



THE MARIN



January 3, 2022

Township of Esquimalt
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, BC
V9A 3P1

Dear Mayor Desjardins and Council

Re: The Marin Rental Residential Development Permit Application

Introducing The Marin

Boardwalk REIT and Invictus Commercial Investment Corp. (ICIC) have partnered to proudly present our proposal for The Marin, a new purpose-built rental residential development in Esquimalt's town core. We embrace Esquimalt's strategic vision as a vibrant, distinct and diverse community for people to discover and belong and believe our proposal offers a number of benefits for the community.

Boardwalk and ICIC are committed to contributing to the community of Esquimalt and have worked together to propose a new inspirational multi-family development which creates value for all. Our combined expertise and resources encompass all aspects of the delivery and development process that will help bring The Marin to life.

Boardwalk is Canada's leading owner/operator of multi-family communities; with more than 200 communities in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Quebec. With over 33,000 residential units in total the Boardwalk team manages more than 28 million net rentable square feet.

ICIC is led by CEO Doug Foord who brings 45 years of experience in all aspects of construction, real estate sales, finance and development to the project. Foord and his team develop high-quality, uniquely designed developments throughout the Capital region. Their expertise is diverse, creating value in coveted, distinctive communities.

Together, we have curated a team of local design, planning and development expertise to create a vision for The Marin as a purpose-built rental residential development that will welcome new residents to also **discover** the warmth of the Esquimalt community and to find a place to call home, sharing in the community's



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sense of **belonging**. The project offers a number of community benefits, including significant contributions to the public realm through the proposed extension of the Art Walk as a public walkway linking Carlisle Avenue and Lyall Street, and populated with new public art. An additional public space is proposed at the corner of Carlisle Avenue and Fraser Street with the creation of a plaza for community gathering and social connections.

Early Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Development planning for The Marin began with an interest in the Township of Esquimalt and its unique setting within the region's urban core. Esquimalt has a distinct small-town feel benefiting from a strong sense of place, yet offers proximity to downtown Victoria and a number of significant commercial, civic and employment centres in the Capital region. The recent revitalization of Esquimalt's own town core through the development of the Esquimalt Town Square project is reflective of the community's investment in a more compact urban form with new mixed-use and municipal amenities strategically located to contribute to Esquimalt's economic and social vibrancy. There is a recognized need for more housing choices to support the major employment centre of CFB Esquimalt.

With a foundation of preliminary planning information and an early site concept plan, the team began a more focused program of community and stakeholder engagement in the spring of 2021. With public health regulations still in place, engagement activities were targeted to online information sharing through the launching of a project information website and hosting a series of virtual presentations with stakeholders and community members. Two neighbourhood information sessions were held in April 2021, with participation from over 50 area neighbours and stakeholders. Key themes that emerged from questions, comments and discussion forums were used to refine the concept plans for the rezoning submission.

Consistency with the Official Community Plan

The Township of Esquimalt's 2018 Official Community Plan (OCP) provides insight into the community's long range goals and aspirations and identifies lands, including The Marin site, designated for similar redevelopment to meet the community's vision.

OCP Vision

- *Esquimalt is a caring and welcoming community that has strong relationships with our neighbours, the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, regional municipalities, and the naval base.*
- *Our vibrant economy is supported by an engaged community.*



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- *As a coastal community, we are stewards of our environment and value our past, present and future.*

Early discussions with Development Services staff at the Township informed initial conceptual planning through the fall and winter of 2020/2021. The Marin proposal has been shaped to be in alignment with goals and objectives of the OCP and is presented as a project facilitating the implementation of the plan and extension of the Esquimalt town core following the success of the Town Square project. The property is designated for Medium Density Residential Development and the proposal is consistent with the multi-unit residential use and 2.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) density directions of the OCP. The site plan has been thoughtfully composed to deliver new community amenities through the creation of on-site public spaces, including an extension of the successful Town Square Art Walk and a public plaza at the corner of Carlisle and Fraser.

The composition of two five-storey buildings, oriented toward the public streetscapes and internal Art Walk connection, presents ground-oriented units having entries at grade, with the upper storeys stepped back to relate to the human scale. Our proposal is limited to five storeys in height, where the OCP allows up to six storeys in the Medium Density Residential designation, preserving view corridors from the Esquimalt Town Square buildings to the north and providing a neighbourhood transition in form and scale.

Strategically located in the town core area, The Marin site responds to the key criteria of the Medium Density Residential land use designation, which prioritizes projects that:

1. Reduce single occupancy vehicle use;
2. Support transit service;
3. Are located within close proximity to employment centres; and
4. Accommodate young families.

Supporting Active Transportation

Esquimalt is a highly walkable community and is investing in strategies to further support more sustainable modes of transportation through the current Active Transportation Network Planning process. Esquimalt already boasts 36% of its commute trips by active travel modes (walk, cycle, transit), and by supporting implementation of the OCP directions for new multi-family housing in close proximity to transit, cycling corridors and walkable shops and services, further advancements can be achieved. The Marin proposal supports active transportation with on-site bicycle facilities, including secure bicycle parking for tenants at a ratio of 1 space per unit, and visitor bike racks located at the entrances to the buildings.



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Additional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies will include a contribution of a car share vehicle, either through Modo or as a building-owned vehicle, for tenant use. Parking for the project is proposed within 2 levels of underground parking, at a ratio of 1 parking space per unit, including visitor parking and EV hook-ups. As a rental building, we have the ability to efficiently manage and allocate parking spaces based on demand across the different unit types, sizes and household needs. Our application is supported by traffic and parking studies completed by Watt Consulting, which recommend the proposed parking ratio and supporting TDM program.

Streetscape frontage improvements will improve and expand curb-side parking on Carlisle Avenue for deliveries and short-term loading, and may result in additional on-street parking for general neighbourhood use through the reduction of individual driveways and the creation of a singular driveway for the entire site to be located off of Fraser Street. Ease of access to transit, including the bus stop on Lyall Street, and many more along Esquimalt Road, makes The Marin site a very attractive location for tenants living a car-free lifestyle.

Support Local Shops and Businesses

As a neighbourhood of choice, the Esquimalt town core offers residents access to all of the things needed on a daily basis: it is close to parks, the waterfront and open spaces, local services, shops, civic spaces, and accessible to transit and employment centres. We believe new residents will value being close to services and amenities and being able to access shopping, schools, the recreation centre and library along safe and comfortable walking and cycling routes. The principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood - the ability to meet most of your everyday needs within a 20-minute journey from home, by walking, cycling or accessing transit - are well reflected in the OCP directions and further development of the Esquimalt town core. Supporting local businesses and contributing to local vitality will be even more important as the region embarks upon recovery in a post-COVID environment.

Designing for Social Connections

The site planning and design also reflects the values and best practices documented in Esquimalt's 2019 ***Designing Density: Planning for social connectedness in multi-family housing*** report. The Marin proposal strives to achieve a positive contribution of new rental housing that will promote strong social connections through thoughtful design, including public spaces that offer benefit to the broader Esquimalt community, and on-site amenity spaces in the common areas, fitness studio, rooftop bbq and garden areas that enhance social connectedness and well-being for the residents.



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The project includes a mix of unit types and sizes, including larger 3-bedroom units suitable for families with children. Ground-level units with their own walk-up front doors and private outdoor spaces provide an attractive alternative to single-family living and will be attractive to young families, households with pets and empty-nesters alike.

Site Planning and Architectural Design

The architectural vision for The Marin reflects the objectives of the Official Community Plan through urban design best practices that enhance the neighbourhood through context-sensitive densification.

While the development parcel is large enough to allow a number of different building configurations, aligning the principal buildings in a north-south orientation provides the most widespread sunlight into both suites and key outdoor spaces. This fundamental benefit also coincides with the emerging pedestrian corridor in the neighborhood. The public pathway bisecting the site serves as a direct extension of the new Town Square Art Walk pathway.

Equally important to the pedestrian network is the impact on the adjacent street corridors, and how the project can redefine the streetscapes along Carlisle, Fraser, and Lyall. These are currently characterized by repetitive and eclectic curb cuts, paved driveways, on-site parking and discontinuous street parking. Through thoughtful integrated improvements the project can improve the street character and functionality with more continuous street parking, continuous and consistent curb, new sidewalk, grass boulevard, and street trees. A new corner mini-plaza connects this development with the community centre across the street to accommodate and enrich the natural pedestrian node that exists at this corner.

Each ground floor unit will have individual sidewalk entries leading to semi-private raised patios and front doors. Rather than a passive landscaped yard we envision vibrant, active yards all around that enrich the character of the community. This concept is carried into the pedestrian breezeway, where the rhythm of individual entryways and patio spaces frame the public pathway to create a safe and welcoming traditional public mews.

Side yards next to neighbouring lower density development are given additional width in order to reduce the impacts of shadowing and overlook. The underground parkade footprint is also set back from property lines to provide unlimited root space for full size trees and shrubs in the side yards. With the ability to surround the project with much larger tree species than conventional full-site



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parkades, this project can provide sympathetic densification with improved privacy for neighbours and maintain the beautiful green character of the neighborhood.

A mix of public and resident amenity spaces are provided through a combination of outdoor public space, indoor main floor amenity space, and rooftop terrace and barbecue spaces with garden plots for urban agriculture. The rooftop terraces are set back from roof edges so that views are provided towards the distant sea and mountain ranges rather than down towards neighbours.

The architecture will have a timeless, brownstone urban residential character that serves to beautifully frame a street corridor as much as optimize the suites within. The combination of large, tall windows, and repeating facade modules differentiate each street-facing unit and create a strong residential character. The upper two floors are stepped back along streets so that the three-storey character is emphasized. Within the narrower corridor of the mews a green wall is envisioned to soften and enrich the urban character.

Community Benefits

Each new development contributes to the city-building process by implementing the community's long-range vision as articulated in the Official Community Plan and other key policy documents. The Marin project offer a number of community benefits that are aligned with Esquimalt's goals and aspirations, including:

- New rental housing, with a range of unit types and sizes to meet the needs of a diversity of household ages, stages and compositions.
- Larger family-friendly units located at grade, and a pet-friendly building.
- Greater affordability, with more housing choices and purpose-built rental housing.
- An extension to the Art Walk and new public art to contribute to Esquimalt's unique character and sense of place.
- New public plaza at the corner of Carlise and Fraser to provide a place for social gatherings and community connections.
- Landscape and public realm design, with more "eyes on the street", incorporating CPTED best practices.
- On-site amenities that support resident well-being, foster a sense of belonging, and help relieve pressure on existing civic facilities.
- More residents to support local shops and businesses and a model of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept.
- Support for alternative modes of travel, with new housing in close proximity to parks, shops, employment, transit and municipal services.



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- Quality design and finishing that will contribute to the character of Esquimalt's town core.
- Units with walk-up entries and front doors on the street, compatible with the neighbourhood character.
- Welcoming building entrances located along the Art Walk extension to present a friendly front door and encourage casual interaction with fellow residents.

We value the opportunity to work with the Township of Esquimalt through the development planning process and strive to achieve a positive community result through our commitment to collaboration and design excellence.

Doug Foord, CEO

ICIC

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