



January 16, 2023

Rob Bateman and Planning Staff
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

RE: REVISIONS TO PROPOSAL FOR 50 GOVERNMENT ST APPLICATION FOR REZONING AND DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Our application is respectfully submitted to propose a 16-unit multi-family building at 50 Government St in the James Bay neighbourhood.

The following letter outlines revisions to our proposed design, indicating general revisions from our first proposal and revisions from our updated proposal of August 2023. We will also include descriptions of our changes related to specific comments from Staff.

GENERAL:

The project has been reduced from a 6-story rental building to a 4-and-a-half-story condominium building. Since the August submission, our project has modified the unit distribution to include several studio suites and now includes eight studio apartments, four one-bedroom apartments and two primary suites, which feature two bedrooms and a den or home office.

The form of the building is similar to the August 2 proposal, with a few key changes to the form:

- The front and rear massings have been mirrored across the site, so that the east (or front) is moved south and the west (or rear) has moved north. This has allowed the significant trees in the rear yard of the southern neighbour to remain, and allows the new driveway to avoid an existing utility pole.
- The roof form is simplified to have two gabled ends facing the street and the rear yard. This provides the building with a roof form similar to many of the neighbouring houses. Furthermore, it significantly reduces the shadow impact on the surrounding neighbours, especially the neighbour to the north.

RESPONSE TO ZONING AND PLAN CHECK:

Specific adjustments to the proposal have addressed comments found at the bottom of the Zoning Plan Check form, sent from the city following your review of the August 2 submission. These can be found on the drawings and are summarized here:

- Grades can be found on the site plan, as well as the elevations. The project will not adjust the existing grades of the soil around the project, with the exception of the slight slope up to the entry. Grades in other areas of the site remain as is to avoid disturbing the neighbouring trees. Where existing buildings cover the new grades, we are using grades that are expected to be natural after the removal of the existing building and decks.
- We have indicated a Statutory Right of Way at the front of the property.
- Setbacks, including rear yard are all shown on the proposed site plan, measured from the closest part of the building to the property lines.
- Open Site Space is indicated on the Project Information sheet.
- There are two parking spaces in this proposal; both meet Schedule C requirements.
- The bicycle parking far exceeds the required amounts, including the required floor-mounted spaces. There are additional wall-mounted spaces offered in the proposal beyond the 50/50 ratio.





- The bike parking stall meets the Schedule C for floor-mounted and walled spaces, and also includes cargo bike parking spaces.
- The car-share parking space is under the building, on a concrete slab, and accessed over a driveway of permeable pavers. The accessible space is over similar permeable pavers.

RESPONSE TO TRG APPLICATION REVIEW SUMMARY:

Modifications and adjustments to the proposal have addressed comments found in the TRG Application Summary, sent from the city, following your review of the August 2 submission. These can also be seen on the drawings and are summarized here:

- Regarding the size of building, including density and scale:
 - Our proposal is a four and a half story building (reduced from 6) with a proposed FAR of 1.9. which is within the guidelines for Urban Residential areas. As noted in the OCP, projects with an FAR of up to 2.0 may be considered in strategic locations for the advancement of plan objectives.
 - We believe that this James Bay neighbourhood is a primary example of a property that can support car-free living, and that modest increases of density above 1.2 but below 2.0 will help provide new housing and housing types to aid with the City's proclaimed housing crisis.
 - Additionally, the building has since been modified to a form more in keeping with the neighbourhood and sympathetic to the surrounding houses.
 - Regarding the Inclusionary Housing and Community Amenity Policy, because the project is not requesting additional density beyond what is proposed in the OCP, there are no specific "Community Amenity Contributions" proposed. However, the developer is willing to discuss how this proposal can add value to the community.
- Regarding affordable rental units:
 - As a result of significant pressure from the neighbours and city staff, the former proposal offering affordable rental units was revised to the current proposal. As you are aware, a viable project offering affordable rental units requires a size that exceeds other guidelines within the OCP.
- Land Assembly is not possible in this location.
- The Tenant Assistance Policy is applicable, and a Tenant Assistance Plan will be developed.
- Sustainable features are an important part of this proposal and can be negotiated through legal agreements.
- Design Comments:
 - Relationship to the neighbours:
 - The proposal has revised the massing to provide a project with two principal forms, with footprints similar to surrounding houses. Additionally, a revision of the roof shape and an offset to the massings provide the overall project with a housing form that fits in well with the neighbouring buildings.
 - Privacy is addressed by removing overlooking windows from the closest units to the northern and southern neighbours. Windows on these building faces are high, allowing views up to the trees and sky.
 - Relationship to Government Street:
 - The front yard setback has increased.
 - Landscaping has provided new improvements to the street.
 - Additional bike parking has been added to the front setback area.
 - A dwelling unit on the ground floor, facing Government would remove the focus from the car share and the large bike room - a key component of a car-free lifestyle for many families. It would not benefit the project.





- Landscaping is minimal on a site with limited frontage. However, we have added planting consistent with the city's requirements for boulevards.
 - There is a large balcony on the upper level facing Government Street.
 - Additional onsite planting areas have been added around the project with a reduced deck area and a setback from the existing trees to the south
 - Patios and decks are provided at each level, most extensively on the lower floor. On the upper floors, they are integrated with the exterior corridors, and the top units have large balconies facing east and west.
 - Short-term bike parking has been provided at the front of the building, in front of the bike room window.
 - All areas are accessible for wheelchair access, with graded pathways over the very subtle grade changes on the site and elevator access to each level above.
 - There are no expected utilities for the project other than what can be provided in the utility room and the units themselves.
 - Materials for soffits and Peter aspects of the building that will be seen from below are expected to finish grade - either in painted metal at the exterior stairs or wood finish within the form of the building - see elevations.
 - Fencing will meet the requirements of Schedule S; see landscape package.
- Engineering Comments:
 - A Civil plan is provided with this new submission.
 - The requested 3.68m Statutory Right of Way is shown.
- Transportation Comments:
 - A Civil plan is provided with this new submission.
 - The requested 3.68m Statutory Right of Way is shown.
 - Our proposal includes curb cuts and plans to integrate with City upgrades to the crossing and potential upgrades to the eastern sidewalks.
 - The existing utility pole will remain as is, provided approval is received from relevant utilities.
 - Sidewalks and boulevard trees are shown as requested. Sidewalks will be brushed concrete.
 - All car parking and bike parking - including short-term bike parking stalls meet Schedule C requirements.
 - This project is prepared to secure the following measures related to traffic demand management:
 - An electric car charging station for the car share parking space.
 - Coordination with MODO or other car share suppliers.
 - Memberships to unit owners.
 - Space for cargo and oversized bikes can be adapted to mobility scooters or other mobility devices.
 - A bicycle maintenance area.
- Stormwater Management Comments:
 - Please see the civil plan is provided with this new submission.
 - Building permit plans will specify details and materials of hardscape and stormwater management .
- Parks Comments:
 - Arborist report is included with this proposal.
 - Landscape plans are included with this proposal.





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- Please review current landscape drawings and arborist report related to replacement trees and boulevard planting.
- Site servicing is shown on the civil drawings, included with this proposal.

If you have any questions about the submittal, or our responses to your comments, please email Will King, at wiiil@waymarkarchitecture.com. We will gladly walk through the drawings with you and help ease your review period.

Sincerely,

Will King, Architect AIBC, MRAIC. LEEP AP

