



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

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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OFFICE CONVERSION POLICY

DODP Areas C2, C3, G, H, L1, L2, M and N; and HA Districts HA-2 (Gastown) and HA-3 (Yaletown)

Adopted by City Council on June 16, 2009

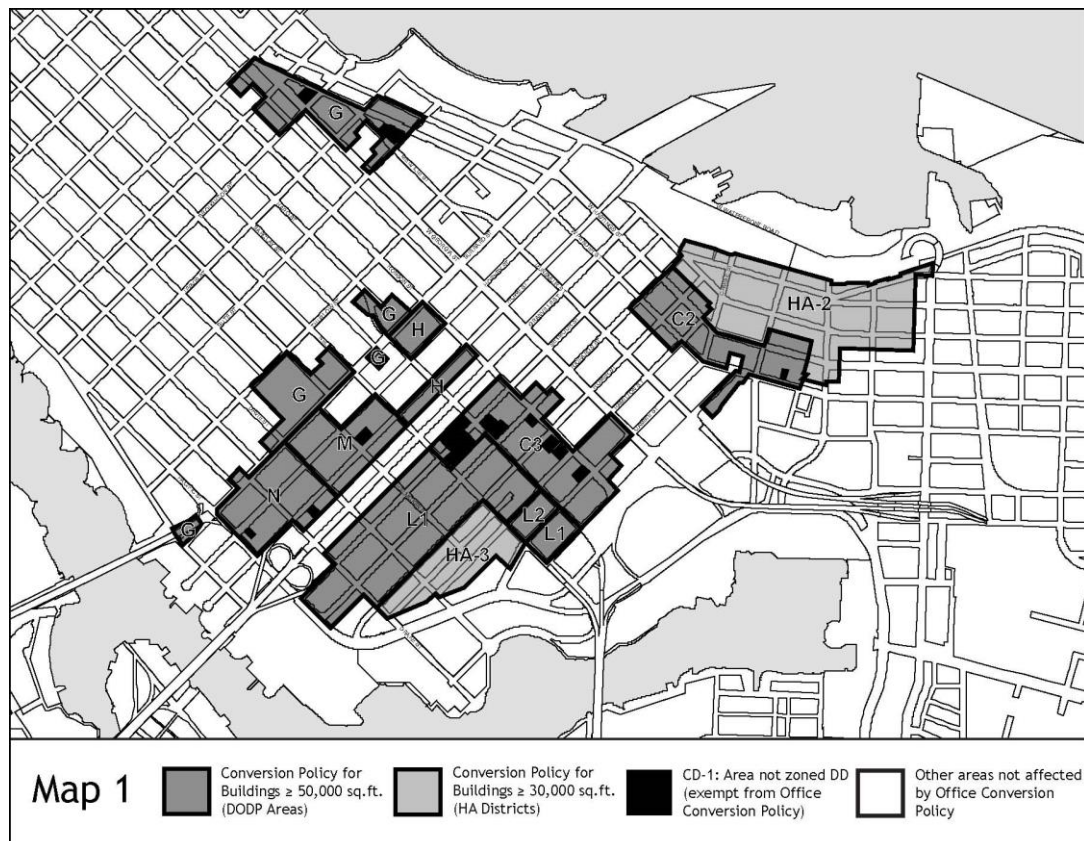
Amended October 22, 2009

1 Application and Intent

The policy is intended to be used in the evaluation of inquiries and applications for conversion of significant, existing office space to residential use in areas of Downtown where zoning provides the option of both commercial and residential uses.

The policy applies to Downtown District Areas C2, C3, G, H, L1, L2, M and N and Historic Area Districts HA-2 (Gastown) and HA-3 (Yaletown), as shown in the Map 1.

The zoning in these areas generally anticipates mixed-use, and there are numerous existing, significant office buildings. Although the zoning does permit both residential and commercial use, the City has discretion within the zoning. This conversion policy does not prohibit residential conversion of office space, but rather initiates a report to Council, where appropriate, to consider whether the conversion is in the public interest. In this way, the City is able to monitor the conversion of significant office buildings.



2 Definitions

For the purpose of this document:

- (a) “Office” means any office, including banks and financial institutions.
- (b) “Existing office space” means any building containing office commercial use, as exists as of October 22, 2009.
- (c) “Heritage building” means a building listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register or a building that could qualify for listing on the Vancouver Heritage Register.

3 Application of the Office Conversion Policy

The Office Conversion Policy applies to buildings in the following areas:

- DODP Areas C2, C3, G, H, L1, L2, M and N containing *50,000 square feet* or more of existing office floor space; and
- Historic Area Districts HA-2 and HA-3 containing *30,000 square feet* or more of existing office floor space.

4 Conditions for Consideration of Conversion

4.1 Proposals and development applications to convert existing office space to residential use may be subject to a report to City Council at the discretion of the Director of Planning.

4.2 The report to Council will assess enquiries and development applications for conversion based on consideration of the following criteria:

- (a) The current supply of office space and the projected demand for the next 25 years in the Downtown, including the Heritage Districts.
- (b) The amount of office space being converted and the general pace of office space conversion.
- (c) Whether the building is on the Vancouver Heritage Register (or is a post 1940 building worthy of inclusion on the VHR), is at risk, and heritage designation will result.
- (d) The quality of the development proposal in terms of liveability and design with consideration to the level of and proximity to land uses and amenities that support residential use.
- (e) Proximity of rapid transit stations to support sustainable commuting alternatives through highly accessibility and maximize the benefits of existing transit investments.