

# Policy

## Mass Timber Policy for Rezonings

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# Table of Contents

- 1 Background and Context .....3
- 2 Intent .....3
- 3 Policies.....3
  - 3.1 Mass Timber Policy for Rezonings .....3
  - 3.2 Additional Considerations .....4

# 1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

In December 2023, City Council approved incentives to advance mass timber buildings in community plan areas. Expanding the use of mass timber is a priority action under the Climate Emergency Response goal of reducing carbon emissions related to construction materials. Mass timber is a low carbon material with good insulating properties that can be manufactured off-site. Building with mass timber can reduce the embodied carbon of construction; improve energy efficiency; and reduce the time, cost, and community impacts of on-site construction.

# 2 INTENT

This policy provides the project requirements and criteria which will guide consideration of additional height and density for rezoning applications that use mass timber construction. The intent of the policy is to enable more new buildings of 8 or more storeys to use mass timber for their structure.

# 3 POLICIES

## 3.1 Mass Timber Policy for Rezonings

- 3.1.1 In areas of the city where existing plans and policies already enable redevelopment to 8 storeys or more, allow modest increases in height and density for projects which meet the definition of mass timber construction. This policy does not apply in areas where the height limit is less than 8 storeys.
- 3.1.2 Additional height and commensurate density will be considered generally up to:
  - (a) **Two additional storeys** for sites where 8 to 11 storeys are enabled; or
  - (b) **Three additional storeys** for sites where 12 or more storeys are enabled.
- 3.1.3 The building must maintain the use and tenure requirements specified in the area plan or policy after the additional storeys are added.
- 3.1.4 Projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with proposals for additional height and commensurate density evaluated alongside public realm impacts and urban design considerations, including view cones and shadow impacts on significant public spaces.
- 3.1.5 Applicants must demonstrate that the building meets the definition of mass timber in Section 2 of the Zoning and Development By-law.

## **3.2 Additional Considerations**

### **Limits**

- 3.2.1 The Director of Planning may decline to support additional height if doing so would unduly affect other civic goals such as:
- (a) Council-approved view corridors, except where permitted in policy;
  - (b) Sunlight on public park spaces, at the times specified for that area; or
  - (c) Conservation of heritage property.
- 3.2.2 In case (b), consideration will be given to redistributing the commensurate density throughout the building to avoid additional height.
- 3.2.3 This policy can be combined with the Below-Market Rental Housing Policy for Rezoning in community plan areas that do not offer additional height or density for below market rental development, such as in Grandview-Woodland. For community plan areas where additional height and density for below-market rental are already defined, including those in Broadway, Cambie Corridor and the West End, the Below-Market policy does not apply and cannot be combined with this policy.
- 3.2.4 This policy is not intended to be combined with the increases in height and density that can be considered for the delivery of local-serving retail, service uses, childcare, or heritage conservation in the Broadway Plan.
- 3.2.5 This policy may be combined with heritage property conservation and incentives in other areas, provided that the proposal complies with relevant policies including the Heritage Policies, and provided the above noted requirements and considerations are evaluated.
- 3.2.6 This policy can be combined with the allowable heights under the Transit-Oriented Areas Rezoning Policy.

### **Discretion**

- 3.2.7 Where appropriate, the Director of Planning may recommend varying the dimensional limits in Planning policies or guidelines, such as floor plate sizes or upper level setbacks, to facilitate mass timber construction. Applicants must show how the variation is connected to the dimensional requirements of mass timber, and how the effect of these variances will be mitigated through other aspects of the design.

**Table 1: Examples**

<b>Plan</b>	<b>Area Plan</b>	<b>Maximum Storey Height in Plan</b>	<b>Additional Storeys for Mass Timber</b>
Broadway	Granville/Burrard Slopes – Area D – p.127	10 for secured market and below-market rental	2 more secured market and below-market rental
	Mount Pleasant RT Areas – Area D – p.260	12 for secured market and below-market rental	3 more secured market and below-market rental
Grandview-Woodland	Hastings Slope – South side of Hastings St – Commercial to Victoria – p.62	8 for mixed-use development for sites with min. 200 ft. frontage	2 more mixed-use
	Hastings Plateau – North side of Hastings St – McLean to Woodland – p.59	15 for mixed-use development on sites with min. 200 ft. frontage and min. 20% residential as non-market	3 more mixed-use with min. 20% residential as non-market

*Note: The building must maintain the use and tenure requirements specified in the area plan or policy after the additional storeys are added.*