



May 3, 2024

File: DP000339

Municipality of North Cowichan
Planning Department
7030 Trans-Canada Highway,
Duncan, British Columbia, V9L 6A1

Re: Letter of Intent
Gibbins Mixed-Use Development
3096 Gibbins Road, North Cowichan, BC

The attached Development Application is for a 100 unit – four storey mixed-use residential project at the above noted address. The subject property is zoned as C2 (Commercial General Zone), in which this application is based. The items of significance are as follows:

Site Description

North Cowichan's OCP encourages and enables a diverse mix of housing types, tenures and levels affordability – with targets to increase the number of purpose-built rentals units by 20%. The project site is located west of Downtown Duncan and will provide 100 rental units within a relatively proximity to the center of the city. Additionally, the mixed-use portion of the development will help build a resilient and diverse neighborhood. The current site does not contain any built structures. Zoned as C2 – Commercial General Zone, the site will retain its current zoning.

Project Description

This proposed development is comprised of three stories - totaling 100 units - of residential construction sitting atop a one story commercial and office space podium. Also included on the fourth floor is a rooftop outdoor amenity area for resident use. One level of open parking contains both visitor and residential parking stalls that are separated by controlled gate access. Below grade is one story of residential parking with elevator and stair access to the residential construction above. The design has considered maximum public interaction along Gibbins Road

KEYSTONE ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING LTD

Eric Poxleitner *Architect AIBC AAA MRAIC LEED® AP BD+C Sr. Principal*

Steven Bartok *Architect AIBC AAA MRAIC Principal* | Lukas Wykpis *Architectural Technologist AIBC Principal*

ABBOTSFORD BC | 300 – 33131 South Fraser Way V2S 2B1 | Phone 604 850 0577

CALGARY AB | 410 – 333 11th Avenue SW T2R 1L9 | Phone 587 391 4768

Fax 1 855 398 4578 | mail@keystonearch.ca | keystonearch.ca



with an increased commercial frontage to engage with the surrounding community. The site has also accommodated space for a public transit bus shelter.

Residential Units

The residential unit counts are largely comprised of one bedroom studio units with 92 of the 100 units being single bed units. One bedroom units' range in size from 393 - 458ft². The remaining eight units are two-bedroom units ranging from 836 - 915ft² each. Units have access to the outdoors via an outdoor patio space, balcony, or Juliet balcony. The shared rooftop amenity also provides access to the outdoors which helps to establish a social environment within the building.

Massing, Form & Character

The siting and form of the building follows the site geometry, with a strong street presence with a wide ground floor volume designated for commercial use, and a narrow 3-storey residential volume - a tribute to the floating houses by the bay. The proposal of CRU's is in line with the design guide goals for Cowichan, valuing pedestrian safety and convenience, while promoting economic development to the neighborhood. The commercial frontage serves as the public face of the building and acts as the driving force behind community engagement.

The character of the building responds to historical patterns, following an industrial west coast aesthetic to relate to the existing character of the village, while the contemporary design proposed nods to the future of the community. Extroverted architecture is proposed through residential balconies in all units, and facade composition and transparency are achieved through the proposed size and placement of the windows.

The commercial ground floor is enfolded in wood-looking cement board lap siding wrapped on a contemporary black cement board framing the volume. The residential levels also emphasize the wood-looking lap siding, with the building core in neutral gray tones. Black corrugated metal features are strategically located on the street elevation and above the residential building entrance.

Parking

Vehicle access is provided with site entry off Gibbins Road. The parking in combination with the building has been designed to hide most of the "less attractive" parking elements from the street view. The open-air car park serves visitors of the commercial and office uses as well as

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the residents above while also providing resident parking behind a secure gated parking structure. In addition to vehicle parking, 22 visitor bike racks have been provided in the covered plaza space behind the commercial space and a separate secured bike storage room provides 100 bike racks and 3 scooter storage lockers for residents of the building.

Landscaping

Landscaping requirements and drawings are coordinated by Prospect & Refuge Landscape Architects to Municipality of North Cowichan standards.

Garbage/Recycling

Resident garbage & recycling facilities are provided in the secured open-air car park area. The space allotted is compliant with North Cowichan's Zoning Bylaw 1997 – No. 2950.

Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability is addressed within the development by:

- The provision of bike racks and bike storage
- Light pollution reduction by means of dark sky compliant exterior lighting systems
- Water efficient landscaping and plumbing systems
- Natural ventilation through operable windows and energy efficient HVAC systems
- Storage and collection of recyclables
- Renewable based wood building materials
- Heat island effect reduction by minimizing exterior parking and maximizing density as well as the inclusion of greenery on the roof provided via the outdoor rooftop amenity area

Accessibility + Circulation

Accessibility has been incorporated into the project by providing flat level entrances for commercial and office uses, incorporating all required accessible parking stalls and the careful placement of them in relation to the building's entrances. The project includes an accessible elevator and corridor width that all comply with accessibility standards.

Crime Prevention (CPTED)

Environmental design principles (CPTED) have been incorporated into the design by means of natural surveillance throughout the perimeter and parkade levels by means of clear viewing

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lines from the residential units and balconies, elimination of all potential dark areas and accesses/exits, clearly defined main entrances and secure and fully accessible parking.

Refer also to the attached concept statement by Prospect & Refuge Landscape Architects for further detail on the landscape design.

We trust the information provided satisfies the Municipality of North Cowichan's requirements for this preliminary Development Permit submission, however, should you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noel Lim', written in a cursive style.

Noel Lim, *Project Manager*
Architectural Technologist AIBC, B.Arch.Sc.

Cc: Steven Bartok, *Principal*
Architect AIBC, AAA, MRAIC

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