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Richmond/Kings

CW March 13, 2018



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

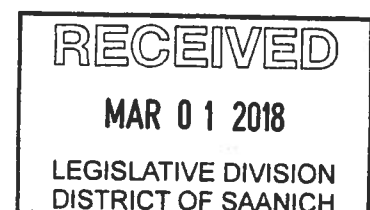
To: Mayor and Council
From: Sharon Hvozdzanski, Director of Planning
Date: February 28, 2018
Subject: Rezoning and Development Permit Application
File: REZ00592 DPR00690 • 2707 Richmond Road and 1810 Kings Road

RECOMMENDATION

That Council postpone further consideration of the development to allow the applicant to rework the development proposal to include the planned improvements to Richmond Road fronting the site.

Note: Should Council support the application in its current form the following resolutions are recommended:

1. That the application to rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to the RT-5 (Attached Housing) Zone be approved;
2. That Development Permit DPR00690 be approved;
3. That Final Reading of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw and ratification of the Development Permit be withheld pending registration of a covenant to secure:
 - The development be certified with Built Green Canada as a BUILT GREEN® Gold project;
 - The project be constructed solar ready;
 - A contribution of \$24,000 (\$1,500 per unit) to the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund prior to issuance of a building permit;
 - Registration of statutory right-of-way where the public sidewalk would encroach onto private lands prior to issuance of an occupancy permit; and
 - Payment of of \$6,375 (5 x \$1,275) for five Schedule I trees (see Option 3 on Page 17).
4. That Final Reading of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw and ratification of the Development Permit be withheld pending registration of a housing agreement to prohibit a Strata Bylaw or Strata Council from restricting rental of a dwelling unit for residential purposes.



PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on the subject application. The subject application is to rezone from the RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zone to the RT-5 (Attached Housing) Zone to construct a 16 unit townhouse development. Variances and a Development Permit for form and character are also requested. The applicant is Abstract Developments.

DISCUSSION

Neighbourhood Context

The subject property is located in the Shelbourne Local Area, approximately 500 m north of the Royal Jubilee Hospital near the southern extent of the District of Saanich. Richmond Road serves as the boundary between Saanich and the City of Victoria in this area. The proposed development includes two lots, each contain a single family dwelling.

The site is approximately 1.3 km travel distance to the Hillside Major "Centre", and approximately 1 km travel distance to a range of commercial and retail services located in the Fort Street and Foul Bay Road area. The Richmond Road school site, which is being used as a temporary location for other schools during major renovations, is within 200 m. Lansdowne Middle School is approximately 800 m travel distance and Camosun College is approximately 1.2 km travel distance. Public transit is available within 30 m on Richmond Road, and within 500 m on Foul Bay Road.

Immediately east of the site, the single family home at 1840 Kings Road is listed on the Saanich Community Heritage Register. The heritage structure is a front-gabled Craftsman house with a granite stone exterior, front verandah with granite columns, and half timbering in the gable.

Proposed Land Use

The proposed development would change the land use from single family residential to multi-family residential with an increase in the permitted density to allow 16 townhouse units. The site currently consists of two lots zoned for single family use, which would be consolidated to create a 2,346 m² development site after a 4.15 m wide road dedication along Richmond Road.

Although the site is not within a "Centre" or "Village", it is located on a major road and in close proximity to a range of commercial services, institutional uses (health services, schools) and neighbourhood parks. The Official Community Plan (OCP) supports a range of housing types within neighbourhoods, including townhouses. The site is conveniently located and many services are within a walkable distance, it has good accessibility to public transit, and the relatively flat topography in this area is conducive to cycling and walking.

Multi-family developments in the area include a townhouse development that is located one block to the north, and townhouses and an apartment immediately to the south.

Site and Building Design

The subject site is relatively flat and the proposal includes three blocks of townhouses for a total of 16 units. A townhouse block of six units would be oriented toward Richmond Road, a block of five units would be oriented toward Kings Road, and the remaining block of five units would be sited in the interior of the site along the north property line. A single access into the site would be provided off Kings Road.

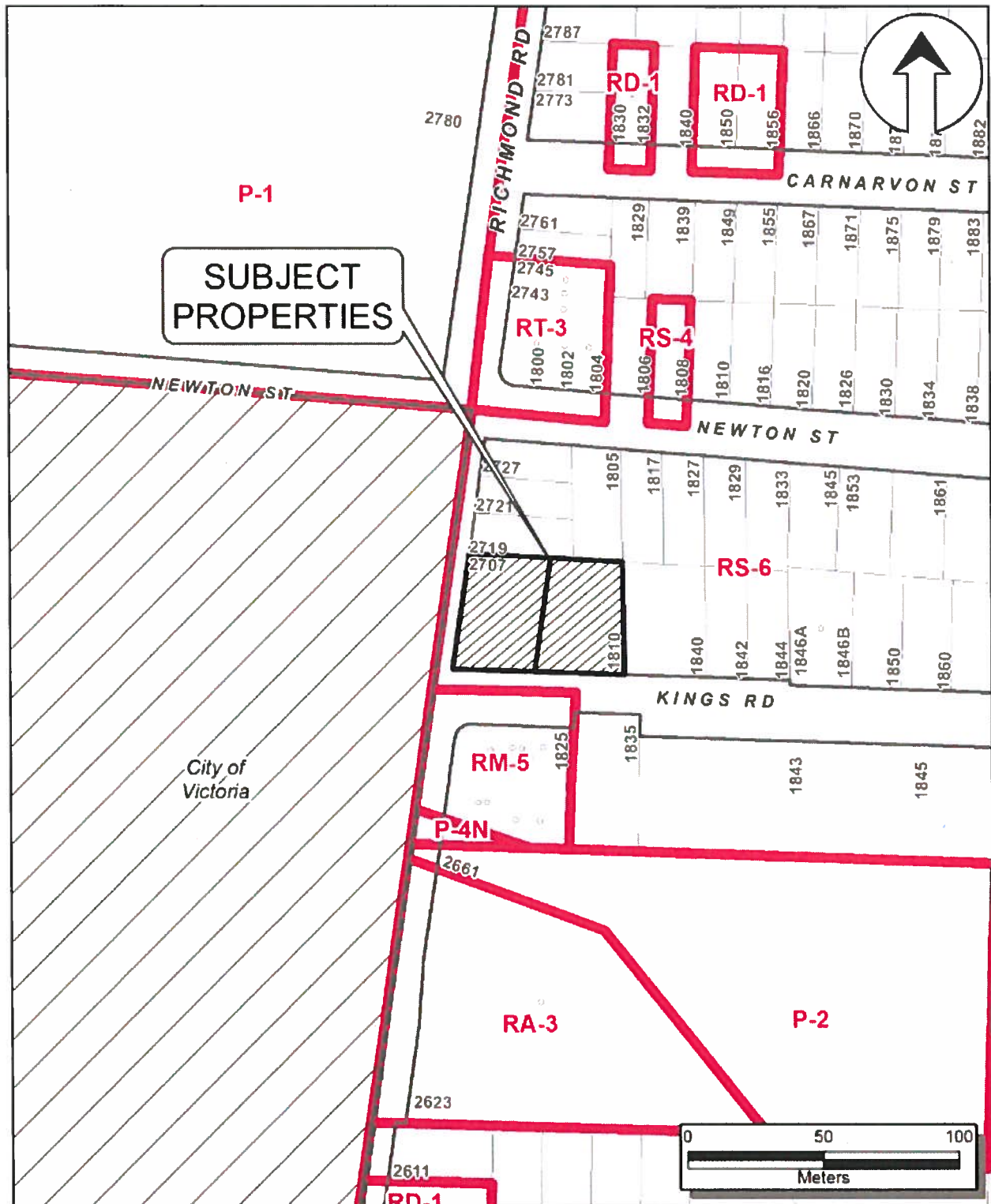


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Context

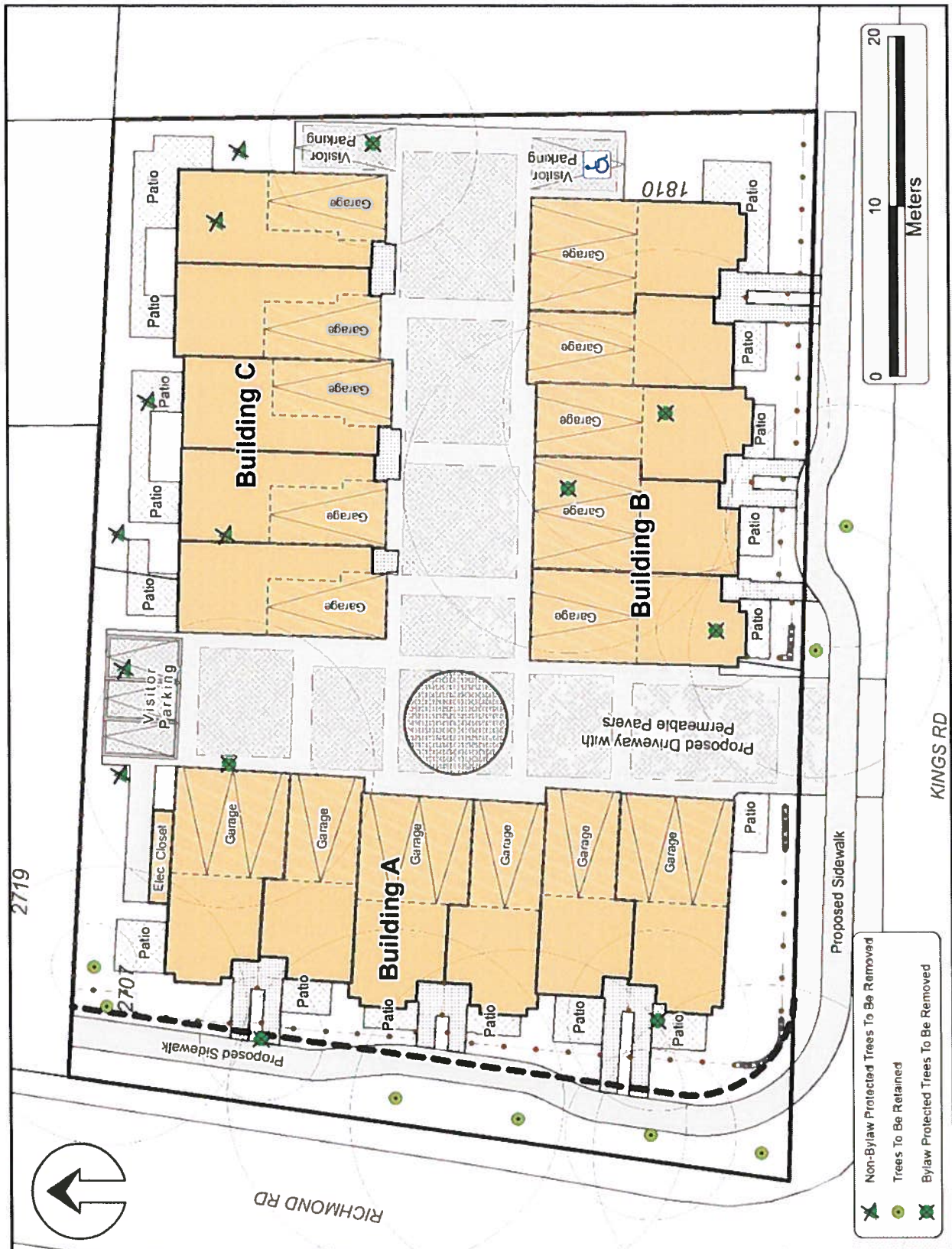


Figure 2: Site Plan



Figure 3: Rendering of Richmond Road Frontage (Provided by BDM 3d Architectural Visualization)



Figure 4: Rendering of Kings Road Frontage (Provided by BDM 3d Architectural Visualization)

The three-storey townhouses would incorporate a number of Arts and Crafts elements that would be compatible with the surrounding single family homes. The design includes steep pitched roofs, gables with half timbering and knee brackets, finials, bay windows, and covered entrances with support columns. Exterior materials would include wood shingles, cement board siding, wide wooden trim and columns. The placement of exterior materials in conjunction with architectural features creates visual interest and gives texture to the building facades. All units would include three bedrooms, attached garages, covered entrances and upper level decks. Ground level patios fronting the street, or in the rear yard of the interior building, would provide useable outdoor areas for each unit. White wooden fencing 1.2 m in height would be used to define the patio areas along Richmond Road and Kings Road and would include individual gates and walkways to the unit entrances.

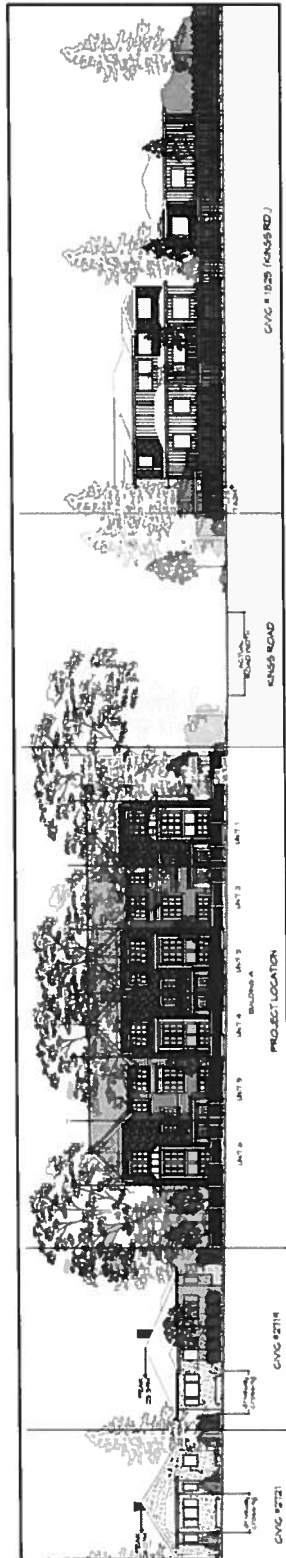


Figure 5: Richmond Road Streetscape (Provided by MJM Architecture Inc. / Zebra Design)

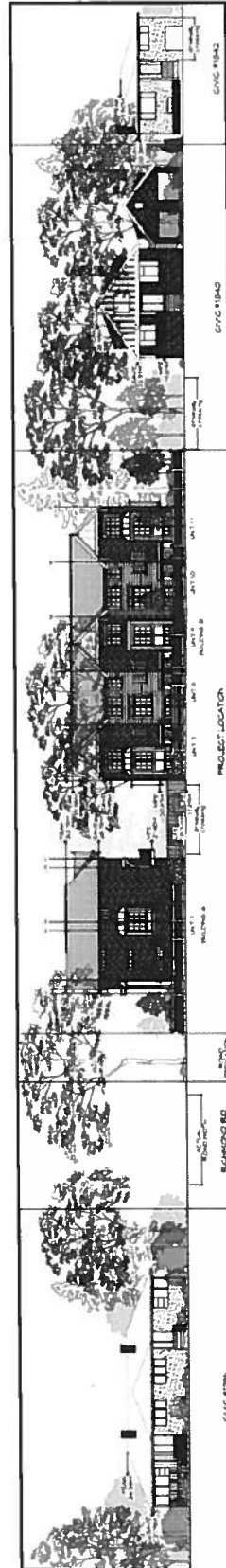


Figure 6: Kings Road Streetscape (Provided by MJM Architecture Inc. / Zebra Design)

Resident parking would be located inside garages with five surface parking spaces for visitors. Permeable pavers would be used for the drive aisle and visitor parking spaces throughout the centre of the site. Absorptive landscaping would be used to collect runoff from sidewalks, decks and patios.

Landscaping is focused around the perimeter of the site and the applicant proposes to retain six boulevard trees, including three elms and a maple on the Richmond Road boulevard and one Garry Oak and one maple on the Kings Road boulevard. A cedar that would straddle the Richmond Road property line would also be retained, effectively functioning as a boulevard tree. A spruce tree just off the property line in the northwest corner of the site would also be retained. Three additional boulevard trees (Garry Oaks) on Kings Road would be planted and new separated sidewalks would be provided along both street frontages. To reduce impacts to tree root zones cantilevered slabs, minimal excavation for patios and walkways, and floated sidewalks are proposed. No basements are proposed for the townhouses, which would further reduce potential tree impacts from excavation.

The applicant has stated their willingness to commit that the project will be certified with Built Green Canada as BUILT GREEN® Gold and solar ready.

Consultation

Neighbourhood:

Between October 2016 and February 2017, prior to submitting a development application, the applicant undertook neighbourhood consultation within 100 m of the site in the form of direct contact (door knocking) or information letters. In April 2017, an Open House was held for the neighbourhood and the proposal was subsequently presented to the Camosun Community Association (CCA). The applicant also contacted Victoria's North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association as the west side of Richmond Road is within the City of Victoria.

Following the community meeting, further consultation through direct contact with residents occurred in May 2017. A further community meeting on November 23, 2017 was scheduled through the CCA to obtain additional feedback.

A referral was sent from the Planning Department to the Camosun Community Association (CCA). A preliminary response was received indicating that their final position was not yet determined as further consultation with the neighbours was anticipated. No further comment has been received to date.

City of Victoria:

Planning sent a referral to the City of Victoria because the site is adjacent to the municipal boundary with the City. A response was received from City staff indicating that Victoria's Official Community Plan (2012) designates the adjacent neighbourhood for ground-oriented residential, including attached dwellings. The Jubilee Neighbourhood Plan notes that the character of the neighbourhood and surrounding properties should be considered when evaluating the design of residential developments. Site planning should also balance useable green space and paved areas for parking, with an emphasis on retention of existing mature landscape features.

Advisory Design Panel:

The proposal was considered by the Advisory Design Panel at their December 6, 2017 meeting. At that meeting the ADP resolved:

“That it be recommended that the design of the proposed 16-unit townhouse development at 2707 Richmond Road and 1810 Kings Road be approved, with the applicant considering the comments made by the Panel members.”

The Panel provided the following comments:

- The accessible parking offered does not have any cover. Applicant should consider that many buyers are aging and have mobility issues.
- This will compliment other developments up the street and is nicely set back. Maneuvering vehicles on-site could be impacted if everyone leaves at the same time.
- Applicant should consider liability insurance in case someone is injured on the sidewalk where a statutory right-of-way is used.
- The project compliments the streetscape and area. Consider building in disability parking for visitors.
- Question raised as to why the individual entrances are not different/separated from one another. Suggestion that they could have made entrances at the end of Building A more special by having corner entrances.
- The site is challenging and the applicant did a good job of addressing issues with setbacks and the bump out. The east setback is fairly tight but the vegetation will help as will the additional fence height.
- Frontages look good but suggestion made to try and soften the entrances on Building C, which has garage doors beside the main entrances.
- Design is good. Suggestion to consider putting a dormer on the Kings Road roof.

No design changes were made in response to the Panel's comments.

Variances

Variances are requested for the following:

- To permit a lot coverage of 52% (45% permitted);
- To permit an open space area of 4.83% (5% required);
- To permit a building separation from the centre line of windows in a living room of 6.55 m between Buildings B and C, and 6.98 m between Buildings A and C (15 m required);
- To permit a building separation from the centre line of windows in a habitable room other than a living room of 6.27 m between Buildings A and B, 6.55 m between Buildings B and C, and 6.98 m between Buildings A and C (12 m required);
- To permit a setback of 2.32 m to Richmond Road and 3.20 m to Kings Road (7.5 m required);
- To permit a setback of 3.02 m to the edge of an attached deck and 2.18 m to the exterior steps support posts from the interior side lot line (7.5 m required);
- To permit a setback of 2.98 m to a rear lot line (10.5 m required);
- To permit a maximum height of 11.69 m (7.5 m required);
- To permit the parking area to occupy 48.11% of the lot area (30% permitted);
- To permit a fence height of 2.4 m along the north and east property lines (maximum 1.9 m permitted); and
- To permit the development to be constructed with a total of 26 parking spaces (32 spaces required).

Community Contributions

The applicant proposes to contribute \$1,500 per unit for a total of \$24,000 to the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund. This commitment would be secured by covenant with payment required prior to issuance of a building permit.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That Council approve the recommendations as outlined in the staff report.

The implications of this alternative are that it would postpone consideration of the application to allow the applicant to rework the development proposal to include the planned improvements to Richmond Road fronting the site. This alternative would result in a delay in Council's decision regarding the application.

2. That Council support the proposal in its current form and forward the proposal to a Public Hearing.

The implications of this alternative are that the application would advance to a Public Hearing and the applicant would be expected to respond to outstanding questions raised by Council at a Public Hearing.

The Official Community Plan (OCP) policies support townhouses in neighbourhoods subject to consideration of neighbourhood context, site size, scale, density, parking capacity and availability, underground service capacity, adequacy of parkland and visual and traffic impacts. If Council supports the proposed design and variances then proceeding to a Public Hearing is an appropriate option.

3. That Council provide alternate direction to Staff.

Should Council provide alternate direction to staff, such as a redesign of the proposal to address a specific issue for example, the implications are that staff would work with the applicant to address comments from Council. The applicant would undertake any necessary revisions to the plans, and would resubmit their proposal for review by staff and ultimately consideration by Council. This alternative would result in a delay in Council's decision regarding the application.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no immediate implications related to the District of Saanich Financial Plan.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no implications related to the District of Saanich 2015 - 2018 Strategic Plan.

PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**Policy**

The following Saanich Planning Policies are most applicable to the subject proposal:

Official Community Plan (2008)

- 4.2.1.1 “Support and implement the eight strategic initiatives of the Regional Growth Strategy, namely: Keep urban settlement compact; Protect the integrity of rural communities; Protect regional green and blue space; Manage natural resources and the environment sustainably; Build complete communities; Improve housing affordability; Increase transportation choice; and Strengthen the regional economy.”
- 4.2.1.2 “Maintain the Urban Containment Boundary as the principal tool for growth management in Saanich, and encourage all new development to locate within the Urban Containment Boundary.”
- 4.2.1.16 “Encourage “green” development practices by considering variances, density bonuses, modified/alternative development standards or other appropriate mechanisms when reviewing development applications.”
- 4.2.1.18 “Encourage new development to achieve higher energy and environmental performance through programmes such as ‘Built Green’, LEED or similar accreditation systems.”
- 4.2.1.20 “Require building and site design that reduce the amount of impervious surfaces and incorporate features that will encourage ground water recharge such as green roofs, vegetated swales and pervious paving material.”
- 4.2.2.3 “Consider the use of variances to development control bylaws where they would achieve a more appropriate development in terms of streetscape, pedestrian environment, view protection, overall site design, and compatibility with neighbourhood character and adjoining properties.”
- 4.2.4.2 “Evaluate zoning applications for multiple family developments on the basis of neighbourhood context, site size, scale, density, parking capacity and availability, underground service capacity, adequacy of parkland and visual and traffic impacts.”
- 4.2.4.3 “Support the following building types and land uses in Neighbourhoods:
- single family dwellings;
 - duplexes, tri-plexes, and four-plexes;
 - townhouses;
 - low-rise residential (up to 4 storeys); and
 - mixed-use (commercial/residential) (up to 4 storeys).”
- 4.2.9.37 “Consider parking variances where one or more of the following apply:
- transportation demand strategies (TDM) are implemented;
 - a variety of alternative transit options exist within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development;
 - there is a minimal reduction in required parking;
 - the development is located in a “Centre”;
 - availability of on-street parking.”
- 5.1.2.2 “Evaluate applications for multi-family developments on the basis of neighbourhood context, site size, scale, density, parking capacity and availability, underground

services capacity, school capacity, adequacy of parkland, contributions to housing affordability, and visual and traffic/pedestrian impact.”

- 5.1.2.15 “Consider requiring registration of a covenant on title of new multiple-family developments prohibiting Strata Council rental restrictions as part of rezoning applications.”

Shelbourne Local Area Plan (1998)

- 4.1 “Preserve the public visibility of heritage resources and encourage design compatibility when considering rezoning, subdivision and development permits in the vicinity of heritage structures.”
- 5.1 “Seek opportunities to protect indigenous vegetation, wildlife habitats, aesthetic landscapes and views when reviewing applications for change in land use.”
- 6.1 “Protect and maintain the stability and character of Shelbourne by maintaining single family dwellings as the predominant land use.”
- 6.3 “Provide opportunities for a variety of housing types by considering applications to rezone for attached housing or apartment use on sites identified on Map 6.2.”
Note: the site is not identified on Map 6.2
- 6.4 “Apply the development guidelines, identified on Map 6.2 when considering rezoning and/or development permit applications for multi-family dwelling use.”

Note: The subject property is not identified as a potential multi-family site, however the noted guidelines include:

- “Building scale and design should acknowledge adjacent single family.
 - Consider underground parking.
 - Parking areas and garbage collection to be located away from adjacent single family and well screened.
 - Garbage receptacle must be screened from view from adjacent single family.
 - Adequate open space amenity area should be incorporated into the design.”
- 6.6 “Require multi-family developments to provide adequate private open space amenity areas on-site.”

Development Permit Area Guidelines

The development proposal is within the Saanich General Development Permit Area. Relevant guidelines include: retaining existing trees and native vegetation where practical; designing buildings to reflect the character of surrounding developments with special attention to height; providing high quality architecture; balancing the needs of all transportation modes; reducing impervious site cover; designing above grade parking to be complementary to the surroundings; and encouraging pedestrian activity.

Analysis

The Official Community Plan (OCP) policies support townhouses in neighbourhoods subject to consideration of neighbourhood context, site size, scale, density, parking capacity and availability, underground service capacity, adequacy of parkland and visual and traffic impacts.

Although this site is not identified in the Shelbourne Local Area Plan as a potential multi-family site, there are two sites in very close proximity with similar characteristics in size and location that have since been rezoned and developed as multi-family housing projects. The local area plan also notes key considerations for rezoning to a multi-family use. Generally, new multi-family developments within neighbourhoods are preferably located on major roads where there is safe access to the site, public transit is available, and the scale and massing is sensitive to adjacent single family neighbourhoods.

The site design with pedestrian entrances oriented toward the street, ground level patios, and a single vehicle entrance would contribute to creating a pedestrian friendly environment that would enliven the streetscape. The proposed design of the townhouses with Arts and Crafts features, pitched roofs, and a focus on pedestrian entrances would be compatible with the surrounding single family neighbourhood, including the adjacent heritage home.

The proposed development includes reduced setbacks to all property lines when compared to similar townhouse developments. Landscaping is focused along the perimeter of the site and property line fencing would help mitigate privacy impacts. Careful placement of windows, decks, and entrances can also mitigate privacy concerns. Overall, the design is more reflective of an urban environment with reduced setbacks and useable outdoor space in the form of upper level decks and semi-private ground level patios rather than common amenity areas.

The site is currently dominated by a number of mature trees, including a row of trees along the Richmond Road frontage, and a grouping of trees on the Kings Road frontage and within the front yard of 1810 Kings Road (see Photographs 1 and 2). The proposal would require the removal of seven protected trees including two large Garry Oak trees from the centre of the lot. Two other established trees in the same area would be retained as boulevard trees.

The applicants propose to retain five on-site trees along the Richmond Road frontage, which would become boulevard trees after road dedication is provided. Due to their size and proximity to the development there remains a risk that if large structural roots are impacted during construction the trees may need to be removed and replaced due to an increased risk of failure. Construction activity would occur within the protected root zones and although the project arborist believes the trees can be retained based on exploratory excavation, there is concern that their long term preservation may not be feasible. The applicant has proposed construction techniques to increase the probability of their survival, including cantilevered slabs and floated sidewalks. However, even if the trees can be retained, given their proximity to the proposed structures it is likely that they will need to be removed in the near future to facilitate improvements to Richmond Road. There is also a risk that the roots could infiltrate perimeter drains and cause property damage. This is identified as a particular risk with Elm trees due to aggressive water seeking root systems. Alternative approaches are discussed in the Environmental Section later in this report.



Photograph 1: Established Trees at 1810 Kings Road



Photograph 2: Trees along Richmond Road frontage – to be retained (looking south)

Variances

Variances are requested for setbacks, lot coverage, height, building separation, parking, open space area, and fence height. Potential impacts from the requested variances are discussed below.

Setbacks:

The proposed setbacks are 2.32 m from Richmond Road, 3.20 m from Kings Road, and from the northern property line 3.02 m to an attached deck and 2.18 m to the exterior steps. The Zoning Bylaw requires a setback of 7.5 m from these three lot lines. The proposed setback from the rear (eastern) lot line is 2.98 m, whereas 10.5 m is required. The proposed setbacks would be smaller than many similar townhouse developments; however, as noted above they reflect an urban design that is increasingly common in newer developments.

As a point of comparison, the recent townhouse development at 3440 Linwood Avenue was approved with setbacks ranging from 1.2 m to 5.5 m. Similarly the townhouse development at 4355 Viewmont Avenue was approved with setbacks ranging from 2.7 m to 4.5 m. The Linwood Avenue development had no single family dwelling neighbours and the Viewmont Avenue development had only one. In this case, the subject site is adjacent to four single family homes. The reduced setbacks to the northern and eastern property lines would arguably have the most impacts to neighbouring homes. A new property line fence would help protect privacy, augmented with new landscaping focused on the perimeter of the lot. For these reasons, the reduced setbacks from the north and east property lines can be supported.

Generally, reduced setbacks from a street can be considered when the design would enliven the street with an active frontage and create a human scale streetscape. The applicant has designed the townhouses with pitched roof lines and gables to have a similar appearance to a single family dwelling. Proposed design features, which include covered pedestrian entrances oriented toward the street, ground level patios, low open fences and landscaping, would support this objective. Reduced setbacks, however, could result in increased impacts to the existing trees. The existing trees on the site are a significant contributor to the character of the streetscape and immediate neighbourhood. Impacts to the existing trees are discussed further in the Environmental Section of this report. Whether or not the requested setback variance from Richmond Road can be supported depends in part on Council's decision respecting the trees.

Lot Coverage:

The proposal requires a variance to increase the proposed lot coverage from 45% to 52%. All of the proposed townhouses are designed as three bedroom units suitable for families. Complying with the lot coverage would require reducing the number of units, reducing the unit size, or a combination thereof. Similar to the setbacks, the proposed density is reflective of a more urban design, however it is higher than similar developments approved by Council. The Linwood Avenue and Viewmont Avenue developments noted above have lot coverages of 37.5% and 31% respectively.

Height:

The requested building height is 11.69 m for Building A, 11.39 m for Building B, and 11.24 m for Building C whereas the Zoning Bylaw permits 7.5 m. The requested height reflects the highest part of the roof as the centre of the building would have a flat roof screened by a pitched roof line. The attic space would be non-habitable area and would be used for mechanical appurtenances. The requested height would allow for a three-storey townhouse. No basements have been proposed in order to reduce impacts to the existing trees.

If there was no flat roof section, the height would be measured to the mid-point of the highest sloping roof and would be 9.99 m for Building A, 9.68 m for Building B, and 8.63 m for Building C. The proposed building heights are consistent with the three-storey urban design and can be supported.

Building Separation:

Variances are requested to reduce the building separation as follows:

- Between the centre line of windows in a living room from 15 m to 6.55 m between Buildings B and C, and 6.98 m between Buildings A and C; and
- Between the centre line of windows in a habitable room other than a living room from 12 m to 6.27 m between Buildings A and B, 6.55 m between Buildings B and C, and 6.98 m between Buildings A and C.

The objective of building separation regulations are to avoid window locations that may be overly intrusive between neighbouring units, protect privacy, and to support natural daylight. Buildings would also need to comply with the BC Building Code separation requirements which impact the number of openings (windows/doors) and fire ratings of proposed materials. Given the separation distances are still significant, the variances are supportable.

Parking:

There are two variances related to parking, the total parking requirement and the amount of parking area coverage. The applicant has requested a reduced parking requirement from 32 spaces (two spaces per dwelling unit) to 26 spaces (1.6 spaces per dwelling unit). The proposed parking layout would provide 21 resident parking spaces within garages and 5 surface parking spaces for visitors. No tandem parking is proposed and one of the visitor parking spaces would be designated as an accessible space.

The neighbourhood is known to have high on-street parking demand particularly due to the proximity to the Royal Jubilee Hospital. No on-street parking is available on Richmond Road south of Newton Street, and Kings Road is restricted to residential parking only. The OCP policies support parking variances where any of the following apply:

- Transportation Demand Strategies are implemented;
- A variety of alternative transit options exist;
- There is a minimal reduction in parking;
- The development is within a Centre; and
- The availability of on-street parking.

Watt Consulting Group undertook a parking study for the proposed development that included a review of on-street parking usage. The report concluded that the resident only restriction on Kings Road was being adhered to and the proposed on-site parking supply would be expected to meet demand. Given the site's location to public transit and a range of schools and commercial retail services, the variance is supportable.

The Zoning Bylaw restricts the parking area to 30% of the lot. By definition, parking area includes any area used for surface parking, garages, and driveways. Including all garages the parking area would be 48.11% of the lot area. If garages were excluded the parking area would be approximately 43%. The proposed parking area would include a mix of concrete and

permeable pavers. The material mix would provide texture and mitigate the visual impacts of the hard surfacing.

Open Space Area:

The Zoning Bylaw requires an open space area equal to 5% of the lot area. This open space area is to be provided outside of the required setbacks and outside the parking areas. The open space requirement may be reduced by 1% for each 1% that the development is below the maximum permitted lot coverage. In this case, a variance is requested to reduce the open space area requirement from 5% to 4.83%. The open space area provided would be adjacent to the required setbacks and includes portions of the proposed patio areas.

A number of neighbourhood parks are within 1 km travel distance, including Allenby Park, Carnarvon Park in Oak Bay, and Oaklands Park in the City of Victoria. Outdoor amenity area is also available at the Richmond Road School site and Lansdowne Middle School. Given the requested variance is relatively minor and that alternative outdoor areas are readily available in the surrounding neighbourhood, the variance is supportable.

Fence Height:

The maximum permitted fence height is 1.9 m, whereas the applicant proposes a 2.4 m high fence for the north and east property lines to help mitigate potential impacts to neighbouring single family dwellings. The proposed fence would consist of a 1.8 m solid wood fence with a 0.6 m trellis top. On the basis that the fence would provide added privacy for neighbours and would not obstruct visibility at the driveway, the variance can be supported.

Servicing

Development Servicing Requirements for this development would include upgrading the substandard drain main and manholes on Kings Road fronting the development, an appropriately sized sewer connection from the existing main on Kings Road, a suitably sized water service, and relocation of an existing fire hydrant at the corner of Kings Road and Richmond Road.

Stormwater management must be provided in accordance with the requirements of Schedule H "Engineering Specifications" of the Subdivision Bylaw. This subdivision is within a Type II watershed area which requires stormwater storage, oil/grit separator or grass swale and sediment basin. The applicant has stated that on-site stormwater management would include permeable pavers and absorbent landscaping, an oil separator, and underground detention chambers.

Richmond Road fronts this site and it is planned to be upgraded in the future to include road widening, a separated concrete sidewalk, and bike lane. To incorporate these improvements, a 4.5 m wide property dedication for road allowance is required along the entire Richmond Road frontage complete with a 6.0 m radius corner cut at Kings Road and Richmond Road. Kings Road frontage is required to be improved to residential road standards including new curb, gutter and a separated sidewalk. The applicant proposes to have the sidewalk encroach slightly onto private lands to reduce tree impacts along both frontages. A statutory right-of-way would be required to allow public passage.

Future upgrading of Richmond Road would likely require the removal of five boulevard trees. These trees make a significant contribution to neighbourhood character and the streetscape and are an important part of the urban forest canopy close to Bowker Creek. The applicant has designed the development with the intent to retain the existing trees along Richmond Road as

long as possible on the basis that road improvements were not anticipated to occur in the short term. Special design considerations are proposed to mitigate potential tree impacts in order to increase the trees chances for survival and the applicant has indicated a willingness to provide bonding for a period of 10 years to cover the cost of removing the trees should they decline as a result of this development. On this basis, initially Engineering requested a cash contribution in lieu of road improvements (sidewalk excepted) along the Richmond Road frontage with actual construction to be done by Saanich crews at some time in the future. Upon further reflection, Engineering anticipates that Richmond Road improvements will be needed earlier than initially anticipated and the best way to move forward, if the application is approved, would be to have the frontage improvements completed as part of the redevelopment. The options are discussed in the Environment Section of this report.

Environment

The site is located about 70 m north of Bowker Creek. Key concerns raised by Environmental Services are tree canopy loss, minimizing impervious area, and meeting the objectives of the Bowker Creek Blueprint. The proposed development would require the removal of 7 of the 15 existing trees on the site and adjacent boulevard: 2 Douglas-fir, 1 Pacific Dogwood, 2 Garry Oak, 1 Arbutus, and 1 non-native cedar. The applicant proposes to retain five boulevard trees along the Richmond Road frontage: three elm trees, a maple and a cedar that straddles the property line. A maple and a Garry Oak on the Kings Road boulevard would also be retained.

While retaining existing trees is encouraged as much as possible, consideration of a tree's long term survival is also important. Tree survival can vary significantly depending upon the tree species, its health, the site conditions and amount of disturbance anticipated. With this particular proposal the primary concerns are:

- The current extent of the root zones given the size of the established trees;
- Proposed construction activity within the root zones;
- The nature of Elm trees to have water aggressive root structures;
- Anticipated risk of future conflict with buildings or structures; and
- The future costs to resolve tree issues.

While acknowledging the applicant's efforts to retain the boulevard trees, engineering staff anticipate the need to upgrade Richmond Road fronting this site within the next five to eight years. Road upgrading would likely require removal of all of the trees along the Richmond Road frontage. In addition, Parks staff have expressed concerns that the long term survival of the trees is uncertain given the proximity of the proposed building footprint and construction activity within the root zone, including new patios, perimeter drains and the sidewalk.

Alternatives to respond to the concerns are:

1. Accept that the boulevard trees will need to be removed in the near future to facilitate improvements to Richmond Road and require the developer to remove and replace them as part of the development. In this scenario the cost of tree removal and replacement would be borne by the developer.
2. Approve the development as proposed, including the special measures proposed by the applicant to mitigate impacts to the boulevard trees, with the understanding that the trees will need to be removed in the future when the road improvements are required. In this scenario the cost of future tree removal and replacement would be borne by Saanich.

3. Approve the development as proposed, including the special measures proposed by the applicant to mitigate impacts to the boulevard trees, with the understanding that the trees will need to be removed in the future to facilitate improvements to Richmond Road, and require the developer to pay for five “future” boulevard trees (\$1,275 per tree). In this scenario the cost of replacement trees would be borne by the developer, but the more significant cost of removing the existing trees would be borne by Saanich.

Climate Change and Sustainability

The Official Community Plan (OCP) adopted in 2008 highlights the importance of climate change and sustainability. The OCP is broadly broken down into the pillars of sustainability including environmental integrity, social well-being and economic vibrancy. Climate change is addressed under the environmental integrity section of the OCP and through Saanich's Climate Action Plan.

The following is a summary of the Climate Change and Sustainability features and issues related to the proposed development. It is important to note that this summary is not, and cannot be, an exhaustive list of issues nor a detailed discussion on this complex subject matter. This section is simply meant to ensure this important issue is a key part of the deliberations on the subject application.

Climate Change

This section includes the specific features of a proposal related to mitigation and adaptation strategies. Considerations include: 1) Project location and site resilience; 2) Energy and the built environment; 3) Sustainable transportation; 4) Food security; and 5) Waste diversion.

The proposed development includes the following considerations related to mitigation and adaptation:

- The proposal is an infill project located within the Urban Containment Boundary and Sewer Service Area, and is able to use existing roads and infrastructure to service the development.
- The proposal is located approximately 1.3 km travel distance to the Hillside Major “Centre” where a range of commercial and personal services are provided and employment opportunities exist, and 1 km to the commercial node at Fort Street and Foul Bay Road.
- The development is readily accessible via all modes of alternative transportation including walking, cycling, and public transit.
- The site is within 30 m of public transit stops on Richmond Road and 500 m on Foul Bay Road.
- Public transit is available on Richmond Road, with frequent service every 15 minutes or less (#14). Foul Bay Road is serviced with regional routes (#15 & 7), which has service every 15 to 60 minutes.
- The site is also within 200 m of the Richmond Road school site, 800 m to Lansdowne Middle School, and approximately 1.2 km to Camosun College.
- The applicant has stated their willingness to commit the project to be certified with Built Green Canada as BUILT GREEN® Gold and solar ready.
- Increasing the permitted density, having smaller residential units, and having shared walls in the proposed attached housing development would contribute to a decline in greenhouse gas emissions relative to an equivalent number of single family dwellings.

Sustainability

Environmental Integrity

This section includes the specific features of a proposal and how it impacts the natural environment. Considerations include: 1) Land disturbance; 2) Nature conservation; and 3) Protecting water resources. The proposed development includes considerations related to the natural environment, such as:

- The proposal is a compact, infill development in an already urbanized area without putting pressures onto rural areas.
- The proposal includes the use of permeable pavers as part of the stormwater management plan.

Social Well-being

This section includes the specific features of a proposal and how it impacts the social well-being of our community. Considerations include: 1) Housing diversity; 2) Human-scale pedestrian oriented developments; and 3) Community features. The proposed development includes the following considerations related to social well-being, such as:

- Buildings front onto public streets and have active frontages that allow interaction between users of the private space and people on the street.
- The proposal is sensitive to the local character, specifically the adjacent heritage home.
- A range of outdoor, community, and recreation opportunities are available within reasonable walking/cycling distance. Nearby parks include Allenby, Carnarvon, and Oaklands.

Economic Vibrancy

This section includes the specific features of a proposal and how it impacts the economic vibrancy of our community. Considerations include: 1) Employment; 2) Building local economy; and 3) Long-term resiliency. The proposed development includes features related to economic vibrancy, such as:

- The development would create local short-term jobs during the construction period.
- Limited home based businesses would be permissible in this development.
- The development would site additional residential units within the commercial catchment/employment area for the businesses and services located within the Hillside Major "Centre".

CONCLUSION

The proposal is consistent with Official Community Plan (OCP) policies that support townhouses in neighbourhoods. The site is located on a major road where there is safe access to the site and public transit is available. It is within convenient walking/cycling distance of schools, parks, and a range of commercial services.

The site design would contribute to creating a pedestrian friendly environment that would enliven the streetscape. The proposed design of the townhouses with Arts and Crafts features, would be compatible with the surrounding single family neighbourhood, including the adjacent heritage home.


Requested variances for setbacks, lot coverage, height, building separation, parking, open space area, and fence height are reflective of the urban design. These variances are not expected to negatively impact on the neighbourhood or the adjacent single family dwellings and can be supported.

While acknowledging the applicant's efforts to retain the existing trees along the Richmond Road frontage, staff anticipate the need to upgrade Richmond Road fronting the site in the near future which would require removal of these trees. In addition, Parks staff have expressed concerns that the long term survival of the trees is uncertain given the proximity of the proposed building footprint and construction activity within the root zone. As a result, staff believe that it would be best to require the developer to remove and replace these trees as part of the development, if it is approved.

The applicant has stated a willingness to commit the project to be certified with Built Green Canada as BUILT GREEN® Gold and solar ready. This commitment, along with a commitment to contribute \$1,500 per unit for a total of \$24,000 to the Saanich Affordable Housing Fund, would be secured by covenant. The covenant would also require the applicant to register statutory right-of-way where the public sidewalk would encroach onto private lands, prior to issuance of an occupancy permit. In addition, if the application is approved in its present form including retention of the existing trees along the Richmond Road frontage, a payment of \$6,375 (5 x \$1,275) for five Schedule I trees should be required prior to Final Reading of the Zoning Amendment Bylaw and ratification of the Development Permit. A housing agreement to prohibit a Strata Bylaw or Strata Council from restricting rental of a dwelling unit for residential purposes is also recommended.

Overall, staff support this project. That being said, staff believe a decision on the application should be postponed to allow for the resolution of the Richmond Road frontage improvements.

Prepared by:


Neil Findlow

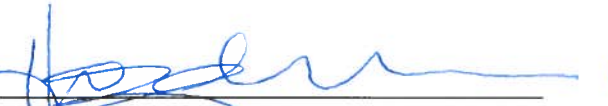
Senior Planner

Reviewed by:


Shari Holmes-Saltzman

Manager of Current Planning

Approved by:


Sharon Hvozdenki

Director of Planning

AP/NDF/jsp

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Attachments

cc: Graham Barbour, Manager of Inspection Services

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.


Paul Thorkelsson, Administrator