

FILE: 3360-20-2019-01

REPORT DATE: October 27, 2021 **MEETING DATE:** November 09, 2021
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Anne Berry, Director of Planning and Development
SUBJECT: **Rezoning Application for 12258 Harris Road.docx**

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW/APPROVAL:



RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Council:

- A. Direct the applicant of 12258 Harris Road to hold a Public Consultation Meeting, in accordance with Council Policy C015, to gather feedback from the surrounding residents; AND
- B. Refer the application for 12258 Harris Road to the City's Economic Development Advisory Committee for comments regarding the proposed commercial development portion of the project; OR
- C. Other.

PURPOSE

To present an application to rezone the property at 12258 Harris Road to develop a mixed use building, with commercial space on the ground floor and rental residential units above, in order to obtain initial feedback from Council about the concept.

Information Report Decision Report Direction Report

DISCUSSION

Background:

The City has received an application to rezone the property at 12258 Harris Rd from Community Commercial (C-3) to a new zone, in order to develop a 15-unit rental condominium building with one or two commercial units on the ground floor.

Applicant:	Prism Construction Ltd.
Owner:	Budhwani Trading Ltd.
Civic Address:	12258 Harris Rd
Area:	0.151 ha (0.37 ac)
OCP Land Use:	Town Centre Commercial
Development Permit Area:	#7 Town Centre Commercial
Zoning Existing:	C-3 Community Commercial
Zoning Proposed:	New Zone

The site is the former Charlton Automotive shop and is currently vacant.

This application to develop the site was first received in 2019; however, due to uncertainty around how the Harris Road underpass might impact access to this site. The application was put on hold while the applicant was in discussion with the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority, the lead agency for the project involving the underpass. The Port Authority recently confirmed that one driveway access at the southernmost point of this site would be provided with the underpass. Confirmation of access would be a condition of rezoning, if this application moves forward.

Relevant Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 2352, 2007

The property's current Official Community Plan (OCP) Town Centre Commercial designation permits high density mixed commercial and residential uses appropriate to the community's central area. High density is considered anything greater than 100 units per hectare.

Development Permit Area (DPA) #7 – Town Centre guidelines apply to the site and if the site is rezoned, a development permit will be required prior to construction. This type of development permit requires review by the City's Advisory Design Panel and approval from Council for form and character.

Zoning Bylaw No. 2505, 2011

At present, the site is zoned C-3 (Community Commercial). This zoning is intended to permit convenience retail service to the surrounding community.

If this application moves forward, a new mixed use zone will be developed. It will incorporate commercial uses on the ground floor and residential rental-tenure zoning on the upper floors.

Residential rental-tenure zoning is now permitted under the *Local Government Act* (this ensures the residential units remain as rental and cannot be converted into strata ownership units in the future).

Analysis:

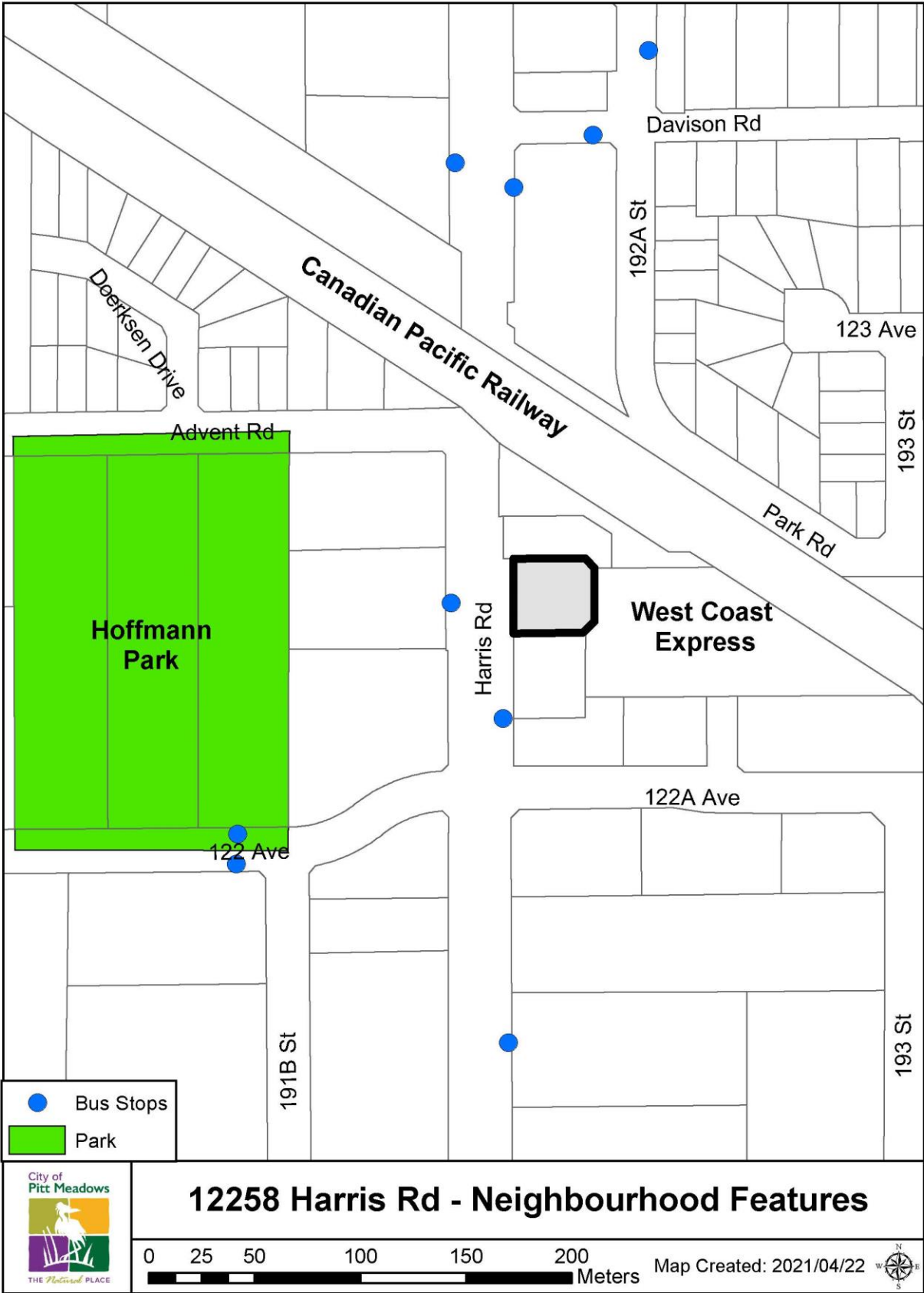
Location

The site is located in the centre of the City, and within close walking distance to shops and services, parks and other amenities.

Harris Road is an arterial road designed for higher traffic volumes to carry people through the City and is also a designated cycling route with bike lanes in both directions. The site is located next to the West Coast Express Pitt Meadows Station, giving the area easy access to a commuter route to Downtown Vancouver. It is also part of TransLink's frequent transit network, with bus service at least every 15 minutes in both directions throughout the day and into the evening, every day of the week.

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12258 Harris Rd - Neighbourhood Features

Project Overview

This application proposes a five-storey building, with one or two ground floor commercial units and 15 residential units on the top four floors (see Attachment E). The proposed unit mix at this point is as follows:

- Three 3-bedroom units;
- Eight 2-bedroom units;
- Four 1-bedroom units.

Unit sizes range from 72 m² (783 ft²) to 119 m² (1,289 ft²). The total floor area proposed is 2,112.3 m² (22,737 ft²) with a floor-area ratio of 1.39.

The residential units are proposed for rental, and this can be secured long-term through the creation of a zone that limits the tenure of the residential units to rental.

The applicant advised that the ground floor commercial space is proposed for a pharmacy, and may be split into two commercial units.

Access and Parking

Access to the site is proposed from a driveway off Harris Road, at the south end of the site. The Vancouver Port Authority has confirmed that a driveway in this location is feasible with the proposed construction of an underpass at Harris Rd.

A total of 19 surface parking spaces are proposed for this development, behind the building. The applicant advised that underground parking is not economically feasible at this site. The water table is only 10' below grade, which would make it challenging to provide proper clearance for an underground parkade without raising the building further. According to the applicant, the cost to build underground parking is high given the efficiencies the development can achieve with the current site geometry. Staff will request that the applicant further investigate the feasibility of providing underground parking, but recognize that the cost of underground parking may be prohibitive to the viability of a residential rental project.

Design

The building is proposed as five storeys, with a height of 19.93 m (65.41 ft). Massing of the building is reduced by stepping back the south end of the top storey, nearest to the adjacent building (Grace Community Church). The design features incorporate a wood frame entry, different colours, and variations in exterior building finishes.

Staff Comments

City Plans and Policies

The City's OCP contains several policies related to concentrating residential development in the

town centre area, as follows:

- 4.6.1 a) Multi-family housing is particularly encouraged within the central part of the urban area, including medium to high-density multi-family housing located on major roads and within the Town Centre;
- b) Preference will be given to areas close to public transit routes or stations for higher density residential developments;
- c) The City will consider allowing buildings higher than four storeys within the areas designated for high density residential and mixed residential/ commercial use in the Town Centre, where publicly accessible open space and other public amenities and community benefits are provided.

The OCP also contains policies supporting a range of housing choices, including rental units:

- 4.6.2 a) Encourage and facilitate a broad range of market, non-market and supportive housing.
- e) A range of housing types are encouraged within the urban area to meet the needs of seniors and citizens with special needs;
- f) The City will consider incentives (e.g. density bonuses) to encourage provision of seniors, rental, and special needs housing in the urban area;
- g) Support smaller, more affordable housing design with a focus on units for single young adults, single seniors and young couples;
- 4.6.3 a) Consider applying incentives (including, but not limited to fee waivers, density bonussing, and property tax exemptions) as appropriate, to encourage the development of rental housing;
- b) Investigate reducing parking requirements for purpose-built rental housing (secured as rental with a housing agreement) in the Urban Centre and along arterial roads;
- c) Encourage rental apartments above commercial development;

The OCP also contains policies supporting certain commercial development in the town centre as follows:

- 4.7.1 b) Small retail, office, medical, professional and personal service uses are encouraged to locate in Town Centre Commercial areas with increased residential densities and close to public transit;
- d) The City will investigate the possibility of reducing parking requirements for commercial development within walking distance of transit.

- 4.7.2 a) Town Centre should be zoned to provide local shopping, health care, professional offices, administrative, financial, cultural and community services for Pitt Meadows;
- b) Development projects in the Town Centre commercial area that front onto Harris Road will be required to commit a share of total developable area to commercial uses located on the ground floor, with access points orientated toward Harris Road. The proportion of developable area required for commercial uses will be determined on a project-specific basis taking into consideration lot size and configuration, location on Harris Road, types of commercial uses being proposed and other factors;
- c) To improve pedestrian movement and visual aspects of the Town Centre streetscape for residents and visitors, future commercial uses are encouraged to develop adjacent to the front lot line, with parking located at the rear lots or, in some cases, below grade. Other desirable design aspects include canopies and awnings over sidewalks;

In the City's Housing Action Plan, Objective #2 is to increase the supply of market rental housing by the following actions:

- Consider waiving or reducing development and permit fees for purpose-built rental housing (secured as a rental with a housing agreement).
- Reduce parking requirements for purpose-built rental housing (secured as a rental with a housing agreement) in walkable centres and along main roads.
- Consider property tax exemptions for a period of time (e.g. ten years) to encourage new rental housing construction.
- Encourage rental apartments (secured as a rental with a housing agreement) above commercial development.
- Negotiate additional density on a project-by-project basis in exchange for the development of new rental housing.

Comparison to other developments

The proposed floor-area ratio (FAR) is 1.39, and site coverage is 30%. Floor-area ratio is a measurement of floor space (living area) in relation to lot size:

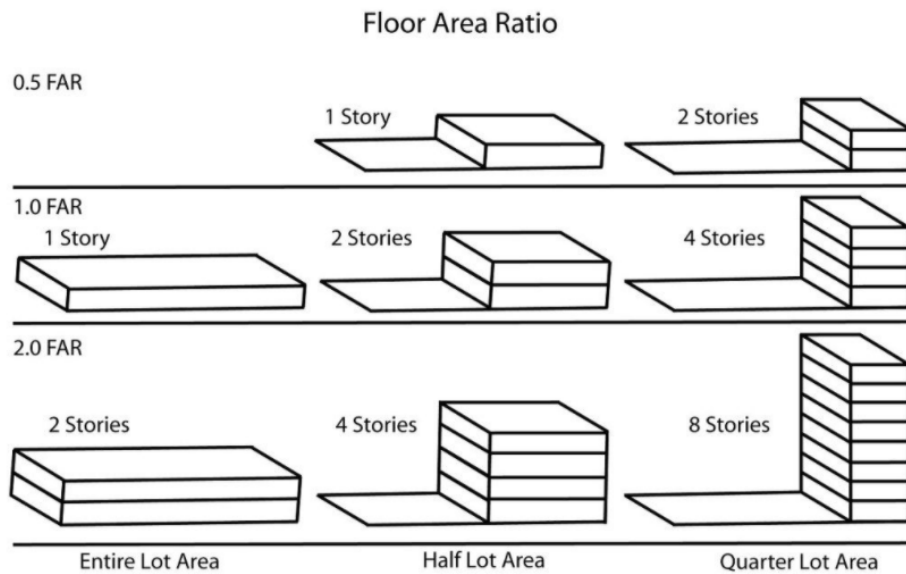


Figure 1: Examples of floor-area ratio

The table below provides a comparison for density and height to other development projects in the City:

Table 1: Comparison to Other High-Density Developments

Project	Density (units/ha)	Density (FAR)	Height
Liv42 (12409 Harris Rd)	213	1.6	4 storeys
Orion Phase 1 (12460 191 St)	200	1.95	4 storeys
Origin (11950 Harris Rd)	188	1.47	4 storeys
Keystone (12350 Harris Rd)	179	1.96	4 storeys
Solaris (12099 Harris Rd)	169	1.96	10 storeys
Cedar Downs (12585 190A St)	146	1.42	4 storeys
Fairways (19673 Meadow Gardens Way)	146	1.5	4 storeys
Current Application (12258 Harris Rd)	105	1.39	5 storeys

The City has not had any purpose-built rental buildings constructed for several decades. Currently, there is a strata apartment building at 12172 Harris Road where all the suites are owned by a single owner and are rented out. These units could be sold individually at any time, though and are not a source of protected rental housing units in the City. There are also four co-op developments in the City.

Density

As shown in Table 1, this project is on the low end of high-density development in the City. However, it proposes significantly less parking than other high-density developments, as discussed below.

Height

Other than the two Solaris towers next to City Hall (which are ten storeys), the City does not have any other buildings over four storeys. In this case, the site is located next to a parking lot, driveway and one building (Grace Church). There are no nearby residents that will be impacted by shading or overlook from this five-storey building. The only nearby building, Grace Community Church, is located on the far end of the adjacent property, over 20 m away from the proposed building.

In the TC zone, which is presently the most common mixed-use zone within the City's town centre, the maximum height is 16 m (52.5 ft). This development proposes 19.93 m (65.4 ft).

Parking

In the Zoning Bylaw, this proposed building requires 35 parking spaces as follows:

NO. OF SPACES	USE
16.5	11 Two- and Three-bedroom units
4.8	4 One-bedroom units
3	Visitor
11	Commercial retail
35	

This development is proposing 19 surface parking spaces. If this application moves forward, further details about the parking need to be worked out with the developer, such as how the spaces would be allocated to residential units, visitors and commercial uses. In addition, there may be some opportunity for shared parking between uses; for example, visitor parking spaces may be utilized by commercial users during business hours and by residential visitors after business hours.

In the form of individual lockers or a bike room, Bicycle parking is required as per the Zoning Bylaw for at least eight bicycles for residents, along with outdoor bicycle parking for visitors and commercial customers. The applicant advised that the required bicycle parking will be accommodated as required.

The applicant provided a parking study (see Attachment F) by Creative Transportation Solutions (CTS). The CTS study suggests that the site is well-positioned next to transit, on a cycling and pedestrian route and close to amenities. The study collected data on parking areas within 200 m of the site for 12 hours (1 pm to 1 am) on a Thursday in July of 2019. The study identified 48

street parking spaces within that 200 m radius, with a peak of 33 vehicles parked in those spaces. The parking study also reviewed the adjacent West Coast Express parking lot at the same time, which had a peak of 94 vehicles parked in 149 available spaces. Overall, the study notes that both areas studied are not at capacity. The CTS study concludes that the average peak parking demand for this development is forecasted to be approximately 28 parked vehicles.

Staff have concerns about the low number of parking spaces proposed. The nearest street parking is on 122A Ave by the Fire Hall, but much of this is time-duration and already has competition for parking. There is also street parking on Advent Rd and 122 Ave, but users of these areas would have to cross the busy Harris Rd, which is also likely to become more complicated in the future with the underpass.

As noted earlier in the report, the City's OCP and Housing Action Plan recommend investigating reduced parking requirements for purpose-built rental housing. As the City has not previously received any applications for purpose-built rental housing, the application of these policies has never been investigated, so there is no precedent for this type of parking reduction. However, other municipalities have permitted purpose-built rental apartments, so staff reviewed some regional and other local government regulations for parking in these situations.

Regionally, a 2012 Apartment Parking Study (http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/Apartment_Parking_Study_TechnicalReport.pdf) by Metro Vancouver found that residential parking demand is lower near TransLink's Frequent Transit Network (such as Harris Rd), ranging from 0.89 to 1.06 vehicles per apartment unit. It also found that renter households generally have lower parking demands than owner households. In purpose-built market rental apartments close to transit, the parking demand range was 0.58 to 0.72 vehicles per unit. This study found that most municipalities require at least 1.0 parking spaces per unit, plus 0.2 spaces per unit for visitors, for apartments close to transit.

Metro Vancouver also completed a 2018 Regional Parking Study (<http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/RegionalParkingStudy-TechnicalReport.pdf>), which again found that apartments close to frequent transit, especially rental apartments, have lower parking demands than apartments further from transit.

Several municipalities contain provisions for developers to provide cash-in-lieu to reduce the number of parking spaces required, which the municipality can then use to fund off-site municipal parking facilities. The City of Pitt Meadows does not currently have a policy to provide this option, although this option could still be negotiated with the developer during the rezoning stage.

Table 2: Municipal Comparison of Purpose-Built Rental Apartment Parking Requirements

Municipality	Parking Spaces Required – Residents and Visitors
Mission – w/ some affordable units	1.0 per unit
New Westminster	1.1 per unit
City of North Vancouver	0.75 per unit
Coquitlam – near transit	0.85 per unit
Port Moody	1.1 per unit
Surrey – in city centre	1.0 per unit

The City of Pitt Meadows parking requirements for residential apartment uses are as follows:

Table 3: Zoning Bylaw Selected Parking Requirements

Use	Number of Parking Spaces	
	Basic Requirements	Visitor Requirements
<i>Apartment (not in TC, MC)</i>	1.3 per <i>bachelor unit</i> or <i>1-bedroom unit</i> 1.5 per <i>2-bedroom</i> or more unit	0.2 per <i>dwelling unit</i>
<i>Apartment (in TC, MC)</i>	1.2 per <i>bachelor unit</i> or <i>1-bedroom unit</i> 1.5 per <i>2-bedroom</i> or more units	0.2 per <i>dwelling unit</i>

Note: TC and MC are the town centre (Harris Rd) and Osprey Village areas

As noted, the City does permit a slight reduction (from 1.3 to 1.2 per unit) for 1-bedroom units in the town centre area, where transit is more readily available. However, the City's parking regulations make no distinction between rental and strata apartment units.

The proposed parking ratio will vary depending on the allocated parking spaces (residential vs commercial uses). This will be determined upon further consultation with the developer if this application proceeds.

Overall, this development is proposing a reduction of 16 parking spaces. This is a significant amount and should be carefully considered before approval. Some reduction in parking spaces is supportable though under the OCP and Housing Action Plan. Staff suggest that gathering public input through a developer information meeting and the City's Advisory Design Panel will help to inform Council's decision-making process on this topic. Purpose-built rental housing is hugely needed in the community and the region and should be encouraged where possible while balancing the need for parking associated with that housing.

Trees

There are a total of five trees on the site. Based on the arborist report submitted (see Attachment G), three trees are likely to be removed for development. The two largest trees can be retained,

with tree protection measures in place during construction. Replacement trees and a tree preservation covenant can become conditions of approval if this application proceeds.

Fire Protection

The building is proposed as wood-frame construction. The BC Building Code permits wood frame construction for residential buildings up to 12 storeys. Numerous buildings higher than four storeys around the Lower Mainland have been constructed using this technique; however, the tallest building currently in Pitt Meadows built with wood frame construction is four storeys.

The City operates a paid-on-call model for fire protection, and the Fire Department has concerns about a wood frame building taller than four storeys, mainly during construction, and about exposure to other nearby buildings. A Fire Safety Construction Plan will be required, to the satisfaction of the City, including details about how the Plan will be implemented and ways to monitor compliance during construction.

The City's OCP also contains policies addressing buildings over four storeys, which includes a requirement for the plans to be reviewed by a qualified, subjective third party at the time of development permit.

The Fire Department also has some concerns about truck access and apparatus parking during an emergency, but these technical details can still be worked out if the project progresses.

Public Consultation

A development information sign is required to be posted on-site before any bylaw receives the first reading. In addition, a public hearing will be required before this application receives any consideration for third reading. A public information meeting and the public hearing will provide opportunities for public consultation at a level appropriate to this application.

Economic Development Advisory Committee

Staff recommend that this application be forwarded to the City's new Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC). EDAC was formed in 2021 to advise Council and staff on economic development initiatives, tourism promotion and development, and policies and proposals relevant to the community's balanced economic prosperity. Due to the commercial component of this proposal, it is recommended that EDAC reviews this application and provides comments through a local business and economic development lens.

Recommendation

This application supports the OCP, Strategic Action Plan, and Housing Action Plan to increase housing diversity and affordability, provide rental housing, and increase density close to transit. In addition, it represents an opportunity to secure badly needed rental housing for the community. According to the most recent data available (October 2020) from Canada Mortgage

and Housing Corporation, the residential rental vacancy rate for Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge is 1.5%, and the City does not have any secured rental apartments.

As noted earlier, the City's OCP suggests that buildings higher than four storeys be considered if community benefits are offered. In this case, the staff consider the community benefit the secured rental component of the housing, which is greatly needed in the community. In addition, the City's Community Amenity Contribution Policy C091 also applies and suggests a contribution of \$3,000 per residential unit.

While there are details still to work out regarding this application, staff recommend that Council consider the concept and provide any initial feedback to the developer. It is also recommended that the developer host a public information meeting. This will allow the developer to hear any concerns from Council and the surrounding residents regarding the project. It will also enable the developer to finesse their project and work with staff to confirm more details before the application is brought back to Council for first reading.

Should Council ultimately grant first reading to this project, the following is a list of potential requirements that would be required before proceeding to a public hearing:

- Confirmation of Fire Department requirements regarding access;
- An initial review by the City's Advisory Design Panel;
- Finalized site plan and proposed drawings;
- Confirmation of parking space allocation; and,
- Agreement for a Community Amenity Contribution.

If this site is not rezoned, it can be redeveloped per the current C-3 zoning. This zoning permits a building height of three storeys, a maximum floor-area ratio of 1.0, and permits community commercial uses such as retail, office; restaurant; personal service; and micro-brewery.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

- Principled Governance Balanced Economic Prosperity Corporate Excellence
 Community Spirit & Wellbeing Transportation & Infrastructure Initiatives
 Not Applicable

Affordability. Promote accessible and affordable transportation, daycare and housing opportunities to help families and businesses thrive.

Housing Diversity. Encourage diversity in housing types to foster an inclusive, affordable, multi-generational community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- None Budget Previously Approved Referral to Business Planning
-

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

Comment(s):

A public information meeting is required. A public hearing is required prior to third reading of a bylaw amendment.

KATZIE FIRST NATION CONSIDERATIONS

Referral Yes No

SIGN-OFFS

Written by:

Allison Dominelli,
Development Services Technician

Reviewed by:

Alex Wallace,
Manager of Community Development

ATTACHMENT(S):

- A. Neighbourhood OCP Map
- B. Neighbourhood Zoning Map
- C. Aerial Photo Map
- D. Letter of Intent
- E. Proposed Development Plans
- F. Parking Study
- G. Arborist Report

