



# City of Vancouver *Planning - By-law Administration Bulletins*

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## DECONSTRUCTION

*Authority - Director of Planning  
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### 1 Introduction

On July 26, 2011 Vancouver City Council approved the Deconstruction Strategy, which proposes an alternative to conventional demolition practices as a means of reducing the volume of construction and demolition waste disposed in landfills, while creating new green job opportunities. While Council is supportive of deconstruction as a means of waste reduction and job creation, a barrier to widespread adoption of deconstruction as a common practice is that it takes more time than a conventional demolition. As such, Council supported the recommendation that the Zoning and Development By-law be amended to allow a building permit to demolish by deconstruction to be issued in advance of a development permit, in order to allow the necessary time to complete deconstruction. Council also supported amendments to the Vancouver Building By-law, including a definition of what constitutes demolition by deconstruction, the compliance path for demolition by deconstruction and penalties for non-compliance.

This bulletin will provide information about the benefits of deconstruction, changes to the by-law and the requirements for deconstruction applicants.

### 2 Deconstruction

Deconstruction means the practice of systematically disassembling a building in order to maximize diversion. Diversion means reuse, recycling or recovery of sorted demolition waste to avoid disposal at a landfill or incinerator. Applicants can opt in to a deconstruction as opposed to a standard demolition on a voluntary basis.

To qualify as a deconstruction, projects must meet the following diversion rate:

- 75% of all building materials, excluding materials which are hazardous or banned from landfill.

### 3 Zoning and Development By-law

Section 5.7 of the Zoning and Development By-law states that rental buildings, heritage buildings and buildings in most residential districts may not be exempted from development permit requirement before demolition. Section 5.7 has been amended to allow an exemption for buildings within R-zoned residential districts for which a building permit has been issued to demolish by deconstruction.

Section 10.12 of Vancouver's Zoning and Development By-law regulates the demolition of a building, and stipulates that "...no development permit shall be issued for the demolition unless and until a development permit for the new development has been issued." Section 10.12 has been amended to allow a building permit to demolish by deconstruction to be issued in advance of a development permit.

#### **4 Submission Requirements**

For one and two family homes, applicants will be eligible to receive a building permit to demolish by deconstruction prior to issuance of their development/building permit provided they meet the following conditions:

- (1) Demonstrate the intent to undertake deconstruction by signing a letter of intent;
- (2) Commit to generating a waste management plan compliance report detailing diversion rates for all waste; and
- (3) Have an active development/building permit application in progress.

Upon issuance of a building permit to demolish by deconstruction, applicants will be expected to deconstruct the home and strive to maximize diversion of waste from landfill. Salvaged building materials must be tracked, measured (tonnage or volume), and end-use recorded on a waste management compliance report.

#### **5 Penalties**

Based on the degree of non-compliance, failure to comply with the stipulations of a building permit for demolition by deconstruction could result in:

- (1) Stop work order;
- (2) Revoking of permit; and/or
- (3) Business Licence hearing.