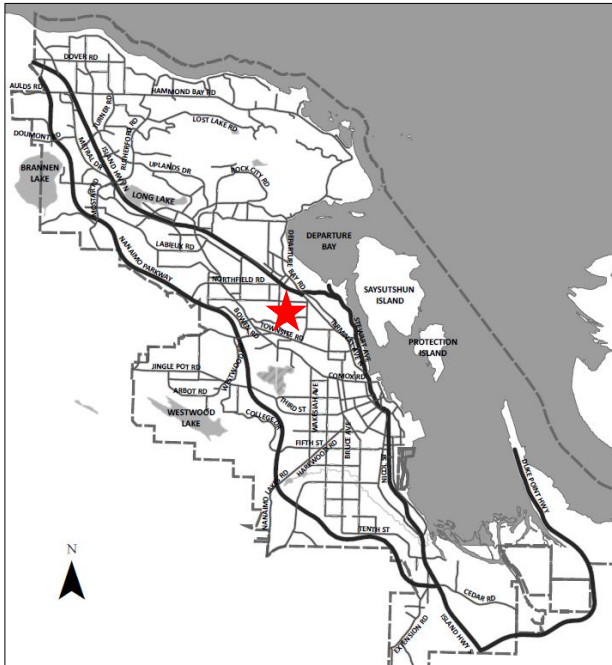


DATE OF MEETING | February 3, 2025 |

AUTHORED BY | CALEB HORN, PLANNER, CURRENT PLANNING |

SUBJECT | **DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT APPLICATION NO. DVP473 –
1200 DUFFERIN CRESCENT** |



Proposal:

Variance to building height for the proposed Nanaimo Cancer Centre

Zoning:

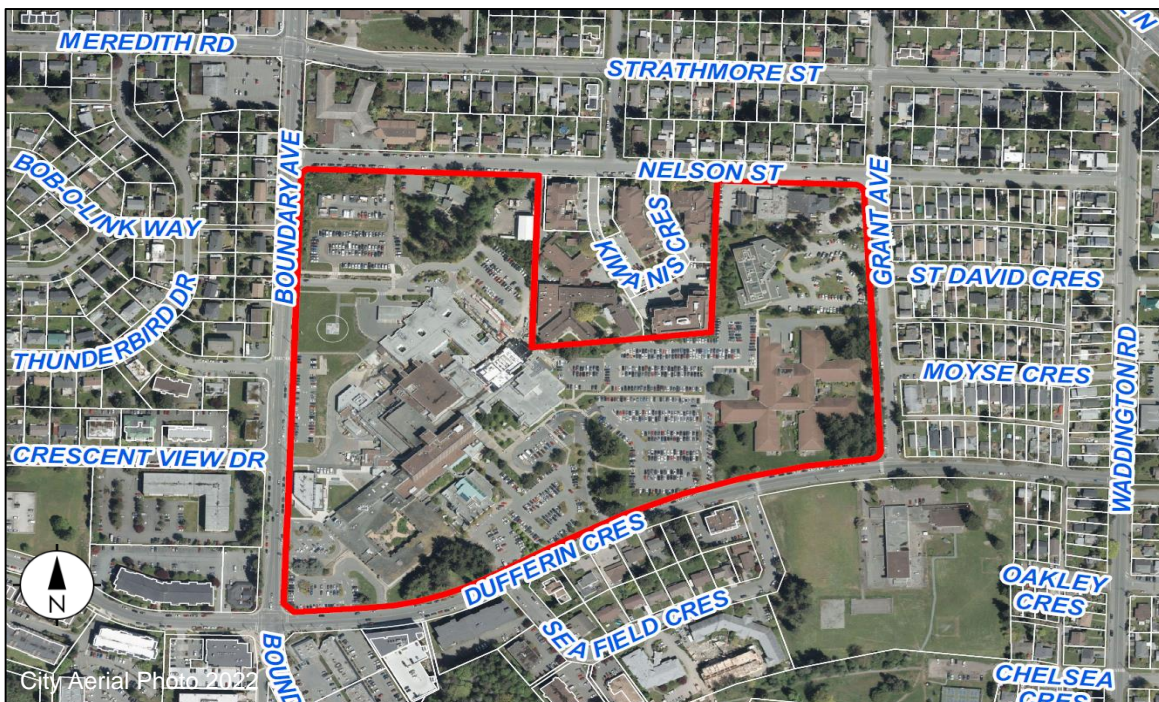
CS1 – Community Service One

City Plan Land Use Designation:

Secondary Urban Centre – Hospital
Urban Centre

Lot Area:

14.6ha



OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To present for Council's consideration a development variance permit application to increase the maximum permitted building height for the proposed Nanaimo Cancer Centre at 1200 Dufferin Crescent (Nanaimo Regional General Hospital).

Recommendation

That Council issue Development Variance Permit No. DVP473 for the Nanaimo Cancer Centre with a building height variance as outlined in the "Proposed Variance" section of the Staff Report dated 2025-FEB-03.

BACKGROUND

A development variance permit application, DVP473, was received from Stantec Architecture, on behalf of Island Health, to vary the provisions of the "City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" (the "Zoning Bylaw") to increase the maximum permitted building height from 14m to 25m for the proposed Nanaimo Cancer Centre located at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH) at 1200 Dufferin Crescent. While a form and character development permit is not required for the institutional use, Staff recognize the applicant's efforts in building design to complement the existing hospital campus and surrounding neighbourhood.

Subject Property and Site Context

The NRGH property is a large site in the Hospital Neighbourhood, located to the northeast of the intersection of Boundary Avenue and Dufferin Crescent. The NRGH campus consists of a number of buildings that have been constructed in phases since opening in 1963, the most recent major addition being the two-storey Intensive Care Unit expansion completed in 2023. The surrounding neighbourhood includes a mix of residential, institutional, retail, and medical-focused office uses. Nearby recent developments include a five-storey medical office building at 1515 Dufferin Crescent (completed 2021) and the first phase of a five-storey seniors' housing development at 1125 Seafield Crescent (completed 2023).

Statutory notification has taken place prior to Council's consideration of the variance.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Development

Island Health is proposing to commence work on the Nanaimo Cancer Centre this year which will be located on the southern portion of the site, close to Dufferin Crescent. The building footprint will be sited over a portion of an existing parking lot and landscaped area to the south of the existing Ambulatory Care Block. Some tree removal and replacement will take place, and displacement of parking spaces will be made up by expanding parking areas elsewhere onsite.

To the west of the proposed building footprint, a number of existing mature trees will be retained. The proposed building siting will be outside of the NRGH helipad flight path.

The facility will be a four-storey building with a gross floor area of approximately 6,918m² and an enclosed walkway will connect the new building with the existing Main Block Nursing Tower, on the north side of the Ambulatory Care Block (see Attachment C). This project is part of a multi-phase development plan for NRGH, and improvements in this phase will include landscaping, sidewalk connections, and redevelopment of parking areas; however, these improvements do not form part of the development variance permit application.

The proposed Nanaimo Cancer Centre will provide enhanced cancer care for the region by offering radiation therapy and associated services. The facility will include PET/CT scanners and linear accelerators which require concrete vaults, necessitating a significant amount of mechanical equipment. The building is proposed to include a rooftop mechanical penthouse in addition to cooling towers to accommodate these services.

Proposed Variance

Maximum Building Height

The maximum permitted height for a principal building in the CS1 zone is 14m. The proposed building height is 25m for the highest portion of the building, a requested variance of 11m.

The applicant has requested the variance in order to accommodate the size of building necessary for cancer care programming which requires approximately 5m of height for each storey (see Attachment D). The building height includes four storeys of clinical space in addition to the mechanical penthouse that will appear as a fifth storey on the northern portion of the building roof. Additional rooftop elements (elevator shaft and cooling towers) are exempt from building height per the Zoning Bylaw section 6.8.1.

The highest portion of the building with the mechanical penthouse will be sited away from Dufferin Crescent towards the centre of the NRGH site. The closest portion of the building to the street will be two-storeys in height and approximately 6m from the front property line, while the larger four-storey massing will be approximately 10m from the property line and the mechanical penthouse greater than 30m from the property line. The tallest existing building on the NRGH campus is the Nursing Tower that has a building height of approximately 21m.

The nearest adjacent properties to the proposed building footprint include single residential dwellings and a four-storey apartment complex on the opposite side of Dufferin Crescent to the south. A shadow study provided by the applicant (see Attachment G) shows some shadowing occurring on-site with minimal off-site shadowing.

Staff support the proposed building height variance for the Nanaimo Cancer Centre and acknowledge City Plan policies in the Hospital Urban Centre that recognize the centre as a “city-wide and regional centre for health services” (D4.3.48), in addition to policy in the Hospital Area Plan to “support the operation and growth of the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital at 1200 Dufferin Crescent as the health services centre of the region”. City Plan policies for Secondary Urban Centres also support low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise building forms with typical building heights between two and 12 storeys.]

SUMMARY POINTS

- Development Permit Application No. DVP473 proposes a variance to increase the maximum permitted building height from 14m to 25m for the proposed Nanaimo Cancer Centre located at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital (NRGH) at 1200 Dufferin Crescent.
- The applicant has requested the variance in order to accommodate the size of building necessary for cancer care programming.
- Staff support the proposed building height variance.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Permit Terms
ATTACHMENT B: Subject Property Map
ATTACHMENT C: Proposed Site Plan
ATTACHMENT D: Proposed Building Elevations
ATTACHMENT E: Proposed Building Renderings
ATTACHMENT F: Context Photos
ATTACHMENT G: Shadow Study

Submitted by:

Lainya Rowett
Manager, Current Planning

Concurrence by:

Lisa Brinkman
Acting Director, Planning & Development