

Lapis Homes Ltd.  
4291 Oakfield Crescent Victoria, BC, V8X4W4  
Phone 250-413-7121  
[ryanjabs@laphomes.com](mailto:ryanjabs@laphomes.com)  
[www.laphomes.com](http://www.laphomes.com)



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Dear Mayor and Council,

I am the developer of the proposed 10-unit townhouse development at 825 Lampson and 939 Colville, as well as the owner of a small family-run company called Lapis Homes. We recently completed the four townhouses at 521 Foster, and this is my second multi-family development proposed for Esquimalt.

I wanted to provide you with some details on my proposal, as well as to let you know that I'm available to meet with you if you'd like more information or have some specific questions about the project.

#### **Local homes for families:**

Like the homes at Foster, my expectation with this project is to bring more housing options to Esquimalt for families who want to live and work in the municipality. As a result, we've used a similar interior layout to the one we used at Foster, which appealed and worked well for the four families who bought those homes.

We've designed each unit as a three-bed, three-bath townhouse with open concept living areas, a flex room and a single car garage, which we're proposing to wire up for electric car chargers. The layout works well for families with young children, as all three bedrooms are on the top floor, sharing a large cheater-ensuite bathroom.

The first-floor flex room could be used as an office, media room or a storage area. But it also works well for families with a teenager, who may need a little more space from the rest of their family – as well as their own full bathroom.

#### **A design for the Neighbourhood:**

In addition to an interior layout that will appeal to young families, we spent considerable time coming up with a design and a landscaping plan that will improve the look of the street and will feel welcoming to the neighbourhood.

The southeast corner of Lampson and Colville is a key corner in Esquimalt, as it's the first thing people see when they come around Transfer Street and south up the hill onto Lampson.

As you can see from the 3D renderings, these homes – with the warm designer colour scheme, entrances that face Lampson and Colville, layers of landscaping that will provide colour all year, and the tree-lined yards – will create a presence on the street corner that invites people into the heart of the township.

We've also staggered the buildings to provide breaks, walkthroughs, open spaces, trees and other landscaping features throughout the property to make it more liveable for residents and neighbours.

## **Designing for bikes, transit and automobiles:**

As I noted above, we want our development to appeal to people who are looking to stay local and to live, work and play in Esquimalt. And while we know that having a car is necessary for most families who have kids (and we're meeting this with single car garages in each unit, plus five visitor spaces), we're providing a number of alternative transportation options to get people out of their cars.

Recent Statistic Canada data shows that in the last two decades, the number of people taking their bikes to work rose nearly 90% and the number of people taking transit rose by nearly 60%. In addition, the data shows that Victoria, at 17%, has the largest percentage of people in the country who walk or cycle to work.

I want to tap into this market with our marketing efforts as this location provides a great opportunity for the growing number of people who take their bicycle to work. In fact, the commute to Naden military base on a bike is less than 10 minutes – and only a couple minutes longer than by car. And for those who might work in downtown Victoria, their commute is virtually identical by car or by bike because of the excellent connection from this location into town along the E&N and over the new bridge.

This is why we're building longer garages with storage space in each for two bicycles, as well as a bike lockup on the property for guests.

And for those that choose transit, this location is well served by BC Transit service, with major routes that connect to the entire city running down Colville, Lampson and nearby on Craigflower.

I'm also looking to reduce our buyers' desire for a second car by introducing them to car share. A 2011 study showed that households that joined a car share program cut their vehicle ownership in half. I am in discussions with Modo to purchase a vehicle for this development and provide memberships for each home.

This car will not only reduce the need for second cars for people in these 10 units but it will also provide options for people in the surrounding community and for future neighbouring developments that may want to provide car share memberships for future residents.

## **Featuring Green:**

Vehicle traffic is one of the largest contributors to pollution across the world. We want to make it as easy as possible to help future buyers use their cars as little as possible.

As noted above, we're close to good public transit and we'll be putting in cycling storage in each unit and marketing the easy access and great connection to cycling paths. We're also in discussions with Modo to purchase and put a car share vehicle on the property and provide memberships to each unit.

As well, we're planning to wire each garage for electric car chargers so that people who purchase these units have easy access to secure charging spaces when they switch to electric.

In addition to the efforts we're taking to get buyers out of cars or into cleaner vehicles, we have engaged an energy consultant (Adapt Energy Advising) on the project and are planning to install solid-core front doors and more environmentally efficient windows (either higher end double panes, or triple panes) in the six units that run along the Lampson street frontage. This will help reduce the energy use of these buildings, as well as cut down on the sound from the street.



We will also be using more paving stones than concrete for the driveways, patios and walkways to both provide a pleasing aesthetic look, as well as to help with drainage and rainwater management. In addition, we are installing a landscape swale along the northeast corner of the lot, which is the natural low point of the development. This will capture and handle rainwater from the driveways.

And as you can see from the detailed landscaping plan, we are proposing to plant over 45 new trees on the property to provide privacy, shading and natural beauty to the project and surrounding properties. These trees will also help clean the air and water, reduce stormwater issues, and improve building energy use.

### **Landscaping as screening - electrical building and parking**

We worked closely with our landscape designer to screen the electrical building and the recycling area, including using a natural wood pergola over the recycling area, choosing a dark colour scheme for the electrical building, as well as including a layering of trees, shrubs and other plantings, which over time will grow up to completely hide the building from the street.

We're also not just landscaping in front of the one building, which would have drawn the eye to that area. Instead, we're proposing a series of plantings along the Colville street frontage that will draw the focus away from the building itself and toward the entire garden.

We considered putting the electrical building and recycling area at the back of the site, but this would have meant moving the parking spaces there up to the front of the lot and creating more of a car-centric design.

In addition, the building and landscaping along the frontage also creates privacy for residents. I anticipate families barbequing, playing road hockey or hosting community events on the sheltered driveway.

Similarly, we've identified plants and trees along the driveway that will over time limit the visibility to the three parking spots that we have included on the Northeast corner. Once the landscaping is mature, the only car that should be easily visible from the street will be the MODO vehicle that will be parked there.

### **Massing and Privacy**

For a pie shaped lot like 825 Lampson and 939 Colville, where the property tapers in towards the north (Colville), we needed to fit our units on the southeast side and along the Lampson street frontage so that we could accommodate the natural slope of the lot and put the driveway in the safest location possible.

By doing this, we were also able to create a people-focused street presence by orienting six entrances and gardens towards Lampson, as well as by dropping one of the floors below the grade of the street.

We also worked to break up the size and massing of our buildings as much as possible, choosing to go with two triplexes along the Lampson street frontage, and two duplexes at the southeast side of the property. This configuration reduces shading, improves how people move around the property and provides more airflow and sunlight throughout the development and onto neighbouring properties.

We're also using a layering approach with our plantings that will give more natural privacy to the neighbours along the eastern and southern side of the lot. Along the eastern property line, for example, we'll be planting a hedge of California lilacs, which will both shield the neighbouring units, and provide some colour with the blue flowers. On the south, we'll plant a row of red currant, as well as seven trees spaced out along the property.

### **The Official Community Plan and surrounding properties:**

Both the current and the draft Official Community Plans designate these properties as townhouse residential. The property directly to the south is a three-unit townhouse, and the properties neighbouring this project to the southeast are part of an 18-unit townhouse-designated small lot development.

In addition, 825 Lampson was already approved by council in 2014 for a 9800-square foot, four unit three-floor townhouse development (approximately 2500 square feet each, including the garage), but that project was never built.

While this 10-unit development will provide a higher average number of units over two properties than the earlier project proposed for 825 Lampson, the average unit size will be much smaller, with a total building size of approximately 17,000 square feet, including garages (about 1700 square feet a unit). It'll also, as noted above, provide a people-focused orientation along both the Lampson and Colville frontage, making for a much better development.

Separately, and for additional context, I'll be bringing an application forward for smaller townhouses at the property directly to the east at 937 Colville, which will be the last single-family house in this block of Lampson and Colville.

If both projects are approved by council, this would provide a consistent, people-focused, family-oriented multi-family corner in the neighbourhood that matches the Official Community Plan's goals for the area.

### **Affordable Housing:**

To shift tone a bit: I know what you might be thinking with the section's title, and I agree... I'm not going to suggest that these new townhouses should be considered "affordable housing." I've heard developers make that argument before. Sure, they will be more affordable than single family homes. But because of the increase in the market over the last five years, many people are priced out of this type of housing.

As a small developer, it's challenging to build affordably. But what I can do is contribute to affordable housing projects.

As I mentioned to you in an email earlier this year, out of our profits from Foster, we donated \$60,000 to the Anglican Diocese towards an affordable housing project that they're working on in Esquimalt. If this project is successful, I'll once again contribute a significant portion of profits to affordable housing in Esquimalt.

Thank you for taking the time to read through this letter and review my proposal. I look forward to discussing this project with you and with your staff in the coming months.

Take care,



Ryan Jabs  
250-413-7121  
[ryanjabs@lapishomes.com](mailto:ryanjabs@lapishomes.com)  
[www.lapishomes.com](http://www.lapishomes.com)