

Attachment 1

Policy Context

Attachment 1: Policy and Regulation Context

Downtown Community Plan Land Use Designation

Mixed Use High Density: The Downtown Community Plan notes the following details regarding the Mixed Use High Density Designation:

- mixed-use (commercial and/or residential) throughout Downtown, outside of Columbia Street Historic Mixed-Use;
- retail, office, service or residential uses;
- any combination of the above (can be one use or multiple uses)
- Commercial development is required only in areas identified in the Downtown Community Plan and only at street level.

The form of the proposed development is generally consistent with the Mixed Use High Density Land Use Designation in the Downtown Community Plan.

Development Permit Area

The site is within the #1 Downtown Development and Special Development Permit Area. The Development Permit Area seeks to support the Downtown's Regional Town Centre designation in the Regional Growth Strategy. This Development Permit Area outlines objectives and guidelines for:

- The form and character of commercial, multifamily, institutional and intensive residential development.
- Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.
- Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted.
- Objectives to promote energy and water conservation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

A Special Development Permit (SDP) issued by the Director of Development Services is required before doing any work which would result in development or alteration to the lands or exterior of buildings on the lands within this portion of the Downtown. SDPs function similar to a regular Development Permit, but under the New Westminster Redevelopment Act, the City was given special authority to regulate urban redevelopment within this area.

Downtown Building and Public Realm Design Guidelines and Master Plan

The Downtown Building and Public Realm Design Guidelines and Master Plan provides guidance in achieving a high quality, cohesive Downtown that honours the historical and cultural context of New Westminster. This document serves as a toolkit to inform public realm improvements both on- and off-site within the Downtown area.

The subject site is located on the eastern edge of the Tower Precinct in the Downtown Building and Public Realm Design Guidelines. This area is described as follows within the guidelines:

The Tower Precinct will continue to develop as a highly urbanized component of New Westminster's Downtown with the SkyTrain Station at its core. Serving as a regional destination, it is anchored by existing and developing education and commercial destinations, including Douglas College, Plaza 88 and the retail mall at the foot of Royal Ave. It is anticipated that the area will accommodate a significant share of Downtown's residential and commercial growth.

Interim Development Review Framework

In January 2024, Council approved the Interim Development Review Framework, as well as a subsequent update to the Framework in September 2024. The Framework guides overall evaluation of new development applications. As outlined in the Interim Development Review Framework (section 2.a.ii), amenity charges and inclusionary housing policy requirements would continue to not apply to development proposals which are 100% secured market rental.

Secured Market Rental Housing Policy and Incentives

The Secured Market Rental Housing Policy provides incentives to encourage the development of secured market rental housing projects by the private sector. The objective is to increase the supply of market rental housing and ensure security of tenure over time. Rental units created under this policy are secured by Housing Agreements and no-separate sales (no stratification) covenants. Significant incentives have been offered through this policy including reduced parking requirements and waiver of payment of Density Bonus and Voluntary Amenity Contributions.

Zoning Bylaw

The subject site is currently zoned Downtown Mixed Use Districts (High Density) (C-4). This district permits a maximum residential density of 3.0 FSR and a maximum overall density of 5.2 FSR. The maximum permitted height on this site is currently 12.92 metres (40 feet), which would accommodate three to four storeys.

Inclusionary Housing Policy

The Inclusionary Housing Policy was developed to help address the need for affordable rental housing in the city. Council endorsed the draft policy as the basis for initiating consultation with the public and stakeholders. The draft Inclusionary Housing Policy, would apply to new strata developments to include a minimum contribution of affordable housing units as a condition of rezoning approval.

Secured Market Rental Housing is exempt from the requirements of the Inclusionary Housing Policy.

Family-Friendly Housing Bylaw and Design Guidelines

The City's Family Friendly Housing Policy and Regulations (2024) requires a minimum of 10% of the units to be three-bedroom units, and 30% of the units to be two- or three-bedroom units for purpose-built market rental developments.

Child Care Strategy

The 2016 Child Care Strategy provides an overall vision, policy framework and three-year action plan in support of a comprehensive child care system in New Westminster which recognizes that quality, accessible and affordable child care is necessary to create a complete and healthy community and a prosperous economy. The Child Care Strategy is based on a Needs Assessment undertaken every five years, and recommends a range of policy directions and actions to improve the quality, accessibility, and affordability of childcare in New Westminster.

Office Space

The Official Community Plan Economy and Employment Policy 3.3 states the City will "Encourage office development in new and existing buildings and support more versatile workspaces." Supporting this Policy is Action 3.3e which promotes "office development in strategic locations, including Downtown, the Uptown Center and Frequent Transit Development Areas." the two SkyTrain Precincts identified in the Downtown Community Plan, where commercial developments are encouraged, through density incentives, to have office space. Furthermore, the Economic Development Plan seeks to target technology, creative, education and healthcare businesses in these growth sectors. Ensuring a diverse and available supply of office space is critical for attracting these businesses.

[Metro Vancouver 2024 Growth Projections](#) (medium growth scenario) forecasts the need for 44,610 jobs in New Westminster by 2030. This is an increase of 9,950 jobs (28.7%) from 2021 census data which indicates 34,660 current jobs in New Westminster.