



REPORT

Development Services

To: Land Use and Planning Committee **Date:** 8/31/2020

From: Emilie K Adin, MCIP **File:** PAR01378
Director of Development Services

Item #: 16/2020

Subject: **823 - 903 Sixth Street: Proposed Affordable Housing Project - Preliminary Application Review**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Land Use and Planning Committee endorse the recommendations summarized in the Feedback Section of this report (Section 5) and instruct staff to provide feedback from the Committee in the Pre-Application Review letter to the applicant.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Pre-Application Review inquiry has been submitted on behalf of the Aboriginal Land Trust Society (ALT) for 823 – 903 Sixth Street. The proposal is a six storey affordable housing apartment building with 96 units which would require an Official Community Plan (OCP) amendment, rezoning, and Development Permit. The project affordability is set to meet BC Housing's Community Housing Fund.

The proposed development would have a floor space ratio (FSR) of 2.2, providing 20 three-bedroom units (21%), 37 two-bedroom units (38%), and 31 one-bedroom units (41%) which exceeds the requirements of the City's Family Friendly Housing Policy. Vehicle and long term bike parking for the site would be located on one level of underground parking.

There are a number of items that are being brought forward to the Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) for preliminary feedback, particularly related to:

1. Affordable Housing and City Funding;
2. An Official Community Plan Amendment and Building Height;
3. The Draft Uptown Streetscape Vision and Off-Site Improvements;
4. Heritage Considerations; and
5. Reduced Parking.

LUPC and staff feedback will be formally provided to the applicant in a Pre-Application Review Letter.

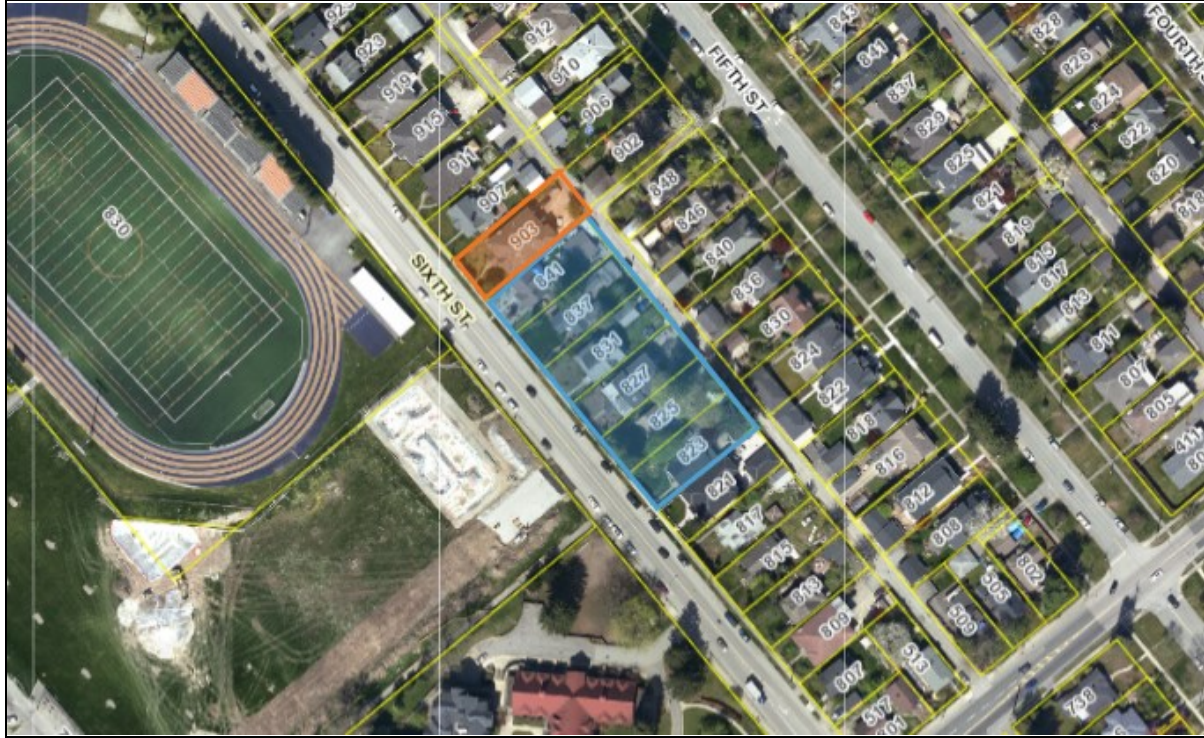
1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Site Characteristics and Context

The site, pictured in Figure 1 below, is on the western edge of the Glenbrook North neighbourhood. The site is made up of six lots (823 – 841 Sixth Street), but the applicant does have the option to include an additional lot on the northern edge of the site (903 Sixth Street). Each property is zoned to allow a single detached dwelling. The site is approximately 3,798 square metres (40,881 sq. ft.) in total, is relatively flat, and has a rear lane.

The properties on Sixth Street to the north and south of the site, as well as the properties across the lane (fronting on Fifth Avenue) are all zoned for single detached dwellings. In the OCP, Infill Townhouses are anticipated along Sixth Street to the north and south of the subject site. The properties to the east will remain single detached dwellings but have the option to add a laneway house. Across the street from the subject site is the New West Secondary School (NWSS).

Figure 1: Site Context Map. Properties highlighted in blue. Optional additional property highlighted in orange.



1.2 Proximity to Transit

The property is located on Sixth Street which is part of the Frequent Transit Network (route #106, connecting Edmonds and New Westminster SkyTrain Stations). The closest bus stop is located 77 metres (250.6 feet) away, at the intersection of Sixth Street and Eighth Avenue.

Transit Service	Project Distance
Frequent Transit Network Bus Stop	77 metres (250.6 feet)
SkyTrain Station	> 2 kilometers

1.3 Land Use Policy and Regulations

The Official Community Plan (OCP) land use designations for the subject properties are (RT) Residential – Infill Townhouse. An OCP amendment to change the land use designation to “RM Residential – Multiple Unit Buildings” would be required to allow the proposed low rise apartment building. The OCP would also be amended to change the Development Permit Area to: 1.4 Multiple Unit Residential. This change would ensure alignment between the design guidelines and the proposed land use. Similarly, the proposal is not consistent with the existing Single Detached Residential Districts (RS-2) zoning currently in place, and therefore a rezoning is required. For further information, please refer to a summary of these and related policies in Appendix A.

1.4 Draft Uptown Streetscape Vision

Sixth Street is identified as a Great Street in the Master Transportation Plan and the Official Community Plan. With recent and planned growth in the Uptown area, the City is developing an “Uptown Streetscape Vision” to inform future developments and City capital works along both Sixth Street and Sixth Avenue. The Uptown Streetscape Vision would provide the overall concept and illustrated guidelines for detailed design and implementation of these “Great Streets”. The Vision anticipates the following improvements related to this development:

- A pedestrian and cyclist connection between Sixth Street and Fifth Street (three metre-wide multi-use path with landscaped boulevard on either side), with the optimal location situated along the northern edge of 841 Sixth Street.
- A pedestrian and bike connection along the Sixth Street frontage that connects the Sixth Street to Fifth Street path to the secondary school via a proposed signal/crossing on Sixth Street. (See Figure 2).
- Additional off-site works on Sixth Street such as widening the sidewalk, adding trees to the boulevard, and undergrounding the overhead utilities.

Figure 2: Site Context Map with Proposed Pedestrian and Cyclist Connection Route Overlay



2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 General Project Description

A Pre-Application Review inquiry has been submitted on behalf of the Aboriginal Land Trust Society (ALT) to allow an affordable housing project. The project is intended to house multi-generational members of the Indigenous community including elders, families, and individuals. In addition, the Swahili Vision International Association, a Swahili community group, has been invited to participate in the project. As part of this partnership, a number of units will be made available to the Swahili community.

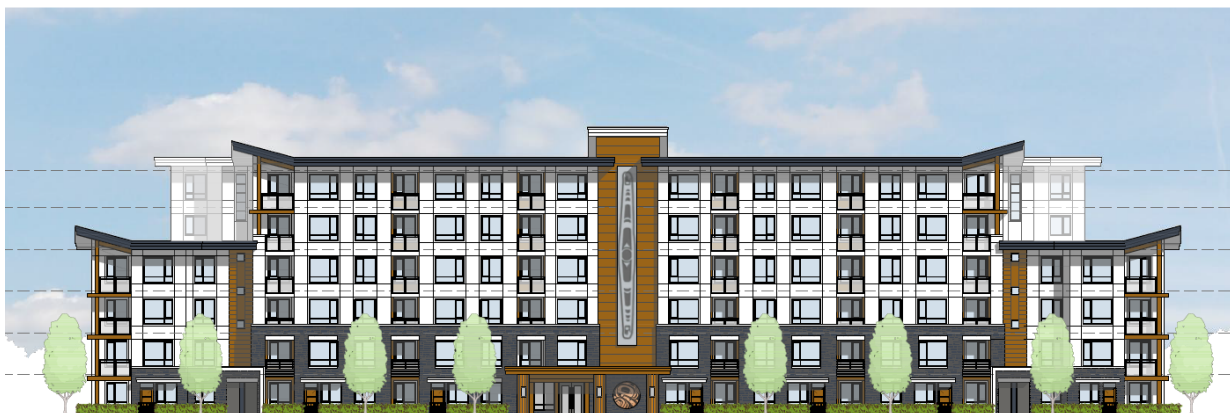
The project affordability is set to meet BC Housing's Community Housing Fund which would result in the project having the following mix of rents and income limits:

- 30% affordable housing (moderate income),
- 50% rent geared to income (housing income limit), and
- 20% deep subsidy.

The proposed development would have a floor space ratio (FSR) of 2.2, providing 20 three-bedroom units (21%), 37 two-bedroom units (38%), and 31 one-bedroom units (41%) which exceeds the requirements of the City's Family Friendly Housing Policy.

Vehicle and long term bike parking for the entire site would be primarily below grade. Parking access to the building would be from the rear lane. The applicant has proposed 52 off-street parking spaces (49% of requirement). The conceptual site and floor plans are attached in Appendix B.

Figure 2: Preliminary Front Elevation



2.2 Project Statistics

Existing Site Area	
823 – 841 Sixth Street	3,798 square metres (40,881 sq. ft.)
903 Sixth Street (optional addition)	731 square metres (7,867 sq. ft.)
Site Frontage	
823 – 841 Sixth Street	89.94 metres (295.08 ft.)
903 Sixth Street (optional addition)	16.09 metres (52.79 ft.)
Lot Depth	
823 – 841 Sixth Street	42.21 metres (138.48 ft.)
903 Sixth Street (optional addition)	45.42 metres (149.02 ft.)
Gross Floor Area	8,254.81 square metres (88,854 sq. ft.)
Floor Space Ratio	2.2 FSR
Building Height	6 storeys
Parking	52 total parking spaces 46 parking spaces 2 assessable parking spaces 4 visitor spaces

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 Affordable Housing and City Financial Support

This project would deliver much needed affordable units in New Westminster, aligning with the mandate of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan through which the City resolved to “aggressively pursue creative approaches to housing policy and on the ground projects to transform the way housing is provided in New Westminster” and to “use partnerships, negotiations with developers and leveraging City resources to secure development of below- and non-market housing, as well as affordable child care”. Further, the intent to house multigenerational members of the Indigenous community including elders, families, and individuals, is strongly aligned with the City’s reconciliation initiative.

Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT) would seek financial support from the City of New Westminster in two forms: 1) a significant per unit capital grant from the City's Housing Reserve Fund; and 2) a reduction of applicable municipal fees. At this time, the City does not have funds available to allocate to this project. Instead, staff recommend considering supporting the project’s feasibility in other ways, including:

- Exploring the proposed OCP amendment. The amendment would allow a land use and density that would result in significantly higher number of units than would otherwise be permitted, which could bolster the project's feasibility.
- Providing assistance with identifying and advocating for additional funding sources.
- Reducing some off-site streetscape improvements (as outlined below).
- Not requiring on-site retention of existing buildings (as outlined below).

The applicant has also indicated that their objective is to have the OCP and Zoning Bylaw amendments adopted by the summer of 2021. Achieving this timeline would require a streamlined application process and dedicated staff resources. This would also require the applicant to have capacity to very quickly make revisions and resubmit materials throughout the process. Should this project move forward to full application staff would provide additional information to Council regarding options for timelines for processing the project.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that this proposal, which would include a mix of rents and incomes set to meet BC Housing's Community Housing Fund and will house multigenerational members of the Indigenous community, is supported in principle subject to Council consideration as a formal development application?

3.2 Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendment and Building Height

Land Use Designation

The proposed development is not consistent with the OCP and an amendment would be required for the project to proceed. The "(RM) Residential – Multiple Unit Buildings" designation best reflects the proposal, as it anticipates low rises. This designation includes provisions for consideration of up to six storeys in circumstances where: the development permit guidelines can be met; a compelling case can be made; and appropriate amenities are provided.

Staff consider it reasonable to further explore a project that is above four storeys for the following reasons:

- This project would deliver much needed new affordable units in New Westminster, aligning with the mandate of the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.
- The intent of the project to house multigenerational members of the Indigenous community including elders, families, and individuals, is strongly aligned with the City's reconciliation initiative.
- The project exceeds the requirements of the family friendly housing policy.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that an OCP amendment to “(RM) Residential – Multiple Unit Buildings” is supported in principle for further exploration as part of a formal development application?

Development Permit Area Guidelines

To align with the land use designation change, the OCP would also be amended to change the site’s Development Permit Area (DPA) to “1.4 Multiple Unit Residential”. This DPA includes specific design guidelines with the intent to integrate multi-unit housing forms into the city’s single detached dwelling and ground oriented housing neighbourhoods. The DPA also includes specific guidelines for consideration in relation to any building that is proposed to exceed four storeys, including:

- **Ground Oriented Units:** When considering buildings over four storeys, the development permit guidelines require two storey, three bedroom, family-friendly, ground oriented units at the base of the building. The application proposes one storey units, including a mix of one, two, and three bedroom configurations instead. In this case, staff recommend supporting the proposed single storey units, if it can be demonstrated that this approach is best suited for the housing model proposed. Though, further opportunities to enhance the ground orientation of these main floor units would need to be identified.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that one storey units could be explored at the building base if appropriately ground-oriented?

- **Transition to Neighbouring Properties and Visual Impact:** The need to appropriately transition to the neighbouring properties (include those across the lane) is particularly important on this site, given that the surrounding land uses will remain a lower density. The design details (e.g. massing, setbacks, materials, colour, overshadow and overlook) must ensure an appropriate transition to the neighbouring properties and must minimize the visual impact of the height of the building. If this project advances to a formal application, further consideration would need to be given by the applicant to the development permit guidelines.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that six storey massing could be further explored provided that an appropriate transition to the surrounding lower density neighbourhood can be achieved?

3.3 Draft Uptown Streetscape Vision and Off-Site Improvements

The advancement of this project provides an opportunity to implement the Uptown Streetscape Vision. There are two main elements for consideration: the pedestrian connection across the subject site and the upgrades envisioned along Sixth Street.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Connection

The Uptown Streetscape Vision, proposes a pedestrian and cyclist connection between Sixth and Fifth Streets. This would include a three metre wide multi-use path with landscaped boulevard on either side. Staff recommend that a formal application provide the space and include a design for this pathway, which could be provided as a statutory right-of-way or through a land dedication.

The optimal location for this pathway is along the northern edge of 841 Sixth Street. Therefore, staff recommend that the optional property (903 Sixth Street) not be incorporated into a formal development application and that the multi-use path be provided along the edge of the project site (i.e. appropriate space be provided on 841 Sixth Street).

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that:

- *a formal development application should design and incorporate the desired pedestrian and cyclist connection between Sixth Street and Fifth Street;*
- *the development should provide sufficient space to achieve the desired connection through a SROW or dedication; and*
- *it is preferable for the optional property (903 Sixth Street) not to be incorporated in the project?*

Sixth Street Off-Site Improvements

As per the Uptown Streetscape Vision, a number of off-street improvements are envisioned along the Sixth Street frontage of the subject site including a pedestrian and bike connection, adding trees to the boulevard, installing street lighting, and undergrounding the overhead utilities. It would be challenging for an affordable housing project to accommodate the costs associated with this level of off-site works. Should a formal application be submitted, staff would work with the applicant to explore various methods of achieving the desired outcome, while also ensuring that the proposal for affordable housing remains viable.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that further exploration of the extent to which the application can incorporate the off-site work on Sixth Street occur, provided it can remain a viable affordable housing project?

3.4 Heritage Considerations

With the exception of 903 Sixth Street (built in 1994), the houses located at 823 – 841 Sixth Street range in age from 1911 to 1943. In the case of redevelopment, where a site includes buildings of this age, the City's policy is that heritage assets be identified, retained, restored, and protected.

Table 1: Summary of Property Details

Property Address	Building Age	Developer	Inventory Listed
823 Sixth Street	1912	Bradley Brothers	No
825 Sixth Street	1911	[unknown]	No
827 Sixth Street	1940	Samuel Jaggart	No
831 Sixth Street	1912	J.S. Cameron	No
837 Sixth Street	1941	P. Keymer	No
841 Sixth Street	1943	T. Holzman	No

However, given that the proposal is intended to provide homes for members of the Indigenous community, and that all the houses are representative of the City's colonial history, staff recommend not pursuing on-site retention as part of this project. Not requiring the retention of buildings representative of settler history, and subsequently reducing the costs to the project, is considered to be aligned with the City's reconciliation initiatives. Should a formal application be submitted, staff would work with the applicant to determine if any of the buildings have heritage significance and to offer those houses for private relocation, prior to demolition.

Does the LUPC support staff advising the applicant that on-site retention of existing buildings does not need to be considered as part of a formal development application?

3.5 Parking

The proposed development assumes a parking reduction to 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit. As this site is within 400 metres of the Frequent Transit Network, this ratio aligns with the City's Inclusionary Housing Policy which would apply to the below-market and non-market rental units (as defined by the Policy). A reduction in the parking ratio would also be considered for the remainder of the units, in alignment with the City's Secured Market Rental Housing Policy. The proposal is also proposing a reduction in the number of visitors parking stalls required.

Should this reduction in parking be requested in a formal application, the application would need to include a *Transportation Statement* in accordance with the City's Draft Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) Guidelines, in order to assist the City in assessing the proposed variance to the on-site parking. All reductions should be supported by meaningful Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures that promote the use of sustainable modes on the site (e.g. bicycle infrastructure), as well as a means of getting to and from the site (e.g. transit, car-share etc.). Staff would be considerate of the overall affordability of the project during the discussions related to the extent of the TDM measures to be provided.

Does the LUPC support staff exploring the proposed parking reduction in combination with the provision of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures that promote the use of sustainable modes on the site, provided the project can remain a viable affordable housing project?

3.6 Tree Retention and Protection

It is noted that the proposed project site is home to a number of significant trees which are an asset to the urban canopy and urban realm as well as to the livability of the proposed development. In support of the Urban Forest Management Strategy and Tree Bylaw No. 7799, the formal application would need to include a tree survey and arborist report. Should this proposal proceed to a formal application, staff would work with the applicant to explore opportunities for minimizing tree loss, and where necessary, ensuring that replacement trees are provided in accordance with the Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw.

4. CONSULTATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Feedback from the LUPC and staff will be incorporated into a PAR letter that would be forwarded to the applicant. Should the proponent proceed with formal development applications for the site, they would be required to undertake public engagement.

The consultation and review process would typically include applicant-led community consultation, liaising with the Glenbrook North Residents Association, and review by the New Westminster Design Panel and Advisory Planning Commission. The applicant has indicated that their objective is to have the OCP and Zoning Bylaw amendments adopted by the summer of 2021. Achieving this timeline would require a streamlined application process. Should this project move forward to full application, staff would provide additional information to Council regarding options for timelines for processing the project, including public consultation. As outlined in Section 3.4 of this report, staff would not refer the application to the Community Heritage Commission.

5. FEEDBACK FROM LAND USE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Staff is seeking feedback from the LUPC on the proposed development. In addition, staff seeks LUPC endorsement of the following recommendations, specifically that the LUPC support that staff advise the applicants that:

- A. this proposal, which would include a mix of rents and incomes set to meet BC Housing's Community Housing Fund and will house multigenerational members of the Indigenous community, is supported in principle subject to Council consideration as a formal development application;

- B. an OCP amendment to “(RM) Residential – Multiple Unit Buildings” is supported in principle for further exploration as part of a formal development application;
- C. one storey units could be explored at the building base if appropriately ground-oriented;
- D. six storey massing could be further explored, provided that an appropriate transition to the surrounding lower density neighbourhood can be achieved;
- E. a formal development application should design and incorporate the desired the pedestrian and cyclist connection between Sixth Street and Fifth Street; the development should provide sufficient space to achieve the desired connection through a SROW or dedication; and it is preferable for the optional property (903 Sixth Street) not to be incorporated in the project;
- F. further exploration of the extent to which the application can incorporate the off-site work on Sixth Street occur, provided it can remain a viable affordable housing project;
- G. on-site retention of existing buildings does not need to be considered as part of a formal development application; and
- H. exploring the proposed parking reduction in combination with the provision of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures that promote the use of sustainable modes on the site, provided the project can remain a viable affordable housing project.

6. OPTIONS

The following options are offered for consideration of the LUPC:

1. That the Land Use and Planning Committee endorse the recommendations summarized in the Feedback Section of this report (Section 5) and instruct staff to provide feedback from the Committee in the Pre-Application Review letter to the applicant.
2. That the Land Use and Planning Committee provide staff with alternative feedback.

Staff recommends Option 1.

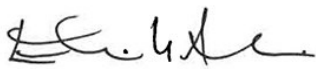
ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Policy and Regulations Summary

Appendix B: Conceptual Site & Floor Plans

This report has been prepared by:

Lynn Roxburgh, Senior Policy Planner



Emilie K Adin, MCIP

Director of Development Services



Appendix A

Policy and Regulations Summary

POLICY AND REGULATIONS SUMMARY

Official Community Plan (OCP)

The Official Community Plan (OCP) land use designations for the subject property is (RT) Residential – Infill Townhouse. The purpose of this designation to allow small scale, side-by-side townhouses and rowhouses which are compatible within areas of single detached housing and other lower density ground oriented housing.

The proposed six storey building is not consistent with the Official Community Plan (OCP) land use designation. An amendment to the OCP would be required to change the land use designation to (RM) Residential – Multiple Unit Buildings. The principal forms and uses permitted in this land use designation include: townhouses, rowhouses, stacked townhouses and low rises. Only in circumstances where the Development Permit Area guidelines can be met, a compelling case can be made, and appropriate amenities are provided will a five or six storey low rise building be considered.

Development Permit Area and Design Guidelines

The subject site is located within the 1.3 Townhouses and Rowhouses Development Permit Area, which aligns with the current land use designation, but is not consistent with the proposed land use. The OCP would also be amended to change the Development Permit Area to: 1.4 Multiple Unit Residential. The intent of this Development Permit Area is to integrate multi-unit housing forms into the city's single detached dwelling and ground oriented housing neighbourhoods. The Development Permit Area also includes specific design guidelines for consideration for when a building is proposing to go above four storeys.

Zoning Bylaw

The subject properties are currently zoned Single Detached Residential Districts (RS-2) which would permit single detached dwellings and secondary suites. The proposal would not be consistent with current zoning and as such an application for rezoning is required.

Heritage Review Policy

In June 2011, Council approved a revised heritage review policy where demolition applications for a building or structure older than 50 years is automatically forwarded to the Planning Division for review and may be referred to the Community Heritage Commission (CHC) for comment if it is deemed by the Planning Division to have sufficient heritage significance. The CHC could make a recommendation to Council that a Temporary Protection Order be placed on the property, in order to discuss retention strategies with the owner or applicant.



Appendix B

Conceptual Site & Floor Plans

LUMA - New Westminster Updated July 31, 2020
823 - 903 6th street, New Westminster

DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

SITE INFORMATION									
Site Area	1	823	14.93	42.21	630.20	6,784			
Consolidated 6 lots	2	825	14.93	42.21	630.20	6,784			
	3	827	14.93	42.21	630.20	6,784			
	4	831	14.93	42.21	630.20	6,784			
	5	837	14.93	42.21	630.20	6,784			
	6	841	15.24	42.21	643.28	6,924			
	7	903	16.09	42.21	679.16				
					Square Feet	40,842	sf	2.2	89,853
					Square meters	3,794.3	m2		

RENTAL APARTMENT UNITS

Room Type	Parking	Main Floor	2nd Floor	3rd Floor	4th Floor	5th Floor	6th Floor	Total Units	Unit Area	Total Area	Unit Mix
A 1 Bedroom		4	7	7	7	7	7	39	584 SF	22,776 SF	41%
B 2 Bedroom		6	7	7	7	5	5	37	873 SF	32,301	39%
C 3 Bedroom		2	2	2	2	0	0	8	1,031 SF	8,248 SF	8%
D 3 Bedroom		2	2	2	2	0	0	8	1,079 SF	8,632 SF	8%
E 3 Bedroom							2	4	1,068 SF	4,272 SF	4%
#UNIT / FLOOR	0	14	18	18	18	14	14	96	Avg Unit 794 SF net	76,229 SF	100%
UNIT AREA/FLOOR	0	11,794 SF	14,419 SF	14,419 SF	14,419 SF	10,589 SF	10,589 SF				
Common Area	0	1,691 SF	1,726 SF	1,726 SF	1,726 SF	1,921 SF	1,921 SF			10,711 SF	
Entry Lobby		595 SF								595 SF	
Amenity		2,065 SF								2,065 SF	
GROSS FLOOR AREA	0	16,145 SF	16,145 SF	16,145 SF	16,145 SF	12,510 SF	12,510 SF		933 sf gross	89,600 SF	
NET EFFICIENCY		73 %	89 %	89 %	89 %	85 %	85 %			85 %	

one bedroom	39
	41%
two bedroom	37
	39%
three bedroom	20
	21%

Units	96
	100.0%

Check 89,600 sf

REQUIRED PARKING

TOTAL UNITS			96	units
CARS/UNIT	0.50	cars/unit required	48.0	cars
VISITOR PARKING			4.0	cars
TOTAL	2	Disabled Access Stalls required	52.0	Cars Required

PROPOSED PARKING

BLDG 3				
TOTAL UNITS		RESIDENT PARKING	49	cars
		VISITOR PARKING	4	cars
TOTAL			53	cars
NOTE		SMALL CARS INCLUDED	0%	small cars
		DISABLED PARKING INCLUDED	2	cars

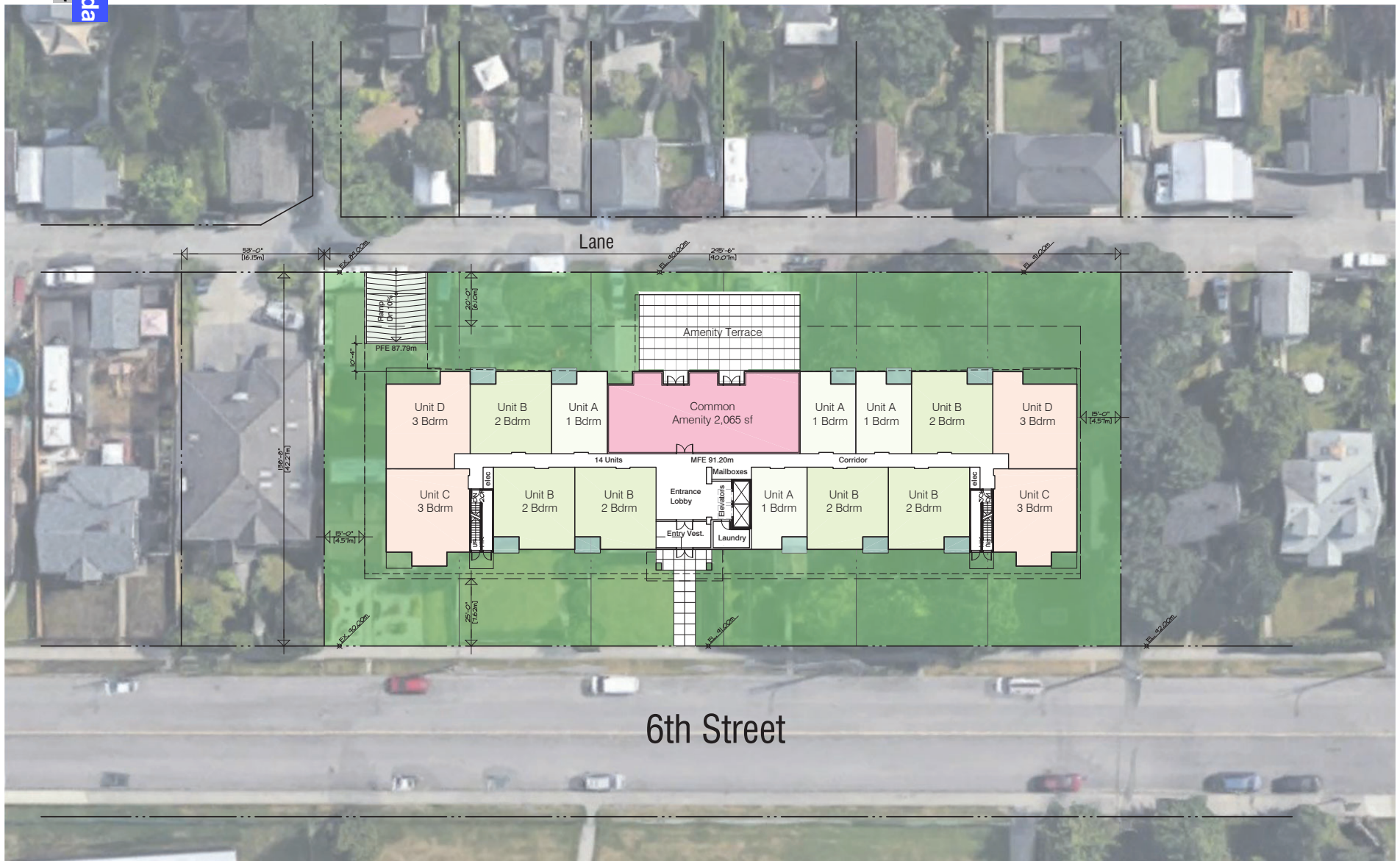


Aug 12th, 2020

Development Summary

SK-1.00
Aboriginal Land Trust





Aug 12th, 2020



Conceptual Site & Main Floor Plan

1/16" = 1'-0"

SK-2.01

Aboriginal Land Trust



Aug 12th, 2020



Conceptual Parking Plan

1/16" = 1'-0"

SK-3.00

Aboriginal Land Trust





Aug 12th, 2020



Conceptual 5th & 6th Floor Plan

1/16" = 1'-0"

SK-3.02

Aboriginal Land Trust