



HIGH STREET



941 Aspen Road – Aspen East (Nova)
DEVELOPMENT PERMIT & DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT RATIONALE
Comox, BC.

Introduction

Highstreet is a forward-thinking real estate development company recognized for its dedication to sustainable, community-oriented residential developments. With an established history of creating vibrant communities throughout Western Canada, our company's vision extends beyond simply building attractive communities; it focuses on developing spaces that are not only welcoming but also environmentally responsible.

We are committed to advancing sustainable development practices, designing spaces that integrate with their surroundings to offer residents a balanced blend of modern living and high-performance homes. Our proposed Aspen East project follows this commitment. All proposed buildings will be 100% electric with onsite solar electric generation supplying most of the energy demand and will be designed to exceed step 4 requirements of the BC Energy Step Code for Part 3 buildings, currently the most stringent energy code in Canada.

Application Rationale

Highstreet Ventures is submitting a Development Permit application for 941 Aspen Road (Aspen East), Comox, British Columbia. A comprehensive rationale has been provided below as part of the Development Permit Application.

Contents

- Introduction.....2
- Application Rationale2
- Development Details.....4
 - Project Overview4
 - Site4
 - Architectural Design.....4
 - Landscape Design.....5
 - Community Space5
 - Parking6
 - Waste System6
- Requested Relaxations.....6
 - Section 1 – Development Variance Permit Requests6
 - Section 2 - Request Pursuant to Section 5 of the PDA.....7
- Development Features.....8
 - Building Like the Future Depends on It8
 - Solar8
 - Security8
- Our Values.....9
 - Taking the High Rd.9

Development Details

Project Overview

Highstreet aims to deliver Net-Zero Energy Ready multi-family residential housing to the Town of Comox with a strong commitment to sustainable development. We are pleased to propose the development and construction of 5, 4-storey residential buildings comprising 280 dwelling units, and 26 townhomes for a total of 306 homes. These homes will include 32 studios, 90 one-bedroom suites, 158 two-bedroom suites, and 26 three-bedroom townhomes to accommodate diverse housing needs, promoting an inclusive and varied residential environment. Parking will be provided in both underground and surface areas with the intention of enhancing community well-being through thoughtful and sustainable residential design. In addition to the residential units, a commercial component tied to the west building is proposed along the Aspen Road frontage to accommodate 600m² of gross floor area. Of the 600m², 230m² is proposed as daycare space.

Our focus is on delivering superior architectural quality and spaces for community interaction, while being respectful of all neighbouring land uses. This vacant site presents an excellent opportunity to create compact, medium-density residential spaces that respect the nature of the lands while aligning with the Town's vision for multi-residential and mixed-use development.

The land use of the subject site is currently designated CD26, Commercial Residential. This project is designed to comply with the intentions for this designation.

Site

The site design has been thoughtfully planned to complement the character of the existing forested area. The site layout has been arranged to respect the natural landscape to create ground-oriented main floor elevations, wherever possible, providing smooth transitions between private and public spaces while working with the natural topography to locate buildings.

We have prioritized utility buffers and public access connections, ensuring safe and convenient pedestrian pathways throughout the development.

Architectural Design

Our architectural approach combines modern design elements with traditional urban forms. Distinctive horizontal and vertical articulations using a variety of different materials and color palettes enhance visual interest and reduce the perceived mass of the buildings. These design elements not only contribute to aesthetic appeal but also help diminish the visual impact of the building, creating a cohesive and well-defined street edge. Ground-level patio entry connections (where possible) and integrated landscaping features further enliven the pedestrian realm, fostering positive interaction between buildings and public spaces.

The architectural design emphasizes durability and sustainability, incorporating materials such as fiber cement board and aluminum selected for their longevity and resistance to environmental stressors. The buildings will be engineered to exceed step 4 requirements of the BC Energy Step Code, with rooftop solar systems generating most of the electricity required for building operations.

Overall, our proposed architectural approach for the Aspen East project aims to create a visually compelling, sustainable, and community-oriented residential development that enhances the livability and vitality of the Town of Comox.

Landscape Design

Our landscaping is designed to complement the site's natural features and enhance the overall character of the forested setting. The landscape design prioritizes water absorption and heat reduction using native and drought-tolerant plant species, and permeable landscape areas. Broad leaf deciduous trees are strategically proposed in areas to provide natural shading in summer and allow sunlight penetration in winter, contributing to passive cooling and heating throughout the year.

Pedestrian pathways throughout the site will be designed to incorporate features such as clearly marked crossings to prioritize pedestrian movement across private vehicle drive aisles. Seating areas, pathway connections, and plantings are thoughtfully positioned to define open space boundaries and foster social interaction and community engagement.

Beyond enhancing the aesthetic appeal of the development, the landscape design incorporates comprehensive stormwater detention systems for effective runoff management. The implementation of drip irrigation, combined with water-saving fixtures and native plantings, supports the project's broader sustainability and water-use reduction objectives.

Overall, our landscaping approach for the project aims to create a cohesive and inviting environment that encourages community interaction, promotes alternative transportation options, and celebrates the natural beauty of the Town.

Community Space

The proposed development has been thoughtfully designed to provide a wide range of high-quality indoor and outdoor amenities that foster community connection, support healthy lifestyles, and complement the natural character of the site.

Residents will have access to a centrally located outdoor playground designed for children and families, a dedicated dog run with pet-friendly features, a community garden complete with planter boxes and a garden shed to encourage urban agriculture and neighbour interaction, and sports court to encourage active lifestyle. Additionally, multiple seating and gathering areas are distributed throughout the development, including a community fire pit and outdoor lounge spaces that create opportunities for informal social interaction and year-round use. A network of landscaped pedestrian pathways and community trails weaves throughout the site, connecting buildings, open spaces, and amenity areas while encouraging walkability and outdoor recreation.

The amenity building further enhances the livability of the development by providing a resident community lounge and a fully equipped fitness gym, creating opportunities for wellness, recreation, and social engagement. In addition, the inclusion of an on-site daycare facility will provide an important community-serving amenity that supports young families and contributes to the long-term sustainability and functionality of the neighbourhood.

Collectively, these amenities have been carefully integrated into the landscape design to create a vibrant, people-focused residential community that emphasizes outdoor living, social connection, and compatibility with the surrounding natural environment.

Parking

449 stalls are proposed to be contained on site, split between surface and underground parking. All surface parking areas will be landscaped to help soften the hardscape nature of surface parking and concealed from public view where possible.

In addition to vehicle parking, long-term bicycle storage within the underground parking areas will be provided, along with convenient bicycle parking options around the site for short-term use. Our site design is guided by the goal of encouraging alternative transportation methods for both residents and their guests.

Acknowledging the increasing popularity of electric vehicles and e-bikes, each parking stall in the underground parking area on site will be EV-ready, plus additional EV-ready parking stalls on the surface lot for visitors. Additionally, charging infrastructure will be integrated into the secure storage areas for e-bikes, further supporting eco-friendly transportation options.

Waste System

We plan to use an in-ground style waste system, which we have successfully implemented in other communities. This system is animal proof, low height, clean and tidy looking and is aesthetically superior to traditional waste bins. The waste material sits below grade controlling odors and access.

These bins look modern, clean, and avoid the need for screening. From an operational standpoint, we find that removing the screens allows the bin areas to stay clean and monitored and helps keep our residents safe by preventing areas where people or items can be concealed. We will, however, employ landscaping elements to provide visual separation between the waste collection area and the adjacent residential suites.

Requested Relaxations

Section 1 – Development Variance Permit Requests

1. **Maximum Number of Storeys:** A variance is requested to permit portions of the residential buildings to be considered five storeys where a maximum of four storeys is permitted.

Rationale

The variance is required as a result of the site's natural topography and grade transitions across the development area. While portions of the buildings are considered five storeys from the lower side of the site, the buildings remain within the maximum building height permitted by the CD26 Zone. The variance allows the buildings to respond sensitively to existing grades while maintaining a consistent architectural form and minimizing unnecessary site disturbance.

2. **Internal Side Setback:** A variance is requested to reduce the required internal side setback between proposed Lots A and B from 9.0 m to 4.88 m adjacent to the east residential building.

Rationale

The reduced setback allows the development to maintain appropriate separation and buffering from the external property boundaries, particularly along the eastern edge of the site adjacent to existing residential properties. The variance supports an efficient site layout while preserving the intent of the zoning regulations to provide adequate building separation, access, and livability.

3. Commercial Building Length: A variance is requested to permit a decrease in the minimum commercial building frontage length along Aspen Road and location at the corner with Hector Road.

Rationale

The proposed building configuration is intended to create an active and functional corner presence while accommodating the planned daycare and community amenity uses. The variance results from the unique geometry of the corner site and does not adversely affect the public realm, pedestrian experience, or overall character of the development.

4. Frontage Landscape Setback (9 m x 9 m Recesses): A variance is requested to permit the required 9 m x 9 m landscape recesses along Aspen Road and Hector Road to be distributed across proposed Lots A and B following subdivision rather than being located entirely on each individual frontage.

Rationale

The intent of the regulation is to provide opportunities for enhanced boulevard landscaping and street tree planting along the public road network. The proposed design continues to provide the required number and overall area of landscape recesses while distributing them more effectively across the development frontages. This approach responds to site constraints and subdivision layout considerations without reducing the landscape benefit envisioned by the bylaw.

Section 2 - Request Pursuant to Section 5 of the PDA

1. Application of Updated Zoning Regulation Pursuant to Section 5 of the Phased Development Agreement: Elevator Shaft and Roof Projection Height.

Pursuant to Section 5 of the Phased Development Agreement, we request that the roof projection provisions contained within Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw No. 2056 apply to the Aspen East development.

The previous zoning regulations permitted elevator overruns and roof projections to extend a maximum of 2.0 m above the permitted building height, whereas Zoning Bylaw No. 2056 permits projections up to 3.0 m.

The additional projection height is required to accommodate the proposed elevator overruns. These structures are limited in size, serve a functional accessibility purpose, do not create additional habitable areas, and will not materially impact the appearance or massing of the buildings. Application of this updated zoning provision represents a minor refinement that supports building functionality while maintaining the intent of the zoning bylaw.

Development Features

Building Like the Future Depends on It

Sustainability is at the core of who we are and what we do. It is more than just a business goal, it's a way of life and a fundamental understanding of integrity. We recognize that the business model must be identifiably sustainable, satisfying the ecological, economic, and societal challenges we face both today and in the future.

We distinguish ourselves from typical developers by prioritizing sustainable building materials, ensuring occupant comfort, managing operating costs, and constructing 100% electric buildings to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, our communities are powered by on-site solar photovoltaics, with the flexibility to expand as allowed by utility regulations.

Recognizing that our residents are our most valuable asset, we have taken extensive measures to ensure that our communities enhance occupants' health and well-being. This includes providing clean, filtered air, water, ample natural light, and a comfortable living environment. Achieving this is made possible through high-quality mechanical systems that offer enhanced filtration, heat recovery, and a constant supply of fresh air, exceeding base energy code requirements by up to 75%. Our building envelopes are also designed to be robust and airtight, further enhancing occupant comfort, indoor air quality, and reducing energy demand.

Additional Sustainability features that will be included in this development include:

- Water-saving fixtures, reducing water use by 35% or more within all buildings
- Low-VOC paints and adhesives on all interior surfaces
- Energy Star appliances
- Triple pane windows
- Solar panels
- EV Chargers
- High-efficiency Energy Recovery Ventilators in every dwelling unit
- Native and drought-tolerant plantings
- Comprehensive stormwater detention systems
- LED lighting

Solar

Our buildings are 100% electric and largely powered by on-site solar photovoltaics. Highstreet buildings feature rooftop solar arrays that can generate more than 100 kilowatts of electricity per building.

Security

We will install security cameras throughout the site, including common hallways, as part of our standard security measures. Our building orientations are carefully planned to minimize blind spots. The residential layout encourages a sense of community and keeps "eyes on the street," reducing the likelihood of harmful incidents going unnoticed. We also ensure that all outdoor amenities are well-lit and easily accessible with multiple entrance and exit points at regular intervals to enhance safety.

Our Values

At Highstreet, we are driven by our belief to always do the right thing. Whether we are selling or operating rentals, we promise to always take the high road. If something wasn't built right, we will make it right. This can be seen in our double warranty promise where, instead of the industry standard 2-5-10 year warranty program we have doubled it offering 4-10-20 year warranties for our buildings. We stand behind our product, giving peace of mind to the end user, and we are happy to provide it.

Taking the High Rd.

Our Mission is to elevate everyone who works with us and share in the success of responsibly creating smarter, more sustainable real estate and we do that by living our company values. Should you wish to know more about our company, we invite you to visit our website at gohighstreet.ca or contact us directly at 778-946-6250.