



**Avenir Construction (2018) Inc.**

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Brentwood Bay, B.C., V8M 1P7

To Esquimalt Mayor and Council,

Avenir Senior Living is proposing to rezone the properties at 819-823 Esquimalt Rd. for a seniors retirement community. The model for this community is an affordable alternative to traditional senior independent living. We are providing this narrative to highlight how this project's unique features will benefit Esquimalt and its residents.

The community will be named Hythe Pointe, which means 'a landing place or a small port' and fits well with its location in the historic Township of Esquimalt, with stunning views of the Salish Sea and the Olympic Mountains.

**The Housing Model**

This model differs from full-service independent living communities, which typically cater to higher income seniors (the top 20%). These communities are expensive to operate, because they require significant staffing.

Hythe Pointe will offer social connectedness, implementing a volunteer model to serve the needs of the 'forgotten 40%', middle income seniors with fixed incomes and pensions. There is significant demand for affordable independent living designed for active, self-sufficient, middle income seniors seeking a place to call home.

Hythe Pointe will support social interaction between residents, enhancing quality of life and allowing them to age in place. Most of the amenities typically found in traditional independent senior living will be available on the main floor and on the rooftop terrace. Activities and services will be provided by third party vendors and resident volunteers, through coordination and direction of our limited staff.

This model has been proven in the United States and recently in Alberta, with 95% of residents participating in the volunteer program and approximately 42% volunteering more than 10 hours per month. Volunteering is optional, and those who choose to be part of the program receive a reduction in rent for their contributions.

Some examples of volunteer activities include:

- Preparing meals together in the communal kitchen
- Taking fellow residents shopping and to medical appointments
- Helping residents with accessing technology
- Supporting daily recreational programming
- Maintaining gardens and landscaping
- Walking residents' dogs or supporting their pets when convalescing or travelling
- Supporting management of the emergency call and safety programs
- Helping fellow residents with chores

Providing seniors with volunteer opportunities stimulates social interactions and leads to a greater sense of purpose. The rent reduction has a significant emotional appeal, residents feel proud to be contributing to their own community and their adult children are supportive, because they see their parents thriving.

There are five key pillars that are foundational to the success of an aging in place community:

*Food* – All apartments at Hythe Pointe will have full kitchens, so residents can prepare their own meals. Residents will also have access to various other meal options. Community meals will be made in the purpose-built, gourmet, communal kitchen (with a commercial dishwasher for sanitization). The staff will coordinate home delivery of groceries and meals. There will also be a commercial café/bistro to provide à la carte meals, snacks, coffee, etc.

*Recreation* – Our staff will coordinate recreation programs with resident volunteers, customized to their interests.

*Transportation* – There will be a shuttle van on site for the residents' use, which we will maintain and insure. A staff member with a Class 4 drivers license (taxi, limousine, chauffeur) will operate and maintain the van.

*Optional Services* – Residents will have the comfort and security of having services such as home care, housekeeping and laundry available as they need them (pay per use). These will be provided by a third-party vendor, coordinated by the staff.

*Emergency Call Program* – Every resident will have access to an emergency call system for their safety. The program will be operated by both staff and a third-party vendor call centre.

The success of this innovative seniors model is dependent upon having sufficient residents living at the property, to support the volunteer activities and the third-party vendors providing à la carte services. The viability and affordability of this community, with its extensive amenities, relies upon having enough density. Much thought has been put into the project design to take all of these factors into account.

## The Building

Hythe Pointe will use architectural features, quality materials and landscaping to create an engaging community for seniors. The project will be 8 stories, constructed using structural steel and concrete, it includes:

- 92 rental units
- 63 underground parking stalls (exceeding the parking bylaw for Dwelling Units 55+)
- Layaway parking in front of the building
- 5,682 square feet of amenity space on the main floor
- 1,076 square foot commercial space for a café/bistro on the main floor
- 3,200 square foot rooftop terrace (with outdoor, covered kitchen)
- Ground floor garden and patio area

After receiving feedback from Advisory Planning Commission (APC) and Township of Esquimalt staff, we have implemented changes to the structure, including:

- A half level of parking has been added, to provide additional spaces for disabled parking, visitors, commercial customers and staff (the parking now exceeds the bylaw).
- The parkade footprint has been reduced to allow for planting of large trees around the perimeter of the building to create privacy for residents and neighbours.
- The commercial space (café/bistro) has been increased to over 1,000 square feet.
- The exterior has been softened with a warm colour palette (see new building rendering).

All suites will be fully appointed apartments, finished with quality materials, complete kitchens, bathrooms, in suite laundry, balconies and air conditioning. Residents can prepare meals in the privacy of their own home, which supports self-sufficiency in the event of another pandemic or similar situation.

Hythe Pointe will offer residents the following amenities:

- Demonstration Kitchen & Community Dining Room
- English Pub & Tea Room with Private Liquor Storage
- Fitness & Movement Studio
- Theatre
- Games Room
- Fibre Arts Studio
- Rooftop Terrace Garden
- Raised Vegetable & Flower Beds
- Dog Area (Bark Park)
- On-site Storage Lockers
- Commercial Café/Bistro

## **The Prospective Residents**

Hythe Pointe is designed for middle income people whose home equity is their primary asset. They don't want to lose their legacy by using their equity to pay for supportive living services. They prefer to pay for their living expenses from their fixed monthly income. People are living longer and still want to leave an inheritance to their children or loved ones. Living at Hythe Pointe will help them realize this meaningful financial goal. By paying significantly lower rent and fees, residents can also save money for later in life, when they may need to pay for progressive health care costs/assisted living services.

Hythe Pointe residents will primarily be people who enjoy an active lifestyle, live independently and want to be part of a community. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified loneliness as the key contributor to depression, affecting 1 in 3 seniors. Hythe Pointe will provide safe, well-designed, socially connected housing that will contribute to increased social stimulation and longevity.

Aging in place keeps neighbourhoods socially diverse, builds lasting relationships and allows seniors with fixed incomes to remain in their community. Most importantly, it keeps seniors and the entire community socially, mentally and physically active/healthy.

## **The Designing Density Report - Township of Esquimalt and Island Health**

A recent study completed by the Township of Esquimalt and Island Health called, *Designing Density – Social Connectedness in Multi-Family Housing* discusses how the homes we live in can enhance social connectedness, inclusion and trust between neighbours.

The study also talks about Island Health's Official Community Plan (OCP) review, which brought attention to the need to design higher density housing with social health in mind, for the missing middle of the housing spectrum. The study encourages developers to design for social connectedness by including:

- Resident volunteerism
- Shared garden spaces
- Rooftop decks
- Communal kitchens
- On-site shops and services

Hythe Pointe meets and exceeds these recommendations with the services and amenities we've just highlighted.

Progressive planners in urban centres focus on densification of major streets connecting town centres, the corridors. This is the future of urban development, and where densification should be, so residents have easy access to transit, commuting throughfares and commercial services. Esquimalt Road is such a corridor, and the ideal location for a community like Hythe Pointe.

## **The Developers/Operators**

Avenir Senior Living is family-owned and operated. The principals reside in Victoria, BC and have over 40 years of experience developing low and high-rise buildings. For the last 25 years they have specialized in developing, building and operating, independent/assisted living and memory care communities. Avenir has the experience to provide this model, and they are highly respected within the construction and senior housing industry.

Avenir is currently building The Vista, their first continuum of care community in Greater Victoria, at 622 Admirals Rd., Esquimalt.

## **Summary**

Our research indicates a significant, growing demand for middle income senior housing in the coming years. We are confident that Hythe Pointe, with its unique aging in place lifestyle amenities, will help fulfill this demand and be a valuable asset to Esquimalt and its residents.

Kind Regards,

David and Jason Craik

Principals, Avenir Senior Living