

Attachment 4
Background Information

Policy and Regulations Summary

Official Community Plan

Land Use Designation

The subject site is designated (ML) Mixed Use – Low Rise in the Official Community Plan (OCP), which is described, in part, as follows:

Purpose: To provide low-rise commercial or commercial and residential mixed use buildings which create active and engaging principal streets.

Principal Forms and Uses: Low rise buildings which include commercial uses (e.g. retail, office) and which may also include residential uses. Active commercial uses (e.g. retail) are required on principal street frontages. Only in circumstances where the Development Permit Area guidelines can be met, a compelling case can be made, and appropriate amenities are provided will a five or six storey building be considered.

The proposed development is consistent with the intent of the ML land use designation and therefore, no OCP amendment is required.

Special Employment Area

The Regional Growth Strategy recognizes that Special Employment Areas around hospitals, including Royal Columbian Hospital (RCH), or post-secondary institutions play a special role in the economic development of cities. These are characterized by high levels of employment-related activity.

The OCP designates the area surrounding RCH, in which the subject site is located, as a Special Employment Area. The Area is intended to align with the work of the IDEA Centre, which envisions an economic healthcare cluster around RCH, by promoting and offering incentives for office development.

Development Permit Area

The site is within the 3.2 East Columbia Street Development Permit Area (DPA). The DPA seeks to facilitate new commercial and mixed-use development, with active commercial spaces oriented towards East Columbia Street. This DPA has been designated with the following purposes:

- Establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial and mixed-use development;
- Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity; and,
- Establishment of objectives to promote energy conservation.

A Development Permit is required before doing any work that would result in development or alteration to the lands or exterior of buildings on the lands.

Economic Development Plan

The City's Economic Development Plan (EDP) identifies healthcare as an important economic sector in New Westminster, and Royal Columbian Hospital (RCH) as the city's largest employer and a major regional healthcare anchor.

The EDP supports creation of the IDEA Centre, the City's Economic Healthcare Cluster Initiative, which is intended to build on and support the investment in Royal Columbian Hospital. The project does so by providing rental units within close proximity to the hospital and transit, additional office space to support the IDEA Centre, and more commercial amenities along East Columbia Street through provision of at-grade retail on a largely vacant site.

Zoning Bylaw

The site is currently zoned a combination of C-2 Community Commercial Districts (Low Rise) and Service Districts (CS-1). The properties would be rezoned to a Comprehensive Development (CD) District to support the proposed development. Per Section 464(3) of the *Local Government Act*, a Public Hearing for the proposed Zoning Amendment Bylaw is prohibited given that this is a residential project.

The site would be rezoned to a site-specific Comprehensive Development (CD) District. The zone incorporates specifications tailored to the proposed project, including the following: residential rental tenure; accessible parking design, bicycle storage design, and compact vehicle parking variances; and, building use, density, siting and massing restrictions. Per the City's typical practice, minor density, siting, and massing allowances have been incorporated into the CD zone. Consistent with the recommendations of the City's Retail Strategy, medical/dental office use would be restricted to 5 of 8 units only on the ground floor, to support more active uses at grade.

Master Transportation Plan

East Columbia Street is identified as a "Great Street" within the Master Transportation Plan (MTP). Per the MTP, Great Streets "require planning and design that goes beyond the typical street function of supporting through traffic. Planning and designing Great Streets means providing characteristics that make streets destinations – places for people to be, instead of places to move through." The design of the project has been considered in light of the MTP Great Street objectives and significant streetscape improvements (sidewalks, landscaped boulevards, etc.), would be constructed as part of the project's required off-site improvements.

Sapperton/Massey-Victory Heights Transportation Plan

The Sapperton/Massey-Victory Heights Transportation Plan aims to enhance the multi-modal transportation system to provide more transportation choices. The Plan also seeks to enhance the safety and livability of these neighbourhoods by managing the volume and speed of traffic using local roads. A number of Alberta Street traffic calming initiatives are detailed by the Plan, such as removal of the temporary diverter, and construction of a “pinch point” and speed humps. These interventions would be implemented through the project’s required off-site improvements.

Active Transportation Network Plan

The Active Transportation Network Plan (ATNP) updates the active transportation network plans identified in the City’s Master Transportation Plan and other neighbourhood-specific plans. The ATNP identifies the portion of East Columbia Street fronting the site as part of the Core Cycling network, which connects major destinations, including commercial areas, civic facilities, schools, parks, and interregional routes. The Plan proposes protected bike lanes along this section of East Columbia Street, which would be completed as part of the project’s required off-site improvements.

Secured Market Rental Housing Policy

The project would provide secured market rental housing and support the City’s objective of increasing rental housing supply and ensuring security of tenure over time. The proposed units would be secured through a Housing Agreement and rental tenure only zoning.

Family Friendly Housing Bylaw and Design Guidelines

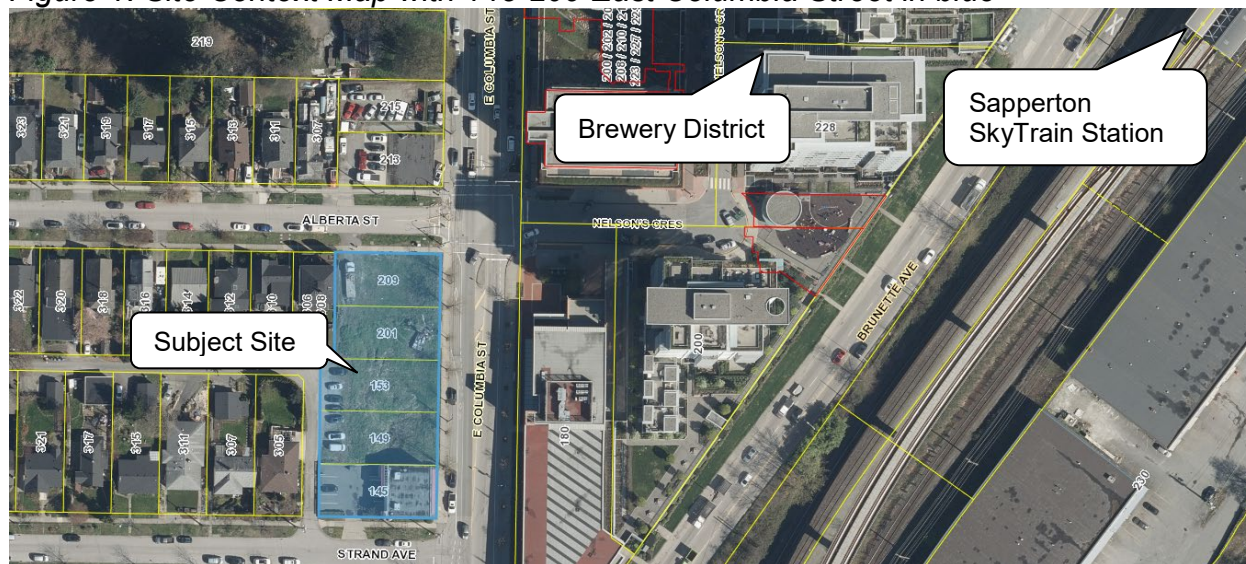
Per the City’s Family Friendly Housing Policy, and given that the project proposes secured market rental units, the development would be required to provide a minimum of 25% two and three bedroom units, of which at least 5% would need to contain three or more bedrooms. The project proposes 28.3% two- and three-bedroom units, of which 6.1% would contain three bedrooms, exceeding requirements.

Site Characteristics and Context

The subject site is 2,481.0 sq. m. (26,705.3 sq. ft.) and is located in the Sapperton neighbourhood, approximately 310 m. (1,017.1 ft.) from Royal Columbian Hospital and 400 m. (1,476 ft.) from Sapperton SkyTrain Station. It is bounded by East Columbia Street, Alberta Street, Strand Avenue and the rear lane. East Columbia Street is designated a Great Street by the Master Transportation Plan and is part of the Central Valley Greenway. The site has recently been consolidated and readdressed to facilitate the application.

The site slopes down north to south along East Columbia Street, and west to east from the rear of the property down to the East Columbia Street frontage. East of the site, is the Brewery District with commercial buildings facing East Columbia Street. West of the site are single-detached and duplex houses, the majority of which are designated (RGO) Residential – Ground Oriented Housing, save for 308 Alberta Street, which is designated (ML) Mixed Use – Low Rise.

Figure 1: Site Context Map with 145-209 East Columbia Street in blue



Proximity to Transit Service and Other Sustainable Transportation Options

The subject site is located on East Columbia Street, which is identified as a “Great Street” in the Master Transportation Plan and part of the Active Transportation Network Plan core cycling network. The site is approximately 310 m. (1,017.1 ft.) from the Sapperton SkyTrain Station.

Transit Service	Frequency	Approximate Distance
Sapperton SkyTrain Station	2 to 5 minutes	310 m. (1,017.1 ft.)
#109	30 to 60 minutes	0 m. (0 ft.) to Alberta St. at E. Columbia St.

Project Statistics

	Permitted / Required Under C-2 / CS-1 Zoning	Proposed
Lot Area	-	2,481.0 sq. m. (26,705.3 sq. ft.)
Site Frontage	-	75.9 m. (249.0 ft.)
Average Lot Depth	-	34.2 m. (112.2 ft.)
Total FSR	-	3.92 FSR
Building Height	C-2: 12.19 m. (40.0 ft.) CS-1: 9.14 m. (30.0 ft.)	25.08 m. (82.3 ft.)
Residential Units	C-2: Up to 2 storeys CS-1: Not permitted	99 units
Unit Mix	Min. 25% two- and three- bedroom units Min. 5% three- or more bedrooms	Studio: 20 (20.2%) 1-bdr: 51 (51.5%) 2-bdr: 22 (22.2%) 3-bdr: 6 (6.1%)
Off-Street Parking		
Residential	67 ¹	99
Visitor	5 ¹	10
Commercial	75	84
Total	147	193
Off-Street Loading	2	2 (standard sized) 2 (Class A)
Bicycle Parking		
Long-term	155	156
Short-term	15	18

¹ Per ratios for secured market rental units within 500 m. of a SkyTrain station