



**QUADRA CEDAR HILL**  
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

February 25, 2025

**RE: DPR00941, REZ00709; 801, 811 and 821 McKenzie Avenue**

Dear Saanich Planning,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment re the above rezoning and development application for 801, 811 and 821 McKenzie Avenue to construct a seven-storey mixed-use building with 104 residential units. The original plan was to also include one commercial unit but due to changes to the building design to preserve the Garry Oak grove on the northwest corner of the site, the proposed commercial unit was removed.

The proponent, Abstract Development, held three community engagement sessions, all on MS Teams, with QCHCA and the Rainbow community re this site and their plans - on November 24, 2021, on January 26, 2022, and a final one on February 23, 2023. Traffic congestion, pedestrian/cyclist safety, parking issues and loss of significant numbers of trees were raised as key issues by the community. The proponent also took advantage of an invitation to get Council's feedback at a COW meeting at an October 23, 2023 meeting where similar issues were brought forward by Council members.

The developer addressed the concerns as follows:

1. A strong desire to retain more trees on the site, especially the Garry Oak grove at the southwest corner on McKenzie. As a result, the proponent refined the building design and site servicing to retain more trees by:
  - refining and jogging the building design to create an adequate setback for the critical root zones of the Garry Oaks in the northwest corner
  - proposing to plant ten succession Garry Oaks as understory plantings in addition to the initial proposal which contemplated protection of nine mature Garry Oak trees on the site.
  - planning to register a Natural State Covenant with Land Titles to ensure this area remains protected for the years to come.
2. Concerns about the Increased vehicle traffic, traffic flow and overflow parking in an already congested area. The proponent addressed these issues with the following measures:
  - doubling the original offer to homeowners without a parking stall from a one-year free transit pass to two years
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- The provision of the modo vehicle and membership passes will remain consistent with the original offering.
  - A fully equipped bike repair and maintenance facility within the resident secured bike parking room
  - A large bike room conveniently located with direct access to Rainbow Street sidewalk, Rainbow Park and the connector bike trail down to the Lochside Trail.
  - A marketing program that will promote units as car-free to target those looking to utilize alternative modes of transportation.
  - Providing two accessible parking stalls
  - separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the entire McKenzie Avenue frontage. The future sidewalk will be wider than the current sidewalk, and it will be separated from vehicles by a bike lane and hardscape buffer.
  - eliminating the originally planned walk-out units facing McKenzie in the northwest corner. The existing retaining wall at the edge of the existing sidewalk cannot be removed without impacting the health of the adjacent trees. Therefore, the proposed sidewalk is to be cantilevered or projected over the existing retaining wall. To ensure pedestrians are safe, a guardrail will be installed, similar to what is existing today. Homes front McKenzie in this area will not have a direct connection the sidewalk on McKenzie
  - A second vehicle access onto McKenzie (right-in, right-out only). Unfortunately, Saanich Engineering was not supportive of any vehicle access off McKenzie and preferred a sole entry to the site off Rainbow. The elimination of the commercial space means the overall traffic generated by the project will be lower than initially considered.
3. Building height and setbacks as experienced from the south:
- As a result of the steeply sloped site, and the push of the building out of the Garry Oak critical root zone, the building appears taller at the rear with six storeys of residential above the parkade podium. Planned terraced landscaping surrounding the podium will create some relief.
  - A reduced rear-yard setback distance to the approved Abstract townhome project (3977 Rainbow) was used as part of the strategy to accommodate trees in the NW corner of the site.

We appreciate the developer's efforts to respond to issues raised by the neighbouring community by refining the building design to protect the grove of Garry Oaks and incorporating additional traffic and pedestrian/cyclist safety measures. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Susan Haddon  
President, QCHCA