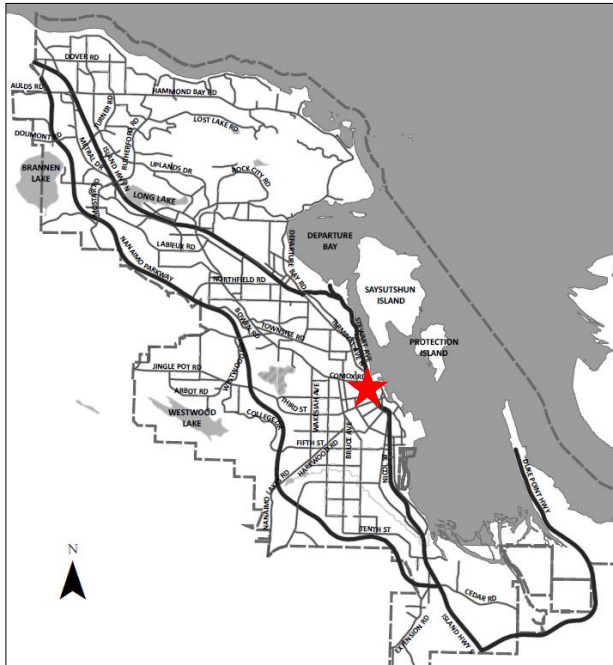


DATE OF MEETING | December 16, 2024

AUTHORED BY | PAYTON CARTER, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING

SUBJECT | **DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DP1350 – 77 CHAPEL STREET**



Proposal:

A 162-unit multi-family development

Zoning:

DT5 – Chapel Front

City Plan Land Use Designation:

Primary Urban Centre

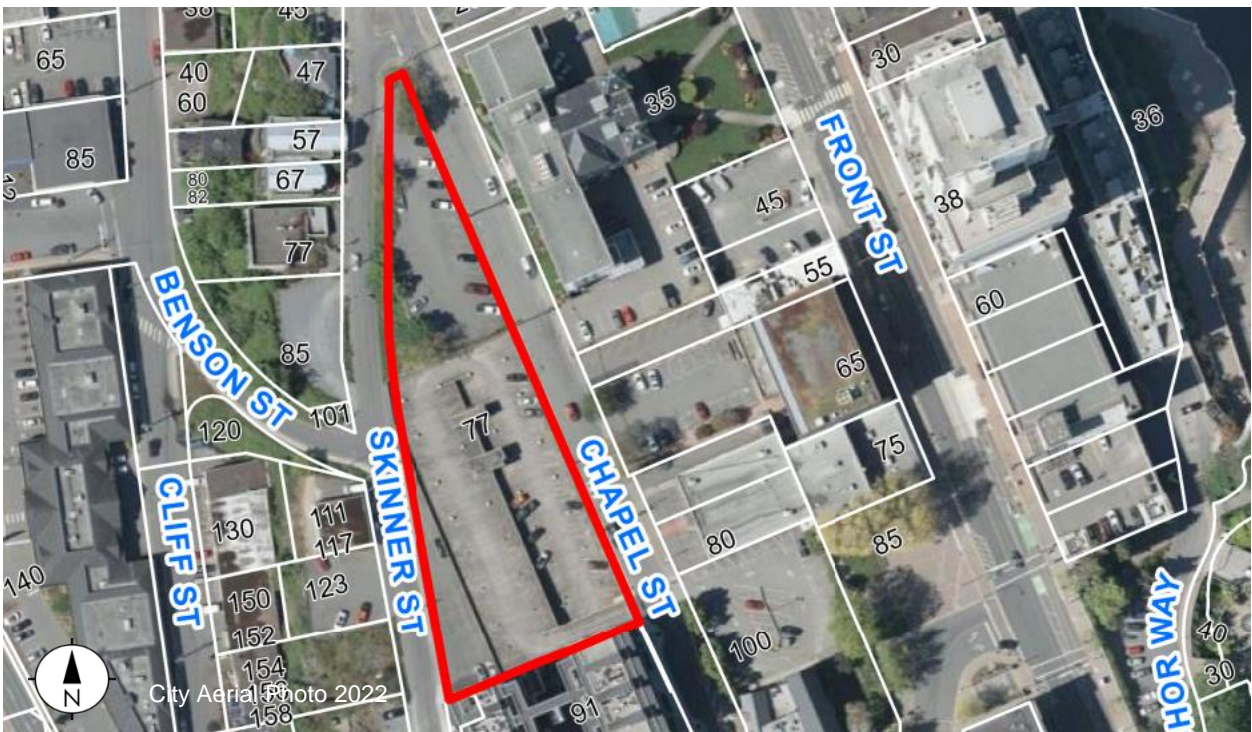
Development Permit Areas:

DPA4 – Abandoned Mine Workings Hazards

DPA8 – Form and Character

Lot Area:

4,206m²



OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration a development permit application for a multi-family residential development at 77 Chapel Street.

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Permit No. DP1350 for a multi-family residential development at 77 Chapel Street.

BACKGROUND

A development permit application, DP1350, was received from Primex Investments Ltd., on behalf of 6577 Nanaimo Holdings Ltd., to permit a 162-unit multi-family residential development.

A previous development permit, DP1256, was approved in 2023 for 157-unit multi-family development. The design has since changed, and the owner would like to proceed with a revised development proposal.

Subject Property and Site Context

The subject property is located at a prominent site in Downtown Nanaimo, located at the intersection of Skinner Street and Chapel Street. The property is irregularly shaped and slopes downhill significantly from north to south. A parkade structure currently exists on the lot and is proposed to be removed to accommodate the proposed development.

The surrounding neighbourhood contains a variety of uses including mixed-use and multi-family developments, the Nanaimo Law Courts, and range of commercial uses, including restaurants, retail businesses, and offices within walking distance of the site. Both Maffeo Sutton Park and the Nanaimo Waterfront Walkway are located approximately 200m to the north.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

The applicant is proposing to construct a six storey multi-family residential development with 162 units including six townhouse units along Skinner Street and five live/work units along Chapel Street. The development is intended to include both rental and strata housing. Under-building parking is proposed as well as various amenities within the building and on-site. The development will include studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units and townhouses. The unit composition is as follows:

Unit Type	Number of Units	Unit Size
Studio	22	34m ²
1-Bedroom	100	49m ² -59m ²
1-Bedroom Live/Work	5	69m ²
2-Bedroom	29	73m ² -93m ²
2-Bedroom Townhouse	6	80m ² -92m ²
Total	162	

The proposed gross floor area is 10,940m² and the total Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 2.60, which is below the maximum permitted FAR of 4.25 in the site-specific DT5 zone. The proposal complies with all zoning and parking requirements. As such, no variances are proposed.

Site Design

The proposed building overlooks both Chapel Street and Skinner Street and is situated strategically to animate both street frontages and provide a continuation of the pedestrian-oriented streetscape. The portion of the building along Chapel Street is setback to facilitate pedestrian circulation. Two public outdoor plazas are proposed and designed to ensure accessibility and address the grade difference across the property.

Public art is to be provided at the corner of Chapel Street and Skinner Street, with a minimum value of \$38,000, in accordance with an existing covenant registered on title. The art selection is to be completed prior to Building Permit issuance and the art will provide additional interest to the corner plaza. A Statutory Right-of-Way for public use will be secured for the outdoor plazas located at either end of the site, and for the pedestrian connection through the site, along the south property line. Site design features including direct connections to the street, urban plazas, tiered raingardens and a fenced dog run create shared public spaces and activate the site.

Building Design

The proposed apartment building, townhouses, and a two-storey under-building parkade are interconnected. A prominent pedestrian access to the apartment building is located on Chapel Street and defined by vertical architectural features, areas of recess for visual interest, glazing, and wood-look siding. Also along Chapel Street are direct pedestrian entrances to the live/work units on the ground floor, which are protected by the balconies above. The townhouse units have direct pedestrian access to Skinner Street with privacy screening, ground-level patios, and private balconies. Materials used for the townhouses complement those of the apartment building and include wood-look metal and fibre cement siding in various shades used through the building façades. A rooftop amenity is provided in the residential building, complete with outdoor seating, planters, and an outdoor kitchen, as well as a shared indoor amenity room and gym.

The parkade is secured by an overhead entry gate, which is recessed from the sidewalk along Skinner Street to avoid pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Long-term bicycle storage, service rooms, and general storage areas are located within the parkade.

To highlight the prominent building corner at the intersection, a composition of vertical multi-storey panelling, alternating windows, and vertical slat walls surround the edges of the corner balconies. These design features add a unique visual interest that distinguishes the building from others and will be visible from the waterfront and throughout the neighbourhood. The building form is

complementary to neighbouring developments and offers continuous street presence along Chapel Street and Skinner Street.

Landscape Design

The proposed landscaping includes both hardscaping and softscape elements. Hardscaping includes pedestrian walkways throughout the site with various types of pavers, stone seating, and landscape boulders. The public outdoor amenity spaces are further enhanced with urban plaza features including formal landscaping, rain gardens, a variety of outdoor seating options, and lighting. Softscape areas within the plazas include a variety of flowering perennials, hedges, and trees to reintroduce vegetation to the site. The northern plaza will also include two large flowering focal trees (Galaxy Magnolia) with ground-level lighting. Bollard lighting is proposed along the walkway along the south property and within the plazas. Additional pockets of landscaping are proposed around the perimeter of the site.

The proposed development substantially meets the intent of the General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines and the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines by providing a six-storey building with landmark design features at the prominent northern corner of the lot. The proposed building is setback to allow pedestrian areas and well-defined and accessible public spaces are provided throughout the site. Continuous ground-level street frontages, live/work units, and townhouses are provided in accordance with the Urban Design Strategies for Chapel Street discussed in the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines. Additionally, the proposal achieves desired infill and incorporates underground parking.

Design Advisory Panel

The Design Advisory Panel (DAP), at its meeting held on 2024-SEP-26, accepted DP1350 as presented and provided the following recommendations:

- Consider adding texture, colour and/or materials to break up the uniformity of the exterior in a way that would make the form and character of the building more iconic and suitable to its location;
- Consider enhancing the form and character of the townhomes by adding a variety of materials, colours, and more durable and authentic materials to the exterior;
- Consider adding a green roof or other treatment to the townhome rooftops as a way to improve the appearance from above;
- Consider creating a retail unit on the ground floor of the north end of the building to better animate the corner plaza;
- Consider ways to enhance the north corner as a potential landmark as per the applicable design guidelines;
- Consider relocating the smoking area away from the plaza on the north end of the building;
- Consider ways to better address the grade of the units on Chapel Street;
- Consider ways to ensure security along the pedestrian corridor on the south end of the building by adding windows on the south face and by providing wayfinding and suitable lighting;
- Consider relocating the dog park and ensuring materials used, such as fencing, are appropriate to the neighbourhood context and that the ground material is durable;
- Consider adding texture to the retaining walls along Chapel Street;
- Consider adding fenestration on the concrete walls along Skinner Street as a way to add visual interest and to provide lighting in the parkade;

- Consider adding some shaded areas to the rooftop amenity space; and,
- Consider bike racks that can accommodate larger bikes.

The applicant subsequently submitted revised plans in response to the DAP recommendations, including the following key design revisions:

- Incorporation of narrow vertical panel treatment, alternating windows, and vertical slat walls surrounding the edges of the corner balconies at the prominent northern corner of the site.
- Additional textures and materials were introduced, including a lighter overall colour palette.
- Increased use of wood-look siding and strengthened design of the townhouse units.
- Increased landscaping, design features, and public art are proposed to animate the northern plaza.
- Larger windows were added to the south building face and ground-level bollard lighting was introduced in public plazas and walkways between the proposed building and 91 Chapel Street to ensure public safety and improve overall visibility. The lighting also acts as a wayfinding feature.
- Short-term bicycle parking was relocated to covered areas to provide weather protection.
- Decorative picket fencing was added to the dog run area.

Staff support and recommend approval of the proposed design, which substantially meets the applicable design guidelines, addresses both street frontages, complements existing streetscapes, and supports a mix of unit types with private and public amenities in the Downtown and within close proximity to services, employment centres, and destination parks and recreation amenities along the waterfront. |

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit Application No. DP1350 is for a 162-unit multi-family residential development.
- The proposed development substantially meets the intent of the General Development Permit Area Design Guidelines and the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Guidelines.
- No variances are proposed. |

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms and Conditions
ATTACHMENT B: Subject Property Map
ATTACHMENT C: Site Plan and Parking Plan
ATTACHMENT D: Building Elevations and Details
ATTACHMENT E: Building Renderings
ATTACHMENT F: Landscape Plan |

Submitted by:

Lainya Rowett
Manager, Current Planning |

Concurrence by:

Jeremy Holm
Director, Planning & Development |