

AGENDA ITEM NO: 11.4.2

MEETING DATE: July 2, 2025

STAFF REPORT – COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: Cody Voorhorst
Development Variance Permit / 4268
Stewart Road DATE: June 18, 2025


DEPARTMENT: Planning
DVP01518 PREPARED BY: Shamim Bahri / mb

1. SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The applicant requests to reduce the minimum number of off-street parking spaces required to facilitate retention of the existing gymnasium associated with the elementary school currently located on the subject property.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

Recommendation that, subject to public representation, Council approve the issuance of Development Variance Permit DVP01518 with respect to property located at 4268 Stewart Road, subject to the recommendations as stipulated within the draft Development Variance Permit. (Presentation)



Gillian Villeneuve
Director of Planning

**3. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S
RECOMMENDATION/COMMENTS:**

Supports recommendation.



David Blain
Chief Administrative Officer

STAFF REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT DVP01518

PREPARED BY: Shamim Bahri DATE: June 18, 2025
POSITION: Planner I DEPARTMENT: Planning Department

1. BACKGROUND:

The Canadian Reformed School Society of Abbotsford has operated *John Calvin School* on the subject property for over 60 years. The property has received multiple 'Non-Farm Use' approvals from the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) in the past. Most recently, an 1150m² expansion of the school building for new classrooms and gymnasium was approved with a condition that the existing gym be demolished (Resolution #163/2022). Upon completion of construction of the addition, the applicant determined that the original gymnasium was in better condition than originally assumed and as such, requested to retain this portion of the building. An ALR application (ALR00372) was submitted to the ALC to request the retention of the existing 430m² gymnasium and was approved with a condition that the siting remain in accordance included site plan. A copy of the decision is attached for information (Resolution #205/2025).

2. PROPOSAL:

In order to meet the minimum off-street parking requirements, as per the Zoning Bylaw, for the retention of the gymnasium, 62 spaces are required. Although there are 62 parking spaces available for use by the school, 15 of the existing parking spaces are located within the City right-of-way (ROW) along Stewart Road and do not count towards the overall parking provided on-site. As such, a Development Variance Permit application to reduce the off-street parking requirement from 62 spaces to 47 spaces is required.

The Land Development has reviewed the proposal and advised that there are no concerns regarding the use of the 15 pre-existing parking spaces within the road right-of-way given the long-term use of the existing parking area and there are no plans for road expansion or improvements along Stewart Road at this time. Should road expansion occur in the future, these spaces may be impacted.

3. FACTORS:

3.1 2040 Official Community Plan (OCP) / Land Use

OCP: "Institutional" designated in the Yarrow Neighbourhood Plan

Land Use: John Calvin School

3.2 Neighbourhood Character

The subject property is situated within the Yarrow Neighbourhood and is surrounded by rural properties with varying property sizes from 0.06ha to 4.4ha in area. To the north is an M2 (Service

Industrial) Zoned property with rural properties within the AL (Agricultural Lowland) Zone to the east, west, and south.

The neighbouring property to the east and south, 4230 Stewart Road, contains a single detached dwelling and serves as a recreational field associated with John Calvin School.

3.3 Technical Issues

Floodplain: The subject property is located within the Yarrow Area of the protected floodplain and is subject to the Floodplain Regulation Bylaw.

Watercourses: A Class “A” watercourse known as *Sharon Ditch* is located to the north of the property and requires a 30m setback for riparian protection. The proposal is not affected by the watercourse.

Geotechnical: The subject property is not subject to any known geotechnical hazards or earthquake related risks.

3.4 Conditions of Issuance

Staff support the requested variance as proposed by the applicant and recommend approval of the draft Development Variance Permit, subject to the condition as stipulated within the draft Development Variance Permit.

4. RECOMMENDATION & SUBSTANTIATION:

Recommendation:

Recommendation that, subject to public representation, Council approve the issuance of Development Variance Permit DVP01518 with respect to property located at 4268 Stewart Road, subject to the recommendations as stipulated within the draft Development Variance Permit. (Presentation)

Substantiation:

The proposal is considered supportable as the school has been operating for a number of years within the subject property while utilizing the existing parking spaces without any issues. Approval of the requested parking variance will allow for the retention of both of the gymnasiums, legitimize the existing parking area within the City right-of-way and recognize its contribution to the overall required parking for the site.

5. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- Development Variance Permit Application (DVP01518) – May 9, 2025
- Agricultural Land Reserve Application (ALR00434) – August 21, 2024 (Resolution #205/2025)
- Agricultural Land Reserve Application (ALR00372) – March 24, 2021 (Resolution #163/2022)

Site Photo – Existing parking area within City right-of-way



Location Map



Ortho Photo



Attachment
ALC Decision Resolution #205/2025



**PROVINCIAL AGRICULTURAL
LAND COMMISSION**

T: 604-660-7000
E: ALCBurnaby@Victoria1.gov.bc.ca
201 – 4940 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC, Canada V5G 4K6

March 21, 2025

ALC File: 101517

John Vankammen

The Canadian Reformed School Society of Abbotsford BC

Delivered by e-mail

Dear John Vankammen:

Re: Reasons for Decision - ALC Application 101517

Please find attached the Reasons for Decision of the South Coast Panel for the above noted application (Resolution #205/2025). As the agent, it is your responsibility to notify the applicant accordingly.

Please note that the submission of a \$150 administrative fee may be required for the administration, processing, preparation, review, execution, filing or registration of documents required as a condition of the attached Decision in accordance with section 11(2)(b) of the ALR General Regulation.

Under section 33.1 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* ("ALCA"), the Chair of the Agricultural Land Commission (the "Commission") has 60 days to review this decision and determine if it should be reconsidered by the Executive Committee in accordance with the ALCA. You will be notified in writing if the Chair directs the reconsideration of this decision. The Commission therefore advises that you consider this 60 day review period prior to acting upon this decision.

Under section 33 of the ALCA, a person affected by a decision (e.g. the applicant) may submit a request for reconsideration. A request to reconsider must now meet the following criteria:

- No previous request by an affected person has been made, and
- The request provides either:

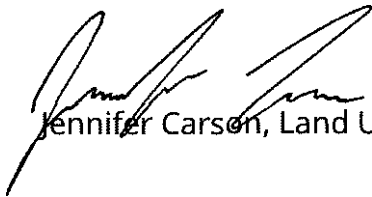
- Evidence that was not available at the time of the original decision that has become available, and that could not have been available at the time of the original decision had the applicant exercised due diligence, or
- Evidence that all or part of the original decision was based on evidence that was in error or was false.

The time limit for requesting reconsideration of a decision is one year from the date of the decision's release, as per ALC Policy P-08: Request for Reconsideration.

Please refer to ALC Information Bulletin 08 – Request for Reconsideration for more information.

Please direct further correspondence with respect to this application to ALC.SouthCoast@gov.bc.ca.

Yours truly,



Jennifer Carson, Land Use Planner

Enclosure: Reasons for Decision (Resolution #205/2025)

cc: City of Chilliwack (File: ALR00434) Attention: Erin Leary

101517d1



Agricultural Land Commission File 101517
Reasons for Decision of the South Coast Panel

Non-Farm Use Application Submitted Under s.20(2) of the
Agricultural Land Commission Act

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Applicant: | The Canadian Reformed School Society of Abbotsford BC |
| Agent: | John Vankammen, The Canadian Reformed School Society of Abbotsford BC |
| Property: | Parcel Identifier: 011-078-316 Legal Description: Parcel "A" (Explanatory Plan 13598), Lot 53, District Lot 83, Group 2, New Westminster District, Plan 4373 Civic: 4268 Stewart Rd, Chilliwack, BC Area: 1.2 ha (Entirely within the ALR) |
| Panel: | Ione Smith, South Coast Panel Chair Susie Gimse Holger Schwichtenberg |

OVERVIEW

- [1] The Property is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) as defined in section 1 of the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA).
- [2] The Applicant is applying to the Agricultural Land Commission (the "Commission" or "ALC") under s. 20(2) of the ALCA to retain an existing ~430 m² gymnasium that was required to be demolished when the Commission approved expansion of the school and construction of a new gymnasium through Resolution #163/2022 (the "Proposal").
- [3] The Proposal was considered in the context of the purposes and priorities of the Commission set out in section 6 of the ALCA:
 - 6 (1) The following are the purposes of the commission:
 - (a) to preserve the agricultural land reserve;
 - (b) to encourage farming of land within the agricultural land reserve in collaboration with other communities of interest; and,
 - (c) to encourage local governments, first nations, the government and its agents to enable and accommodate farm use of land within the agricultural land reserve and uses compatible with agriculture in their plans, bylaws and policies.
 - (2) The commission, to fulfill its purposes under subsection (1), must give priority to protecting and enhancing all of the following in exercising its powers and performing its duties under this Act:

- (a) the size, integrity and continuity of the land base of the agricultural land reserve;
- (b) the use of the agricultural land reserve for farm use.

EVIDENTIARY RECORD

- [4] The Proposal, along with related documentation from the Applicant, Agent, local government, and Commission is collectively referred to as the "Application". All documentation in the Application was disclosed to the Agent in advance of this decision.

BACKGROUND

- [5] The Property has been occupied by John Calvin School (the "School") since 1952, prior to the establishment of the ALR. The original 1952 structure has had small additions approved through applications to the ALC. The Property also contains a parking lot, a playground structure and playing fields. The school expansion and gymnasium approved by Resolution #163/2022 and have been constructed.
- [6] The Applicant also owns the 2.7 ha parcel to the south and east of the Property of which the majority is currently being used as a grass playing field for the School.

- [7] In 1994, Application 28830 was submitted to the Commission to expand and upgrade the school facilities by 564 m². The Commission approved the application by Resolution #332/1994.

- [8] In 2019, Application ID 54518 was submitted to the Commission to construct an eight classroom, two storey addition with a building footprint of totalling approximately 557 m². The Commission approved the application by Resolution #218/2016.

- [9] In 2022, Application ID 61649 was submitted to the Commission to construct a 1,150 m² gymnasium with a second storey classroom for the School to replace the existing gymnasium on the Property. This application explained that the existing gymnasium is around 70 years in age and required replacement to meet the current BC building code including earthquake and seismic engineering loads. The Commission approved the application by Resolution #163/2024 subject to the existing gymnasium being demolished.

- [10] The City of Chilliwack (the "City") confirms that the Proposal is consistent with the Property's 'Civic Assembly' designation under the City's Zoning Bylaw 2020, No. 5000 and the 'Institutional' designation City's Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 675.

- [11] City Staff have indicated that if the Proposal is approved by the Commission, a development variance permit is required to reduce the required off street parking.



- [12] The City's Agricultural and Rural Advisory Committee supported the Proposal as it was noted that the "retention of the existing gymnasium will not have an impact on agriculture as it has been in place on the property for a number of years without incident."
- [13] At its meeting on December 17, 2024 the City Council resolved to forward the application to the ALC with support.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

- [14] The most recent 2022 Application (61649) proposed demolishing the old gymnasium as it was too small and at the time was believed to be in need of significant repairs. The Application notes that after a comprehensive construction review it was discovered that the old gymnasium, initially proposed for demolition, was in better condition than was initially believed. Further, the Application argues that the Applicant has since decided that updating the existing structure is preferable.
- [15] The Application notes that it is unlikely that the area in which the gymnasium is located will be converted to farmland. Alternatively, the Application argues that the Applicant prefers to preserve the gymnasium as usable space. The Panel understands that circumstances change and finds that the non farm use impact on the Property has not changed. As such, the Panel is amenable to the Applicant retaining the older gym for school use.



DECISION

- [16] For the reasons given above, the Panel approves the Proposal to retain the existing ~430 m² gymnasium that was required to be demolished by Resolution #163/2022 subject to the following conditions:
- (a) Siting of the non-farm use remains in accordance with Schedule A and cannot expand without permission from the Commission; and;
 - (b) The non-farm use of the Property is non-transferable without explicit permission from the Commission through the application process.
- [17] This decision does not relieve the owner or occupier of the responsibility to comply with applicable Acts, regulations, bylaws of the local government, and decisions and orders of any person or body having jurisdiction over the land under an enactment.
- [18] These are the unanimous reasons of the Panel.
- [19] A decision of the Panel is a decision of the Commission pursuant to s. 11.1(3) of the ALCA.



[20] Resolution #205/2025

Released on March 21, 2025

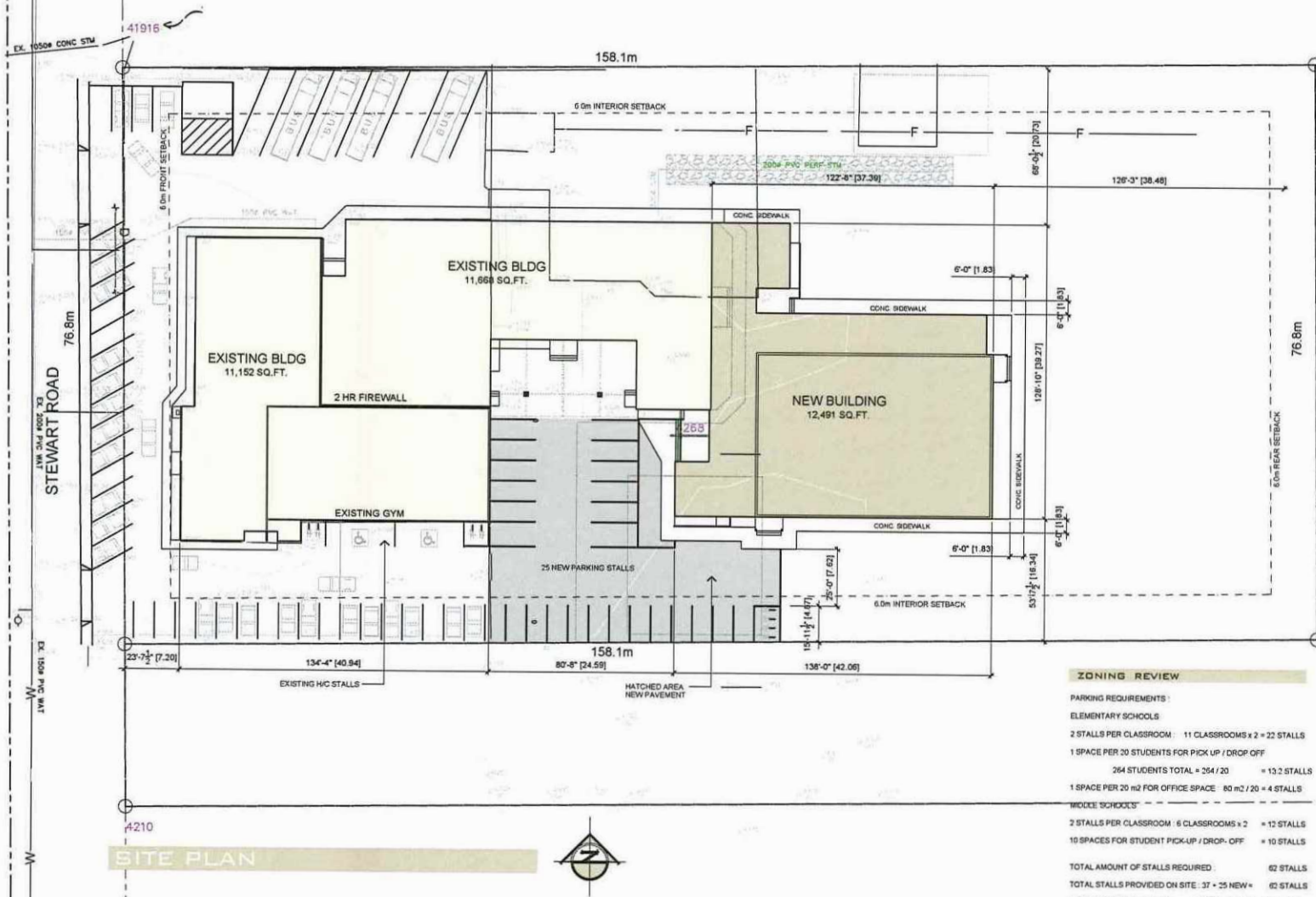


Ione Smith, Panel Chair

On behalf of the South Coast Panel

Enclosure: Schedule A: Decision Map

ALC Application 101517



SITE PLAN

ZONING REVIEW

PARKING REQUIREMENTS:
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
 2 STALLS PER CLASSROOM : 11 CLASSROOMS x 2 = 22 STALLS
 1 SPACE PER 20 STUDENTS FOR PICK UP / DROP OFF
 264 STUDENTS TOTAL = 264 / 20 = 13.2 STALLS
 1 SPACE PER 20 m2 FOR OFFICE SPACE : 80 m2 / 20 = 4 STALLS
MIDDLE SCHOOLS
 2 STALLS PER CLASSROOM : 6 CLASSROOMS x 2 = 12 STALLS
 10 SPACES FOR STUDENT PICK-UP / DROP-OFF = 10 STALLS
TOTAL AMOUNT OF STALLS REQUIRED: 62 STALLS
TOTAL STALLS PROVIDED ON SITE: 37 + 25 NEW = 62 STALLS
MAX. LOT COVERAGE: 50% 3,292 m2 / 12,141 m2 = 27.2%
FLOOR AREA RATIO: 1.5 5,172 m2 / 12,141 m2 = 0.43
BUILDING SETBACKS: 6.0m ON ALL SIDES
MAX. BUILDING HEIGHT: 15m

Conditionally Approved Retention of Existing Gym by Resolution #205/2025

JOHN CALVIN
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



LUTHERYN
ARCHITECTURE LTD

JOHN CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS
OVERALL SITE PLAN & ZONING

DATE: JULY 2024
 DRAWN BY: [Name]
 CHECKED BY: [Name]
 DATE: [Date]
 PROJECT: [Project Name]
 SHEET: [Sheet Number]
 TOTAL SHEETS: [Total Sheets]

A.1.0



City of Chilliwack
Notice of Public Information Meeting
Council Chambers
8550 Young Road, Chilliwack BC V2P 8A4

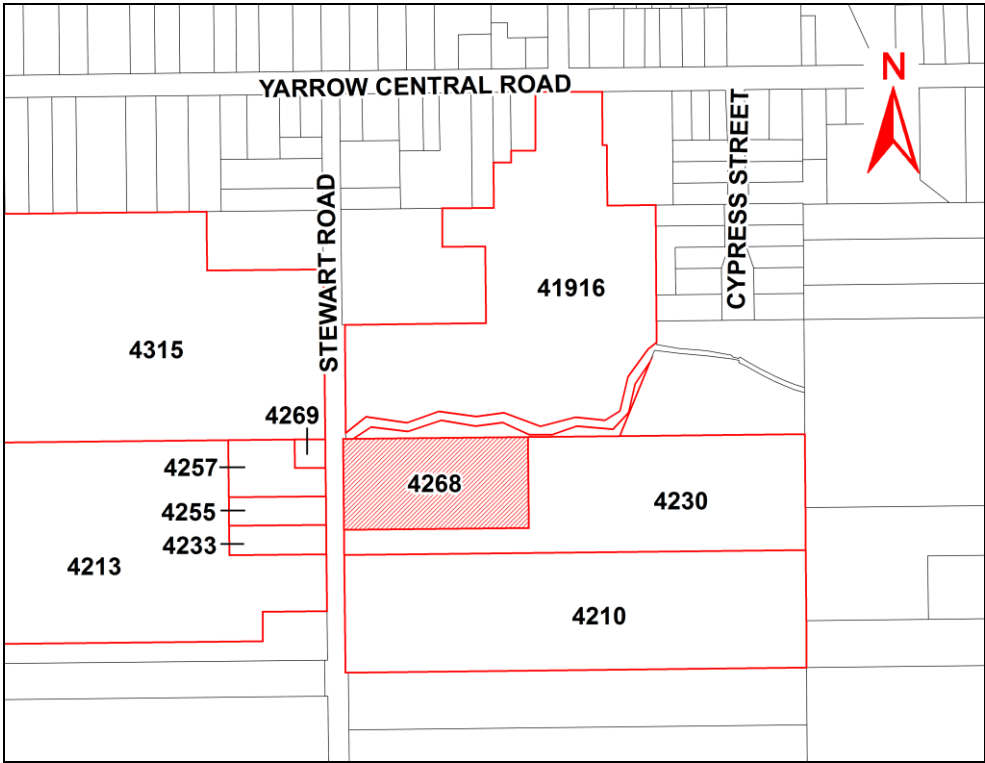
When: Wednesday, July 2, 2025 at 4:00 PM
Watch: The live council meeting broadcast at [Chilliwack.com/live](https://chilliwack.com/live)

Development Variance Permit (DVP01518)

Locations: 4268 Stewart Road

Applicant: Cody Voorhorst

Purpose: To reduce the minimum number of off-street parking spaces required to facilitate retention of the existing gymnasium associated with the elementary school currently located on the subject property, as shown on the included map.



How to share your feedback:



Attend the Public Information Meeting in person (8550 Young Road)

Mail or email our Legislative Services Department:



Mail: 8550 Young Road, Chilliwack BC V2P 8A4

Email: clerks@chilliwack.com

- Submissions will be accepted until 4:00 PM on July 1, 2025. Any submissions received after this time will not be considered by Council.
- Please include your name and address.
- **All mail and emails, including your name and address, will be recorded and form part of the official record.**

Contact our Planning Department between Wednesday, June 18, 2025 and Wednesday, July 2, 2025 for a copy of the proposed permit at planning@chilliwack.com or 604-793-2906.

Jacqueline Morgan, CMC
Corporate Officer



SCHEDULE "A"

CITY OF CHILLIWACK

DEVELOPMENT VARIANCE PERMIT NO. DVP01518

1. This Development Variance Permit is issued subject to compliance with all of the Bylaws of the City of Chilliwack applicable thereto, except as specifically varied or supplemented by this Permit.
2. This Development Variance Permit applies only to those lands within the City of Chilliwack described below, to facilitate the retention of two school gyms within the existing school building, as per Agricultural Land Commission Resolution #205/2025, and does not apply to any additions or subsequent replacement of any and all buildings and structures and other development thereon:

Parcel Identifier No. 011-078-316
Legal Description: PARCEL "A" (EXPLANATORY PLAN 13598) LOT 53 DISTRICT LOT 83 GROUP 2 NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT PLAN 4373
Address: 4268 Stewart Road

3. In accordance with the provisions of Section 498 of the *Local Government Act* the following section of "Zoning Bylaw 2020, No. 5000" is varied as stated:

Section 5.04 Minimum Off-Street Parking Space Requirements is varied by reducing the minimum off-street parking requirement from 62 to 47 spaces.

4. The land described herein shall be developed strictly in accordance with the terms and conditions and provisions of this Permit and the plans and information contained within the application. The following condition applies:
 - a) that the development be in accordance with the plans found in Schedule "A".
5. Pursuant to Section 504 of the *Local Government Act*, if the permittee does not substantially start any construction permitted by this Permit within two years of the date of this Permit, this Permit shall lapse.
6. This Permit is not a Building Permit.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON THE ____ DAY OF ____, 2025.

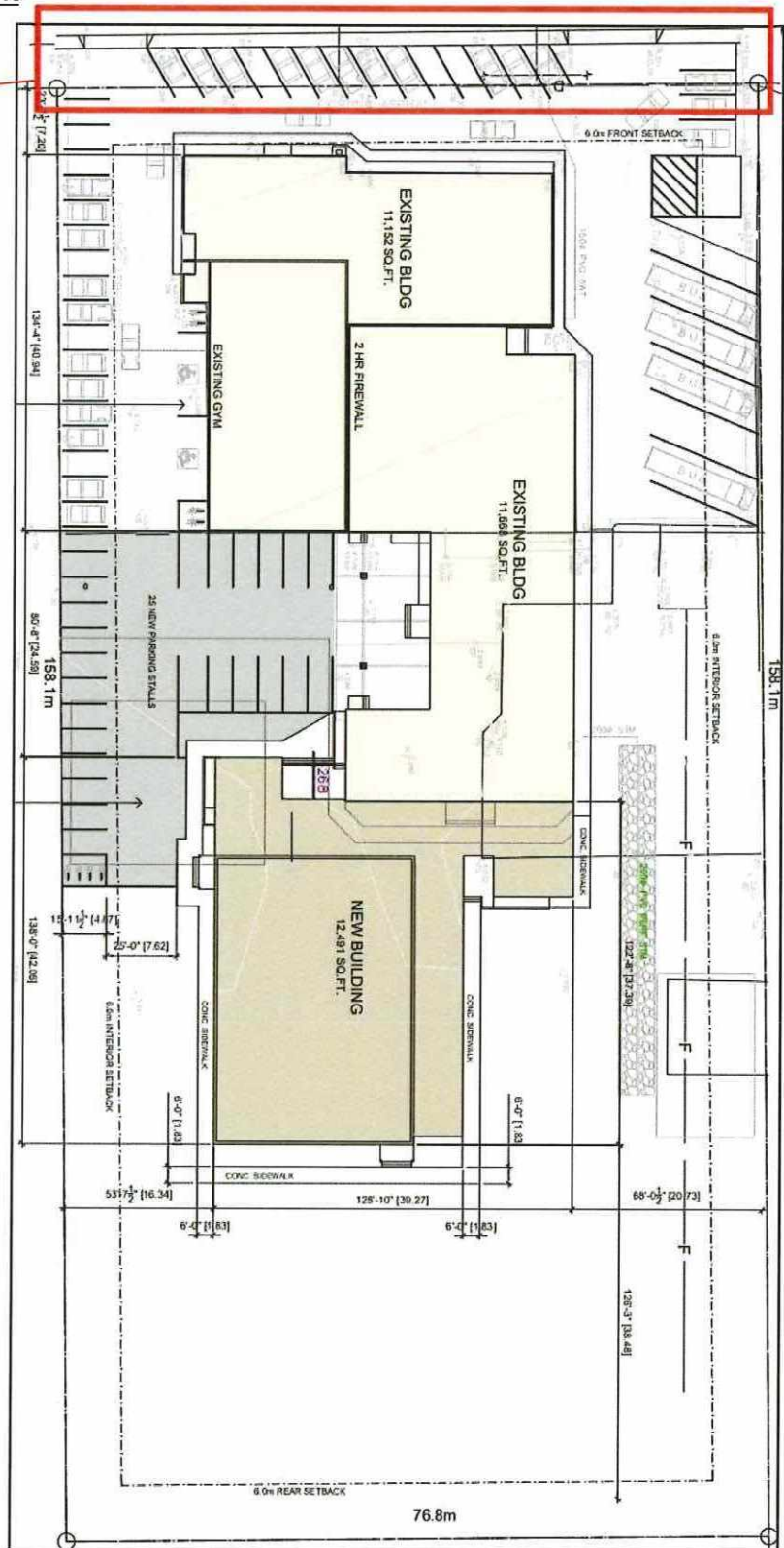
ISSUED THIS ____ DAY OF ____, 2025

CORPORATE OFFICER

DRAFT

Site Plan (as provided by the applicant)

Parking spaces located on the city right-of-way (not included in total parking requirement)

**DRAFT**