

November 26, 2025

District of Central Saanich
1903 Mount Newton Cross Road
Saanichton, BC V8M 2A9
Attn: Mayor Ryan Windsor & Council

RE: Application for Subdivision, Rezoning and Development Permit at 7840 Lochside Drive Lot A, Section 5, Range 4 East, South Saanich District, Plan 31812, PID 001-130-374

Dear Mayor Windsor and Council,

On behalf of Starlight Developments, we are pleased to be moving forward to the Committee of the Whole meeting on December 15. As we prepare for this discussion, we wanted to highlight the key benefits of our application to help support an informed conversation at the meeting. Since our last appearance before Council, the proposal has been meaningfully refined in close collaboration with District staff, shaped by engagement with the community and Tsawout First Nation, and guided by feedback from Mayor and Council to ensure strong alignment with the District's planning vision and community priorities.

Proposal Overview

The proposed development represents a significant investment in purpose-built rental housing within Central Saanich and a critical step toward achieving the housing goals outlined in the Official Community Plan and Housing Needs Report.

This proposal includes a 6-storey, 129-unit wood-frame rental building with one level of underground parking. The project provides a mix of unit types, ranging from studios to three-bedroom homes, designed to support a diverse cross-section of residents, including young professionals, families, and seniors wishing to remain in the community. This proposal also features a small-scale commercial retail unit (CRU) that will enhance neighbourhood walkability and provide opportunities for local businesses.

As confirmed by District staff, the proposal is in substantial compliance with the OCP's designation and policies. The added density is appropriately located fitting within the context of surrounding 6 storey buildings; the design provides a gradual transition from higher- to lower-density housing, and the inclusion of a small commercial space will further enhance walkability and local amenities within the area.

This proposal will complement the newly **fully leased** Bella Vista rental community at 2515 Hackett Crescent, with all 235 units leased as of November 2025. The success of Bella Vista is a clear indicator of the strong and growing demand for rental housing in Central Saanich.

To ensure this project remains both viable and respectful of its surroundings, the application is requesting variances related to height, setbacks, and parking. These refinements allow for gentle densification, minimal site disruptions for existing residents, and a building form that aligns with its surroundings. Without approval of these variances, the project would not be able to deliver the level of community benefits, amenities, and high-quality rental housing currently proposed. We are pleased to share that on July 16, 2025, the District's **Advisory Planning Commission carried a motion in support of the proposed variances** for this application.

Retention of Existing Rental Housing

This proposal has been thoughtfully designed to complement the existing Lochside Apartments, two 3-storey buildings with 126 rental units, while ensuring that no existing tenants are displaced. By retaining all current housing and adding new homes through sensitive infill, the proposal protects existing affordable housing. As of December 2025, more than 40% of the Lochside Apartments' existing units are rented at

affordable rates as defined by CMHC¹, emphasizing the importance of retaining existing housing stock and affordable housing in the community.

Housing Need in Central Saanich

As a purpose-built rental development, this proposal directly responds to the region's acute housing shortage. This proposal would add 129 much-needed rental homes to Central Saanich, a community that has seen limited new rental construction for decades. Between 1977 and 2013, no new purpose-built rental buildings were developed in Central Saanich, and much of the existing rental stock is aging.

According to the District's Housing Needs Report, 1,117 new homes are required by 2029 and 3,476 by 2044 to meet projected growth and local demand. Yet as of July 2025, only 314 new units have been completed since 2024, with just 127 more expected in 2026 based on building permits issued to date. At this rate, the District will have achieved only 39% of its 2029 housing need by the end of next year (2026). This gap highlights the urgent need to accelerate approvals and construction of diverse, higher-density, and rental housing options across the District. **Achieving housing need is not only about how many units the District approves, it's about how many units are actually viable enough to build.** When projects stall, infrastructure isn't delivered, amenities go unbuilt, trade employment declines, and our community's housing challenges only worsen. Supporting projects like this one is essential to ensuring Central Saanich remains a place where residents, workers, and families can continue to live and thrive.

Community Benefits

This proposal delivers a comprehensive package of community benefits, together advancing the District's goals for housing affordability, sustainable growth, and neighbourhood livability. First and foremost, it provides **purpose-built rental housing**, which is a meaningful community amenity in a municipality with limited new rental construction. By adding secure, professionally managed rental homes, the project strengthens housing choice, supports local employers, and helps residents of all ages remain in Central Saanich.

The full range of community benefits offered through this proposal is summarized below.

Housing Affordability and Diversity

- **10% of new homes** secured as affordable housing through a Housing Agreement with the District.
- **\$262,000 voluntary contribution** to the District's Affordable Housing Fund to support additional affordable housing initiatives*.
- **More than 30%** of new homes are **family-sized (2 and 3-bedroom)** units, supporting families and those seeking to stay in the community.
- **10% of homes** are designed as **accessible units** to support residents aging in place and those with mobility challenges.

*At the time our application was submitted in 2023, purpose-built rental projects were exempt from Community Amenity Contributions (CACs). Despite not being required to provide a CAC, Starlight recognize the critical need for more affordable housing in Central Saanich. As such, Starlight is committing this voluntary monetary contribution to help the District advance much-needed affordable housing options in the community.

Transportation and Infrastructure Improvements

- **Land dedication:** Our proposal provides a land dedication along Mt Newton Cross Road frontage, unlocking the ability for Central Saanich to conduct road and intersection improvements at the intersection at Lochside Drive.
- **New signaled pedestrian crossing** at Ferguson Road and **sidewalk improvements** to enhance access to the existing northbound bus shelter.
- **Sanitary sewer main extension** at Ferguson Road.

¹ 80% of the average monthly rent for a dwelling of comparable size and location as set out in the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Market Outlook for Greater Victoria

- **\$20,000 in transportation demand management measures** for residents, promoting sustainable travel choices:
 - \$10,000 toward **Modo carshare memberships**, and
 - \$10,000 toward **BC Transit tickets**
- **Free daytime visitor parking** to help reduce on-street parking pressure in the surrounding area.

Community and Economic Contributions

- **Commercial retail space** to support local businesses, enhance neighbourhood walkability, and provide convenient amenities for residents.
- **Over \$500,000 in Development Cost Charges (DCCs)** to help fund infrastructure improvements related to growth and development.
- **The addition of approximately 250 new jobs during construction through to occupancy.**
- **\$65,000 to Tsawout First Nation** to support initiatives on reserve lands which include (but are not limited to) providing a new youth playground to complement their new Early Learning Centre.

Sustainability and Design Excellence

- Targeting **BC Energy Step Code 3** and **Zero Carbon Step Code Level 4** performance, ensuring a high level of building efficiency and reduced emissions.
- Professionally managed, purpose-built rental housing to ensure long-term maintenance and community stability.

Resident Amenities

- Enhancing the property with a range of practical and welcoming outdoor amenities including a children's playground, shared garden beds, a dog run, additional bike parking, and an updated waste and recycling facility to support a comfortable and enjoyable environment for all residents, including tenants from the existing Lochside Apartments.

Parking and Traffic

We recognize that traffic and parking are important concerns for the community, and we have taken them seriously. To fully understand potential impacts, we engaged Watt Consulting Group to conduct detailed parking studies, traffic impact assessments, and travel-time reviews along Mt. Newton Cross Road and at the Highway 17 intersection.

Parking Study

The parking study identified a residential parking demand of 0.96 stalls per unit, which equates to 245 stalls for residents. When visitor and commercial needs are included, the total demand is 281 stalls. Our proposal provides 316 stalls in total, **in excess of 33 stalls than the parking demand**, ensuring that on-site parking comfortably meets the needs of residents, visitors, and commercial tenants.

Traffic Impact Findings

The conclusions from the traffic impact assessment are reassuring. While a slight increase in travel time is anticipated as the community grows, the study confirms that these changes are **minor** and will remain manageable. Importantly, vehicles turning onto the Pat Bay Highway are expected to continue doing so within a single signal cycle. The assessment also notes that most of the current delay along Mt. Newton Cross Road is due to long signal timing at the highway rather than overall traffic volume. As a result, the additional traffic generated by **this proposal is not expected to create any significant negative impacts.**

The study also identified several improvements that could enhance traffic flow and safety for the wider community. Watt Consulting Group recommended that the District of Central Saanich consider:

- Retiming the Highway 17 signal to reduce unnecessary delays;
- Lengthening the westbound left-turn lane on Mt. Newton Cross Road; and
- Improving pedestrian access to nearby RapidBus stops to support safe and efficient transit use.

These measures would benefit the broader transportation network and further support safe and efficient

movement in the area.

Community Consultation

From the early concept planning in 2023 through to today, this proposal has been shaped by the input of tenants, neighbours, and the broader community. Through multiple engagement sessions, we listened carefully to the feedback shared and made meaningful changes to ensure the proposal reflects local priorities and concerns.

What We Heard:

- Concerns about **traffic and on-street parking** congestion.
- Worries that additional density along Lochside Drive might change the **community character** of the area.
- A strong emphasis on **protecting trees and preserving outdoor spaces** enjoyed by tenants and their pets.
- Support for small-scale commercial uses to encourage a **more walkable, complete community**.

How We Responded:

- **Comprehensive Traffic Review:** Additional traffic studies were completed to evaluate vehicle wait times, bicycle safety, and confirmed that the proposed development would not adversely impact local traffic flow.
- **Parking Management Measures:** Paid visitor parking restrictions were added to discourage spillover parking on nearby residential streets and ensure efficient on-site parking use. Each unit will be allocated at least 1 parking stall which they can opt out of if they do not require it.
- **Reduced Density and Building Massing:** The proposal was refined by removing 12 townhouse units and a standalone amenity building, significantly reducing the overall density and creating a more balanced fit with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- **Tree and Open Space Preservation:** The updated site plan retains and protects existing mature trees and preserves key areas of open space along Lochside Drive, maintaining the natural character that residents value.
- **Context-Sensitive Design:** Detailed shadow studies were undertaken to confirm minimal shading impacts on adjacent properties and to support a comfortable public realm.
- **Neighbourhood Amenities:** The inclusion of small-scale commercial space responds directly to community support for local amenities within walking distance.

This evolution reflects genuine collaboration with the community. Every change was made with the goal of achieving balance, providing much-needed rental housing while protecting what residents value most about the neighbourhood. The result is a thoughtful, well-integrated proposal that responds directly to local feedback and strengthens the Marigold community.

Engagement with Tsawout First Nation

Over the past several years, we have worked closely with Tsawout First Nation throughout the design development process, with the goal of being thoughtful and collaborative neighbours in delivering much-needed housing to the community. Through a series of meetings and ongoing dialogue, we have sought to ensure meaningful engagement and explore ways this proposal can provide direct and lasting benefit to the Nation.

As a result of these discussions, we are proud to share that **our proposal has received full support from Tsawout First Nation**. Should this proposal be approved by Council, the following commitments to Tsawout First Nation include but are not limited to:

- **Youth and Community Support:** Providing a monetary contribution to provide a new outdoor youth playground for Tsawout youth, complementing the Nation's new Early Learning Centre and creating additional spaces for children and families to gather.
- **Affordable Housing Access:** Offer right of first refusal for the affordable rental units to Tsawout First Nation members, creating new opportunities for members to access secure, affordable housing within their community.

These commitments reflect our respect for Tsawout First Nation's priorities and our shared interest in building a stronger, more inclusive future for the region.

Conclusion

In closing, we remain committed to working collaboratively with Mayor and Council and the community to advance a proposal that delivers meaningful housing, thoughtful design, and long-term community benefits. We appreciate the opportunity to bring this proposal for Council consideration and look forward to continuing the conversation. Thank you for your ongoing leadership in supporting responsible, community-focused growth in Central Saanich.

Sincerely,



Matthew Vos
Director of Development



Kelsey Tyerman
Development Manager