



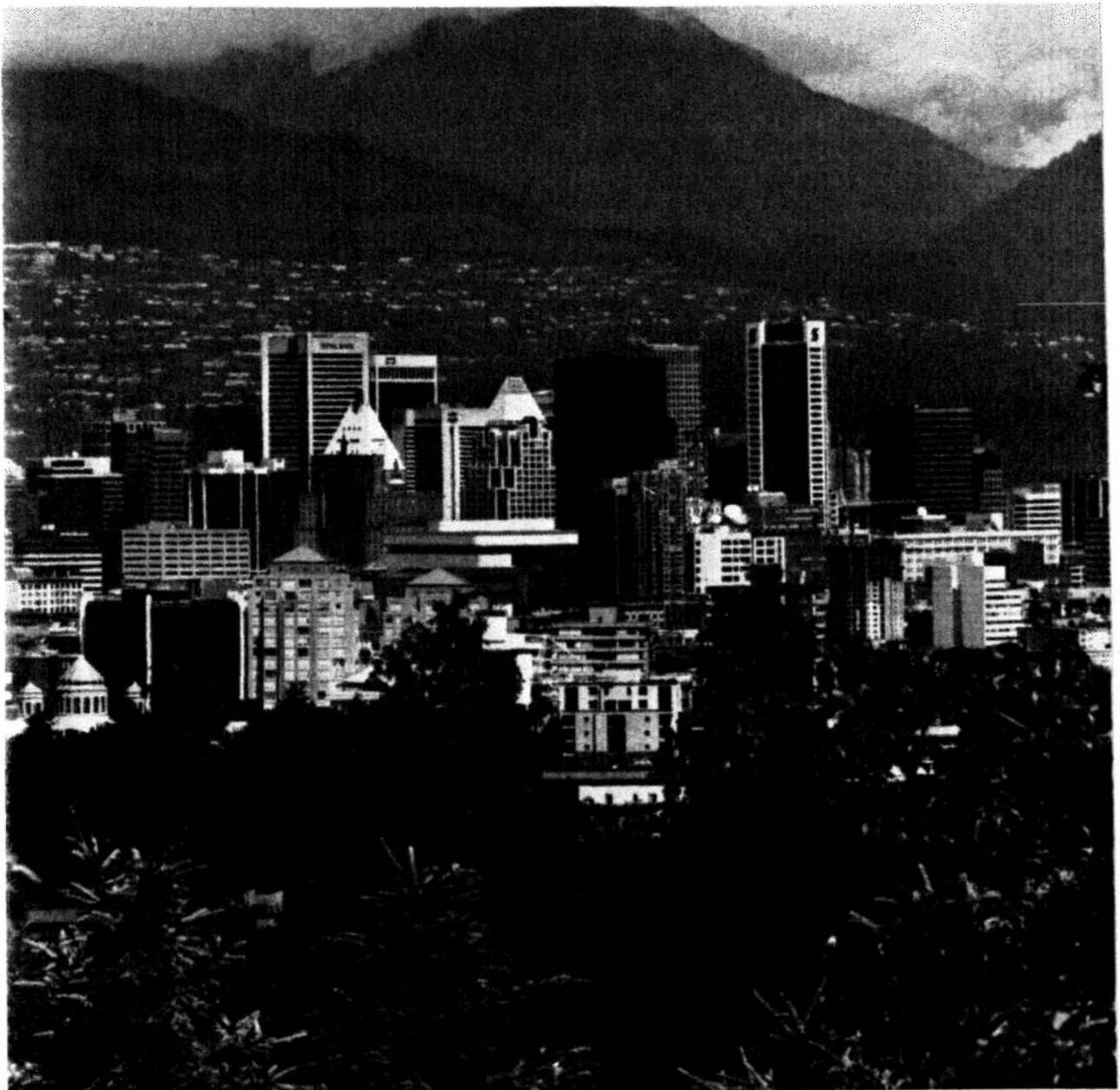
Planning

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CENTRAL AREA PLAN

Goals and Land Use Policy

**Adopted by Vancouver City Council
December 3, 1991**



Central Area Plan: Goals and Land Use Policy -- City Council Decisions

The following is a summary of City Council decisions and amendments regarding the Central Area Plan. The Central Area Plan contained in the following pages of this document has been revised to incorporate these Council decisions.

On December 3, 1991, Vancouver City Council approved the following:

THAT the overall Goals and the land use Policies and Actions in the "Central Area Plan: Goals and Land Use Policy Proposal", May 1991, be approved, subject to further review and refinement through the city-wide planning process and subject to (amendments noted below).

THAT Council refer work on preparing additional Central Area Plan policies to the up-coming city-wide planning process.

Amendments approved by Council:

1. That the Goal for the Central Area entitled "The Economic Generator" be re-drafted to place greater emphasis on Vancouver's pre-eminent role in the region and its international importance to Canada and the Pacific Rim.

2. That the Goal for the Central Area entitled "A Walkable Central Area" be amended to read as follows (*italics denotes amendment*):

Enhance the Central Area as a place where pedestrians move safely, easily, and comfortably on all streets and where walking, supplemented by transit *and bicycles*, is the primary means of moving around.

3. Section III: Replace Map C with revised Map C to distinguish heritage areas from heritage character areas. (Map C is a summary of the land use policies.)

4. Policy 1.1 (Reshape CBD): Revise Action statement to add: "Future detailed planning for Victory Square should address its linkages to and impacts on Gastown and Chinatown."

5. Policy 1.6 (Assist Regional Town Centres): In descriptions of what types of offices locate in regional town centres, replace the reference to "back offices" with "appropriate offices."

6. Section 2.0, Support Services, Background: The description of support services should be re-written to dispel any feeling that areas accommodating support services are somehow "marginal, low rent areas."

7. Section 2.0, Support Services, Map E (Proposed Policy): Add office districts as locations for support services.

8. Section 2.0, Support Services and Section 3.0, Housing: Regarding Burrard Slopes, permit housing, but do not require it -- with specifics to be determined as part of area-specific study.

9. Policy 3.2 (Choice of Use): Add an Action Statement to acknowledge the importance of continuing

studies of parking and seismic problems in heritage areas, to increase viability of buildings.

10. Policy 5.1 (Limit Retail Concentration): Add requirement for impact studies for retail projects over 100,000 square feet directly to Policy Statement.

11. Policy 5.1 (Limit Retail Concentration): Revise Action to be more explicit in accepting street-fronting department stores.

12. Policy 5.1 (Limit Retail Concentration) describes retail as generally two-storey street-fronting. Policy 5.3 (Ensure Retail Contributes to Public Streets) describes instances where retail that is not traditional street-fronting would also be acceptable. Policy 5.1 should be amended to cross-reference Policy 5.3.

13. Section 5.0 (Retail): Add new Policy: "Seek Council Direction on Special Cases: Where a retail proposal is a significant increase to retail capacity and includes a significant amount of retail that is not solely street-fronting, but in the opinion of the Director of Planning may meet the criteria outlined in Policy 5.3, the Director of Planning may seek direction from Council before proceeding with impact studies and other detailed evaluation. Where a retail proposal does not meet the criteria, but in the opinion of the Director of Planning may warrant further discussion, the Director of Planning will also seek Council advice before proceeding with impact studies and detailed evaluation."

14. Section 5.0 Retail: Replace Maps G and H with revised Maps G and H. (Maps G and H show existing and proposed retail streets.)

That approval of Map H (proposed retail streets) be deferred pending a report back from the Director of Planning with a more detailed map. (See below.)

Regarding the retail street maps, on March 12, 1992, Vancouver City Council approved the following:

THAT the proposed retail streets map (as shown in Appendix A of the Policy Report dated February 27, 1992) be retained in the Central Area Plan as a policy direction for further evaluation and implementation through more detailed planning initiatives.

THAT the Director of Planning report back as soon as possible on a text amendment to decrease the retail requirement for streets where the proposed policy would be more permissive than the current "retail required" category; and that for other streets, text amendments be brought forward through sub-area planning and/or through a specific work item on retail streets implementation.

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I. Introduction

Land Use Issues

This report expresses the policies of the City of Vancouver related to five major issues which will be helpful to Council, the public, and staff in making decisions. Careful consideration is given to individual development permits and rezonings; to major area plans for the Downtown South, Pacific Place, and Coal Harbour; and to initiatives to transform industrial areas. The Central Area Plan provides a unique overview of these areas and others and responds to a number of common issues:

- **Additional Office Zoning:** Is central area office zoned capacity too high? Where and how much reduction should be made in office zoning?
- **Displacement of Support Activities:** Should we be concerned about locations for the activities that support a healthy downtown -- for equipment suppliers, services, printers, designers, and general "incubator" activities, as well as for the entertainment uses that often co-exist with them? Where will these uses go when displaced by the redevelopment, and with what impacts?
- **New Central Area Housing and Reform of the Housing Bonus:** How much downtown housing do we need, where, and when? How should we replace the moribund housing bonus system being superseded by many site-specific CD-1 rezonings? What areas are most suitable for housing?
- **Livability and High Density:** How can we deal with the issues of project and neighbourhood livability which arise with higher density housing than we have historically experienced? How best does mixed use work?
- **Lively Retail:** How much additional retail can be supported in the central area, and how should it be shared among areas? Should we continue to emphasize public, street-fronting retail? Should we allow more multi-level, internal or underground malls?

Leading to a Central Area Plan

This work is part of developing a Central Area Plan -- a policy framework for the central area. Up to now there has been no Central Area Plan, but instead a myriad of plans and proposals for parts of the central area. Some of these are recent; many others date from the mid-1970s. Not only have the mid-70s plans needed up-dating, but also the concept of the central area has changed -- from a relatively small area defined by the business district, the West End, and the character areas of Robson Street, Gastown, and Chinatown -- to a much broader area

that includes the entire downtown peninsula, its waterfronts, the False Creek basin, and Central Broadway.

This report contributes to a Central Area Plan in three ways:

- it defines overall goals that embody a vision for the future growth and development of the central area;
- it provides a set of in-depth policies for the key land use issues listed above; these policies have been undertaken in the context of the overall goals and thus go beyond land use topics alone, linking land use with transportation, heritage, and other aspects important to the future of the central area; and
- it identifies, through the goals structure, related issues needing further work.

Process

Central Area Plan work began with a public process to generate ideas and issues, summarized in an October 1988 report to City Council. Council approved the next phase of Central Area Plan work -- to generate policy approaches based on the ideas from these public comments. A first draft of this work was brought forward for a series of City Council discussions in the fall of 1989. Following those discussions, additional research was completed and the policies were further tested and refined through area-specific studies, such as for Downtown South.

In June 1991 Council referred the revised Central Area Plan (May 1991) to the public for comment. In December 1991 Council amended and approved the goals, policies, and actions as published here. Further review and refinement will occur through the city-wide planning process.

Implementation of the Plan

This Plan is designed to act as a guide for area and project planning in the central area. As such, no zoning changes have been made directly upon approval of these policies. Instead the policies will be applied through area studies, rezonings, and project planning in the central area.

Organization of this Report

This report begins with a set of general goals for the central area, followed by a summary of the key land use policy directions and an outline of how this work relates to its city and regional policy context. These first three sections (Introduction, Goals, and Direction) provide a summary of this report.

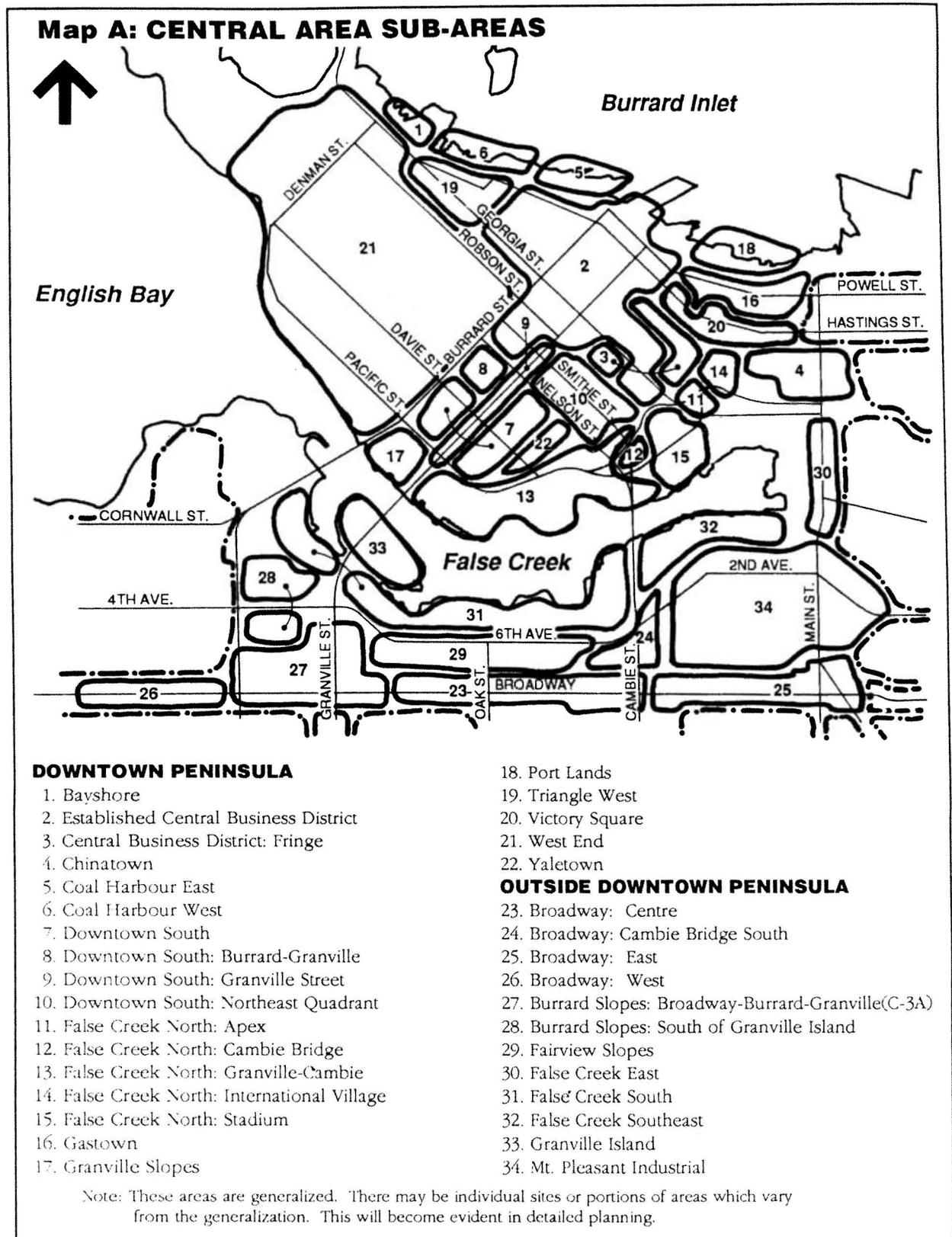
For more detailed information, the main body of the report covers five essential land use topics in depth: office, business support services, housing,

livability, and retail. Each of these sections contains a general objective, a background discussion, and specific policies and actions.

Next is a description of further work needed to implement the land use policies and of other Central Area Plan issues. The concluding section is a capsule description of the central area in the future.

Central Area Defined

Geographically the central area is defined as the downtown peninsula, the heritage areas just east of the peninsula, and the neighbourhoods around False Creek stretching south to Broadway. Map A shows the central area divided into a series of sub-areas which are referred to throughout this document. II.



II. Goals for the Central Area

The many hopes, concerns, and ideas that people expressed in the 1987/88 public dialogues and in various sessions since that time can be summed up in seven goals for the central area -- goals that we have used as touchstones in further developing Central Area Plan policies.

- **THE ECONOMIC GENERATOR**

Provide a focus for the region's special economic growth--head offices and their services and tourism--associated with the centre of a major metropolitan area, recognizing downtown Vancouver's pre-eminent role in the region and its international importance to Canada and the Pacific Rim.

- **AN ALIVE DOWNTOWN**

Create a central area that has a mix of activities, with quieter neighbourhoods where people live close to more active areas where people shop and play as well as work; and where the public streets are the primary scene of public life.

- **FOR ALL PEOPLE**

Ensure that the central area is a place to live and visit for all people; for all income and ethnic groups; accessible to the disabled; and for all ages, from children to seniors.

- **A SPIRIT OF PLACE**

Strengthen the unique qualities and symbolism of the central area as a special place -- its skylines, heritage resources, character areas, livable neighbourhoods, and active public spaces.

- **A CENTRAL AREA IN NATURE**

Ensure a central area reflecting nature, with a strong connection to the magnificent natural setting; maintain and improve environmental quality.

- **A WALKABLE CENTRAL AREA**

Enhance the central area as a place where pedestrians move safely, easily, and comfortably on all streets and where walking, supplemented by transit and bicycles, is the primary means of moving around.

- **AN ACCESSIBLE CENTRAL AREA**

Enhance the accessibility of the central area, while ensuring that its growth does not place an unacceptable transportation burden on central area streets, outlying neighbourhoods, or the environment.

What is striking about these goals is how similar they are to the values that motivated the plans of the early and mid-70s. However, even though there remains a general consensus on overall goals, there are many adjustments and choices to be made on how to address issues and continue to work toward achieving these goals.

The remainder of this report focuses on the role of basic land use topics--office, support activities, housing, livability, and retail -- in achieving these goals.

III. A Land Use Direction

Land Use Strategy

This section summarizes into an eight-point strategy the key themes from the specific policies in this report.

The term strategy is used in two ways. First, the policies are strategic in the sense that they are designed to provide guidance while maintaining a responsiveness to changing circumstances and not foreclosing future opportunities. Secondly, the policies work alone but are stronger as a group because the policies to achieve one goal support the policies to achieve other goals. Maps B and C provide a comparison of the past and new land use policy. The full analysis and background information is contained in Section IV.

1. CONSOLIDATE A COMPACT DOWNTOWN CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND UPTOWN OFFICE DISTRICT: Re-shape major office development on the downtown peninsula into a compact Central Business District (CBD) centred on transit; south of False Creek, focus offices in an Uptown secondary office district.

This report sees the formerly widespread office zoning in the central area re-shaped and focused, as shown by comparing Maps B and C. On the downtown peninsula, centred on Georgia and Burrard, office zoning becomes a compact, high amenity, CBD corporate core of "triple A" offices. This recognizes that in the regional context downtown Vancouver remains the international "face" of the region and its continued function as such is important to the region's economic prosperity -- the goal of "the economic generator". Similarly, the Uptown office district along Central Broadway plays a special medical and civic role in the region. At the same time, this focussing of office contributes to the goal of "an accessible central area" by concentrating office employment where it is most easily served by transit and by supporting regional policy that encourages regional-serving offices to locate in regional town centres. In practice, this means that having accepted some new office zoning at Coal Harbour East and False Creek North Apex, in accordance with criteria in this report, no other new major office zoning is likely to be needed in the central area in the foreseeable future.

2. REDUCE OFFICE ZONED CAPACITY OUTSIDE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND UPTOWN: Continue to reduce overall office zoned capacity through deletions in central area office zoning outside the defined CBD and Uptown office districts, primarily to add housing areas, protect heritage areas, and locate offices near transit.

There is excess office zoned capacity within the central area relative to housing and transportation capacity. The policies in this document result in a

reduction to office zoned capacity, although not for the sake of the capacity alone, but also to help achieve a number of other goals that involve more housing in the central area ("an alive downtown"), that protect heritage areas ("a spirit of place"), and that locate offices closer to transit ("an accessible central area").

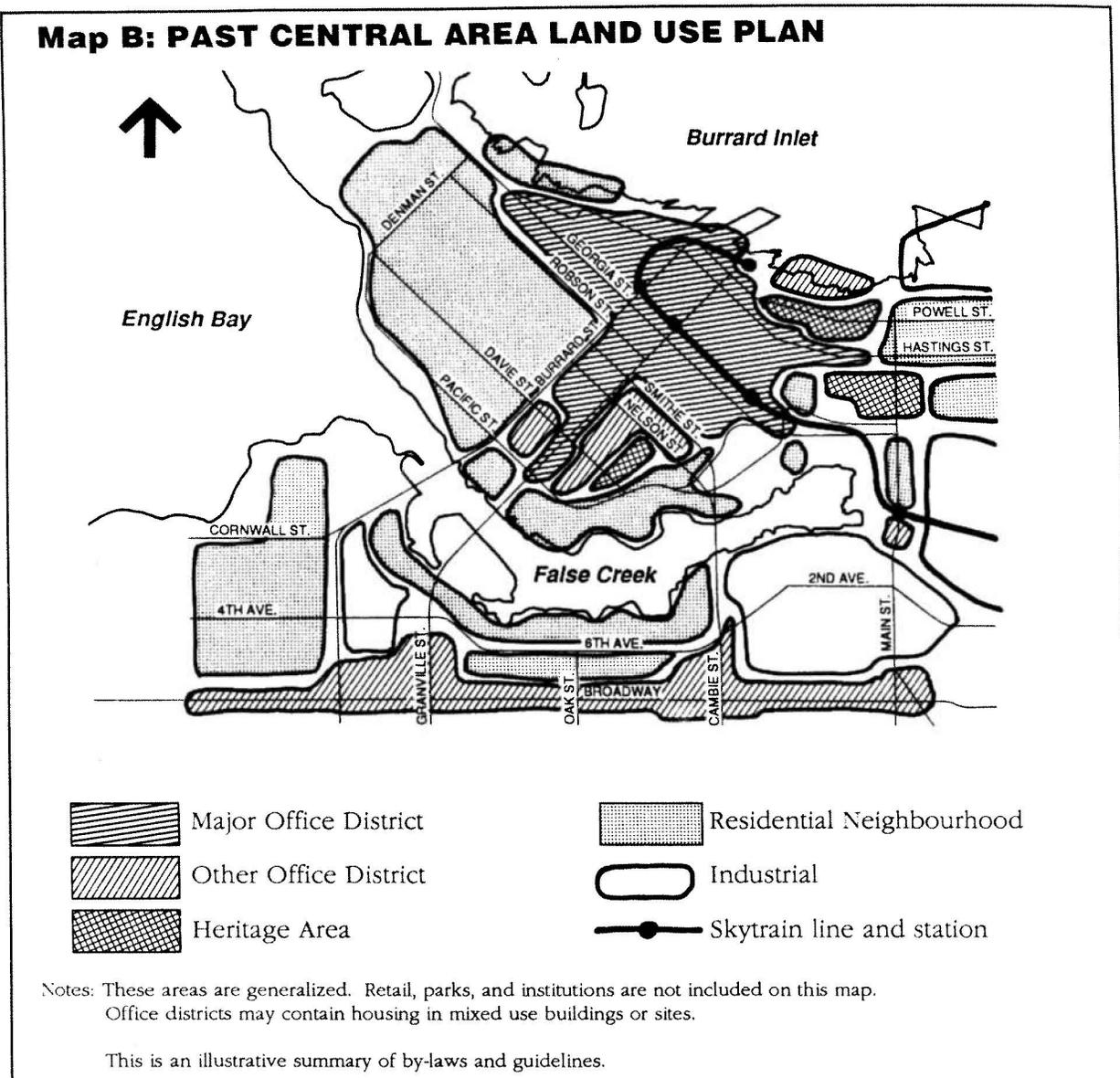
3. IMPROVE THE BALANCE OF OFFICE GROWTH AND TRANSPORTATION CAPACITY: Bring office and transportation capacity closer together. Implement stronger controls only if necessary.

The transportation impacts of continued office employment growth are a special concern and the next chapter of the Central Area Plan is a downtown transportation plan. The land use policies are designed to have positive transportation benefits: encouraging more housing close to jobs, increasing the use of transit, and reducing overall central area office zoned capacity.

A principal initiative is to bring office and transportation capacity closer together. The concept is to allow inner city offices in the future for only as many workers as can be accommodated without a profound restructuring of our transportation system that would be harmful to the city's livability. Some would argue that a "best guess" estimate of future transportation capacity should be made now, with office capacity lowered absolutely to match. The proposed policies do not go this far. They retain some flexibility for two key reasons. First, the relationship between office growth and transportation capacity is affected by many variables which themselves are changing. Examples include: office floor space per worker; the percent of workers who walk, bike, or come by transit or car-pool; part-time work and flexible working hours; and the transportation improvements that are considered acceptable and implemented. Thus, it is not possible to get a certain fix on what represents a transportation-office capacity match for the future. Second, and even more importantly, trying to achieve an absolute match could have severe negative impacts. Too severely limiting corporate office land supply could push prices and rents unnecessarily up and could cause business to forego the Vancouver region altogether, when they are not prepared to locate in the suburbs. In addition, the prospect of approaching limits could set off a rush of unneeded office construction.

Further actions can be taken if proven necessary, such as annual growth limits or more severe reduction of office zoned capacity or more severe limits on auto use. On the other hand, additional or new forms of office development may someday be needed. The land use policies described in this report provide a framework for these further actions,

Map B: PAST CENTRAL AREA LAND USE PLAN



by delineating the desirability of areas for various land uses and recognizing that their density can vary to some degree.

4. PROTECT SUPPORT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES, SHORT AND LONG TERM:

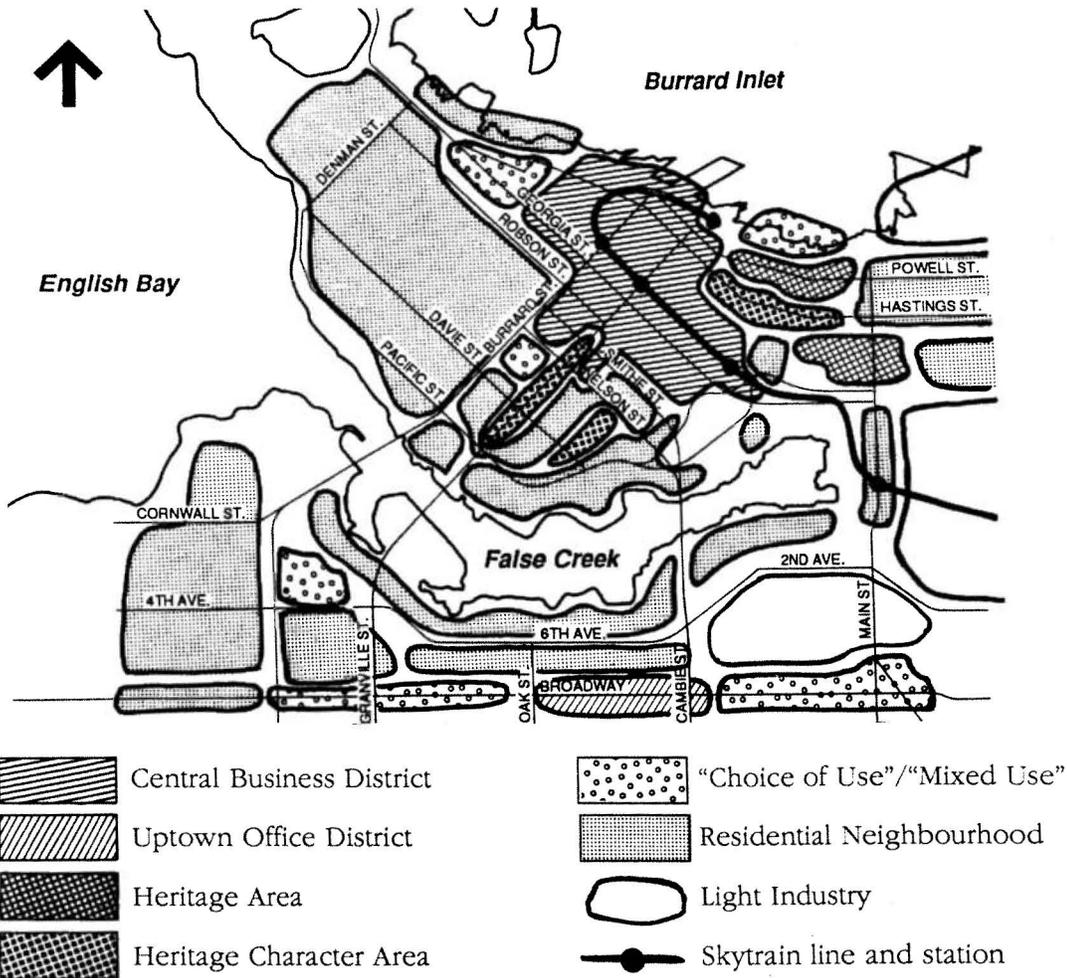
Ensure adequate close-in locations for the support activities that service the CBD and for compatible entertainment uses.

The policies in this plan provide opportunities near the CBD to accommodate support activities such as services, suppliers, design firms, and "incubator" activities. Recent research is showing how important these activities, usually forgotten or deemed "underdeveloped", are to the economic functioning of the more prestigious office core. Through build-out of current zoning or through proposed rezonings, support services will be displaced in a number of areas

where they currently exist. This report suggests that while we can afford to displace some of these uses, which are spread thinly over several large areas, we need to address their needs more specifically. A strategic approach is to provide opportunities for support services where consistent with other policies, while also finding out more about their linkages with the CBD by including this issue in the City's industrial studies.

Areas where support services opportunities can be provided are industrial areas shown on Map C, and some areas which also have commercial and residential uses. Because of these other uses, the latter areas are not shown separately on the map. They include the unique building stock in areas like Gastown and Yaletown, lower floors of residential buildings in proposed residential areas of Downtown South, and the South of Granville Island area.

Map C: NEW CENTRAL AREA LAND USE PLAN



Notes: These areas are generalized. There may be individual sites or portions of areas which vary from the generalization. This will become evident in detailed planning. Retail, parks, and institutions are not included on this map.

This is an illustrative summary of the policy contained in this plan.

5. CREATE NEIGHBOURHOODS: Develop housing in highly livable and primarily residential neighbourhoods around and closely linked to the CBD. Facilitate wide housing choice at various scales and for different household types and income levels. Encourage family housing where appropriate.

Additional housing in the central area can help to reduce the need for public investment in commuting and is essential to achieving "an alive downtown". Housing for families with children and for a range of income levels is particularly important to creating a downtown "for all people". Much central area zoning has allowed a portion of any commercial site to be residential, while fostering office as the predominant use. The policies in this plan propose instead clustering most housing in areas designated as primarily residential where amenity is high.

Significant opportunities to mix uses in these areas would still exist, but housing would predominate. In this way, neighbourhood services can be focussed more effectively; livability in terms of adjacencies of buildings and uses is easier to achieve; and the creation of a variety of character areas of different densities will facilitate different lifestyles and household types. In addition to initiatives already underway, there are several new housing areas identified, to replace office and industrial areas. Comparing Maps B and C shows the location of new neighbourhoods in the central area.

6. PROVIDE SOME AREAS OF CHOICE OF USE INSTEAD OF BONUS -- FAVOUR HOUSING:

Provide several "choice-of-use" areas for inner city diversity, primarily in areas that already have a mix of office and housing development.

This is the one exception to the general thrust of creating housing in neighbourhoods. In a few areas, this plan provides a new strategy of allowing a "choice of use" for offices, housing, or hotels. These are areas with general amenity, but where the zoning has historically favoured offices: Triangle West, Burrard-Granville (in Downtown South), westerly Port lands, and parts of Central Broadway. We could rezone these areas for housing only, but since much is already considerably developed with a mix, this would have little practical effect. More importantly, these areas offer a special opportunity to foster an intensive mix in a central area otherwise divided into primarily housing or office precincts. For the first two areas, choice of use replaces the unsuccessful housing bonus zoning that allows extra offices in exchange for some housing. This has not created much housing, but it has caused land to trade at an inflated rate, which has stymied development or caused ad hoc CD-1 rezonings as a way of escaping the bonus. Different from the bonus, choice of use applies to fewer, carefully selected areas, elevates housing as an equal use, and allows sites to be fully utilized by any one use. Map C shows the identified choice of use areas, whereas on Map B small amounts of housing are permitted virtually anywhere.

7. TARGET RETAIL TO DESIRED PEDESTRIAN SHOPPING STREETS: Develop a network of street-oriented shopping districts, serving the neighbourhoods throughout the central area, by targeting and focusing retail zoning on key pedestrian streets and by limiting extensive patterns of shopping malls and underground retail links.

The tradition of lively, street-fronting retail districts sets downtown Vancouver apart from many other cities. Street-fronting retail helps create a lively downtown, a walkable city, and, by reinforcing the streets as our public spaces, street retail helps achieve a downtown that is inviting to a variety of people. Whereas the mid-70s plans for the central area provided for unlimited retail, this plan recognizes that to continue to build on downtown's retail strengths, we need caution in adding large concentrations of new retail, reductions to and focussing of existing retail zoning, and specific limits to underground pedestrian links and internally-oriented malls.

8. ALLOW USES AND SCALE THAT PRESERVE HERITAGE CHARACTER: In areas with heritage character, permit a mix of land uses that can be easily accommodated in existing buildings or in new buildings of a compatible scale, to help preserve and revitalize these areas.

The land use policies are designed to be supportive of heritage retention -- related to the goal for "a spirit of place". The following policies create a heritage land use strategy: the area designated for major

CBD office skirts areas with major heritage character because Triple A office building heights and densities can be a threat to heritage stock; choice of use is considered applicable for areas with heritage character if its flexibility will help retain existing buildings; and exceptions to the emphasis on street-fronting retail are to be considered if it will help reuse of a heritage building. Heritage areas are shown on Maps B and C.

Related City and Regional Policy

The policy directions summarized above are consistent with *Creating Our Future* which is the recent up-date of the *Livable Region Program* first established in the mid-1970s to help balance jobs and population throughout the region and to create regional town centres for greater accessibility and increased transit use. For downtown Vancouver, the regional strategy seeks more housing growth and less job concentration. Although downtown Vancouver will remain the dominant job centre of the region even with successful regional policies, there is already evidence that downtown's share of job growth is slowly lessening. The Central Area Plan land use policies reinforce the regional policies in the following ways: increasing the opportunity for housing in the central area; shaping downtown job growth to locations well-served by transit; emphasizing the special role of downtown for the region's higher order functions and encouraging other office functions to locate in regional town centres; and reducing overall central area office zoned capacity.

Clouds of Change, the City's recent report on atmospheric change, says that atmospheric pollution can be reduced if there are increased opportunities for non-auto transportation and a greater proximity of uses in order to reduce the need for transportation. The land use policies proposed in this report promote land uses easily linked by walking and public transit -- by adding housing areas close to jobs, by locating offices near transit, and by facilitating retail districts convenient to residents and employees.

Discussions are also underway about a *city plan* for Vancouver. Many cities have both a city plan and a central area plan due to the unique role and complexity of the inner city. Ideally, we would have a city-wide plan which would provide a city context for the central area plan. A city-wide planning process is beginning and discussion of the role of the central area will be included in the city plan process.

IV. Specific Land Use Policies

This section proposes policies and actions for each of the five land use topics. Sub-sections on each topic are numbered as follows:

1. OFFICE POLICY
2. SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY
3. HOUSING POLICY
4. LIVABILITY POLICY
5. RETAIL POLICY

Each sub-section begins with an introduction containing an objective and a description of the significance of the topic, key issues, and background information. This is followed by a series of policies and accompanying actions, which are organized as follows:

Policy Title

Policy Statement

Actions To Be Pursued

Actions Underway

Actions Recently Implemented

Rationale

1. OFFICE POLICY

Toward the goals of "The Economic Generator" and "An Accessible Central Area"

Objective: Enhance the CBD as the region's prestige office centre, consistent with transportation and other city and regional objectives.

Significance: Office space is of special significance in central area planning. In economic terms, the downtown complex of office activity represents the largest and most important element of the city's economy. It is also the information "nerve centre" for regional and provincial economies. However, in addition to the economic prosperity that office development signifies, it can also have negative impacts on transportation demand (offices have the highest density of workers per land area); on housing affordability (pressure is added to housing prices when many people compete for a scarce housing supply close to jobs); and on the skyline and character of the downtown (people worry about canyons of dark office towers and a downtown deserted during evenings and weekends).

Regional Context: *The Livable Region Program* of the mid-1970s proposed sharing employment and population growth throughout the region for a better balance of where people live and work and creating regional town centres as a focus for suburban jobs and services. City policy has generally tried to be consistent with the regional directions. Examples include the 1975 office downzoning of downtown and Central Broadway, as well as the 1986 *Vancouver Plan* recommendation to add more housing zoned capacity to the city to provide the opportunity for more people to live close to work. Recently the Livable Region has been updated and the concept of sharing employment and population growth has been reaffirmed in *Creating Our Future*.

Recent Issues: The issues involving office development have recently come to the forefront because new office zoning has been proposed in a number of areas. Decisions on North False Creek, Coal Harbour, and Downtown South have now been made. Decisions are required for the location and amount of office zoning for Victory Square, Central Broadway C-3A areas, Southeast False Creek, and other areas. Prior to the Central Area Plan, there was no overall context in which to decide where and how much new office zoning is appropriate.

Background Information: In terms of data, the key variables related to offices are: the office zoned capacity, the amount of office development and its rate of growth, and the number of employees and the rate of employment growth. Office zoned capacity in the central area in early 1991 was about the same as in 1975 (although during this time Council has considered and rejected some proposals for major increases). A small increase approved for Coal Harbour and North False Creek was mostly

offset by CD-1 rezonings from office to high density residential, leaving downtown peninsula office zoned capacity at about 52 million square feet, until the mid-1991 rezoning of Downtown South from commercial to residential reduced office zoned capacity by about 5 million square feet, consistent with the policies in this plan.

Actual office development downtown is about 24 million square feet and has increased at an average of about 750,000 square feet a year for the last decade. But evidence suggests that the number of square feet per worker has continued to increase, so that the growth in office space may not be accompanied by the same rate of growth in employees. For example, from 1981 to 1989, office space on the downtown peninsula increased by 28 percent, but morning peak period traffic volumes into the downtown increased by much less (12 percent). Estimated 1991 employment on the downtown peninsula is approximately 142,000, with approximately 45,000 in the rest of the central area, mainly Central Broadway. Different sets of employment forecasts show that there could be 35,000 or 50,000 new employees on the downtown peninsula by 2006, as well as 10,000 more in the rest of the central area. (The lower number is based on more recent trends which indicate higher job growth in the suburbs.) Thus, the challenge has been to design city policy to achieve both the prosperity that office employment can bring and the livability of mitigating or avoiding its negative impacts.

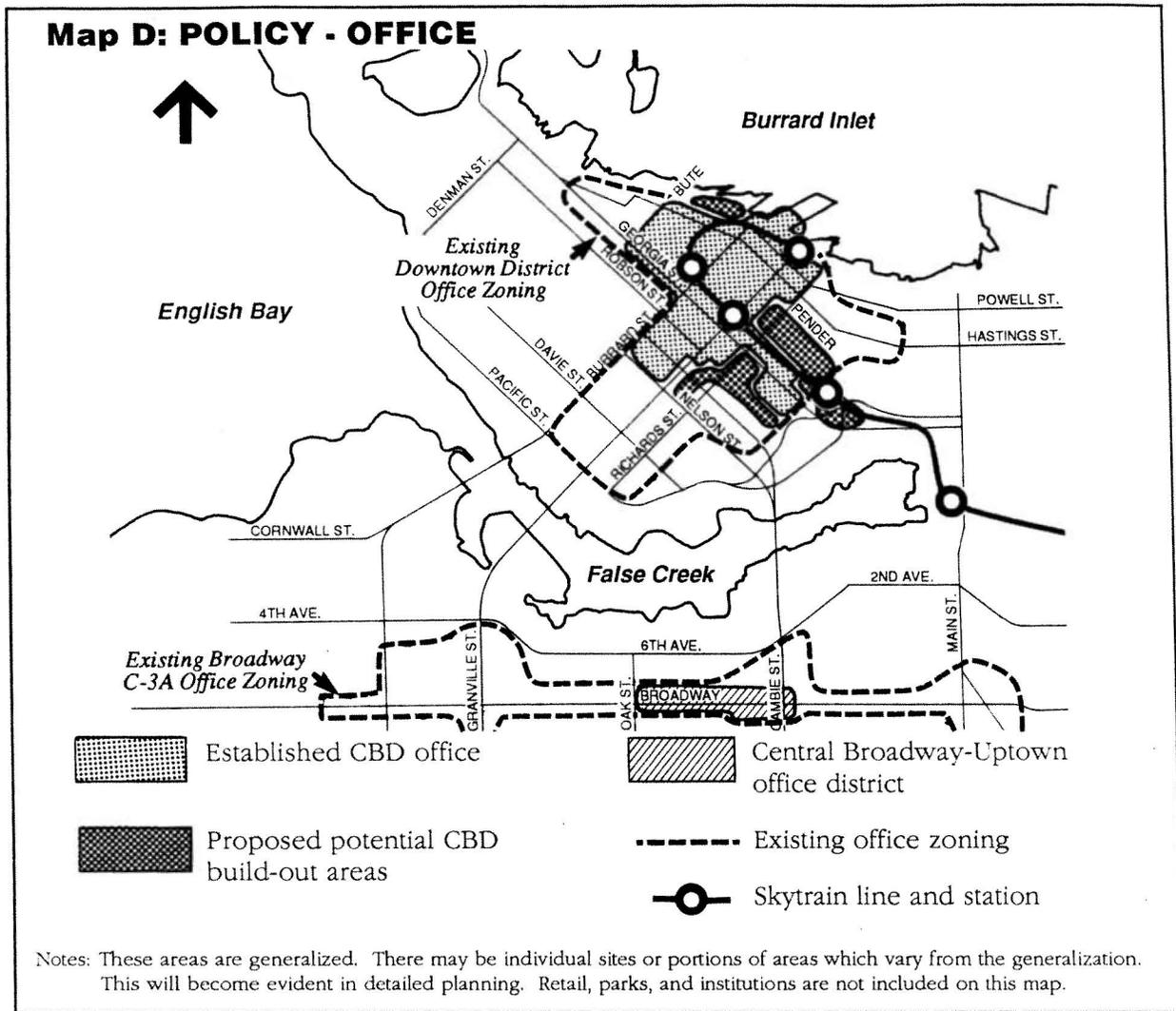
(For the location of specific sub-areas referred to in the policies that follow, refer to Map A in Section I.)

POLICY 1.1: RESHAPE CBD

Reshape downtown peninsula major office zoning into a compact, high amenity central business district (CBD), centred on transit. Limit additions to the established CBD based on office location criteria.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Locate new transit routes and stations to reinforce defined CBD.
- As part of the up-coming Victory Square planning program, ensure Victory Square's permitted density, height, and uses will help to retain existing heritage buildings and character rather than encourage major new office development. (Consistent with this action, Council has recently set a policy of a floor space ratio of 3.0 and height of 70 feet in Victory Square. Future detailed planning for Victory Square should also address its linkages to and impacts on Gastown and Chinatown.)



Actions Recently Implemented:

- Establish False Creek North Apex area for office. (Approved as part of False Creek North Official Development Plan, November 1989.)
- Establish limited office area in Coal Harbour East. Set back tall buildings from the waterfront, and ensure public uses and lower heights near the water. (Approved as part of Coal Harbour Official Development Plan, July 1990.)
- Include Robson and Seymour Street edges of the Downtown South in the CBD. Several CBD criteria listed below are well met here: close to transit, not an area with heritage buildings, not an area with housing or a high desirability for

housing. (Approved as part of Downtown South rezoning, June 1991.)

Rationale:

Major office development should continue to focus near existing and proposed major public transit investments like SkyTrain, SeaBus, and Granville Bus Mall and should build on and enhance the amenity and compactness of the Central Business District. The continuity of major office uses enables the face to face contact necessary for business and is conducive to travelling without use of private autos, thus minimizing traffic congestion. The CBD is defined here as the high density office core which serves as the location for AAA office buildings, the prestige "corporate core" of the region. The following is a

list of location criteria to be used to define areas that should be considered as part of the CBD:

- there is good transit access, particularly to existing major fixed transit routes;
- the area is contiguous with the rest of the CBD and the CBD remains compact;
- there is an opportunity to enhance the whole CBD by opening up public waterfront access for employees and tourists;
- there is not a threat to areas with a major stock of heritage buildings (CBD densities and heights threaten the economic viability of existing lower scale heritage stock);
- it is not an area with significant housing or with a high desirability for future housing or public open space; and,
- it is not an area where support activities would be displaced without alternate locations (see Support Services section of this report).

Office areas should also respond to particular site conditions and opportunities. Heights and building placement should be controlled to shape skylines and views; lower buildings and active public uses and spaces should be incorporated between office towers and the waterfront. This is in accordance with the full set of central area goals.

The criteria result in identifying several "potential CBD build-out areas" which become part of the newly-defined CBD (see Map D). The CBD build-out areas include much of the area that has long been zoned for higher density offices to the east of the established CBD, but skirting the Victory Square area due to its heritage character. The new CBD also includes small newly-zoned areas, which Council has recently approved, in the False Creek North Apex site and Coal Harbour East.

The outcome will be a CBD close to transit with an office zoned capacity of about 33 million square feet. Of the 33 million capacity, 14 million square feet of offices are now developed in "permanent" buildings. This leaves enough office zoned capacity on remaining sites for over 25 years with high employment forecasts, or for 45 years with the alternate employment forecast, based on more recent trends. Finally, if supply constraints did develop, up-zoning of the defined CBD areas is a possibility. It should also be noted that, while major offices would locate in the CBD, smaller amounts of offices would still be permitted in other areas (another 12 million square feet of office capacity), as outlined in the following policy sections on Support Services and Housing.

The CBD shown on the map would still be "an alive downtown" because the office area would not be sprawling; housing areas would be nearby; and

hotels, restaurants, shops, and entertainment would enliven the compact office district.

POLICY 1.2: CONSOLIDATE BROADWAY "UPTOWN" OFFICE

Reshape secondary office zoning outside the downtown peninsula into an Uptown office district particularly related to health and civic functions.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Retain Cambie-Oak area of Central Broadway corridor as the continued major Uptown office focus. Encourage more housing in other areas of Broadway corridor (see Housing policies).
- In determining the location of new transit services, consider the intent of these policies to concentrate Uptown office employment in the Cambie-Oak area.

Rationale:

As with the proposed downtown peninsula focusing of major office into a compact office area, so too should the extensive Central Broadway office zoning be reshaped into a focussed Uptown. This helps to promote a cohesive character, is conducive to face to face business contacts, and frees up other lands for housing and a mix of housing and office. Currently the Central Broadway C-3A zoning contains the region's second largest office concentration outside the downtown peninsula. Yet its zoned capacity is far in excess of its current development.

There are three reasons for focussing Central Broadway offices. First, from a regional perspective, office development on Central Broadway, if it is not related to a unique function such as health services, can be competition with regional town centres. Second, office development dispersed along the entire 25-block length of Central Broadway is harder to serve by transit because transit routes are largely north-south, requiring one or more transfers to reach most of Broadway. The CBD and a number of regional town centres are and will remain better served by transit than the Central Broadway corridor with the possible exception of sites at Broadway and Cambie or Arbutus. Third, from a regional transportation point of view, offices locating in Central Broadway have no advantage over offices locating on the downtown peninsula: the congestion is at the Fraser River bridges, from traffic headed to the central area as a whole.

Currently the major office centre of the Broadway corridor is the Cambie-Oak area serving unique regional functions: medical and civic. In other areas of Central Broadway, there are opportunities to provide more encouragement for housing than the current zoning and guidelines. (See Housing section of this report.)

POLICY 1.3: REDUCE CAPACITY

Seek a reduction in overall central area office zoned capacity in areas that do not meet CBD location criteria and are not part of the Uptown office district.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Consolidate office areas, both CBD and Uptown, as described in Policies 1.1 and 1.2.
- Continue to favour replacement of office and industrial zoned lands, outside the defined CBD and Uptown, with housing where suitable, as identified in Section 3: Housing Policy.
- Do not add further major office capacity.

Rationale:

No major additions to office zoned capacity should occur in the central area outside the desired CBD, and, in total, there should be some reduction to current central area office zoned capacity. Although the amount of office zoned capacity does not immediately affect the rate of office growth (unless the

capacity is reduced severely in which case growth may be temporarily speeded up), it makes sense to reduce office capacity somewhat because there is enough remaining capacity for at least another 30 years and reducing capacity can also achieve other objectives such as helping to preserve heritage areas and freeing up areas for housing.

POLICY 1.4: IMPROVE OFFICE-TRANSPORTATION CAPACITY BALANCE

Improve the balance between office and transportation capacity. Consider more stringent growth controls only if proven necessary.

Actions Underway and To Be Pursued:

- Seek reductions in office zoned capacity in areas outside defined CBD and Uptown.

Rationale:

Given concerns that employment growth will outweigh the ability of the transportation system to handle commuters, without unacceptable impacts on the environment and on neighbourhoods, the role of these land use policies is to create a land use structure that helps to improve the relationship between employment and transportation capacity. From work on a downtown transportation plan, preliminary information has been available to ensure land use policies address transportation concerns.

Figure 1 shows the office zoned capacity on the downtown peninsula well above existing office development and also above the estimated future transportation capacity. The Engineering Department estimates that the increased employment growth and other activity expected downtown in the next 15 to 20 years can be accommodated without freeways, provided some transportation improvements are made and a higher percent of commuters take transit.

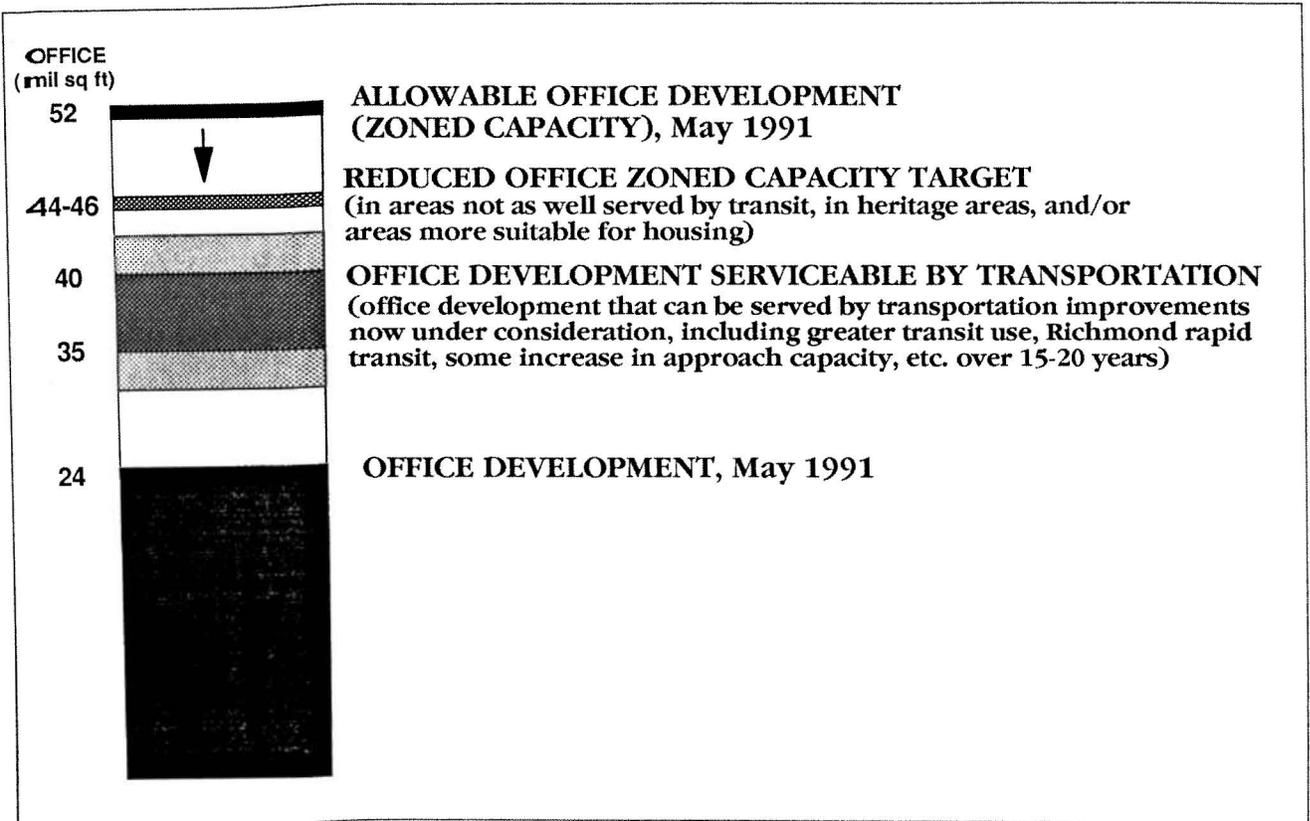
Increased employment growth over the next 15 to 20 years brings office development to about 35 to 40 million square feet in Figure 1, assuming no significant changes to past office location patterns. The estimated future transportation capacity in relation to office is shown in Figure 1 by a wide band rather than by a single line because it will be affected by many variables: how much office floor-space there is per worker; how much housing is in the central area; what is the labour force per housing unit; how many downtown residents work nearby rather than commuting; how many people will take transit, walk, bike, or ride-share; what is the rate of part-time work and flexible working hours; what transportation improvements are made; etc. Land use policy, as well as transportation policy, the state of the economy, technology, and people's attitudes will all have an effect.

**TABLE 1
DOWNTOWN PENINSULA OFFICE ZONED CAPACITY
1975 VS MAY 1991
(in million square feet)**

ZONING ADDED		ZONING DELETED	
APPROVED		APPROVED	
Coal Harbour East	0.85	Coal Harbour West	-0.01
False Creek North	1.75	Bayshore	-0.30
		Site Specific CD-1s	-1.50
Sub-Total Approved	2.60	Sub-Total Approved	-1.81
PROPOSED		PROPOSED	
		Downtown South	-5.00
		Victory Square	-1.00
		Triangle West	-1.00
Sub-Total Proposed	0	Sub-Total Proposed	-7.00
GRAND TOTAL ADDED	2.60	GRAND TOTAL DELETED	-8.81

NOTE: Losses refer to office zoned capacity only, not to total zoned capacity. Specific amounts are worked out as part of sub-area planning. See Housing Section for more information on areas.

FIGURE 1: DOWNTOWN PENINSULA OFFICE AND TRANSPORTATION CAPACITIES



dim-downtown.pre

Given these unknowns, it is important to design strategic actions that address the concerns, but will not foreclose opportunities or risk negative side effects, unless it is proven absolutely necessary. In this context, the land use policies in this report are designed to do their part to address transportation concerns in a number of ways, including a reduction to zoned capacity.

However, lowering office zoned capacity too severely would entail risks that it is not yet proven necessary to take. Although there is relatively little information on how much office capacity is needed for an office market to function well, studies suggest that to provide sufficient certainty to yield a stable supply of land and to create confidence in the economic stability of the downtown, a 20 to 25 year supply of land is needed. Thus, over the long term, inadequate office zoned capacity can dampen

economic investment in the central area for the type of offices that do not have alternative locations elsewhere in the region.

Over the short term, there are also possible negative consequences. The threat of imminent controls in some cities has induced a rush of office development, resulting in even greater short-term office supply than would otherwise have been the case.

Further actions can be taken if proven necessary, such as annual growth limits or more severe reduction of office zoned capacity or more severe limits on auto use. On the other hand, additional or new forms of office development may someday be needed. The land use policies described in this report provide a framework for these further actions, by delineating the desirability of areas for various

land uses and recognizing that their density can vary to some degree.

POLICY 1.5: DELETE CBD AND UPTOWN HOUSING

Delete or do not encourage housing as a permitted use in the defined CBD or Uptown office district. Encourage hotels.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Retain hotel bonus in the defined CBD only, subject to urban design considerations.
- Establish a policy of not entertaining site-specific rezonings for higher density residential in the defined CBD unless for heritage retention.
- Replace small pockets of housing bonus zoning in the defined CBD with commercial zoning (i.e., northwest corner of CBD - Thurlow, Melville, Bute - and southwest corner - Robson, Burrard, Davie, Howe).
- Delete housing as a permitted use in most of the defined CBD and Uptown.

Rationale:

In a few areas housing should not be encouraged and should perhaps even be deleted due to incompatibility with other uses; the desire to focus CBD office near downtown transit stations; and the desire to focus housing in housing areas. Housing can interrupt the compactness and continuity conducive to face to face contact and business trips on foot. From the time mid-1970s zoning first allowed a component of housing in the office core, the data shows that, to 1988, only two percent of the residential units built in the Downtown District zoning were built in the CBD. Even the few housing proposals on the edge of the CBD have raised concerns of a diminished amenity for high prestige office. Livability is more difficult to obtain in areas that are primarily offices, due to factors ranging from office lights on all night, to less flexibility for siting buildings to maximize views and privacy. There are some areas identified in the Housing section of this report where residential amenity better enables a mix of offices with housing. Continuing the trend of a CBD and Uptown without housing can be done without creating office areas that are "dead" outside of the regular working day. Housing areas will be close to office areas. Restaurants, shops, and cultural activities will bring vitality to the CBD. Hotels can play a particularly important role as a residential "surrogate" in the CBD.

POLICY 1.6: ASSIST REGIONAL TOWN CENTRES

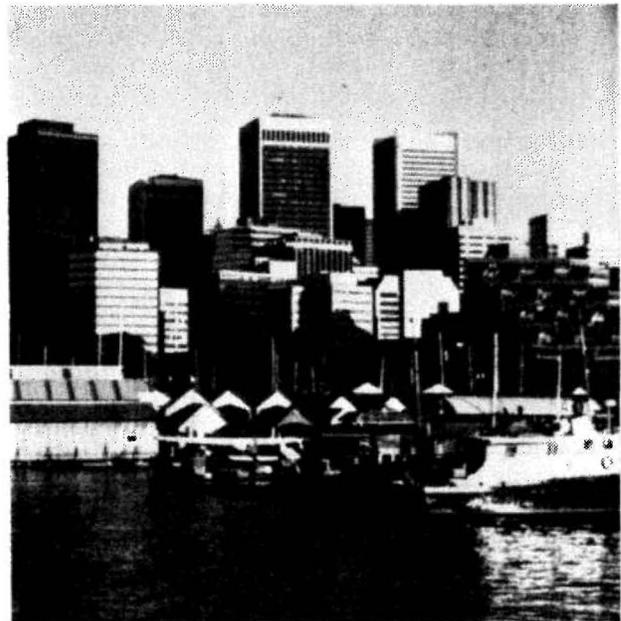
Continue to co-operate with GVRD efforts to encourage appropriate office tenants to locate in regional town centres instead of in the central area.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Encourage GVRD to meet with senior levels of government, crown corporations, and other major corporations to encourage them to locate appropriate functions in town centres instead of in the central area.

Rationale:

The City should assist in establishing regional town centres as alternate attractive locations for tenants who do not require specifically to be in the central area. Office decentralization is already occurring across North America and in Vancouver. This is a thrust of the GVRD's *Livable Region Program* and *Creating Our Future* report and of ongoing planning and promotional efforts to establish regional town centres. While the central area's role is largely taken care of through market forces, there are cases where City policy can help. This includes Policies 1.1 and 1.2 above that help to clearly define distinctive roles for the CBD and Central Broadway in the region. Although it is in the best interests of the regional economy to centralize some functions dealing with provincial, national, and international business, there is also scope to locate appropriate functions in regional town centres, with City and regional encouragement. At the same time it must be remembered that the success of regional town centres will ultimately depend as well on the planning and development policies within the suburban municipalities.



Major offices are focussed in a compact CBD --the "international face" of the region.

2. BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY:

Toward the goal of "The Economic Generator"

Objective: Ensure adequate and compatible locations for support activities that service the CBD.

Significance: Support services include a wide range of downtown-serving activities from printing, to office supplies, office equipment repair, and design services -- all of which are part of the downtown economic system. These are uses that usually find their way into spaces different from new CBD office towers -- spaces that are more affordable, that offer a more flexible layout, and/or that offer a distinctive image. The same areas may also play an incubator role for new businesses starting up.

Research in a number of cities has recently pointed out that support activities are linked with major offices and essential to their economic health. Having such businesses located close to their customers in the CBD facilitates their frequent contact. Other suggested benefits are lower transportation costs for delivery and less truck traffic over long distances.

Recent Issues: The central area here, as in many cities, is losing much of its industrially zoned land, and many former transition areas are being targeted for redevelopment. Thus, there is a constriction in areas available for support services. In portions of Downtown South, the CBD, and several parts of Central Broadway, the spaces available for support activities and incubator businesses are likely to be displaced by new housing and office development, either through build-out of current zoning or through policies suggested elsewhere in this report.

Background Information: To indicate something of the magnitude of support service activities, in Yaletown, the eastern parts of Downtown South, and Gastown, there are 1.4 million square feet of industrial use, equivalent to just over half the industrial use in the Mt. Pleasant industrial area. This does not include the support activities that are classified as commercial rather than industrial.

How significant the constriction of space for support services is has not been fully determined. The reasons for the lack of more complete information are partly because support services are so multi-faceted and do not lend themselves to typical land use categories and partly because it is only recently that areas for support services are so noticeably constricting.

Support services have been thinly spread in many areas and redevelopment takes time, so support services will not all be displaced immediately. Also, some support services may be able to function well even if a little farther removed from the central area. On the other hand, support services as we know them today are an integral part of the down-

town and, as the central area develops and their location opportunities are reduced, it is not wise to ignore their needs and just hope for the best. Thus, policies are needed that recognize the unknowns about support services, their variety of categories, and the changing nature of their location opportunities. (For the location of specific sub-areas referred to in the following policies, see Map A in section I.)

POLICY 2.1: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES WITH RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL

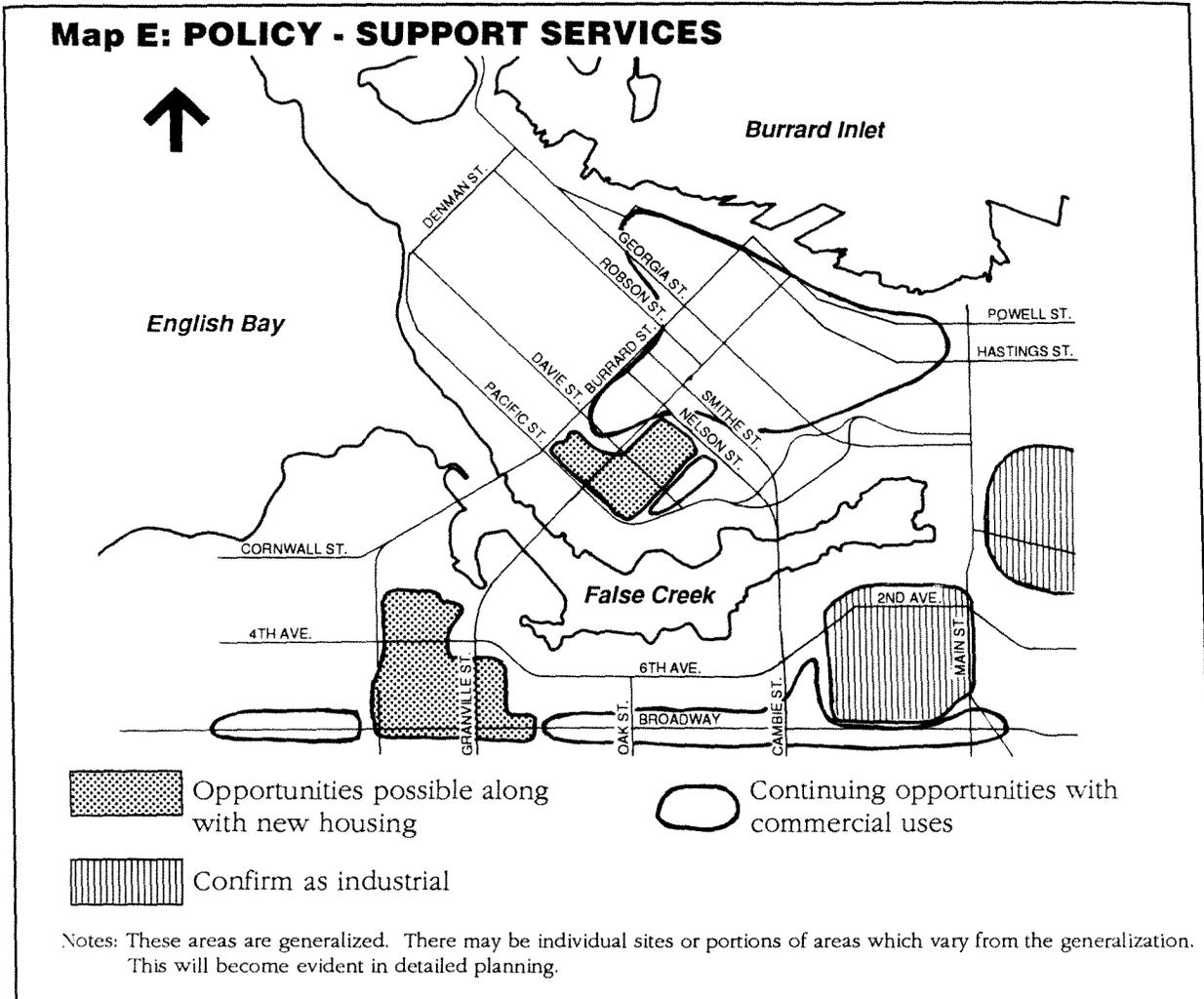
Provide a variety of opportunities, in appropriate commercial and residential areas and where supportive of other policies in this plan, for support services to continue to locate close to the central business district.

Actions Underway and To Be Pursued:

- Allow limited (and compatible) small-scale commercial/support uses in selected residential areas, especially where an alternative to housing units is desired on the lower floors for livability purposes. (An example of this is included in the Downtown South Plan.)
- Recognize that protecting areas with heritage character can also provide location opportunities for support services -- particularly Gastown, Yaletown, and Victory Square. (Gastown and Yaletown are already zoned as heritage areas. In Victory Square, City Council has recently established a policy of 3.0 floor space ratio.)
- In Burrard Slopes (South of Granville Island) continue to provide opportunities for support services by permitting housing but do not require housing - with specifics to be determined as part of area-specific study.

Rationale:

Although not all areas where support services are threatened will redevelop immediately, it is desirable to provide some assured close-in opportunities for support services at least in the near term. There are ways to do this without losing other important opportunities, and while recognizing the wide variety of uses incorporated into the term "support services". Small-scale commercial uses on the ground floors of residential high rises can provide relatively low-cost space while also lifting residential units to higher, more livable levels of the building. Heritage areas, both existing and recommended, offer opportunities to house some types of support services; thus protection of areas with heritage character can have two mutually-reinforcing results. South of Granville Island, although an area with amenity for housing, is also a very viable support services district.



POLICY 2.2: CONFIRM SELECTED INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Confirm the role of selected industrial areas near the downtown peninsula to continue to provide opportunities for support services, subject to further study.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Review support services needs and location opportunities and plan for adequate location opportunities over the long term, by including this as part of the city-wide industrial studies. Consider specifically the role of Mt. Pleasant industrial area and False Creek Flats for support services.

Actions Recently Implemented:

- Support the recent confirmation of Mt. Pleasant industrial area as remaining industrial.

Rationale:

Industrial zoning provides a preferred location for certain types of support services. The Mt. Pleasant area was recently confirmed as part of the Mt. Pleasant Plan. The False Creek Flats area was identified in the City's recent Industrial Lands Strategy report as an area that should remain industrially zoned until further study. It has good suitability for industrial uses and is low in residential amenity compared to many areas closer to the downtown, especially waterfront areas. The Industrial Lands Study will develop a strategy for the amount, location, and types of city-serving industry. It is important to find out how close such services need to be to the central business district, how much space will be needed in the future, and what types of space, as well as to what extent industrial areas should accommodate support services that are commercial rather than industrial in nature.

3. HOUSING POLICY:

Toward the goals of "An Alive Downtown" and "An Accessible Central Area"

Objective: Increase the amount of housing and create new neighbourhoods for a range of households, to add people and activity and to reduce the need to commute from outside the central area.

Significance: Housing is of major importance in achieving central area goals. More housing brings vitality and life to downtown and provides customers for shops and services. In particular, housing for a variety of household types brings a diversity of human activity to the downtown. Housing in the central area also helps to increase the city's supply and choice of housing and may help to relieve some of the redevelopment pressures threatening existing stable neighbourhoods. Finally, housing plays a transportation role. Providing more opportunities to live close to the region's largest employment concentration means fewer demands for major transportation facilities to take people to work from homes in the suburbs.

Regional Context: The regional policy context, through the *Livable Region Program* of the mid-1970s and its recent up-date, *Creating Our Future*, has stressed the importance of more housing in Vancouver, to help meet the goal of balancing population and jobs throughout the region. In keeping with the regional goals, in the mid-1970s the City began to develop policies to encourage housing in the central area. Today, areas that the City has recently approved for new housing are North False Creek, Granville Slopes, Coal Harbour (Marathon and Bayshore), East False Creek (Station/LaFarge), and Downtown South.

Recent Issues: Along with questions raised as part of approving the new areas listed above, there have also been pressures for housing development in other areas, but little policy to guide the decision-making. In some locations important opportunities for new neighbourhoods have been missed. In other areas, the zoning still permits housing where residential livability is not as easily achieved and where other uses may be more suitable.

On the downtown peninsula, most of the 1970s zoning (outside the West End) has envisioned a thin veneer of housing amidst otherwise commercial areas. This zoning requires uses to be mixed in a single development to achieve maximum density. Up to 3.0 floor space ratio of housing can be substituted for other uses anywhere in the downtown zoning district (Downtown South is now an exception), and in housing bonus areas, housing has been rewarded with extra commercial density. This system has been under challenge through lack of take-up, through CD-1 rezonings, and through use of a bonus for public amenities. The CD-1 rezonings have allowed developers to substitute housing

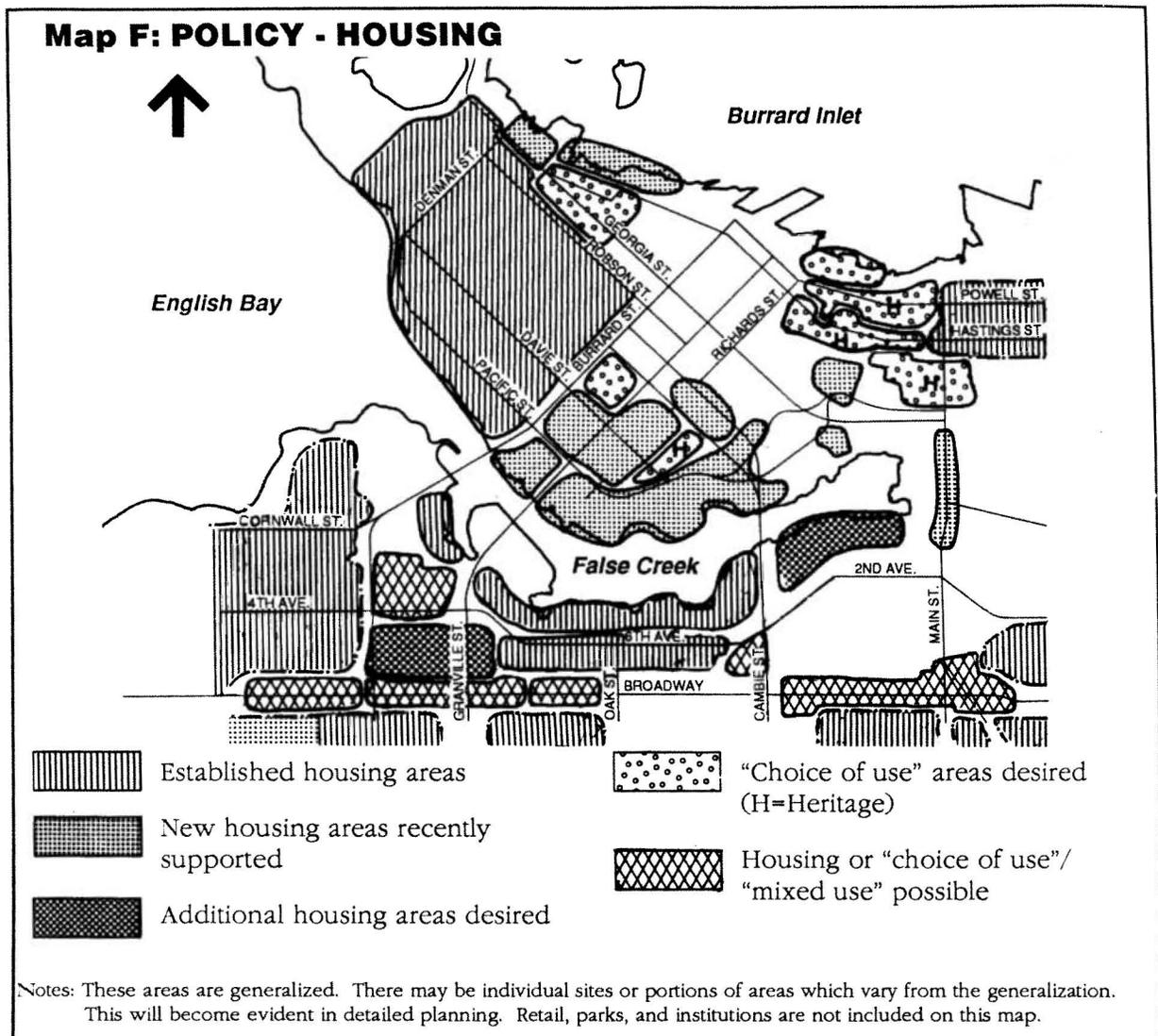
for commercial, resulting in predominantly residential buildings. The amenity bonus approvals allowed developers to substitute commercial for housing in return for offering a public amenity, resulting in predominantly office buildings. Thus, on a site-specific basis, pockets of the mixed use zoning have been changing to all commercial or all residential, without benefit of an overall context. Outside the downtown peninsula, Southeast False Creek and South of Granville Island were recently confirmed by City Council as no longer needed for industrial use, but without new uses confirmed. In the extensive Broadway C-3A zone there are not adequate or consistent guidelines for housing location.

Background Information: Following the West End boom of the 1960s when over 1000 units a year were built, population growth on the downtown peninsula after 1971 remained relatively stable. 1991 downtown peninsula population is estimated at about 45,000, including 37,000 in the West End. In terms of zoned capacity for housing, the zonings of the mid-70s created significant zoned capacity -- but only in theory, because, as described above, the concept of housing within primarily commercial buildings did not prove popular.

The new housing areas recently approved or pending will create a capacity of close to 20,000 units for 30,000 residents on the downtown peninsula. Taking up this new zoned capacity, forecasts show another major increase in downtown population in the coming years, this time outside the West End. A minimum average annual increase of over 600 units a year is forecast, adding over 12,000 people to the population of the downtown peninsula by 2006.

In portions of the central area outside the downtown peninsula, significant population growth occurred when new areas were created -- i.e., South False Creek and Fairview Slopes. Today these areas are virtually fully developed and remaining lands in the False Creek basin and Broadway are zoned for industry or offices. Population growth here will depend mostly on creating more new housing areas.

Living and Working Downtown: The data on the relationship between living and working in the central area show that people tend to live close to work. Of West Enders' total morning peak hour work trips, 57 percent stay on the downtown peninsula (and over 70 percent of these trips are on foot or by transit). Another 26 percent of trips leave the downtown peninsula but stay in the city, mostly destined nearby to Central Broadway. Only 17 percent of morning peak work trips from the West End are to jobs outside the city, and 6 percent of these are to the University Endowment Lands and North Shore.



The possibility of downtown housing having even more positive impacts on transportation is suggested by a recent University of Toronto study, *Commercial Growth and the New Toronto Plan*, by D. Nowlan. Nowlan was surprised that, while there was an increase of 50 percent in employment in Toronto's central area since 1975, there was only a 23 percent increase in the number of people commuting into the central area. His study attributes this primarily to the large increase in population in the central area during the same period. Toronto's new downtown housing was found to have a high average number of workers per housing unit and a high rate of workers staying in their central area to work. If Vancouver follows Toronto's trends, new housing here will also increasingly help to mitigate transportation demand for long-distance commuting.

(For the location of specific sub-areas referred to in the policies that follow, refer to Map A in Section I.)

POLICY 3.1: CREATE NEIGHBOURHOODS
Encourage areas of primarily housing to create new residential neighbourhoods.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Make housing the predominant land use when planning Southeast False Creek (noting that Council in May 1988 reaffirmed the location of the City Works Yard in Southeast False Creek at least until 2003).
- Plan for a transition to housing in the C-3A portion of Burrard Slopes. In the South of Granville Island portion of Burrard Slopes (industrial zoned), permit housing but do not require it;

the area has amenity for housing but is also a viable support services area. Determine specifics as part of area study.

- Initiate a land use review of the remaining Central Broadway C-3A zone (outside the Cambie-Oak Uptown office area) to pursue housing as the dominant use where appropriate. (Criteria include: where adjacent to existing residential areas and where there is no existing major office development.)

Actions Recently Implemented:

- Plan new neighbourhoods in Coal Harbour, False Creek North, False Creek East, and Downtown South.

Rationale:

The best approach for achieving more housing is to encourage areas to become primarily housing instead of a mix of offices and housing. Focusing housing in selected areas creates a critical mass. It provides certainty for developers, a focus for City investment in community services and public amenities, and compatibility for residents. By being near, but separate from, major office districts, these new housing areas will foster a lively downtown while at the same time creating livable residential environments. Some mix of retail and minor office uses may be part of new housing areas, but they should be predominantly housing. There are a number of areas in the central area that could be good residential areas. Criteria are:

- they are close to waterfronts and to other neighbourhoods;
- their interior streets are not all major traffic routes;
- they do not replace existing housing or otherwise directly disrupt existing neighbourhoods.

POLICY 3.2: PROVIDE SOME CHOICE OF USE

Allow choice of use in limited areas in order to permit a mix of housing and office developments. Favour housing.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- In Triangle West, replace housing bonus and housing substitution (which discriminate against housing as the preferred use) with choice of use zoning to favour flexibility for buildings to be primarily housing or primarily offices or hotel. Determine area needs, guidelines, etc. through area planning.
- As part of a Broadway C-3A land use review, pursue choice of use (outside Cambie-Oak Uptown office area) where housing as the dominant use is not as appropriate.

- Consider choice of use for the Victory Square heritage area as part of future planning studies for this area.
- For the Port lands, Seymour to Portside Park, consider housing on suitable sites as a replacement for or in addition to commercial uses that are permitted in the current zoning (and recognizing the overall built form policy contained in the Central Waterfront District Official Development Plan that "new development should be in scale with adjacent Gastown.")

Actions Underway:

- Pending approval of new zoning as described above continue to favour CD-1 rezonings for housing on suitable sites.
- Continue studies of parking and seismic problems in heritage areas, to increase viability of buildings.

Actions Recently Implemented:

- In the Burrard/Granville area of Downtown South, replace housing bonus and housing substitution (which discriminate against housing as the preferred use) with choice of use zoning to favour flexibility for buildings to be primarily housing or primarily offices or hotel.

Rationale:

In limited areas, a new concept of "choice of use" zoning can be suitable. Choice of use means allowing the developer of each site to build primarily housing or primarily offices or hotel or any combination. In single ownership, comprehensive development areas, choice of use zoning means providing a planned development with designated sites for housing intermingled with designated sites for hotels and offices.

Choice of use zoning offers an opportunity for a few areas with a unique mix of uses. There are several areas where there is amenity for both offices and housing, according to the criteria used in this report. These areas are Triangle West, Downtown South Burrard-Granville, the Port lands (Seymour to Carrall), and portions of the C-3A Central Broadway zone. The zoning of these areas has heavily favoured commercial uses rather than housing. In moving to reduce office zoned capacity in the central area and to create new residential neighbourhoods, one option would be to rezone such areas, where possible, to housing. However, most of these areas are already considerably developed with a mix of office and housing, so in practice this would have little effect. Perhaps, even more importantly, choice of use zoning offers an opportunity to foster a few, carefully selected areas with a mix of major land uses. This is a unique opportunity in a central area that is otherwise being divided into precincts that are primarily commercial or primarily housing.

Choice of use can also be helpful in heritage areas to ensure a wide range of possible uses for older buildings.

For Triangle West and Downtown South Burrard-Granville, choice of use also offers a replacement for the widespread, but not very successful, housing bonus zoning that provides extra commercial density in exchange for some housing. Instead, choice of use applies to fewer, carefully selected areas and elevates housing as a use equal to other uses.

Choice of use zoning under the circumstances described above would: favour housing more than the current zoning; not increase office zoned capacity; ensure that housing is not developed randomly in isolated pockets; and ensure that any population increases are expected so that amenities and services are available. In each choice of use area, detailed area study would determine character guidelines and needed amenities, and might also show that some sites are not suitable for housing. (In some locations, retail may not be part of choice of use zoning; see Retail policies.)

POLICY 3.3: DELETE CBD AND UPTOWN HOUSING

Delete or do not encourage housing as a permitted use in the defined CBD or "Uptown" office districts.

(This is a reiteration of Policy 1.5.)

POLICY 3.4: SEEK HOUSING DIVERSITY *Seek opportunities for housing diversity in new areas. Encourage housing for families with children wherever possible.*

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Give priority in planning Southeast False Creek to accommodating housing for families with children due to its opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment and because of its location on the lower density side of False Creek.
- Continue to seek housing diversity -- rental tenure and affordability and family housing where suitable -- as part of area planning for new housing areas. (Implementation strategies include requirements as part of comprehensive redevelopment plans and development levies for areas with multiple ownership.)

Actions Recently Implemented:

- Require housing diversity as part of the new plans for Coal Harbour, False Creek North, and False Creek East.

Rationale:

When additional areas of housing are proposed, the City should continue to seek ways to expand diversity. This helps provide a true variety of human ac-

tivity for an alive downtown. Also, approximately 50 percent of downtown workers live in households with children. The central area is in the favourable and unique position compared to many cities of having significant housing already and being on the verge of having a large new zoned housing capacity. New areas offer an opportunity to help to meet the "gaps" in central area housing supply by providing a fuller range of densities, housing types, and costs. City policy has recently been evolving to require mega-projects to contribute 20 percent core-needy housing and to provide 25 percent of units suitable for families with children. In Coal Harbour a portion of small rental units is also encouraged. The majority of new central area housing is still likely to be high-density, high-rise, non-family, and non-rental. Of the total new central area zoned capacity of 20,000 units now being created, only about 16 percent will be designed for families with children.

POLICY 3.5: ASSIST LOW-COST HOUSING

Maintain, upgrade, and increase the existing stock of low-cost housing in the downtown. (Approved by Council, October 1989.)

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Undertake a comprehensive review of the "Housing Policy and Program Option Study" and report back on the timing and feasibility of implementing appropriate policies and programs. (Approved by Council, October 1989. Housing and Properties is the lead department.)
- Additional Actions to be Incorporated with the Above: Pursue the policies and programs identified in the Downtown South Plan and determine their applicability for low-cost housing elsewhere in the central area.

Actions Underway:

- Monitor low-cost residential hotel and rooming house stock and report back on any significant trend to redevelopment. (Approved by Council, October 1989. A monitoring program has been established by the Housing and Properties Department.)
- Identify specific strategies for maintaining, upgrading, and increasing the stock of low-cost housing in Downtown South as part of planning a new neighbourhood there.

Rationale:

To address the loss of low-cost units, Council approved the policy statement above, following two consultant studies on low-cost downtown housing. About 9000 low-cost units were identified in the area from Burrard to Clark, primarily sleeping rooms in residential hotels and rooming houses.

The "Economic Impact Study" concluded that there could be a loss of about 17 percent of these units on sites that may be redeveloped over the following ten years. The "Housing Policy and Program Options Study" reviewed relevant policies and programs from other cities that may be applicable to Vancouver, including programs to protect tenants, such as improved security of tenure; programs to protect the stock, such as zoning and transfer of development rights; programs to rehabilitate existing and create new stock, such as rental RRAP and social housing targets; financing incentives, such as development cost levies; and organizational initiatives such as the new Housing and Properties Department.

The Downtown South Plan has brought forward a number of such policies and programs for low-cost housing in the Downtown South area. It recommends reducing density to remove the incentive for redevelopment of existing low-cost housing and using development levies for providing new or upgraded low-cost housing. It also recommends investigating additional initiatives such as density bonuses for maintenance and up-grading; City-run rental RRAP; management by non-profit groups; and/or City acquisition.

POLICY 3.6: USE DEVELOPMENT LEVIES

Use development levies to help provide for community needs in areas being rezoned as new neighbourhoods; until levies are in place determine strategies to obtain needed amenities.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Continue Council's initiative to establish development levies for community needs in areas being rezoned to new neighbourhoods.
- When considering increased housing densities for new areas, require community amenity contributions as a condition of site specific rezonings.

Actions Recently Implemented:

- Implement development levies in Downtown South as the first model.

Rationale:

In 1990 the Provincial Government approved Council's request for a Charter amendment to permit development levies. Levies can be an important tool for creating livable new housing areas in the central area. While single owner mega-projects provide public amenities as part of the rezoning and subdivision process, areas where sites are individually owned need a better system of sharing in the neighbourhood-building amenities. Downtown South is the first new neighbourhood approved for development levies. Replacement housing, parks,

and daycare are the priorities identified in the Downtown South Plan. In selected areas, before levies are in place, contributions for community needs are accepted from developers wishing to proceed with site specific rezonings.



New neighbourhoods will add vitality to the central area and reduce the need for long-distance commuting.

4. LIVABILITY POLICY

Toward the goal of "Spirit of Place":

Objective: Protect livability for a range of household types and expectations.

Significance: Vancouver has been very successful in creating comfortable places to live, and people see this as something special about this city. Vancouver's livability is felt by many to be the result of its traditionally low key, low density nature, and protected neighbourhoods. Yet, higher densities and downtown locations can provide new opportunities to achieve more housing and to create more diverse lifestyle choices and diversity of neighbourhood character. The challenge is to realize these opportunities while maintaining Vancouver's high standards for livability.

Many things contribute to the livability of an area or a city. The availability of parks and open space, the volumes of traffic, safety and security, and the preservation of the character of areas are all important and will be dealt with in separate Central Area Plan reports. This section focuses on livability as it relates to those aspects which are most affected by the adjacencies of buildings and different users. Specifically these are privacy, noise, odours, shadowing, and private views.

Deterioration and conflicts in these aspects can be associated with: (a) mixing of different uses and populations (employee, resident, visitor) and (b) increases in building densities. Density can be measured in two ways. One, floor space ratio (FSR), deals with the amount of building that is created. The other, units per acre, deals more with the numbers of people using an area. For most of the density factors under discussion in this section it is FSR which is the more useful measure because it measures building bulk which affects views, shadows, and privacy.

Recent Issues: Density is at issue today because it is only in recent years that residential buildings have been built that are over the long-standing inner-city maximum of 3.0 FSR. Through recent rezonings, residential densities up to 6.0 have been permitted for the first time on some individual sites, and densities above 3.0 are being proposed and approved for entire sub-areas.

Mix is an issue because most of the central area's zoning has been predicated on residential and commercial uses being mixed in one building or on one site. Yet, this has not yielded much housing (about 150 units a year). New developments, which largely replace mixed use with predominantly residential use, have been yielding more than twice that. But the first of these new projects were dealt with on a site specific basis, usually dependent on individual rezonings without an overall policy context. As more of this housing is being built in busy

central area locations, residents' concerns about mix are emerging.

Background Information: Over the past few years the Planning Department has been researching and refining livability guidelines and has used these extensively to evaluate rezoning proposals on both a site-specific and area-wide basis. In developing policies to ensure livability as the central area grows, the following factors, known from this experience and research, should be taken into account:

First, people's perceptions of whether the livability factors are acceptable depends on their lifestyles, family types, expectations, past experience, and community standards. Thus we have not found a dependable world standard for density from which one can be sure of livability. We must consider Vancouver's history and experience.

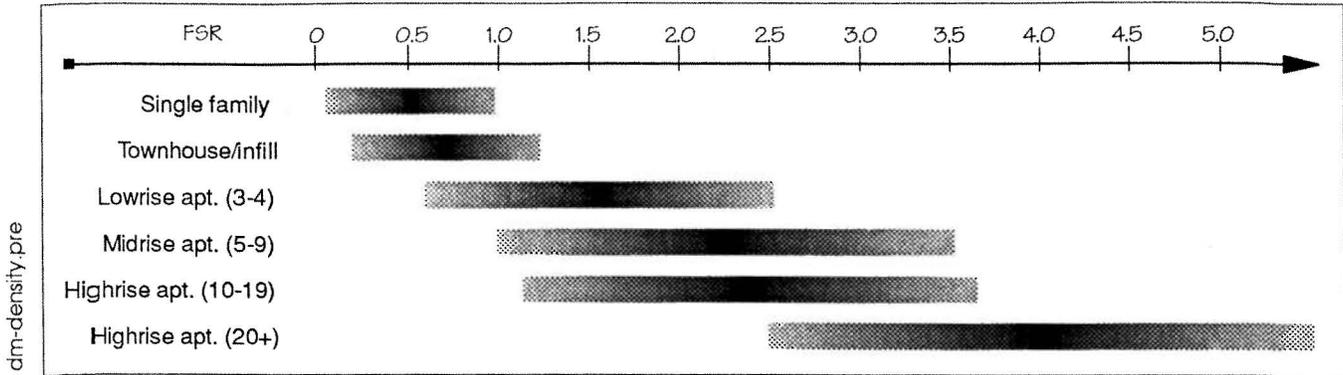
Second, it should be recognized that different densities, taken in combination with building code regulations, prevailing construction practices, and perceptions of the market do tend to result in different building types. The chart below illustrates the possibilities. When densities are set, certain building forms are ruled in or out.

Third, as densities increase, attention to good design becomes more important in ensuring livability. The quantitative controls (eg., minimum setbacks and maximum height) provided by standard zoning can still provide minimum standards. However, many of the qualitative aspects which become more important at higher densities are not amenable to the setting of specific standards. Such qualitative aspects include optimum tower spacing and location to protect public and private views and to maximize privacy and sunlight for the proposed project, as well as for neighbouring projects; organization of units to take best advantage of sun and views; safety and security of lobbies and other semi-public areas; and treatment and configuration of project open space to increase usability.

Fourth, Vancouver, with a reputation for livable neighbourhoods, has had experience with areas developed to overall residential densities of 2.5 FSR or less. Thus, although a number of new areas are being proposed and approved for higher densities, concrete experience with higher densities is just beginning.

Fifth, the mixing of uses and types of users can affect livability regardless of densities. For example, restaurants can create odour or noise problems. Office buildings may leave their lights on for a good part of the night. In addition, an office building has higher ceiling heights and a larger floorplate which creates a larger bulk than a residential building at the same FSR. Thus, office buildings have less flexibility in siting, and, therefore, more impacts

FIGURE 2: DENSITY & BUILDING TYPE RELATIONSHIP



on shadow, views, and privacy next to a residential building.

(For the location of specific sub-areas referred to in the following policies, please see Map A in Section I.)

POLICY 4.1: PROVIDE VARIETY OF DENSITIES

Select area densities based on a range of considerations including design, supporting services, demographics, and past experience. Provide variations in density to create areas with different residential character and to serve different lifestyles.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Incorporate a variety of densities in sub-area planning in the central area.
- Approach rezoning of areas to FSR 2.5+ with regard to area history and existing conditions; specific design considerations; area suitability and opportunity for different lifestyles; the availability of, or ability to provide, supporting facilities and services; and experience with similar areas.
- Refine and expand existing high density livability guidelines for use in developing area zoning, guidelines, and policies, as well as for evaluating individual projects where appropriate area regulations and guidelines do not exist.

Rationale:

While residential densities in the central area will tend to be higher than in the rest of the city, it is important to provide for a range of building types and densities to accommodate different household types, lifestyles, and preferences, as well as to respond to the particular opportunities in different areas and to create areas of differing character. New projects or areas of higher density are not automatic precedents for other areas, but instead a response to an area's particular conditions and opportunities. These include area history and existing conditions and uses; design considerations (such as site sizes and configuration, slope and sunlight, and relation-

ship to adjacent areas); area suitability and opportunity for different lifestyles; availability of, or ability to provide, supporting facilities and services; and experience we have gained with other areas.

POLICY 4.2: MONITOR AREAS

Monitor new higher density residential areas carefully and take action to address concerns.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Develop a monitoring plan for higher density residential areas as they are built, including post-occupancy assessment, resident consultation, and area reviews.
- Take action to correct problems and apply this knowledge to remaining development in an area and in other areas.
- Incorporate experience from monitoring into livability guidelines.

Rationale:

New high density areas should be monitored for any concerns; difficulties should be addressed; and the new experience applied to the planning of upcoming areas. Higher densities can provide new opportunities for downtown living provided that we can prove through experience that livability is maintained and enhanced.

Developing a plan for North Granville Slopes is an example of learning from experience in other areas and taking action to address concerns in existing areas. A plan for North Granville Slopes was recently prepared at a time when Southeast Granville Slopes (SEGS) was nearing full development. (SEGS had been zoned for a density of 4.0+ FSR in 1984.) A number of livability concerns were expressed by SEGS residents based on their experience with the area. In response, the following steps were taken: a large former hotel site in the middle of SEGS was downzoned; retrofitting is underway in SEGS to add greener streetscapes and plazas; SEGS open space deficiencies are addressed in the North Granville Slopes plan through provision of a park site; and the plan for North Granville Slopes is different from that of adjacent SEGS in the following ways: pre-

dominantly residential (less mixed use); wider setbacks from property line for more open space and greenery; provision of park space; individual front-doors on street for more residential character; and a lower base density with maximum density achieved only through full-block assembly.

POLICY 4.3: APPLY AND IMPROVE DESIGN REVIEW

Continue to control the quality of development through the use of design review and enhance the design review process through greater explicitness of qualitative criteria.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- As part of updating and refining the livability guidelines, make qualitative criteria more explicit.

Rationale:

The importance of careful design of the qualitative aspects as well as the quantitative ones in achieving successful residential development has been demonstrated through the City's experience and research and is an integral part of existing zoning. While quantitative regulations may provide minimum standards they do not ensure livability. However, the qualitative criteria should be made more explicit to provide more certainty and guidance for developers and to most effectively achieve livability.

POLICY 4.4: LIMIT MIXES

Limit incompatible mixes and create most housing in areas identified as primarily residential neighbourhoods.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Encourage housing mostly in areas that will be predominantly housing rather than housing as a minor use among other uses. (See Policy 3.1.)
- In areas designated as primarily housing, limit restaurant, retail, and entertainment uses; ensure that the list of minor commercial uses permitted will be compatible with housing; and develop design solutions to address concerns such as restaurant noise and odours.
- Incorporate design solutions for impacts such as noise and odours into livability guidelines.
- Limit the number of "choice of use" areas. (See Policy 3.2.)

Rationale:

Mixing uses must be approached with caution. Compatibility problems come from both differences in activities and building bulk. On a large scale, combining projects which are primarily commercial with those that are primarily residential makes it more difficult to create livable neighbourhoods. Areas of such mix should be minimized. On a smaller

scale, entertainment/nightlife, retail, and restaurant uses can also be a nuisance and should therefore be limited in or near primarily residential areas. Where mix is allowed, careful design solutions can ensure that impacts such as noise and odours are not left to chance. Thus, an "alive downtown" is seen somewhat differently in these policies than how this goal may have been seen 15 years ago. In these policies, a lively downtown is still one with a mix of activities. This is not a mix scattered evenly throughout. Instead there is a mix of precincts with compatibility a key within each precinct.



A diversity of residential neighbourhoods will provide livable housing for a range of lifestyles.

5. Retail Policy

Toward the goals of "An Alive Downtown", "For All People", "Spirit of Place", and "Walkable City".

Objective: Facilitate a variety of street-fronting shopping districts serving precincts throughout the central area by limiting and focussing retail zoning and ensuring that retail contributes to the streets as the public spaces.

Significance: Vancouver's tradition of a variety of retail districts with interesting and continuous street-level retail contributes significantly to many of the goals for the central area: to "an alive downtown" where public streets are the primary scene of public life and retail is conveniently available to residents, employees, and visitors; to "a walkable city" where public pedestrian routes are safe and interesting; to the unique "spirit of place" that sets Vancouver apart from other cities and from its suburbs; and to a downtown "for all people" where all types and ages of people are welcome and comfortable in the public spaces that retail helps to create.

There are sometimes questions about the City's interest in retail. A 1985 Planning Department report confirms that the City's role is not to result in favouring one individual retailer over another or in imposing tastes. The City's role in retail is to ensure that retail is convenient to residents and employees, that it is compatible with adjacent uses, that it contributes to public amenity, and that it is viable where public monies have been invested in beautifications, parking, and other infrastructure.

Recent Issues: In spite of downtown Vancouver's generally successful retail, two issues have arisen in recent years. While the central area has been fortunate to have many new retail proposals (such as at Coal Harbour and International Village), these have also raised concerns that new retail will have a harmful impact on the viability of existing or desired retail areas. Policy has not provided guidance, placing almost no limits on retail location or amount.

The second issue arises in response to proposals for internal malls and underground connections. The concern is that the typical mall does not create or reinforce downtown's key public spaces -- its streets. Again, policy has not provided strong guidance. The 1975 *Downtown Guidelines* contains a policy statement to "discourage major new underground malls". However, since the time of the 1975 document, malls have developed into many mall-hybrids at many scales, from courtyard malls to multi-level, above-ground malls to heritage malls to festival markets. And with the addition of underground transit, proposals for underground retail links -- not addressed by the 1975 policy -- have been increasing.

Even though policy has not provided clear guidance for recent circumstances, Vancouver's tradition of small scale, street-oriented retail has held sway. However, as new proposals have arisen and the policies were not up-dated, the tradition has been challenged. One underlying challenge is the suggestion that, to be successful, downtown Vancouver needs to compete with suburban retail malls by providing large-scale retail mall-type developments as anchors; and further that the retail market can not only absorb these large retail developments, but that they will be of benefit by attracting yet more shoppers.

Background Information: In addressing these challenges, the following information forms the basis for up-dating retail policy for the central area.

First, the retail market is limited and new retail concentrations can have negative impacts on other desired retail areas. In dealing with large-scale retail proposals over recent years at International Village, other parts of False Creek North, and Coal Harbour, the City has had retail critiques carried out. In each case, it was found necessary to scale down the amount of retail initially proposed. The studies confirmed that proposed large-scale retail could have negative impacts on other areas, particularly vulnerable areas like Gastown. The studies also confirmed that benefits of new retail could be obtained even while the projects were scaled down -- that is, a "critical mass" could be created at a smaller scale.

Second, healthy retail is created primarily by nearby consumers, whether residents, employees, or tourists. The key to increase the viability of retail is not the addition of large new retail projects in the hope of attracting shoppers, but the addition of nearby consumers. Pacific Centre Mall data, for example, show 75 percent of visitors coming from downtown employees and tourists and city residents. The same is true for Granville Island. In Philadelphia an assessment by the Rouse Company of its mall, the Gallery, concluded that in spite of enormous efforts to create a regional market, such as locating close to mass transit and parking, the typical shopper at the Gallery "lives downtown, works downtown, and shops downtown". This population of consumers will continue to grow in Vancouver: both forecasts and proposed policies call for continued increases in central area employees, tourists, and residents who will support the continued incremental growth of central area retail.

Third, the notion of growth in smaller increments is reinforced by the 1985 Planning Department report on the *City Role in Retail Development* which notes that the market works best when it changes in small increments and no one actor controls too large a market share. The report explains that in the short term, large and sudden additions to the retail space

supply can exert a very positive downward pressure on consumer prices. However, over the slightly longer term, if demand is not sufficient to support both old and new retail facilities, the smaller older stores are likely to fail. This will leave the new, large centre with control of the market and result in reduced access and choice for the consumer, which could mean less competition and higher prices, as well as fewer on-street retail shops.

Fourth, retail strategies for Vancouver's central area must be selected to build on its strengths. The central area has many retail districts with a successful critical mass of retail and tradition of on-street shopping. Retail strategies for cities that do not have an existing retail tradition have often depended on creating a critical mass with one new large-scale, single-project retail development. This is not relevant for Vancouver. San Francisco may be a better example of a retail model for Vancouver than are most other North American cities. It too has a mild climate and successful downtown pedestrian-oriented shopping district that is not dependent on malls; on a per capita basis San Francisco's downtown shopping district has less mall space than Vancouver.

Fifth, downtown Vancouver does have a unique regional retail role to play by offering speciality retail that would not be as viable elsewhere, such as the high-fashion boutiques on and near Robson. Although malls are sometimes explained as the necessary form for the regional-serving and "anchor" retail that is expected in a downtown, in the downtown context, department stores and street-fronting retail districts, such as Robson Street, Chinatown, and Gastown can and do play a regional and "anchor" role. In suburban areas or in other cities, "DSTM" (department store type merchandise) may only be available in a mall, but in the central area DSTM is available on-street.

The factors described above lead to policies that emphasize managed capacity to allow for incremental retail growth, growth of central area consumer populations (residents, employees, tourists), and reinforcement of public spaces to build on the central area's unique retail strengths.

(For the location of specific sub-areas referred to in the following policies, refer to the Map A in Section I.)

POLICY 5.1: LIMIT RETAIL CONCENTRATION

Promote a variety of viable retail districts by limiting retail concentration. Require impact studies/market analyses for any proposals to add retail zoned capacity or to build new retail developments of more than 100,000 square feet.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Define retail as a separate use in the by-laws and assign to it a density that generally permits up to two levels of street-oriented retail. (Street-fronting department stores may exceed two levels, as may some of the internally-oriented retail examples in Policy 5.3.)
- As with Coal Harbour, International Village, and False Creek North, retail critiques or impact studies should be commissioned by the City to evaluate retail proposals and the proponents' market studies, by answering the following types of questions: what amount of retail is justified and under what assumptions; what critical mass is necessary relative to existing comparable areas; and what impact is expected on other existing or desired retail areas.

Rationale:

In order to create viable retail districts, a managed approach to the creation of new retail is warranted. Some excess capacity helps to allow "affordable" retail locations. But too much excess capacity or new zonings for projects that are too large scale may hinder efforts to foster viable retail districts in desired locations. At present, the existing zoning in much of the central area does not distinguish "retail" as a use. Instead, as part of the general category of "commercial", retail is permitted throughout at a density that is commonly FSR 3.0 to 5.0 or more, providing no effective tool to deal with large retail proposals. (100,000 square feet was identified in the policy as the threshold for impact studies because it is roughly equivalent to both sides of one block of a successful retail street such as Robson.)

POLICY 5.2: FOCUS RETAIL LOCATION

Focus retail where it will reinforce existing and desired retail districts and pedestrian routes and be compatible with adjacent uses.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Refer to Map H as a policy direction for further evaluation and implementation through more detailed planning initiatives.
- Report back as soon as possible on a text amendment to decrease the retail requirement for streets where the proposed policy (Map H) would be more permissive than the current "retail required" category; and for other streets, bring forward text amendments through sub-area planning and/or through a specific work item on retail streets implementation.

Actions Recently Implemented:

- Implement Map H in Downtown South.

Rationale:

Retail should be focused along key pedestrian and retail routes; the location of new retail zoning should reinforce linkages to existing retail districts; and retail locations should be compatible with adjacent uses. The amount of retail is controlled not only by how much we allow on one site (Policy 5.1D), but also by how many locations we allow for retail. The current zoning can result in retail being encouraged wherever the first development is located, rather than on key retail-desired streets. Unfortunately, this can lead to more

retail than can be supported and gaps in retail continuity, as well as to problems of compatibility. Good retail linkages between retail areas are important to the success of retail and commonly identified in retail impact studies as a key in helping new retail have a positive impact on existing areas. Also, there have recently been concerns that where retail districts do become especially viable, their activity (especially at night) can become a nuisance to adjacent residents. Focussing retail on key streets helps to separate retail activity from adjacent residential areas.

POLICY 5.3: ENSURE RETAIL CONTRIBUTES TO PUBLIC STREETS

Ensure that retail contributes primarily to street activity and to the streets as the significant public spaces.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Integrate this policy into central area by-laws and guidelines, using the criteria described below to assess proposals for retail that is not traditional street-fronting.
- In the meantime, encourage any development proposals to meet the criteria below.

Rationale:

Downtown Vancouver's significant public places are its streets and waterfront walkways. Retail should continue to enhance this public realm. Most retail should continue to be street-fronting. However, retail that is not traditional street-fronting retail can also respond to local circumstances or provide new opportunities -- without negatively affecting the central area's predominant on-street retail pattern -- as follows:

- A small mall can provide some variety to a shopping street where it is a limited amount relative to its context and does not alter the street-fronting pattern of its retail district. Examples of such projects are Fashion Park on Robson near Thurlow; Robson Market at Cardero; and the Landing in Gastown. These are small in total square feet (24,000-46,000 sq. ft.) and in street length relative to the size of their sur-

rounding retail areas. Such projects should be designed to be as street-fronting as possible.

- A small amount of underground retail that accompanies a major office building in the corporate core (not located on a street requiring retail) can serve as a day-to-day convenience for the building's employees (coffee shop, news shop, etc.) An example is Park Place which has 22,500 square feet of underground convenience retail.
- Special opportunities may exist at unique waterfront locations to bring public activities close to the water through speciality retail developments. This is particularly true for an area that needs uses to draw the public at a wide variety of hours, such as Granville Island. The commercial area of Coal Harbour East similarly has the potential for this type of development. In addition to Granville Island, existing examples include New Westminster Quay and Lonsdale Quay. The existing festival markets range in size from 41,000 to 63,000 square feet.
- There may be a special opportunity to create a unique new public space in a strategic downtown location, reinforced by shops and restaurants. "Public space" must be defined carefully. Essentially, a public space should be as public as a sidewalk.
- There are opportunities for retail to facilitate the retention of heritage buildings. The Landing, Sinclair Centre, and City Square are examples. Such projects should be designed to be as street-fronting as possible.

In any of the cases described above where retail is greater than 100,000 square feet, impact studies should be required, as per Policy 5.1.

POLICY 5.4: SEEK COUNCIL DIRECTION ON SPECIAL CASES

Where a retail proposal is a significant increase to retail capacity and includes a significant amount of retail that is not solely street-fronting, but in the opinion of the Director of Planning may meet the criteria outlined in Policy 5.3, the Director of Planning may seek direction from Council before proceeding with impact studies and other detailed evaluation. Where a retail proposal does not meet the criteria, but in the opinion of the Director of Planning may warrant further discussion, the Director of Planning will also seek Council advice before proceeding with impact studies and detailed evaluation.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Include this policy in central area by-laws and guidelines.

Rationale:

This policy on process is included in the Plan to address special cases by seeking early Council direction. This would provide applicants with more information at an early stage. In addition, it will provide flexibility to deal with special innovations and test out the policies on a project-specific basis.

POLICY 5.5: LIMIT UNDERGROUND LINKS

Permit underground links only for rapid transit and only for limited distances, to sites immediately adjacent to or directly or diagonally across the street from the transit station. Limit retail in links.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Integrate above policy into central area by-laws and guidelines.
- In the meantime, discourage any proposals which contravene this proposed policy.

Rationale:

Underground links with limited retail should be permitted from a rapid transit station only to sites immediately adjacent to or directly or diagonally across the street from the station. Networks of underground links connecting several malls or buildings beyond this defined distance should be prohibited. This policy is intended to maintain the public streets as downtown's pedestrian routes, while at the same time providing added convenience for transit users and additional pedestrian capacity closest to stations where heavy pedestrian traffic is anticipated. In addition, this limits conflicts with underground utilities.

POLICY 5.6: STRENGTHEN RETAIL

Strengthen central area retail through a variety of supporting policies.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Pursue supporting actions, including more housing, improvements to the public realm, expanded weather protection, enhanced character areas, and supporting transportation policies.

Rationale:

A central area retail strategy consists of many non-retail, but supporting policies. Key among these are more nearby residents, improvements to the public realm, expanded weather protection, enhanced character areas, and supporting transportation policies, such as good "in-town" transit links between downtown retail districts.

POLICY 5.7: CREATE INTEREST ON NON-RETAIL STREETS

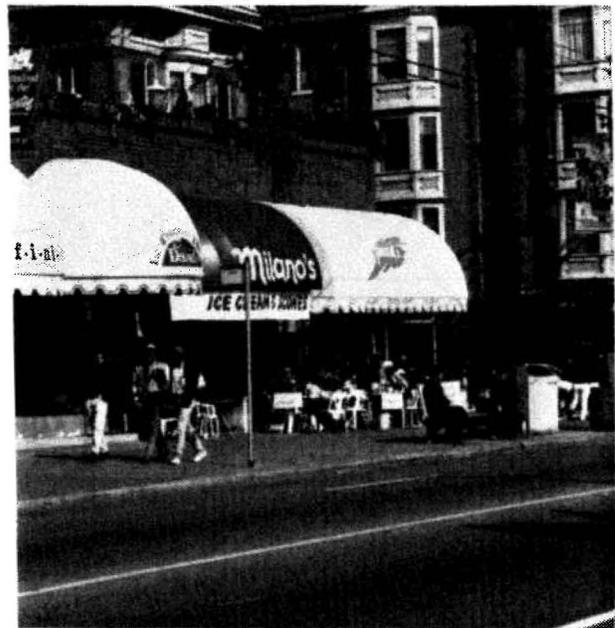
On streets without retail, enhance pedestrian interest and comfort through other means.

Actions To Be Pursued:

- Continue to pay particular attention to the design of the lower pedestrian levels of developments when developing area plans and guidelines and through the development permit process.

Rationale:

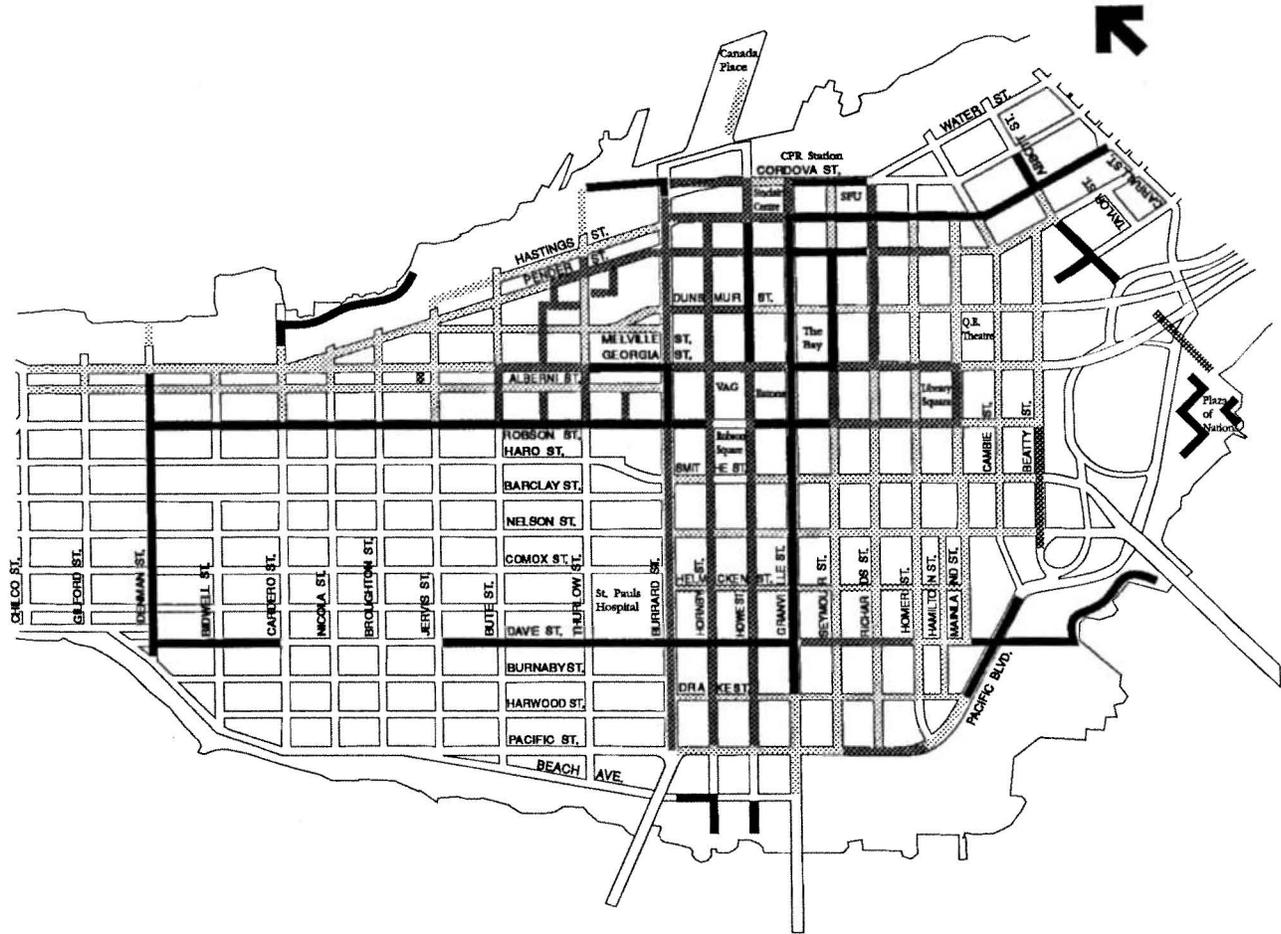
Sidewalk richness, comfort, and interest can be created through provision of interesting building detailing, fine materials, windows into offices or residential amenities, weather protection, and street-scaping and landscaping which are designed to be seen and used by pedestrians. Further attention to this topic will be the subject of a future Central Area Plan report on the public realm, including pedestrian network and pedestrian amenity.



Lively retail streets ensure a network of safe, interesting, active public routes.

Map G: EXISTING POLICY - RETAIL STREETS

(Retail includes any retail store, business, retail type service activity, or restaurant.)



— CONTINUOUS AT-GRADE RETAIL REQUIRED

Streets on which continuous retail has been required since this category was first established in the Downtown District Official Development Plan (DD ODP) in 1974.

▨ CONTINUOUS AT-GRADE RETAIL ENCOURAGED / SUGGESTED

Streets on which retail has been "encouraged" in the DD ODP and streets or areas in which retail has been "suggested" in the Downtown Character Area Guidelines.

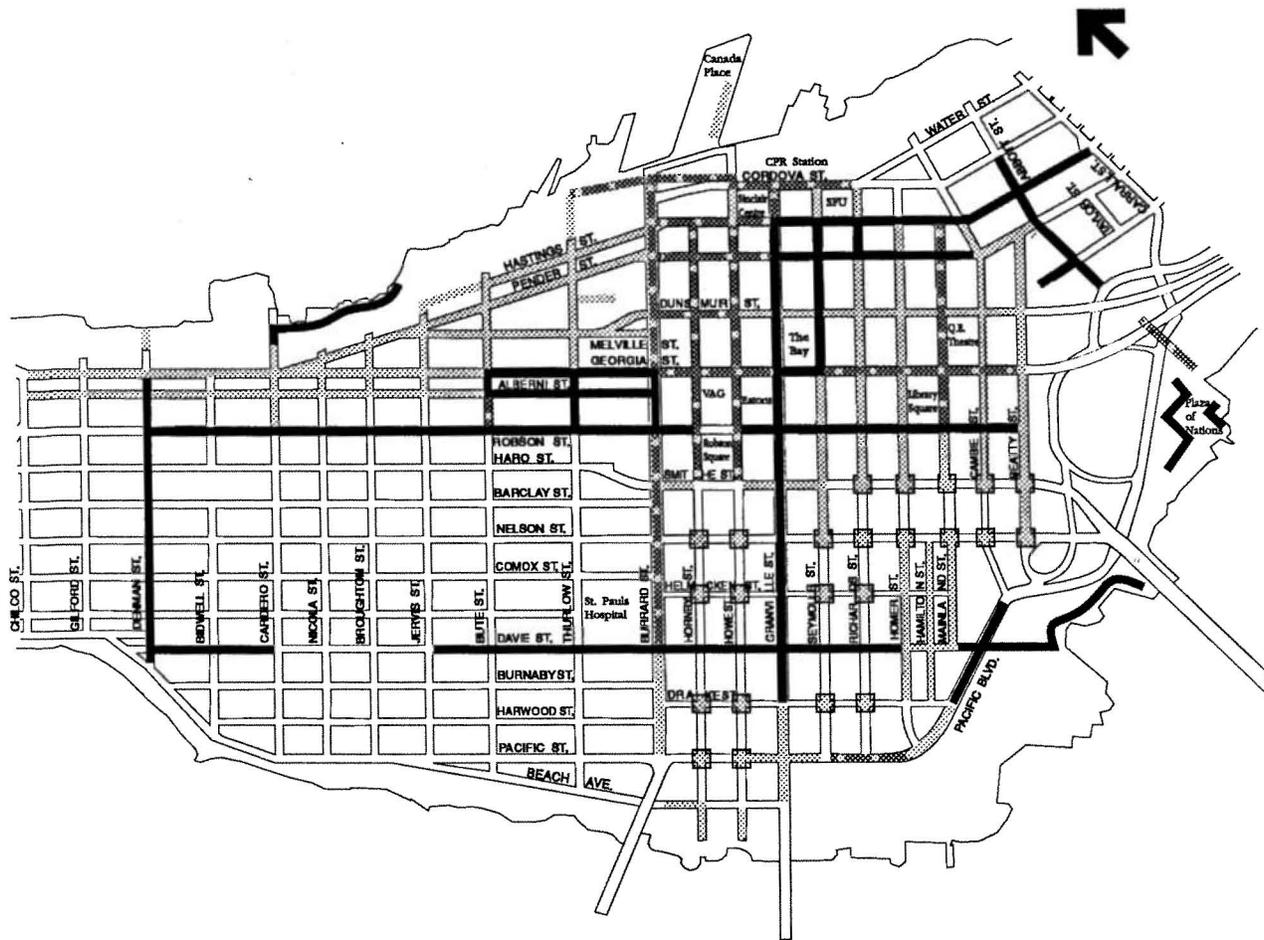
▨ RETAIL PERMITTED

Streets on which retail has been permitted.

NOTE: Mapped lines have been generalized to both sides of the street. In the actual by-law, each side of the street is individually-designated.
This map is a summary of existing policy.

Map H: NEW POLICY - RETAIL STREETS

(Retail includes any retail store, business, retail type service activity, or restaurant.)



— CONTINUOUS AT-GRADE RETAIL REQUIRED

- - - - - INTERMITTENT AT-GRADE RETAIL REQUIRED

Projects with a street frontage exceeding a specific length, would be required to have some at-grade retail; they may, at the developer's discretion, have more retail frontage. This new category, which replaces "retail encouraged" and "retail suggested", provides more certainty.

- - - - - RETAIL PERMITTED

■ RETAIL PERMITTED - CORNER SITES ONLY

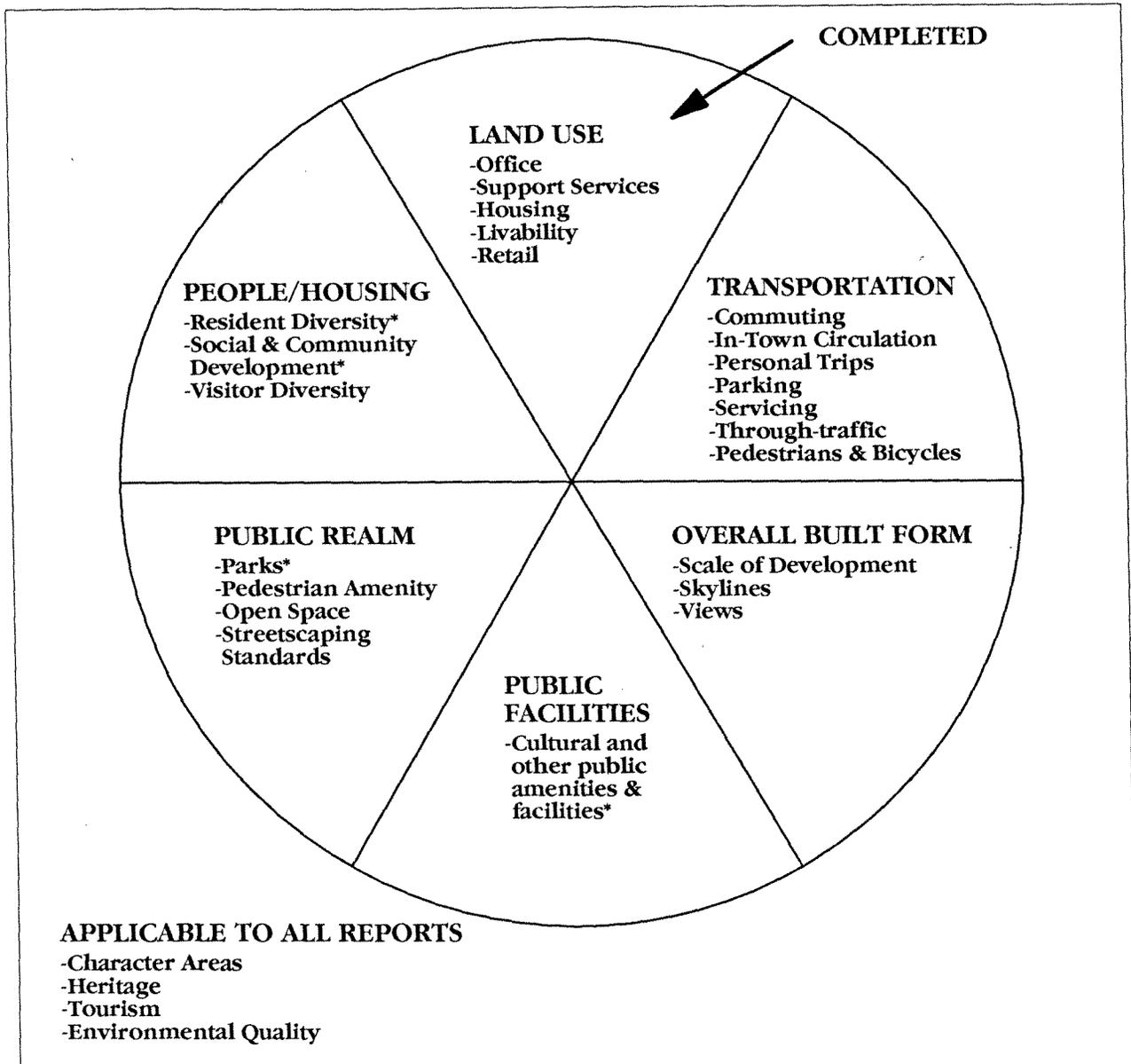
This new category recognizes locations where some retail is needed for convenience, but large amounts of retail are not appropriate.

NOTE: Mapped lines have been generalized to both sides of the street. In the actual by-law, each side of the street is individually-designated.

Retail street designations in Downtown South were implemented via the rezoning, (June 1991).

This map is a summary of retail streets policy in this plan.

FIGURE 3: CENTRAL AREA PLAN POLICY REPORTS



cenpie.pre

* Work has been initiated on components of several remaining policy topics:

Public Facilities: Draft Amenity Bonus Report (Planning)

Public Realm: Draft Core Area Parks and Recreation Plan (Park Board); Urban Landscape Task Force

People/Housing: Downtown South Plan policies on SRO's and affordable housing (Planning, Housing and Properties & Social Planning); Safer City Task Force

V. Next Steps

Implement Central Area Land Use Policies: The land use policies and actions in this report do not immediately change existing zoning. They will be implemented through sub-area and project planning. Pending such sub-area studies, the policies and actions will be useful to guide decisions on development and rezoning applications. In Appendix I, all action statements from this Plan are organized by sub-area.

Consider the City-wide Implications of Central Area Land Use Policies: The policies in this report will be included in discussions as part of a city-wide planning process.

Consider Other Central Area Plan Issues: The intention of this Central Area Plan report is to deal with several of the most immediate issues relating to land use. There are a number of other issues that will be dealt with in future reports. The diagram on the opposite page outlines these topics, followed by a summary of some of the key issues to be addressed. The topics will be combined with city-wide planning work to the extent possible, as well as with other work underway. (Examples of work underway are also noted on the attached.)

CENTRAL AREA PLAN

A SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FOR FURTHER WORK

TRANSPORTATION: A transportation policy report will address a number of transportation issues specific to the central area. These include: improving mode split to encourage more commuters to take transit; improving "in-town" transit and circulation; providing for personal trips such as shopping, tourist, and cultural-entertainment; ensuring that parking requirements help achieve other objectives such as mode split; determining measures needed for through-traffic; and improving pedestrian and bicycle networks. Work is underway on the implications of possible rapid transit routes and stations in the central area.

OVERALL BUILT FORM: Overall built form topics are skylines, views, and scale of development. Issues include: the preservation of views identified as important by the Vancouver Views Study but not yet codified (street-end views, bridge views, and major street corridor views); the scale of future built form in the east extension of the CBD (along the Dunsmuir corridor); and the scale of future built form south of False Creek (Burrard Slopes, False Creek Southeast, and the Mount Pleasant industrial area) in relation to views and topography.

PUBLIC FACILITIES: Public facilities policy issues are mainly the location of, and implementation mechanisms for, cultural and related facilities in the central area. Location issues include questions of concentration of dispersion of facilities; targeting facilities to waterfronts and/or office districts; and relation to pedestrian and transit routes, character areas, and tourism opportunities. An up-coming review of the amenity bonus is part of this study of the implementation mechanisms available for public facilities.

PUBLIC REALM: Public realm policy topics are the interconnected systems of parks, plazas, streetscaping, and other public space that makes up the public realm of the central area. Public realm planning is

now within the mandate of two departments (Planning and Engineering) and the Park Board. Specific issues include improving the joint inter-departmental process for planning the public realm; streetscaping standards for different areas within the central area; greening for atmospheric benefits; and development of a capital plan program for the downtown public realm, to address long-standing interest in up-grading the public realm (eg., Queen Elizabeth plaza and the Art Gallery plaza). Tourism improvements in signage, routes, and linkages are also included. At present, the Park Board is preparing a central area parks and recreation plan which deals with a number of public realm issues and the Urban Landscape Task Force is underway.

PEOPLE/HOUSING: The intention of this policy is to facilitate a variety of types of people living in and visiting the central area. Some work is already underway (mainly through Downtown South planning) on strategies for preserving lodging house units (SROs); this can be expanded where appropriate to other locations in the central area. Other issues include strategies for encouraging affordable housing in the central area (tenure, unit size, bonuses, etc.), as well as supporting services for central area residents and visitors. The Safer City Task Force is underway.

VI. SUMMARY CONCLUSION

This report outlines adopted goals for the central area and describes the policies and actions approved to address basic land use issues. The policies and actions have immediate relevance to work now underway in many parts of the central area. This report recognizes that looking at basic land use patterns does not entirely address all key aspects which will define the future central area, but these policies are informed by work on related issues. Because many decisions need to be made now, this land use context can help to make choices.

The growth of the downtown's corporate core prestige office buildings is recognized as contributing to the economic health of the entire region. The policies provide for some further build-out of the Central Business District as a compact, high amenity office core, extending northeast along Bute Street from Alberni Street to the waterfront and east along the SkyTrain route to encourage transit use, but skirting around areas with heritage character, like Victory Square. The Uptown office district along Broadway would be centred between Cambie and Oak, playing a unique medical and civic role in the region.

The policies in this report also suggest concern about a growing number of employees concentrated in the central area and seek to manage this growth primarily by consolidating major office development in a defined Central Business District and Uptown office district where it can be most easily served by transit; by reducing the overall central area office zoned capacity; and by identifying new housing areas.

The downtown office core is supported by areas that provide space for incubator activities and for services that support downtown's major office tenants, including design services and office supply and repair services. The policies suggest that we find out more about these support activities and their location needs before too quickly displacing them and that, in the meantime, we maintain and create some opportunities for them, such as on lower floors of residential buildings in some areas, in the Mt. Pleasant industrial area, and in Burrard Slopes near Granville Island.

Some of the impacts of central area employment growth are mitigated by nearby housing. Housing also contributes to a lively and socially diverse central area. The housing policies describe a central area primarily of neighbourhoods rather than of housing mixed randomly with offices. Clustering housing provides the best opportunities to ensure compatibility, to provide identity and a sense of belonging, and to deliver neighbourhood services.

New housing areas will be focussed near existing established neighbourhoods and the waterfronts

where residential amenity is greatest. Neighbourhoods will extend from south of Broadway to encircle the False Creek basin. Neighbourhoods will extend north on the downtown peninsula, but skirt the CBD, and spread from the West End north to Burrard Inlet. The policies also suggest that in creating a large zoned housing capacity, the City should look to filling in "gaps" in housing choice and further diversify type and tenure.

With higher densities come new housing opportunities, but also concerns about livability. The policies emphasize the importance of proceeding with care and learning from experience, to create a pattern of varying densities in different neighbourhoods for a variety of lifestyles and characters.

Finally the policies describe a central area of multiple, convenient, street-oriented shopping districts, contributing to the public streets and walkways. To do this, the policies suggest limiting new retail concentrations, focussing retail location, and limiting shopping "malls" and underground pedestrian links.

These policies are consistent with related City and regional policy, namely *Clouds of Change* and *Creating Our Future*.

Appendix I

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS, BY AREA

The land use policies are implemented through sub-area planning in the central area. The following is a list of the implementation actions for each sub-area. Pending sub-area studies, these actions will be useful to guide decisions on development and rezoning applications.

TRIANGLE WEST

- Replace housing bonus and housing substitution (which discriminate against housing as the preferred use) with choice of use zoning to favour flexibility for buildings to be primarily housing or primarily offices or hotel.
- Pending the above, continue to favour CD-1 rezonings for housing on suitable sites.
- (See also Retail and Development Levies actions below.)

Status: On work program of Coal Harbour planning team. Some work already underway.

VICTORY SQUARE

- Ensure Victory Square's permitted density, height, and uses will help to retain existing heritage buildings and character rather than encourage major new office development -- i.e., defined CBD of prestige AAA offices skirts around Victory Square.
- Future detailed planning for Victory Square should address its linkages to and impacts on Gastown and Chinatown.
- Recognize that protecting areas with heritage character can also provide location opportunities for support services.
- Consider choice of use zoning to help retain existing buildings.
- Determine the applicability of policies and programs identified for Downtown South to low-cost housing elsewhere in the central area.

(See also Retail, Development Levies, and Housing actions below.)

Status: Council has an interim policy of 3.0 FSR and 70 feet (versus Official Development Plan maximum of 5.0 FSR and 150 feet) for Victory Square. Staff freed up from planning Downtown South and/or Triangle West could move to a Victory Square planning program in 1992.

SOUTHEAST FALSE CREEK

- Make housing the predominant land use when planning Southeast False Creek (noting that Council in May 1988 reaffirmed the location of the City Works Yard at least until 2003).

- Give priority in Southeast False Creek to accommodating housing for families with children due to its opportunity for comprehensive redevelopment and because of its location on the lower density side of False Creek.

(See also Retail, Development Levies, and Housing actions below.)

Status: To be reported further to Council. Is now City-owned, so opportunities are protected. Likely 1992 work program.

BURRARD SLOPES (C-3A AND SOGI)

- Plan for a transition to housing in the C-3A portion of Burrard Slopes.
- In the South of Granville Island (SOGI) portion of Burrard Slopes, provide for continued support services; permit housing but do not require it - with specifics to be determined as part of area study.

(See also Retail, Development Levies, and Housing actions below.)

Status (SOGI): In July 1990, Council identified the industrial area north of Sixth Avenue as a possible new community. In April 1991, Council approved the redeployment of staff to plan for the area after existing community planning studies are completed. In October 1991, Council asked for an interim policy outlining criteria for possible release of industrial sites for residential redevelopment, in advance of area wide planning. Likely 1992 work program.

Status (C-3A): This portion of Burrard Slopes south of Sixth Avenue is being included in other C-3A review work and will be folded in with the north portion as part of full community planning study.

BROADWAY/C-3A (EXCLUDING BURRARD SLOPES)

- Retain Cambie-Oak as continued major Uptown office focus. Encourage more housing in other areas of Broadway corridor.
- In determining the location of new transit services, consider the intent of these policies to concentrate Uptown offices in the Cambie-Oak area.
- Delete housing as a permitted use in most of the defined Uptown.
- Outside Cambie-Oak Uptown office area, pursue housing as the dominant use where appropriate. Criteria include: where adjacent to existing residential and where there is no existing major office development.

- Outside Cambie-Oak Uptown, pursue choice of use where housing as the dominant use is not as appropriate.

(See also Retail, Development Levies, and Housing actions below.)

Status: On work program. Initial work underway.

CBD

- Locate new transit routes and stations to reinforce defined CBD.
- Establish policy of not entertaining site-specific rezonings for higher density residential in the defined CBD unless for heritage retention.
- Replace small pockets of housing bonus zoning in the defined CBD with commercial zoning.
- Delete housing as a permitted use in most of the defined CBD.
- Retain hotel bonus in the defined CBD only, subject to urban design considerations.

(See also Retail actions below.)

Status: Many of the actions are or can be implemented on a project basis, as issues arise and time permits.

PORT LANDS (SEYMOUR TO PORTSIDE PARK)

- Consider housing on suitable sites as a replacement for or in addition to commercial uses that are permitted in the current zoning (and recognizing the overall built form policy in the Central Waterfront District Official Development Plan that "new development should be in scale with adjacent Gastown").

(See also Retail and Housing actions below.)

Status: At the initiative of the Port.

MT. PLEASANT AND FALSE CREEK FLATS INDUSTRIAL AREAS

- Support the recent confirmation of Mt. Pleasant industrial area as remaining industrial.
- Review support services needs and locations opportunities and plan for adequate location opportunities over the long term by including this as part of the city-wide industrial studies. Consider specifically the role of Mt. Pleasant industrial area and False Creek Flats for support services serving the downtown.

Status: City-wide industrial studies underway. Mt. Pleasant industrial area confirmed as part of recently approved Mt. Pleasant Plan.

DOWNTOWN SOUTH

- Plan new residential neighbourhoods.

- Allow limited (and compatible) small-scale commercial/support uses, especially as an alternative to housing units on the lower floors for livability purposes.

- Pursue the policies and programs identified in the Downtown South Plan for low-cost housing.

- In Burrard-Granville area, replace housing bonus and housing substitution (which discriminate against housing as the preferred use) with choice of use zoning to favour flexibility for buildings to be primarily housing or primarily offices or hotel.

- Include the Robson and Seymour Street edges of the Northeast Quadrant in the CBD.

- Implement development levies in Downtown South as the first model.

Status: Approved by Council in Downtown South Plan.

COAL HARBOUR

- Establish limited office area in Coal Harbour East.

- Plan new residential neighbourhoods in other areas of Coal Harbour.

Status: Approved by Council as part of Coal Harbour Policy Statement and Official Development Plan.

FALSE CREEK NORTH

- Establish False Creek North Apex area for offices.

- Plan new residential neighbourhoods in other areas of False Creek North.

Status: Approved by Council as part of False Creek North Official Development Plan.

RETAIL -- APPLICABLE TO ALL ABOVE AREAS

- Refer to Map H (Retail Streets Map) as a policy direction for further evaluation and implementation through more detailed planning initiatives.

- Report back as soon as possible on a text amendment to decrease the retail requirement for streets where the proposed policy (Map H) would be more permissive than the current "retail required" category; and for other streets, bring forward text amendments through sub-area planning and/or through a specific work item on retail streets implementation.

- Where retail is permitted, encouraged, or required, define retail as a separate use in the by-laws and assign to it a density that generally permits up to two levels of street-oriented re-

tail. (Street-fronting department stores may exceed two levels, as may some of the internally-oriented retail in Policy 5.3.)

- Require impact studies/market analyses for any proposals to add retail zoned capacity or to build new retail developments of more than 100,000 square feet.
- Ensure that retail contributes primarily to street activity; allow internal malls and underground links only under the conditions specified.

DEVELOPMENT LEVIES -- APPLICABLE TO ABOVE NEW RESIDENTIAL AND CHOICE OF USE AREAS

- Continue Council's initiative to establish development levies for community needs in areas being rezoned to new neighbourhoods.
- When considering increased housing densities for new areas, require community amenity contributions as a condition of site specific rezonings.

HOUSING -- APPLICABLE TO ABOVE NEW RESIDENTIAL AND CHOICE OF USE AREAS

- Allow limited (and compatible) small-scale commercial/support uses in selected residential areas, especially where an alternative to housing units is desired on the lower floors for livability purposes.
- Incorporate a variety of densities in sub-area planning in the central area.
- Approach rezoning of areas to FSR 2.5 and up with regard to area history and existing conditions; specific design considerations; area suitability and opportunity for different lifestyles; the availability of, or ability to provide, supporting facilities and services, and experience with similar areas.
- Seek housing diversity as part of area planning for new housing areas. (Implementation strategies include requirements as part of comprehensive redevelopment plans and development levies for areas with multiple ownership.)

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