

April 14, 2026

Daniel Feeney, Rezoning Planner
Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability
City of Vancouver
510 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4A8

**RE: 730 Raymur Avenue Rezoning Application
ODP Amendment Rationale**

Dear Mr. Feeney,

Further to the rezoning application for 730 Raymur Avenue, the following provides a rationale for the associated Official Development Plan (ODP) Amendment.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks to amend the Vancouver ODP's Generalized Land Use (GLU) designation for 730 Raymur Avenue from "Residential Low-rise" to "Mixed-Use High-Rise 1", to facilitate a mixed-use development consisting of two rental towers at 22 and 25 storeys. The amendment would enable this site to transition into a vibrant social hub that diversifies the housing stock in Strathcona and delivers significant community benefits. The scale of the project is intended to be substantive enough to economically support these proposed benefits, while considering shadowing impacts and contextual fit with the evolving urban fabric of the area.

POLICY CONTEXT

While the ODP provides a new policy framework for Vancouver, it is based on existing Council approved land use policies. The existing designation for the site, therefore, is a function of the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Local Area Plan, which was approved in 2014. Public engagement to inform that land use policy was completed more than 10 years ago, from 2012 to 2014.

The DTES Plan envisions the site's sub-area of Kiwassa West to transition from its existing industrial character to residential, with a 20% social housing requirement. An update to the DTES Plan was recently approved by council, which acknowledged that 10-Year market housing targets for the neighbourhood fell short by 54%, while the social housing target was exceeded by 179%. It recognized how project viability has been limited due to available height and density, inclusionary housing requirements, and an increasingly challenging economic climate.

The policy update allows for market rental projects up to 11.0 FSR and 30-storey maximums to support the 20% inclusionary housing requirement in the Oppenheimer District and Thornton Park areas. While this policy update did not include the Kiwassa area, it is an acknowledgement of the heights and densities necessary for market housing projects to deliver the desired public benefits established in the DTES Plan.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Recognizing that the existing land use policy for the site does not allow for an economically viable development, the applicant team undertook preliminary community engagement to better understand local priorities and inform the proposal direction. What we heard was the following:

- The DTES has been able to absorb a lot of the City's much needed social housing;
- There is a strong demand for public benefits to support that housing;
- While retail is needed, it often seems challenged in this area. Retail viability will rely on attracting public interest and getting the right tenants that suit the needs of the community;
- Thoughtfully integrating new developments into the existing environment, creating more open space and responding to the artistic character of Strathcona is important; and,
- Mixed opinions regarding building height, with some residents willing to accept taller buildings or less emphasis on affordability in exchange for public benefits.

ODP AMENDMENT RATIONALE

Vision and Foundational Principles

Our proposal responds to the Vision and Foundational Principles of the Vancouver ODP by contributing toward the long-term goals of Equity and Resilience. Recognizing that Strathcona has been disproportionately impacted by historical planning gaps, this proposal represents a meaningful step toward creating a more balanced mix of housing and services. While existing land use policies focus on social housing in a way that can overlook the day-to-day needs of residents, our proposal seeks to complement the area's residential growth with essential community-serving infrastructure. By introducing childcare, arts and culture space, and commercial opportunities to an underserved area, the project supports the ODP's broader objective of building inclusive and complete communities.

Three Big Ideas

Equitable Housing and Complete Neighbourhoods: The proposed courtyard, childcare, arts and culture space, and retail units will contribute positively to Strathcona becoming a more complete and walkable community. The project also delivers 436 secured market rental homes, with no existing tenant displacement. Critically, 45% of these homes offer two or three bedrooms, supporting both the ODP and DTES Plan's goal of creating family-friendly urban environments. This will contribute to an improved housing mix in the community, where most new housing development has been heavily biased towards social and supportive housing.

An Economy that Works for All: The proposal supports the City's vision for Kiwassa West to transition from industrial to mixed use residential, and aligns with the General Urban designation of the site in the Regional Growth Strategy. Demisable commercial space at grade is designed to support a wide range of local-serving businesses, and will provide job opportunities that support a resilient neighbourhood economy.

Daycare is an especially important part of supporting Vancouver's economic vibrancy. The Strathcona neighbourhood is significantly underserved for early childcare services, particularly for young children under the age of 36 months. The Downtown Vancouver BIA have also advocated for more daycare capacity nearby workplaces for many years. This proposal creates childcare space for up to 110 children, in direct response to this need.

Further, the proposal is positioned to support the soon-to-be-completed St. Paul's Health Campus, located within a 15-minute walk of the site. The False Creek Flats Plan includes a limited number of rental development opportunities surrounding the hospital. The proposed rental housing and balanced unit mix will ensure hospital staff have a diversity of options, alongside shops and services, childcare, and amenity space.

Climate Protection and Restored Ecosystems: Rather than extending the building footprint to the minimum possible setbacks, the proposed podium is substantially setback to expand the public realm and create a welcoming, onsite courtyard. This serves to make space for nature and tree planting, in addition to infiltration space for rainwater management. By locating new daycare, retail and arts spaces in an underserved area and on a major cycling route, the project will make walking, rolling and biking to these amenities a more accessible option for the Strathcona community.

Urban Structure Compatibility

The proposal is in the "Metro Core" area of the ODP's Urban Structure Strategy, which is intended to be the principal centre of business, employment, cultural and entertainment activity for the city. Our proposal directly responds to this designation as follows:

FG1.4.1 Housing: The addition of 436 market rental units helps diversify the local housing supply, supporting the growth of purpose-built rental in the city.

FG1.4.2 Jobs: The proposed housing, daycare, commercial units, and arts & culture space will not only generate onsite employment opportunities, but also add capacity to the neighbourhood for future employees of the new St. Paul's Hospital and associated services.

FG1.4.3 Displacement: This proposal does not displace existing housing or community-serving spaces. Rather, it would secure a new not-for-profit arts & culture space that would serve to counter the pattern of lost cultural spaces in the community – "No net loss, plus!"

FG1.4.5 Public realm: The proposal includes a courtyard designed with transparency, animation, and safety in mind to create an engaging public realm along the heavily used Union-Adanac Bikeway. This is achieved through well activated frontages, ample glazing for passive surveillance, strategic lighting, space for small scale programming, and professional management. The space serves as a welcoming community space, encouraging informal social interaction while enhancing pedestrian comfort and creating a new neighbourhood focal point along the bikeway.

FG1.4.8 Arts and culture: The project integrates a not-for-profit arts & culture shell space on the ground level as an in-kind Community Amenity Contribution (CAC). Located at the heart of the Eastside Arts District, this secured space will become an anchor for the local Strathcona arts community. The space is envisioned as a visible, accessible, and functional civic asset that fosters local creativity and cultural expression, while bringing everyday activity to the site that will support safety and retail activity.

City-wide Policy Areas

Housing: The proposal contributes to improved diversity of housing in a neighbourhood known to be underserved by options outside of social housing, and features 100% net new housing with no tenant or community use displacement. With 17,700 sq. ft. of onsite indoor and outdoor amenity space provided for the rental tenants, the proposal will integrate new residents thoughtfully into the community by mitigating additional demand on local public facilities.

Economy: The site is in the Neighbourhood Employment area, which is mainly home to businesses that serve customers on site and generally need ground floor space, preferably on corners. The proposal includes 8,100 sq. ft. of retail space at grade with strong visibility from an active transportation corridor, complementing the residential context of Strathcona and contributing to the commercial vitality of the area. The proposal also responds to its position at the threshold of adjacent industrial lands by including a significant art space that connects to its historic industrial use and the neighbourhood's artistic community.

Climate: Through incorporating landscape biodiversity, passive design strategies, mixed land uses, energy conscious building envelope design, high-efficiency systems and low carbon construction, the proposal takes strides to mitigate its contribution to climate change.

Ecology: The proposal integrates space for nature onsite through generous setbacks that facilitate large landscape islands at grade and extensive tree planting, achieving a net increase in tree quantity of over 400%, including both onsite and offsite additions. This helps create ecological connectivity along the project frontages that will enhance the urban forest.

Transportation: Union Street is identified by a major greenway and bikeway in the ODP, where housing, shops, services and community uses are encouraged to support car-free access. The proposal also supports the goal of creating People-First Streets through the onsite courtyard, which creates a place for the community to gather and enjoy the outdoors, makes space for improved tree canopy coverage and rainwater management, integrates seating areas, and highlights public art opportunities.

Childcare: This proposal includes a 10,400 sq. ft. private daycare for up to 110 children, supporting the ODP vision to provide access to licensed quality childcare in every neighbourhood. Located near the downtown core and major east-west commuter routes, this childcare space will not only support nearby families but can also serve the downtown business community.

Arts, Culture, and Heritage: The ODP places the site within an “Area of High Concentration of Arts and Culture Spaces and Heritage Resources”. This proposal includes a 4,900 sq. ft. not-for-profit arts and culture space, which will be owned by the City. Recognizing the vulnerability of existing arts spaces in the area, this secured space offers a stable and protected environment that will help sustain the local arts community long term. The project further celebrates the arts by providing centre stage opportunities for public art, and creating flexible open space in the onsite courtyard that could accommodate small scale performances.

CONCLUSION

This proposal for 730 Raymur Avenue represents a thoughtful and policy-responsive vision for this site, reflecting both current market realities and the changing needs of Strathcona. The proposed GLU amendment advances the broader objectives of the ODP by supporting housing diversity, economic resilience, and complete communities.

This is accomplished through the provision of childcare, not-for-profit arts and cultural space, commercial opportunities, enhanced public realm, and secured rental housing with a family-oriented unit mix. Importantly, the redevelopment of this underutilized industrial site can occur without displacement of existing residents or community-serving uses.

We believe this project will support a more complete, equitable and resilient future for Strathcona, and we look forward to working with City Staff and the community towards that goal.

Sincerely,

LPI Management Ltd.



Elise Spearing
Senior Development Manager