

## Molly Harris

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**From:** mrs linda jeaurond [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** May-09-26 12:39 AM  
**To:** and council Mayor; council@saanich.ca; Victoria Mayor and Council; Council; Oak Bay Council; council@langford.ca; mayorandcouncil@colwood.ca; Municipal Hall; corporateservices@northsaanich.ca; admin@sidney.ca; mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca; info@highlands.ca  
**Subject:** Submission regarding "Density Without Demolition" (DWD) Roadmap - correction  
**Categories:** Late Agenda Item

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Township of Esquimalt Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

For your records, I have corrected an earlier clerical error where I misnamed the Minister of Housing. I would very much appreciate you getting this version onto the agenda,

Kind regards, Linda Jeaurond

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## OPEN LETTER

TO: The Honourable Christine Boyle  
Minister of Housing  
PO Box 9074 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9E9  
HOUS.Minister@gov.bc.ca  
CC:  
Hon. David Eby, Premier (premier@gov.bc.ca)  
Hon. Adrian Dix, Minister of Energy and Climate Solutions  
(ECS.Minister@gov.bc.ca)  
Hon. Josie Osborne, Minister of Health (HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Hon. Tamara Davidson, Minister of Environment and Parks  
(ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Hon. Brenda Bailey, Minister of Finance (FIN.Minister@gov.bc.ca)  
Mayors and Councils of the Capital Regional District (CRD)

Subject: Density Without Demolition – A Politically Viable Solution for Climate and Housing Resilience

**Dear Minister Boyle,**

We are writing on behalf of the View Royal Climate Coalition to propose a complementary approach for achieving the density goals of SSMUH - a strategy we call Density Without Demolition (DWD). Our goal is to demonstrate how the Province and our municipalities can quickly deliver needed housing with greater affordability and lower impact on the environment, infrastructure and neighbourhoods.

**This model is designed to optimise your density targets by prioritising affordability and reducing the strain on municipal infrastructure.**

By shifting focus to adaptive reuse, we can deliver housing faster and cheaper while addressing climate resilience. Currently, building code mandates favour costly demolition, producing only high-end housing that remains out of reach for most residents.

**This is a building public health crisis:** current mandates strip away the mature tree canopy and deep-soil moisture essential for surviving the

record-breaking heat forecasted in provincial risk assessments - infrastructure that the Ministry's own risk assessments identify as critical for survival.

**Beyond affordability, internal conversion offers a superior fiscal model for the public purse.** New-build redevelopment necessitates massive utility upsizing - tearing up streets to expand sewer and water capacity to meet the demands of new footprints. Whereas internal conversions utilize existing foundations and service connections, working within the structure's existing energy and water capacity. By minimizing these heavy infrastructure outlays, the Province and Municipality can deliver more units per tax dollar spent, while keeping property assessments rooted in the value of the home rather than speculative land value. This model naturally allows for incremental density and lower-cost entry points, unlike the luxury price points inherently required to make a full-lot demolition and rebuild profitable.

**The evidence for this shift is clear. Ontario's Building Code (Part 11) is specifically designed for conversions.** The CMHC Spring 2026 report confirms its success: in Toronto, over half of new missing middle housing now comes from adaptive reuse. **The need for this transition is urgent, given the "Spring 2026 rennie landscape" report, which shows B.C.'s first population decline in over a century.** As the high-end market cools and presale launches plunge, the Province must pivot away from high-risk, high-infrastructure teardowns and toward the lower-cost, resilient model of adaptive reuse and internal conversion.

**To unlock this in B.C., we urge the Ministry to issue an emergency amendment for a performance-based code to act as a complementary tool for achieving provincial density goals.** Unlike a prescriptive code that mandates impossible structural changes to old buildings, a performance-based code focuses on safety outcomes. This provides the flexibility to use modern safety tools - such as enhanced fire

suppression and sprinklers - to meet safety standards without triggering the prohibitive costs of full-lot excavation.

**As demonstrated by recent political friction in jurisdictions like Calgary**, traditional demolish-and-rebuild density can face significant community pushback. Adaptive reuse offers a more politically viable path forward. By preserving the existing neighbourhood character and streetscape, we can achieve density that earns public consent rather than community resistance. Bill Brown, Esquimalt's Director of Development Services, recently noted the township has seen applications to convert single-family homes into two or three units by erecting dividing walls and separate entrances: "You can get a two-bedroom unit easily in 800 square feet... Not all small-scale multi-unit developments are big, huge, bulky buildings."

**To succeed, the Province must remove the legal and financial red tape that currently makes it easier for a corporation to demolish a home than for a family to divide one.** This includes creating a Standardized Adaptive Reuse Catalogue - similar to the Province's Standardized Catalogue for new builds - of pre-approved engineering plans for common B.C. home types, allowing homeowners to bypass expensive architectural fees. We must also fix outdated property laws that currently block residents from owning individual units within a converted house, often forcing them to remain renters under a single landlord.

**To support this**, the Province could work with local credit unions to ensure that families using shared-ownership models can access the same mortgage products as traditional buyers. Ultimately, to keep our neighbourhoods in community hands, we must establish a Right of First Refusal for residents and non-profits to acquire existing stock before it is further financialised by corporate interests.

**Enabling local, shared ownership is our best defence against ongoing corporate REIT expansion.** Because B.C. has lost the informal safety nets that once prevented housing crises, we must rebuild that support by authorizing Tenants in Common (TIC) Community Land Bank/Trusts, and Co-operative Land Trust models. These frameworks provide a Collective Path - the legal scaffolding and admin support so neighbours can own and manage housing together (similar to what is done for the provincial rental housing program) - providing the community-based stability that our market-driven system currently fails to deliver.

**Beyond financial tools, the Province should introduce a simplified administrative framework for buildings under six units.** Traditional strata legislation designed for high-rise towers often imposes a volunteer burden that can lead to neighbour disputes and deferred maintenance. By providing templates for maintenance plans and the ability to pool professional management services, the Province can eliminate the administrative friction that currently discourages both developers and residents from choosing the missing middle.

**The VRCC calls on the municipalities of the CRD to designate Incentive Zones for internal conversions.** By waiving Development Cost Charges (DCCs) and fast-tracking permit approvals for projects that preserve the existing shell and canopy, our local municipalities can serve as provincial pilot sites - delivering essential housing, nestled in the trees, with significantly less strain on BC Hydro, municipal utility services, and our overstretched regional landfill than traditional demolish-and-rebuild models

**Dr. Stephen Sheppard (Professor Emeritus, UBC Faculty of Forestry, and Director of the Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning**

**(CALP) (<https://calp.forestry.ubc.ca/>)** reminds us that this realignment is essential for both community acceptance and climate survival:

*"Densification without controls to limit environmental and social impacts risks losing vital community character and assets, including green infrastructure that will be crucial in a worsening climate. This could put communities at increased risk, and trigger community backlash. While some change is inevitable, it is how that change fits the community that matters most... Development controls should seek to restrict housing improvements to existing building footprints wherever possible, to protect soil, tree rootzones/permeable area. Increasing building height is the lesser of two evils, and can be partly mitigated by good design and both retention and planting of large trees."*

**Choosing conversion over full-lot redevelopment is faster, cheaper, and greener.** By providing the same standardised support for conversions that is currently given to new builds, the Province can lower immediate emissions - preserving the embodied carbon stored in existing structures - and catalyse a homebuilding industry that is productive and respectful of our environment.

**In closing, if we are to navigate the political storm of rising costs and housing shortages, we cannot afford to bulldoze our way out.** Density Without Demolition offers the province the turnkey units it needs and offers all residents a future that isn't just denser, but cooler and more resilient.

We urge you now to make this shift - provide the tools and the permission to build density that suits all walks of life while letting us meet climate targets.

Sincerely,

View Royal Climate Coalition (VRCC) core team, Ian Brown, Jane Devonshire, Patricia Gooch, Peter Hamilton, Roz Isaac, Linda Jeurond.

VRCC is a growing group of residents who champion effective climate-related solutions to make View Royal and B.C. as resilient as possible against the future impacts of climate change.

<https://www.viewroyalclimatecoalition.ca/>

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### **Footnote:**

This model aligns with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities), Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption), and Goal 13 (Climate Action), by preserving the embodied carbon of existing structures and protecting the urban forests essential for climate resilience.

### **United Nations**

### **THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development**

<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

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## **Citations & References**

### **Spring 2026 Housing Supply Report | CMHC**

<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/professionals/housing-markets-data-and-research/market-reports/housing-market/housing-supply-report>

### **Demolish or refurbish – Environmental benefits of housing conservation**

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286056383\\_Demolish\\_or\\_refurbish\\_-\\_Environmental\\_benefits\\_of\\_housing\\_conservation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/286056383_Demolish_or_refurbish_-_Environmental_benefits_of_housing_conservation)

### **Annual BC Assessment highlights factors impacting Greater Victoria market**

“There is a growing concern about the REIT-ification of real estate across Canada. Canadian tax law currently exempts them from corporate taxes as long as profits are divided between investors and some tax loopholes continue to shield investors from paying income tax on their earnings.”

<https://www.capitaldaily.ca/news/annual-bc-assessment-highlights-factors-impacting-greater-victoria-market>

### **Standardized Housing Designs Catalogue**

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/bc\\_std\\_des\\_catalogue\\_v1.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/bc_std_des_catalogue_v1.pdf)

### **Standardized designs arrive to help build more homes faster**

Updated June 12, 2025

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024HOUS0164-001430>

### **Calgary city council votes to repeal blanket rezoning | CBC News**

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/council-blanket-rezoning-vote-9.7156717>

### **Greater Vancouver Real Estate Market Data | Insights & News**

<https://rennie.com/intelligence>

### **Esquimalt mulls pausing new missing-middle housing projects - Victoria Times Colonist**

<https://www.timescolonist.com/local-news/esquimalt-mulls-pausing-new-missing-middle-housing-projects-12192827>

### **New approach needed to lower housing costs - Goldstream Gazette**

<https://digital.goldstreamgazette.com/Goldstream-Gazette-05062026/6/>