



The Corporation of the District of Saanich

Report

To: Mayor and Council

From: Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning

Date: February 5, 2026

Subject: 961 McKenzie Avenue, and 3986 and 3990 Saanich Road - Development Permit and Rezoning Application

File: DPR01057, REZ00751

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the application to rezone 961 McKenzie Avenue, and 3986 and 3990 Saanich Road from the RS-10 and RS-6 (Single Family Dwelling) Zones to the RA-11 (Apartment) Zone be approved.
2. That Development Permit DPR01057 be approved.
3. That Final Reading of the Zoning Bylaw, 2003, Amendment Bylaw, 2026, No. 10242, and ratification of the Development Permit be withheld pending registration of a covenant to secure the following:
 - a. Community Amenity Contribution to be provided as follows:
 - i. \$51,840 to the Saanich Affordable Housing Reserve Fund,
 - ii. \$34,560 to the Local Park Acquisition Fund (Area 2)
 - iii. \$86,400 to the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary.
 - b. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures as described in TDM Plan A of the Zoning Bylaw, 2003:
 - i. Through the EcoPASS program, or any future replacement program for BC Transit, provide every dwelling unit access to a public transit fund equivalent to the value of one monthly adult pass for a minimum of a 3-year term for every dwelling unit; and
 - ii. Provide new residents with a transit welcome packet within 30 days of occupancy containing redeemable benefit codes, and marketing information on program eligibility, specific transit routes, and schedules associated with the project site.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council's decision on the application to rezone 961 McKenzie Avenue, and 3986 and 3990 Saanich Road from the RS-6 and RS-10 (Single Family Dwelling) Zones to the RA-11 (Apartment) Zone to construct a six-storey apartment. A Development Permit, with variances, is required for Form and Character. The applicant is Seba Construction Ltd. (Aidan McCulloch).

Subject Site	961 McKenzie Avenue, and 3986 and 3990 Saanich Road
Location	Southwest corner of McKenzie Avenue and Saanich Road
Official Community Plan Designation	Primary Growth Area – McKenzie Corridor
Zoning	RS-6 and RS-10 (Single-Family Dwelling) Zones
Size of Site post dedication	1745 m ²
Street Frontage	Approximately 35 m on McKenzie Avenue and 44 m on Saanich Road (plus corner radius)
Current Land Use(s)	One single-detached dwelling per lot
Surrounding Use(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North: Single-detached Dwellings (adjacent), Attached Housing • East: Attached Housing (adjacent), Small-scale Multi-unit Housing, Single-detached Dwellings • South: Small-scale Multi-unit Housing (adjacent), Attached Housing, Single-detached Dwellings • West: Single-detached Dwellings (adjacent), Attached Housing
Building Height	20.8 meters (6 Storeys)
Unit Total/Mix	60 Units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 studio units (7%) • 46 one-bedroom units (76%) • 10 two-bedroom units (17%)
Parking	47 Vehicle Parking Stalls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 Residential • 6 Residential Visitor 72 Bike Parking Spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 66 Class 1 • 6 Class 2 Loading Stalls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1

DISCUSSION

Land Use and Neighbourhood Context

The 1745 m² site is in the Quadra Local Area, at the corner of McKenzie Avenue and Saanich Road (Figure 1). The Official Community Plan (OCP) designates the site as a Primary Growth Area. The site is just outside the Quadra-McKenzie Centre, on the McKenzie Corridor (a Primary Corridor), so is nearby to transit, shopping, schools, parks, and other amenities that support daily living (approximately 500 m from the intersection with Quadra Street and McKenzie Avenue). The McKenzie Corridor is a key thoroughfare, part of the Frequent Transit Network (OCP Map 4), and the All Ages and Abilities Long-Term Bike Network (OCP Map 10). The surrounding area is primarily residential with a mix of single-detached dwellings, apartments and attached housing. Several nearby parks offer various recreation opportunities, with Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary being a major nearby landmark.



Figure 1. Neighbourhood Context.

Proposed Development

The proposed development is a six-storey, 60-unit, market-ownership apartment with underground parking. Parking and loading access are from Saanich Road. A 5.18 m road dedication on the McKenzie Avenue frontage and a 0.7 m Statutory Right-of-Way on Saanich Road help to facilitate necessary right-of-way improvements. Key features of this project include:

- 60 market-ownership residential units
- Six-storey form (20 m) with underground parking
- Vehicle access from Saanich Road
- Variances, as discussed later in the Report, for:
 - Projections into setbacks
 - Residential visitor parking spaces
 - Transportation Demand Management Plans
 - Loading spaces
 - Parking space depth
 - Parking aisle width
 - The setback from Saanich Road
 - Driveway proximity to windows
 - Driveway access width.

Greater detail of the proposed development can be found within the attached Plans for DPR01057 and Servicing Requirements.

Site and Building Design

Site Topography and Existing Conditions

The site slopes down approximately 4 m towards the southwest. Three single-detached houses are tucked among 22 Tree Protection Bylaw-protected trees and 6 non-bylaw protected trees. To the south of the site is a recently built duplex (completed in 2019), and to the west, single-detached dwellings, and a townhouse complex. The parcel layout and existing/recent development of adjacent parcels makes a larger land assembly difficult.

Building Design

The six-storey building faces McKenzie Avenue and Saanich Road, with the entryway located at the corner of these streets. The building contains 60 residential units, of which 10 are two-bedrooms units (17%), 46 are one-bedroom units (76%), and 4 are studio units (7%). A meeting room for residents is located on the main floor near the lobby. At the back of the building (the southern façade), there is a six-space bicycle room, and a loading space tucked under the building. Vehicles access the loading and underground parking at the south of the site from Saanich Road. Forty-seven vehicle parking spaces, including six visitor spaces, and 60 bicycle spaces are located in the parkade.

The building's siting will necessitate the removal of all trees on site: for the removal of 22 bylaw-protected trees, 31 replacement trees are being planted, and cash-in-lieu will be required for 13 additional trees. Figure 2 provides the site layout and the Landscape Plan while Figures 3 and 4 provide building elevations.

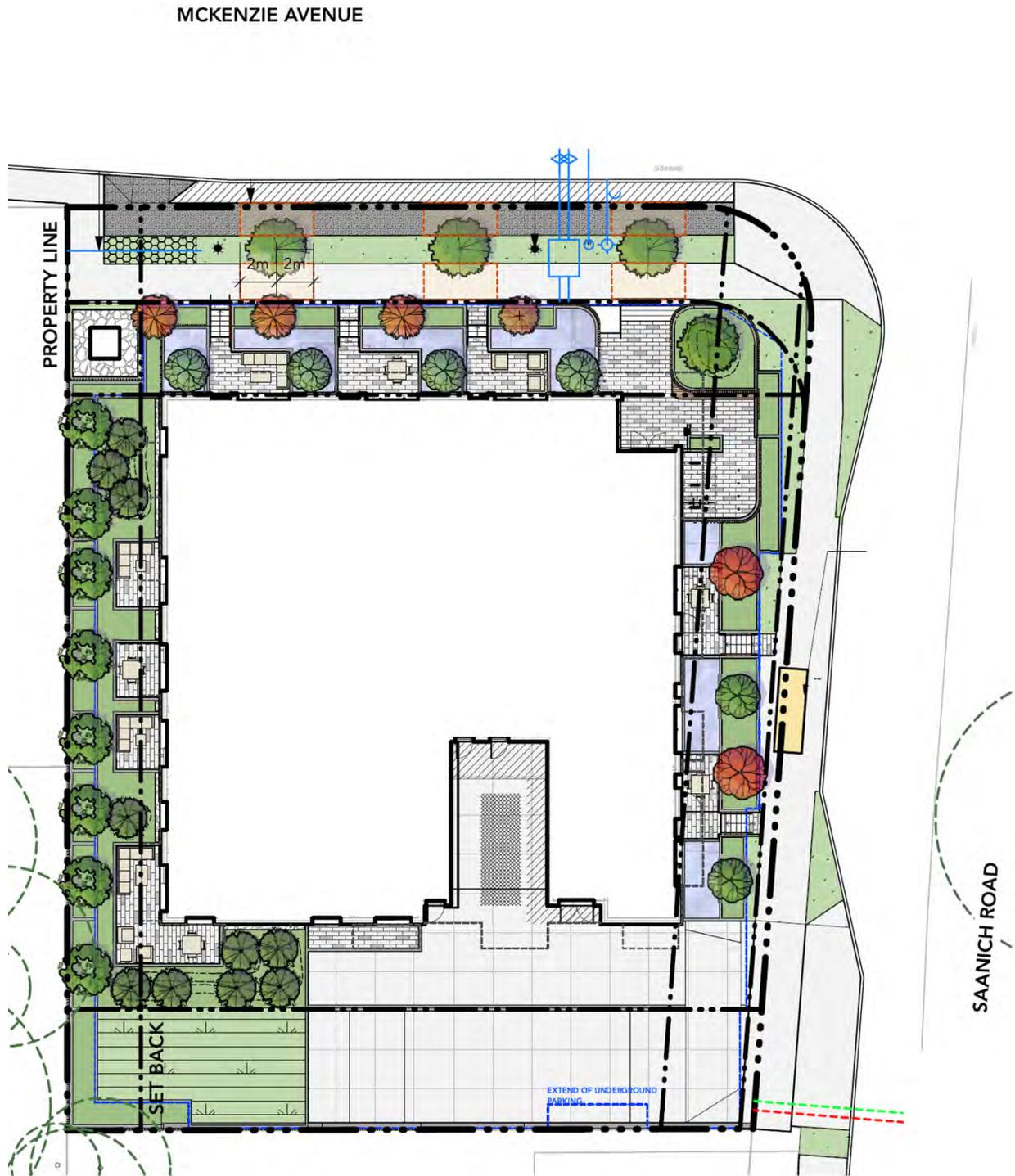


Figure 2. Landscape Plan. Adapted. From plans by Gauthier & Associates Landscape Architects Inc.



Figure 3. North Elevation. From McKenzie Avenue. From plans by Koka architecture & design inc.



Figure 4. East Elevation. From Saanich Road. From plans by Koka architecture & design inc.

Policy Analysis: Zoning

Proceeding with the proposed development requires two decisions of Council. One decision regarding the rezoning of the subject site, and a second decision on the development permit that would permit the buildings proposed. Where different policy applies to each of these decisions, this Report breaks down staff analysis into these separate categories.

Staff has reviewed the proposed rezoning relative to all relevant policies and advise that it is consistent with the intent of the Official Community Plan. Attachment 4 provides a list of relevant policies that have been considered in this recommendation. Of these policies, the following have been identified for detailed discussion:

Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) supports six-storey residential forms at this location. The OCP's land use designation has deference over the Local Area Plan (discussed below). Although the project is unable to meaningfully retain its natural environment features, and its unit mix is skewed towards one-bedroom units, the proposed development advances a key goal of housing provision and diversity.

The proposed change in land use supports progression towards 15-minute, walkable communities. The site is in the McKenzie Corridor, one of the Primary Corridors that make up the Official Community Plan's (OCP's) Primary Growth Areas along with Centres and Villages. While the OCP encourages the greatest intensity of growth in its Primary Growth Areas, Primary Corridors are directed to be primarily residential. As the parcel faces the McKenzie Corridor, the site is encouraged to have the tallest building forms and intensity of development. The proposal meets the OCP in all these respects.

Area-based Plans

The proposed Quadra McKenzie Plan (QMP) (2026) shows these lands as a Corridor Hub. This policy shows up to six storey forms are supported however commercial frontages would be required. The proposed plan is under consideration by Council and subject to change.

While the building form is consistent with the proposed QMP, the project does not include commercial uses along its two street frontages to support the future Corridor Hub envisioned for this area. The applicant was encouraged to provide ground-floor commercial space through the review stage of the project but did not incorporate this element.

The Quadra Local Area Plan (LAP) (2000) identifies these parcels as "General Residential" and excludes them from the sites identified for future multi-family development on Map 4.1. The LAP also notes these parcels contain a "Major Treed Area," which promotes protection and restoration of the natural environment.

Analysis Summary

The OCP supports the proposed type of residential, six-storey form in this location. Directing additional growth to the McKenzie Corridor helps support transit and active transportation investments along the corridor and in the adjacent Quadra-McKenzie Centre. Proximity to services and employment in the Centre promote a 15-minute community where residents can choose to walk to meet their daily needs. While the LAP does not identify this site for multi-family, OCP Policy 7.2.3, defers to the OCP for land use direction.

The proposed development would contribute additional housing units; however, the proposed unit mix does not align with the OCP's objective to provide family-oriented housing. Staff have consistently recommended an increased proportion of two- and three-bedroom units. While the applicant has indicated that nearby townhouses and single-detached dwellings can accommodate three-bedroom households, staff remain concerned that the proposed mix does not adequately address on-site family housing needs. Staff have concerns about the proposed unit mix, but on balance support the addition of the proposed housing units.

The site has notable tree canopy, as identified in the 2000 LAP, but tree retention has proven difficult. The building's siting will necessitate the removal of all trees on site. For the removal of 22 bylaw-protected trees, 31 replacement trees are being planted, and cash-in-lieu will be required for 13 additional trees. Retaining more trees is not feasible on a site of this size while maintaining the same proposed density: shrinking the building footprint would come with the trade-off of significantly increased height. On-site and boulevard plantings have been included,

where possible, to help maintain the urban forest canopy. Three Garry oaks will be planted in the boulevard along McKenzie Avenue.

Policy Analysis: Development Permit

Staff has also reviewed the proposed development permit against the standards found in the 2024 Development Permit Area Guidelines. These guidelines were developed with three objectives in mind:

1. To communicate the design expectations for Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and mixed-use project.
2. To facilitate fair and consistent application of design objectives; and
3. To foster design excellence and sustainability throughout the District of Saanich by encouraging consistently high-quality, contextual, and attractive development.

The building design provides a thoughtful and functional site layout with attractive architecture and landscaping. The Development Permit Area Guidelines (DPAG) are, on balance, met.

The site is small, which leaves little choice for the building's siting. The building is setback appropriately to provide an attractively designed buffer between private and public space (DPAG 3.1.2 a., c.; 3.1.4 g.; 6.1.2 g.), the entrance and landscaping positively frame the street corner (DPAG 3.1.2 b., e.; 3.1.4 d.; 6.1.2 a.), and the units interface well with both streets with walk-out units and inset balconies (DPAG 3.1.2 d., 6.1.2 h., i.). The building has managed to provide all the aspects of liveability while balancing competing development demands and constraints.

Vehicle access to underground parking, loading, and other "back of house" uses are located on the site's south side (DPAG 6.1.4 a.). The parkade ramp is next to the property line, whereas there would ideally be landscaping buffering the ramp from the adjacent property (DPAG 3.1.4 w.). The applicant responded to staff feedback to increase green and open space by including landscaping over the waste and recycling room in the southwest corner of the site (DPAG 3.1.5 a.).

While the development includes 66 Class I bicycle parking spaces, most are of vertical orientation (DPAG p.38). Staff accept that the smaller site has made providing for all modes more difficult and may have contributed to the decision for bicycle parking stall orientation. Multiple transportation features have been included in the project: there is a loading space and inclusion of some cargo bicycle spaces that are positive additions and the applicant has provided the full transit TDM package, as required in the Zoning Bylaw, 2003, to help provide valuable transportation options on this site that is so well connected to transit.

Variations

Table 2 below shows the project's required variations.

Table 2. Proposed Variations

Regulation	Required/Permitted	Proposed	Variance
Projections into Setbacks	1.2 m	1.4 m	0.2 m
Visitor Parking	18	6	12
TDM Plans	TDM Plan A and one additional TDM Plan	See Table 3	See Table 3
Loading Spaces	One large space (L x W x H: 10.2 x 3.5 x 4.5 m)	One space (7.9 x 4.1 x 3.0 m)	Loading space size (2.2 x 0.0 x 1.5 m)
Parking Space Depth	5.5 m	5.1 m	0.4 m
Parking Aisle Width	7.9 m	7.0 m	0.9 m
Setback from a Lot Line Abutting a Street (Saanich Road)	5.0 m	4.6 m	0.4 m
Driveway Proximity to Windows	3.0 m	0.0 m	3.0 m
Driveway Access Width	7.0 m	11.0 m	4.0 m

Projections into Setbacks

Along the building, canopies cover patios and the entrance from weather. These canopies project into required front yards 0.2 m more than permitted. These variations are acceptable and will not create negative impacts.

Visitor Parking

The variance to visitor parking (6 provided, variance of 12 spaces) is supported by a transportation engineering report. The report, completed by Watt Consulting Group, received July 2, 2025, states that the proposed visitor parking will satisfy expected demand based on 'comparable developments' utilization rates.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans

The variations to the TDM Plans are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Proposed and Required TDM Plans

TDM Measure	Required	Proposed
TDM Plan A (Transit)	Required	
EcoPASS Program	For each unit, for three years	No variance
Transit Welcome Package	Required	No variance
TDM Plan B (Cycling)	(One additional TDM Plan required)	
Class I Parking above Requirement	+30%	+10% (66/60 required)
Energized Parking	50%	100% (66/66 total)
Non-standard Parking	+15%	+10% (6/60 required)
Bicycle Repair Station	Required	No variance

TDM Plan A is required by the Zoning Bylaw, 2003, and provides every dwelling unit access to a public transit fund equivalent to the value of one monthly adult pass for a minimum of a 3-year term. This is a positive TDM Plan for this development, considering its proximity to transit.

One additional TDM Plan is required by the Zoning Bylaw, 2003. The measures proposed by the applicant requires a variance, however, as TDM Plan B requires 12 additional Class I bicycle parking spaces (or a total of 78), of which three spaces are required to be for non-standard bicycles (e.g., cargo bicycles). While the applicant has surpassed the energized bicycle parking requirement of 50% by energizing 100% of the Class I bicycle parking, staff note that 60 of 66 Class I bicycle parking spaces are vertically oriented. This energized parking may have limited utility in practicable terms but is nonetheless a positive feature. The six horizontal, non-standard bicycle parking spaces are a positive addition, and accommodate bicycles in an appropriately sizeable 0.9 x 3.0 m parking space.

Loading Spaces

The variance to the loading space is for a shorter length and height than required and is supported by staff. The project's location at a busy intersection makes the provision of a loading space helpful. The loading space, while undersized, demands a large portion of the site (2% by area) and still will accommodate a typical small moving truck.

Parking Space Depth

The variance to parking space depth, from 5.5 m to 5.1 m for a typical vehicle parking space, is supported by the transportation engineering report. Staff note that the requested variances bring the proposed parking dimensions in line with the City of Victoria's Zoning Bylaw.

Parking Aisle Width

The variance to parking aisle width would permit a 7 m aisle instead of 7.9 m and is supported by the transportation engineering report. Staff note that the requested variances bring the proposed aisle dimensions in line with the City of Victoria's Zoning Bylaw.

Setback from a Lot Line Abutting a Street – Saanich Road

The front yard setback is proposed to be 0.4 m less than required. The project applies suitable design interventions to mitigate potential negative impacts, such as adequate landscaping and buffering from the right-of-way, and the siting, layout, and design of private outdoor space. Staff support this variance.

Driveway Proximity to Windows

This variance reduces required distance from the vertical projection of any driving surface to any window from 3 m to 0 m. That is, second-storey-and-up windows on the south elevation are 0 m from the vertical projection of the driveway below. In this case, staff do not have concerns about granting the variance as this regulation would be difficult to meet and does not produce meaningful negative impacts.

Driveway Access Width

Finally, the variance to driveway access width refers to the engineering specifications in Schedule "H" of the Subdivision Bylaw, 1995. This variance serves to allow access to the loading space and parkade ramp from the street. Staff support this Variance, which can be granted through the Development Permit.

Consultation

The Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association (QCHCA) has responded to referral requests from the District of Saanich with generally positive feedback. They have requested that CAC contributions go towards the Saanich Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (see attached response letter from the QCHCA).

Advisory Design Panel (ADP) reviewed this project on March 19, 2025. ADP recommended support, subject to considerations of:

- Softening the southern hardscape area and the addition of landscape screening along the southern side of the building,
- Exploring opportunities to retain mature Garry Oak trees, and
- Provision of an outdoor amenity space.

The applicant provided fulsome responses to each consideration and justification for design decisions. Staff found:

- For the southern hardscaping, the applicant responded to both ADP and staff by including further landscaping where possible (a sedum mat and climbing vines). Other efforts were made to include climbing plants, but these proved infeasible.
- Throughout the application, tree retention was recommended by staff and explored by the applicant. Tree retention opportunities were limited by competing objectives of site access and building and parking layouts. Trees on the frontage could not be retained due to right-of-way improvements along McKenzie Avenue.
- There was not enough site area for outdoor amenity space, nor was it feasible for this use to be located on the rooftop, though the applicant did explore both possibilities.

Staff are satisfied that these considerations were explored, and that there would have been significant trade-offs to pursue these considerations further.

Community Amenity Contribution (CACs)

The applicant has consulted with the community, the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, and the District of Saanich and determined their contribution of \$172,800 be disbursed as follows: the Saanich Affordable Reserve Housing Fund (30% or \$51,840), the Local Park Acquisition Fund (20% or \$34,560), and the Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary (50% or \$86,400). Specific projects were referenced for the Nature Sanctuary funds, including a Swan Creek Bridge and site exclusion fencing to protect rare, threatened, and endangered species.

This contribution package meets the District of Saanich's CAC policy and is supported by staff.

PROCEDURES

As this application is consistent with the Official Community Plan (OCP), notice of the bylaws will be provided pursuant to Section 464(3) of the *Local Government Act* in advance of the Council meeting. This facilitates Council being able to consider the recommendations included in this report.

Should Council decide to approve the recommendations, the following procedures will occur:

1. At the initial meeting, approval of the application, first three readings of the Zoning Bylaw Amendment and approval of the Development Permit.
2. After all conditions have been met, the application will come before Council for Final Reading of the Zoning Bylaw Amendment and ratification of the Development Permit.

COUNCIL OPTIONS

1. That Council approve the recommendations in the staff Report.
2. That Council reject the application.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate implications to the District of Saanich's 2024 - 2028 Financial Plan

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The subject proposal aligns with the Housing theme in the District of Saanich's 2023 - 2027 Strategic Plan by improving the supply of diverse forms of housing in the community.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development achieves several key Official Community Plan (OCP) objectives, including adding to the District of Saanich's housing supply and supporting walkable, 15-minute communities. While the proposal falls short on tree retention and providing a mix of residential unit types, the project adds liveable units, at an appropriate density, and in the right location. Overall, the size of the site (and lack of opportunities to assemble more land) has meant that not every site amenity can be accommodated.

The project provides attractive architecture and landscaping and addresses the frontages and corner well. In general, it meets the intent of the Development Permit Area Guidelines (DPAG). Reasonable efforts to balance transportation modes have been made, with strategic TDM measures included in the project. The site functions well with legible design, units that interface with the street, and the inclusion of a loading space.

For the above noted reasons, staff support the Rezoning REZ00751 and Development Permit DPR01057 Applications, subject to the recommendations outlined on Page 1 of this Report.

Prepared by: Eric Joyal, Planner
Reviewed by: Carl Purvis, Manager of Current Planning
Approved by: Lindsay Chase, Director of Planning

Attachments:

1. Zoning Bylaw, 2003, Amendment Bylaw, 2026, No. 10242
2. Development Permit
3. Engineering Servicing Requirements – November 21, 2025
4. Official Community Plan Policies
5. Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association Response – January 22, 2025
Plans – November 6, 2025

ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:

I endorse the recommendation from the Director of Planning.

Brent Reems, Chief Administrative Officer