

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<http://www.divinedevelopment.org/>
<http://stjohnthedivine.bc.ca>

proudly supported by:



1

executive summary

In 2009 the Parish of St John the Divine decided to investigate the potential of redeveloping the property it occupies to support and expand the service it provides to the community.

The Congregation set out their foundational values: Sense of Community; Environmental Sustainability; and Equity and Social justice. Based on these Values they set the following Objectives: Model Servant Leadership; Support the Mission of the Church; Showcase Environmental, Social, Economic and Spiritual Sustainability. The intention is to create and expand our community with these four elements of Sustainability at its core.

*These values led us to create the vision to “**MOBILISE THE PROPERTY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**”.*

To manifest this Vision in a specific development of the property we agreed there are several critical components: Social Service Hub Space; Not for Profit Office Space; Affordable Housing; Space for Church Needs; Outdoor Space; Arts Component; Green Infrastructure and Community Engagement and Animation.

The site currently occupied by the Church extends to approx. 53,000 square feet with the following buildings: The Church (14,375 sq. ft.), Parish House (6990 sq. ft.), Church Hall (9650 sq. ft.), St John’s Court (13,400 sq. ft. – 19 housing units), and the cottage to the east of the Parish House. There are two important outdoor areas – the Memorial Garden and the Inner Garden. The Church is a Heritage listed building. The buildings are used for a variety of Church and community uses including worship, housing, shelter, Food Bank, meetings, rehearsal space, concerts, offices, etc.

The property is currently zoned for commercial, public buildings and two-family residential use. The City has recently adopted a new Official Community Plan (OCP) and Downtown Core Area Plan. These plans support the development of higher density residential and mixed-use projects. The proposed development outlined in this MDP is well aligned with these new policies.

The proposed sustainable development plan for the property comprises several main components:

- **NOT FOR PROFIT OFFICE AND PROGRAM SPACE:** in a three-four storey building of between 15,000 and 20,000 sq. ft.
- **HOUSING:** a three-storey multi-unit building aimed towards households with income of \$30,000 to \$60,000 pa.
- **CHURCH HALL:** a substantial upgrade or replacement of this facility to provide improved space to existing core users and other Church and community groups
- **MIXED USE BUILDING:** four storey building on Quadra Street with commercial use at grade and multi unit residential above
- **OPEN SPACES:** the Memorial and Inner Gardens will be preserved and enhanced. Additional spaces between the new and existing buildings will be designed to encourage gathering and interaction.
- **EXISTING SPACES:**
 - o The Church: we will investigate the options for layout changes that will facilitate use of the Sanctuary space by a broader range of church and community uses
 - o Parish House: we foresee upgrades and minor changes to layout to accommodate more efficient and broader use of this space
 - o St John’s Court: we anticipate retention of the current housing in its existing form for the foreseeable future

With the intensified use of the site we anticipate a reduction in the number of parking spaces provided on site. This reduction will be mitigated by the provision of alternative transportation strategies e.g. car sharing co-op, bike parking, and potentially the location of parking off site including sharing existing parking.

We believe we can create significant benefit to the community by undertaking this development. Such benefits include: continuing the Church's important work in the community; securing the heritage value of the existing Church structure; provision of high quality space for not for profit organisations to support them in their work; existing and additional affordable housing; support for the arts community; attractive open spaces for use by the community; a leading example of sustainability in action; a catalyst for further community revitalization; a replicable model that will support other churches and organisations engaged in social purpose real estate.

We have considered various options for how we will deliver the proposed development. Our recommended structure is one where we secure funding to allow us to undertake a broad rezoning of the property to accommodate the anticipated buildings and uses that would deliver on our Vision. Thereafter we would engage with specific development partners to fund, construct and operate the various phases of the development. This model ensures that we set the direction of the proposed development and engage partners with skills that the Church lacks. It also greatly reduces the risk borne by the Church.

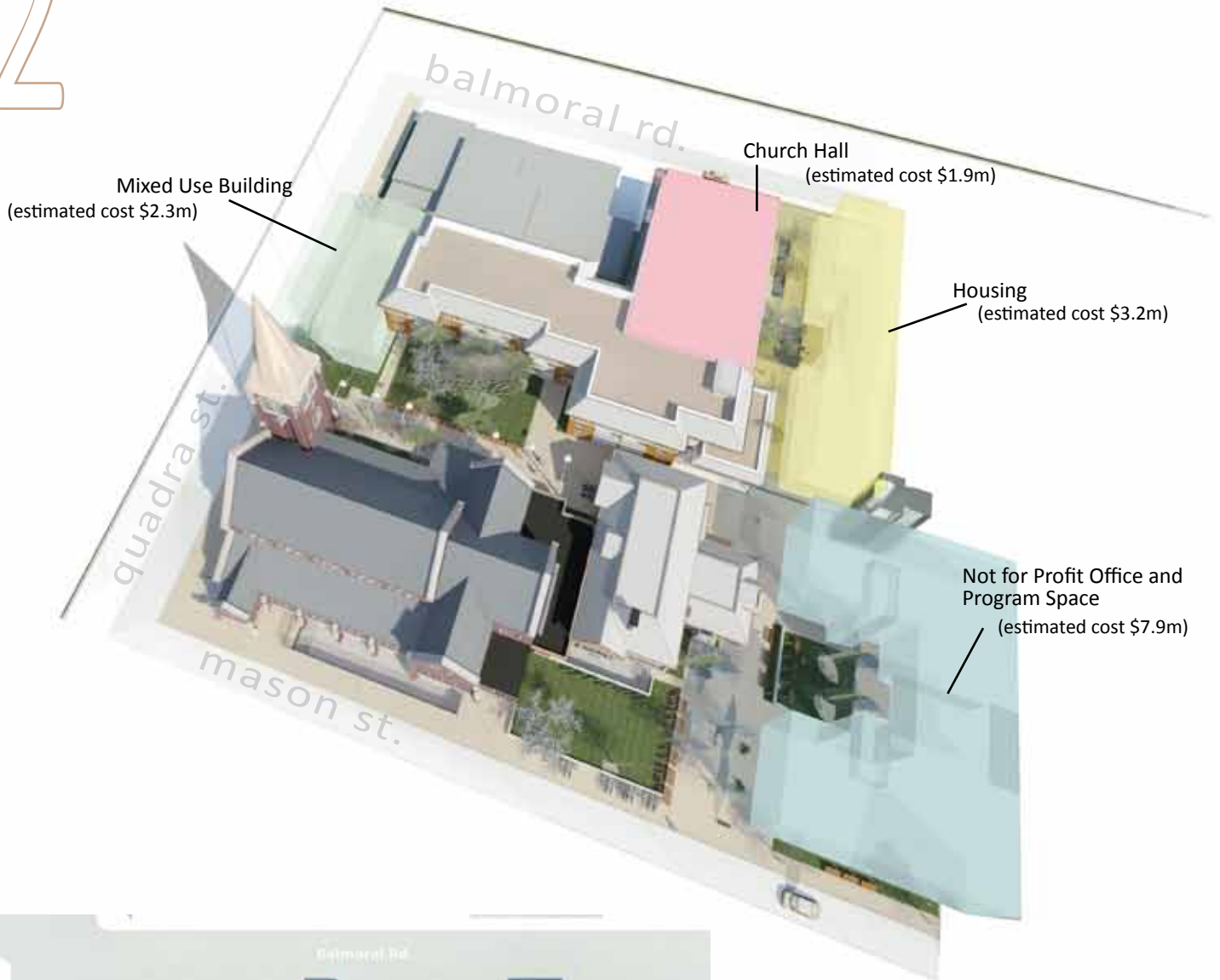
In order to undertake this development we will need a flexible and robust tenure and governance structure. We have reviewed numerous options and would recommend the following structure. A long-term (99 years) land lease from the Diocese to a new non-profit entity controlled by the Parish. This non-profit would in turn sub-lease land parcels to the individual development partners who would undertake the development of buildings on each parcel. The sub-lease and other agreements between the Parish controlled non-profit and the development partners would contain all necessary term to ensure delivery of the Vision and a reasonable financial return to the Parish and Diocese.

The ongoing operation of the "campus" is as critical as the design and development of each component. We will create an entity that will promote and manage the interaction of occupants on the campus and encourage connections to the broader community. This entity will likely raise funds from each sub-tenant/occupant in order to have the resources to effectively generate this community engagement and animation. This, or an alternative entity, will also be responsible for the general property management of the campus

We believe that we can create a campus which achieves the social benefit objectives while generating a reasonable return over time for the contribution the Church is making to the project in the form of land and ongoing management and oversight. The financial feasibility of each parcel development will be assessed in discussion with the selected development partner. It is envisaged that each parcel will contribute an amount of land rent over time and will make a contribution to property maintenance, management and community animation.

2

site development: diagram



**ST JOHN THE DIVINE
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**