



City of Vancouver *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

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REZONING POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE LARGE DEVELOPMENTS

Adopted by City Council on June 10, 2008

Amended May 16, 2013

1 Policy

That it be Council Policy:

for all rezonings that involve 45,000 m² (484,375 sq. ft.) of new development floor area and/or a site size of 8,000 m² (1.98 acres) or more, in addition to the minimum requirements for Green Buildings Policy for Rezonings in EcoCity Action A-1, the City will require the following:

- (a) A business case analysis will be required by a qualified green energy consultant at the discretion of the City to explore the viability of campus or district energy systems. If the business case is viable a system will be required.
- (b) Overall site design shall consider and where appropriate incorporate layout and orientation approaches that reduce energy needs, facilitate passive energy solutions, incorporate urban agricultural opportunities, and replicate natural systems where feasible.
- (c) A Sustainable Transportation Demand Management Strategy will be required that includes the requisite infrastructure where appropriate to prioritize sustainable transportation modes. This includes walking, cycling, public transit and goods movement over automobile use, and facilitates the incorporation of low carbon vehicles (e.g., electric vehicles).
- (d) A sustainable rainwater management plan that utilizes sustainable strategies that allow for infiltration, retention, treatment and utilization of rainwater where applicable and appropriate on site.
- (e) A solid waste diversion strategy that provides space, infrastructure and a plan to divert organics and recyclables from the waste stream, and where possible minimizes the vehicle trips required for collection.
- (f) With sites accommodating housing, a range of unit types and tenures will be considered and negotiated to enhance the affordability that the market can provide, while providing in accordance with Council policy, opportunities for the development of non-market housing to be funded through senior government housing programs.

The sustainable large development requirements will be evaluated and updated every five years to reflect market evolution, advancements in technology, and Council adopted goals and targets.

Projects that are limited in scope may be excluded from the requirements of this policy, including:

- text amendments to the existing zoning for minor changes to large sites, or
- projects on large sites that contain less than 4700 m² (50,590 sq. ft.) of new development floor area.

In such cases, a request for partial exemption from the policy requirements should be discussed with the rezoning planner prior to submission of the rezoning application. Alternatives can be considered and if warranted, some of the requirements may be waived by the Director of Planning.

The Director of Planning will also exercise discretion regarding development floor area if projects are close to either the low threshold (4700 m²) or the high threshold (45,000 m²), or site size, if developments approach the 8,000 m² (1.98 acres) mark.

Consideration of these will be influenced by the site's size, context, proposed uses, opportunities and constraints. Not all site sizes and circumstances allow for the same considerations.

These above components are requirements, and are not compensated with bonus density. In addition, usual City policies and aspirations will apply for land use, urban design, and/or other public amenities and benefits, as appropriate for the specific site.

This policy applies to both residential and non-residential rezonings including commercial, industrial, and institutional.

Appropriate heights and densities are determined through the site-specific rezoning planning process, with public consultation, and options are related to the type of land use, size of site, urban design, neighbourhood context, etc.

Many of the planning policies across the City identify sites of this size ("special sites," "large sites," "CD-1s"), most of which do not have specifically prescribed densities or heights for these sites, but rather provide direction on land use or rezoning process and expect height and density to be determined at rezoning. However, in the Oakridge Langara Policy Statement and the Riley Park-South Cambie Vision, there are sites (4 sites and 4 sites, respectively) for which the Plan or Vision specifies site-specific heights or densities. (Sites are listed in table below). It is the intent of this policy that these heights/densities will be used as the base case option when an actual site planning/ rezoning process occurs. Additional options with increased densities and corresponding heights beyond the Plan or Vision may also be created and assessed through the rezoning review and planning process that accompanies rezonings of this scale. Considerable public engagement, including early dialogue with the community and the local vision implementation committee, prior to preparation of alternative options, will be included.

This policy will apply to all new rezoning applications initiated after May 16, 2013, unless a policy statement for the site was approved by Council before that date as part of a rezoning policy program. Where such a policy statement has been approved, staff shall negotiate reasonable green performance improvements compatible with the policy statement in the rezoning stage that respect the intent of this policy. Where a policy process is underway, but there is as yet no approved policy statement, staff shall use discretion as to the extent to which conformity with the above shall be required, depending on the advancement of the process.

The greener site requirements will be re-evaluated, and updated at regular intervals to reflect market evolution, advancements in technology, and progressive City targets that move toward goals such as carbon neutral new construction.

2 Discussion

As a companion to Action A-1, this Action raises the green requirement for larger developments that come through the City rezoning process. The City has learned much about sustainability options in the context of its larger developments over generations, and the intent of this policy is to ensure that learning continues to build. Larger developments provide the opportunity for greater green performance requirements than smaller developments.

This Action is not intended to enable new site assembly nor favour additional rezonings beyond those sites that would be considered for rezoning under existing City policy. Most often large developments that are considered for rezoning are existing assembled, underdeveloped sites.

They are usually old CD-1 zoned sites with older social housing projects, or former or existing institutions, or older shopping malls.

For the larger residential sites in the large development category, this Action complements and reinforces established City policies and practice to use the potential of large redevelopments to achieve comprehensive new communities that are sustainable environmentally, socially, economically, and culturally. The new communities created within large developments should provide a full range of services and amenities, be socially inclusive, and enrich the larger neighbourhoods of which they are part of as well as the city as a whole.

The new Policy above acknowledges two areas of the City where a local policy (Vision or Plan) identifies heights and/or densities for specific sites covered in this Action, and explains how these heights/densities will be used as a base case in developing options for these sites.

Sometimes there has been confusion about whether heights/densities in other sections of Community Visions would apply to these larger developments. Visions have two ways of discussing height and/or density:

EcoDensity Initial Actions

- (a) For Visions in areas where there are larger sites, there are Vision directions that speak specifically to these sites. Most Visions use these directions to provide general guidance on land use or rezoning process for these sites. As noted above, only one Vision and one Plan speaks to specific densities and or heights for these sites.
- (b) There are other sections of the Visions that provide directions on a variety of more typical or generic locations for height and density in the community, such as around parks or schools, around transit stations, near shopping areas, or generally throughout the community, etc. It has been the consistent interpretation that these general height or density directions do not apply to the larger sites identified separately in the Visions. Thus the new policy above has not had to address these circumstances.

The rezoning process for this size of site typically includes significant public engagement, and all rezonings must include formal Public Hearings and be individually approved by City Council.

Oakridge Langara Policy Statement and Riley Park/South Cambie Vision: Sites over 2 acres with specified site-specific densities and/or heights		
(These will be used in a site specific rezoning process as a base case scenario. Other sites over 2 acres are identified in other Visions, but do not have site-specific policy on density/height)		
SITE	SIZE	DENSITY/HEIGHT
Oakridge Langara Policy Statement (1995)		
former B.C. Transit site, W. 41st & Oak	6.1 ha, 15 ac.	30 ft. for most of site; 40 ft. along 41st Ave. frontage; 50 ft. strip north of 41st Ave. frontage; mix of townhouses, low-rise and mid-rise to 1.0 FSR (gross)
Langara Gardens, 57th & Cambie	8.51 ha, 21 ac.	40 ft. for most of site; 30 ft. adjacent to single family areas; mix of townhouses & low-rise as infill to 1.0 FSR (gross)
Pearson Centre, 57th & Cambie,	8.1 ha, 20 ac.	40 ft. for most of site; 30 ft. adjacent to single family areas; mix of townhouses and low-rise to overall site-density 1.0 FSR (gross) with 0.6 FSR max residential (max 0.6 FSR institutional)
Dogwood Lodge, 57th & Cambie,	2.43 ha, 6 ac.	40 ft. for most of site; 30 ft. adjacent to single family areas; mix of townhouses and low-rise to overall site-density 1.0 FSR (gross) with 0.6 FSR max residential (max 0.6 FSR institutional)
Riley Park/South Cambie Vision (2005)		
RCMP Fairmont Complex, 37th & Heather	8.5 ha, 21 ac.	3 parcels, up to 4 storeys with lower heights for transition where appropriate
Balfour Block, 18th & Laurel	1 ha, 2.5 ac.	up to 3 storeys, approx. 35 ft.
King Edward Mall, Oak & King Edward	1.6 ha, 4 ac.	up to 4 storeys

