



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

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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900 BARRARD STREET CD-1 GUIDELINES (BY-LAW NO. 6421) (CD-1 NO. 229)

Adopted by City Council November 30, 1993

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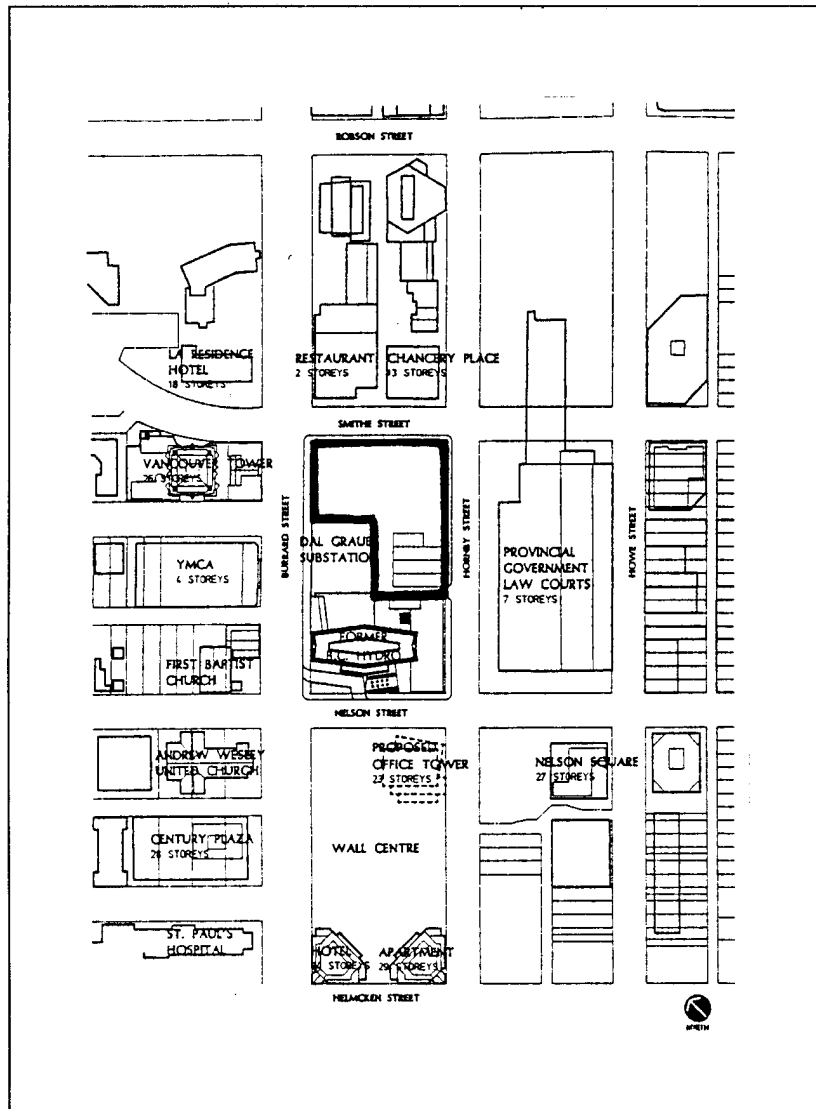
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1 Application and Intent

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the 900 Burrard Street CD-1 By-law to guide development of this site. As well as assisting the development permit applicant, the guidelines will be used by City staff in evaluating the proposed development.

The intent of the guidelines is to achieve a high quality development that respects and is responsive to both the heritage and landmark qualities of the former B.C. Hydro building, and to ensure compatibility with development in the surrounding area. Limited variations may be considered where they improve the overall design. As was the case with the former B.C. Hydro building, a design team approach involving architects, engineers and artists should be used in designing new buildings on the 900 Burrard Street site. As well, it would be valuable if the rezoning architect and possibly the original B.C. Hydro building architect are involved in the detailed design development.

Figure 1. Site Plan



2 General Design Considerations

2.1 Organizing Principles

Key principles organizing development on this site include:

- (a) Respecting the landmark and heritage quality of the former B.C. Hydro building;
- (b) Providing an appropriate scale transition from the Dal Grauer sub-station on Burrard Street and the low-rise portion of the former B.C. Hydro building on Hornby Street;
- (c) Responding to the scale of and providing containment for the Robson Square and Courthouse complex;
- (d) Creating a safe and interesting pedestrian environment on all streets; and
- (e) Responding to the character of the former B.C. Hydro building in detailing, materials and colour.

2.2 Siting

- (a) On both Hornby and Smithe Streets, lower building elements should define the street, with commercial use or residential lobbies being developed along the property line;
- (b) On Burrard Street, lower building elements should be sited to ensure that the tiled northerly portion of the Dal Grauer sub-station is exposed. A 4.5 m setback should be provided at grade and treated as an extension of the public realm; and
- (c) New development along the southern property line should be as close as possible to screen existing development and eliminate views of the blank sidewalls of the former B.C. Hydro building and sub-station.

2.3 Orientation

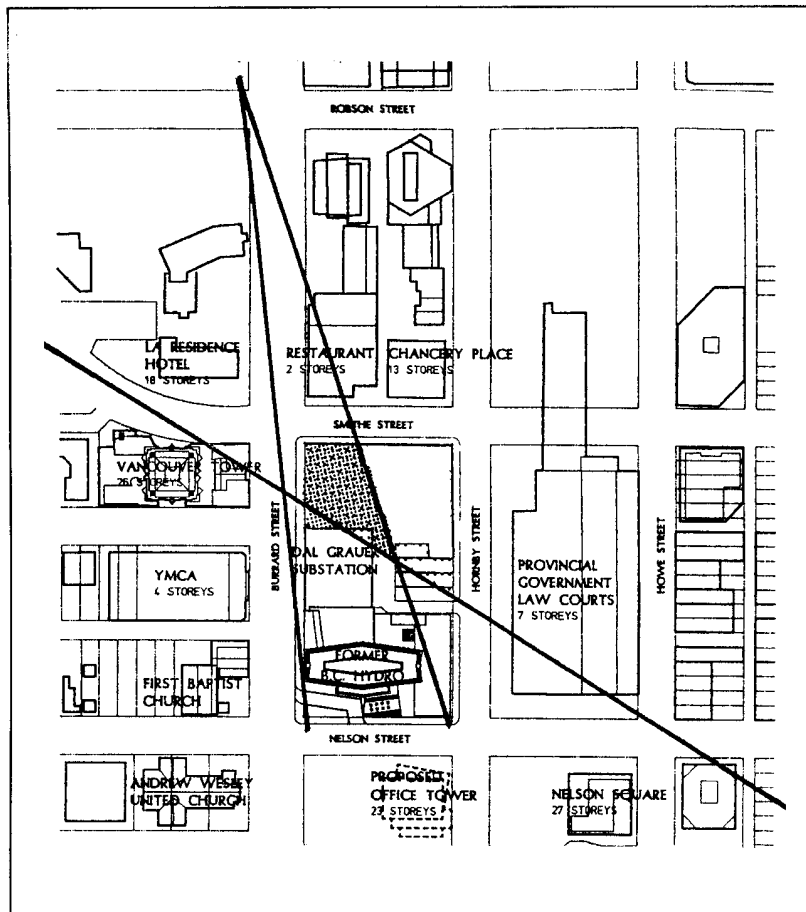
Buildings lower than 35.0 m should generally define the streets by being built to the property line or set back to build to lines as stipulated. Buildings higher than 35.0 m should generally orient to the established downtown grid.

2.4 Views

Figure 2 illustrates the principal public view across the site, from Heather Bay to the Lions. This limits maximum building height to 68.6 m.

Views of the former B.C. Hydro building from the northwest and the southwest corners of Burrard and Robson Streets should also be maintained. Buildings within the shaded portion of Figure 2 should not exceed 30.0 m in height.

Figure 2. Public View Preservation



2.5 Massing Controls

2.5.1 General Massing

The maximum building envelope should reflect a mixed-use character, having a commercial base of up to 1.5 FSR generally containing retail and service uses at grade, and up to an additional 3.0 FSR of office use above with typical commercial floor-to-floor heights. The balance should consist of 3.1 m floor to floor heights, as is typical for residential or hotel use. Some variations may be considered for uses with higher floor to floor requirements (e.g. predominantly office) where the floor area is located on internal facades which do not affect building bulk as seen from the street and the use is less dependent on generous semi-private open space. Care should be taken to minimize the bulk and impact on livability of this building mass on adjacent housing units in the former B.C. Hydro building.

2.5.2 Street Enclosure Buildings

Low-rise buildings ranging from a minimum of two to a maximum of ten storeys should generally define the streets. The scale of large block faces should be broken down into individual elements by developing a separate identity and articulation of building detail to reinforce a human scale.

These buildings form part of the streetscape, and are important to the public realm and pedestrian character of the streets. Detailing of materials and patterns of fenestration should be used to achieve a comfortable pedestrian scale, and enhance the “close-up” view for the pedestrian.

Commercial uses should be located at grade on Hornby, Smithe and Burrard Streets. A diversity of street front tenancy should be encouraged with individual tenancies generally not exceeding

15.0 m, except on corners. All uses should have direct pedestrian access from the street. Display windows, signage and individual tenancy design could be used to enhance pedestrian interest. Residential and commercial entries should be separate and clearly identified.

Along Hornby Street, a built form edge should be established to respond to the lower elements of the former B.C. Hydro building and to contain the Robson Square complex. This lower building mass should be continuous but articulated and should align with the existing street base of the former B.C. Hydro building. It should range in height from 22.0 m to 28.0 m and should be capped by a strong horizontal element such as a cornice or parapet. Building mass above should be set back a minimum of 3.1 m to reinforce this horizontal edge. Changes in material should be considered to differentiate the base from the higher elements.

The transition from the former Hydro building street base on Hornby to the built form edge of new development should occur as close as possible to the common property line, in a manner which respects the scale and makes a sensitive transition from the existing building.

On Burrard Street, building mass should step down from the Smithe Street corner to the height of the Dal Grauer substation.

2.5.3 Higher Building Elements

Higher building elements should be located to minimize shadowing of Robson Square, the Burrard Street sidewalks, and the courtyard for La Residence/Le Meridien Hotel. Building mass should generally step up to the Hornby/Smithe corner, where the highest building elements should generally be located.

Where expressed, the tower form should acknowledge the context of its neighbours, particularly the former Hydro B.C. building. For residential use, the maximum tower floorplate should not exceed 650 m², including all interior storage space, but excluding balconies, up to 8 percent of the total residential floor area in the tower. For commercial use, the tower floorplate should not exceed 1 100 m², including all interior space.

Building mass should step down along Smithe to the Burrard/Smithe corner where the height should not exceed 10 storeys to maintain views of the former B.C. Hydro building from the Burrard/Robson intersection.

Change in massing, fenestration, size and/or shape and materials may all be used to emphasize the top of the tower. The tower top treatment should complement the former Hydro building.

Elevator penthouses should be screened or integrated into the roof structure which should be designed to complement the massing and roofscape.

2.6 Architectural Expression, Materials and Colour

2.6.1 Grade level commercial uses should present a pedestrian scale and image in treatment and detailing. Retail uses should incorporate display windows, lighting and outdoor display. Low-rise and tower elements should be designed to complement the form and treatment of the former B.C. Hydro building. Colours should be sympathetic to the former B.C. Hydro building and the context.

Dominant materials should be durable and of high quality, such as those used on the former B.C. Hydro building. Materials encouraged include concrete, metal, glass curtain walls and mosaic tiles. Stucco should not be used as a principal building material.

2.6.2 Roofs

Low-rise building roofs should be designed to be attractive when seen from above. Careful attention should be paid to the choice of landscape, roofing material and colour to ensure compatibility with adjacent finishes. This treatment should, if possible, include the roof of the Dal Grauer substation.

Vents, mechanical rooms, equipment and elevator penthouses should be integrated with the architectural treatment of the roof or screened in a manner compatible with the building.

2.6.3 Balconies

Balconies should be designed as an integral part of the building, rather than appearing “tacked on”. Balconies should be at least partially and preferably fully recessed into the building face.

Balconies may be enclosed for environmental purposes, such as sound attenuation, subject to conformance with the Council-adopted “Balcony Enclosure Guidelines”.

Balconies should appear transparent. While low parapet walls are permitted, completely solid enclosures which exceed .6 m in height are discouraged, so as to complement the curtain wall treatment of the former B.C. Hydro building.

2.6.4 Awnings and Canopies

Weather protection should be provided for all grade-level commercial frontages, in conformance with the Council-adopted “Central Area Pedestrian Weather Protection” guidelines.

It should be expressed as a connected series of separate awnings or canopies with a minimum depth of 1.5 m to permit outdoor displays, as well as protect the walking space. Weather protection should also be provided at entries to residential and commercial uses.

Weather protection features at entrances should be used to reinforce identity and a sense of address for buildings, both for residential and commercial uses, by enhancing their size and scale.

2.7 Residential Livability

2.7.1 Residential livability for each development and dwelling unit should be designed with consideration of:

- (a) Privacy and Territoriality:
 - (i) Each unit should have direct access to a private outdoor space or an enclosed balcony having a minimum depth of 2.0 m and a minimum area of 4 m²;
- (b) Individuality and Identity:
 - (i) Each building should have its main entrance fronting a street;
 - (ii) Ground or podium level floors of all buildings should be designed to express individual units with a coherent massing; and
 - (iii) Where landscaping of units occurs in the private zones of those units, it should permit reasonable customization by residents, e.g., planting bed and soft landscaping variations at grade, opportunities to place planters, at balconies, etc.;
- (c) Choice and Convenience:
 - (i) Each residential development should provide on-site amenities suitable for the anticipated population;
- (d) Safety and Security:
 - (i) Each residential development and unit should be designed to be safe and secure yet not fortress-like;
 - (ii) Buildings should be designed with windows providing overview to afford both “eyes on the street” and doors on the street;
 - (iii) Public, semi-public and semi-private spaces should have some degree of overlook from residents' homes and, where practical, good visibility from the street; and
 - (iv) Landscaping and lighting should enhance security.
- (e) Interaction with the physical environment:
 - (i) Habitable rooms must have access to daylight and where possible, direct sunlight;
 - (ii) Units should have one unobstructed view of a minimum length of 25.0 m and should be oriented to longer views where these exist; and
 - (iii) Semi-private outdoor spaces should be located so as to receive direct sunlight during most days of the year.

2.8 Parking Access

Parking entrances should be integrated into the buildings or landscape, and exposed walls and soffits should be carefully treated. Good visibility should be provided for vehicles at access points. Servicing should occur off-street, generally in internal corridors.

Parking for retail/commercial uses should be separated from residential parking and designed for safety and security.