

April 24, 2026
Bill Brown
Development Services
1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt, BC



Design Rationale

646 Head Street – SSMUH Project – 4 units – Additional Driveway Variance Only

The main objective for this project is to create four new family homes (2+2 duplexes) in response to the new SSMUH policy created by the Province of British Columbia, following regulations outlined in section 40.3 Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing Zone (Medium Lot) of Zoning Bylaw NO 2050, Esquimalt.

Context:

The proposed corner site at 646 Head Street sits directly across from École Victor-Brodeur and within walking distance of schools, restaurants, grocery stores, a recreation centre, and the library. Its proximity to daily amenities makes it a strong location for family-oriented housing.

The proposed SSMUH fourplex is designed to fit within the established character of the neighbourhood, introducing four new homes without disrupting the existing streetscape. It contributes modest density while supporting a walkable, service-rich community suited to long-term residents.

Site Conditions and Site Plan Design:

The subject property has an area of 742.4 m² (7,991.1 ft²) and features a sloped topography.

The proposal complies fully with zoning requirements. The only variance is for an additional driveway. Front, rear, and side setbacks all meet minimum requirements, while site coverage and building height remain below permitted limits. Four on-site parking stalls are provided for the four dwelling units, exceeding bylaw minimums of 0.5 per unit, with all parking located adjacent to the units.

The site contains several mature trees, most of which are in poor condition. The proposal removes all trees, per direct recommendation from the arborist, but will make up the loss with new landscaping suited for the neighbourhood.

The duplex units are oriented toward the street, with primary entrances facing Bryden Court to reinforce the existing streetscape and pedestrian interface.

Unit Design

Each of the four units is configured as a 3-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom home, designed to support family living. All units include dedicated private outdoor space—either decks, ground-level patios, or yard areas—ensuring direct access to open air. Interior layouts incorporate flexible-use spaces and generous storage to accommodate evolving household needs.

Building Design

The building massing is carefully proportioned and articulated to reduce perceived scale and create a varied, engaging streetscape presence. The form draws on traditional residential typologies, expressed through pitched rooflines, while introducing a contemporary architectural language.

A restrained, monochromatic material palette—combining vertical wood cladding and smooth finishes—provides cohesion and a modern character. Large-format windows and glazed patio doors maximize natural light penetration and ventilation, enhancing interior livability. All exterior materials are selected for durability and low maintenance.

Landscaping

Landscaping is treated as a primary design component. All residual site areas not occupied by building footprint or access are landscaped with intention, creating a consistent green interface across the property. Planting design ensures that each unit maintains visual and physical access to landscaped space, reinforcing a connection to nature throughout the development.

We trust that this letter explains the intent and thought behind this project.
If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me.

Xeniya Vins
Architect
416.876.48.46
Xeniya.vins@gmail.com