentation to Burnside Gorge Land Use Committee
August 13	Burnside Gorge Community Association CALUC presentation

Community engagement has also been at the forefront of the design process for our proposal. Prior to beginning any design work, Cool Aid facilitated two working sessions with local neighbours to identify their vision for the redevelopment of the site. Our key design principles for the development were rooted in the feedback that we took from these meetings and included:

- A community gathering space
- A safe place for neighbours and residents
- Pedestrian access through the site
- Successful and robust commercial space, particularly fronting Burnside Road

## **COMMUNITY AMENITIES**

Our commitment to achieving a shared vision with the community for this proposed development has been at the centre of our design intent and is a main driver for the commercial amenities that we seek to offer on site. Stemming from the community feedback we received, the following are project amenities that will contribute positively the surrounding neighbourhood:

- Accessible and safe public vehicle and pedestrian paths connecting Burnside Road East with Douglas Street
- Dynamic service-oriented retail fronting Burnside Road East, which will animate the street frontage and provide convenient shops and services for tenants and neighbours
- A south-facing public plaza with trees and added greenery, seating, and a children's play element
- A second-storey daycare with an anticipated 60 spaces, run by a local non-profit society and complete with a private outdoor play area
- Affordable residential rental units, offered below market rate, and open to members of the neighbourhood and wider community through an income-test application

## **BUILDING DESIGN**

The proposed development design has a strong relationship to the street level – the ground floor commercial is recessed back from the second storey to provide a human scale, and allow for shade and rain cover at the pedestrian level. The glazed commercial space fronting Burnside Road East provides a strong, vibrant street edge, while the trees and benches along the sidewalk provide a comfortably sized buffer to vehicular traffic. 14 surface parking stalls have been integrated into the landscape design along the site's southern frontage; these stalls will provide convenient access to the project's commercial spaces.

The offices, daycare and affordable rental housing each have their own distinct entrances from the public plaza. The plaza space will be invigorated by various tenants, residents, customers of the commercial spaces, and neighbours accessing the space. The retail units have entries directly from Burnside Road, with the potential of a corner café that could have outdoor seating spill out onto the plaza.

A project goal has been to create a public open space within the development that is well used, with good sightlines and well lit, to ensure safety for the neighbourhood. The landscaping plans for the plaza will introduce much-needed natural elements to this urban site, which will create an area of respite for community gatherings and peaceful enjoyment. This includes a grove of urban trees, interesting public seating, and naturally integrated children's play equipment.

In addition to the public plaza, roof top gardens have been created to allow for private outdoor gathering spaces for the various tenants of the development; the daycare and rental buildings each have their own distinct patios at level 2 and level 5. Care has been taken in the massing of the building to ensure access to daylight is a priority and shadowing is minimized.

The building has been designed with CPTED principles in mind. The ground floor entrances have been carefully designed to provide uninterrupted sight lines across the plaza, and access through the site and to the plaza will be open and well lit.

A full Design Brief from Low Hammond Rowe Architects, which expands on building design details and rationale, has been attached to this letter.

## **OCP AND LOCAL AREA PLAN**

Crosstown meets the policy objectives of the City's Official Community Plan and the recently adopted Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan. Under the OCP, this site is designated as General Employment with Limited Residential, which supports low and mid-rise multi-unit buildings up to approximately six storeys.

The Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan has placed an emphasis on the neighbourhood's desire for housing diversity, including affordable housing options and family-oriented housing. This project delivers not only affordable housing (including 3-bedroom suites suitable for families), but also includes a significant family support service: an onsite daycare.

A further goal of both the neighbourhood plan and the OCP has been to preserve and invigorate retail opportunities along Burnside Road. This proposal includes over 30,000 square feet of commercial space, including 3 commercial retail units fronting Burnside Road, which are envisioned as service-based retail businesses that will create activity along the street frontage.

Both the neighbourhood plan and OCP emphasize this area's significance along major transportation routes. Bus stops along both Douglas Street and Burnside Road East are no further than 50 meters from the property, while the shops and services at Mayfair Mall are within a 5-minute walk of the site. This accessible transportation is complemented on the property as well by thoughtfully designed vehicle and pedestrians thoroughfares, as well as appropriate vehicle and bike parking for the project's mix of uses.

### **Vehicle Parking Requirements**

Our proposal will meet the parking requirements as outlined in the Schedule C parking bylaw, as summarized below:

#### ***Vehicle Parking Breakdown***

<b><i>Use</i></b>	<b><i>Stalls Required (per Schedule C)</i></b>	<b><i>Stalls Proposed</i></b>
<b><i>Residential Units</i></b>	<b><i>49</i></b>	<b><i>55</i></b>
<b><i>Residential Visitor</i></b>	<b><i>17</i></b>	<b><i>17</i></b>
<b><i>Commercial Space</i></b>	<b><i>69</i></b>	<b><i>69</i></b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>135</i></b>	<b><i>141</i></b>

In addition to the above vehicle parking requirements, the Schedule C bylaw also requires a combined Class 1 and Class 2 bike parking total of 204 stalls; this bike parking requirement is met in our proposed plans.

### **Sustainable Features**

Crosstown will be targeting Step 3 of the BC Energy Step Code for all residential areas, and Step 2 for the commercial areas. These Energy Step Code targets, as required through BC Housing as a condition of funding, surpass those currently required by the City of Victoria. The energy efficiency of the building will be evaluated and modelled by a third-party energy modeller to ensure the Step Code criteria are met. Green building features will include:

- High performance double-glazed windows
- Significant exterior insulation and reductions to thermal bridging (and associated heat loss)
- Highly efficient mechanical heating and cooling systems, including a heat recovery system
- A central and walkable location with easy access to public transportation

Sustainable features and environmental design considerations are documented in further detail in the attached Design Brief from Low Hammond Rowe Architects.

## CONCLUSION

Greater Victoria, like many larger urban centres in BC, is experiencing a housing affordability and homelessness crisis. The redevelopment of 3020 Douglas/584 Burnside Rd is an opportunity for our community to positively contribute to solutions to our rental housing shortage, by creating 153 new affordable homes of superior quality, in addition to vibrant commercial amenities that will assist in bringing the visions of the Burnside Gorge Local Area Plan and Official Community Plan to life.

Crosstown has been planned with the overarching goal of creating opportunities for community connection wherever possible. This can be interpreted literally, through the site's connection between two arterials roads, but also more conceptually, through the merging of multiple uses (retail, residential, office, public service, etc.) across the property, which creates opportunities for individuals, families, and neighbours to connect. We are proud to present the Crosstown project for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deanna Bhandar". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Deanna Bhandar,  
Director, Real Estate Development  
Victoria Cool Aid Society

cc: Kathy Stinson, CEO, Victoria Cool Aid Society  
Craig Lochhead, Vice President, TL Housing Solutions