

Rezoning Policy

Following the Renfrew-Collingwood Community Vision

1. About Zoning in General

1.1 How Zoning Works

The Zoning and Development Bylaw is the main way the City controls development – new buildings, additions to existing buildings, or changes in the use of buildings and land.

There are different zoning districts, labeled by letters and numbers. For example RS-1 covers most of Renfrew-Collingwood's single family areas and C-2 covers the larger shopping areas. Every lot in a zoning district is governed by the same regulations and guidelines. The regulations are contained in a District Schedule. They control the kind of activities (uses) that may take place, such as office, retail, dwelling, or manufacturing. District Schedules also control various quantitative aspects of the development including the maximum height of buildings, the position of building on the lot (yards and setbacks), the amount of total development (floorspace or density), and the amount of parking required.

In addition to the District Schedule with its regulations, some zones also have design review, using Design Guidelines. Design review looks at the more qualitative factors such as style or character, the materials used, or the landscaping. Legally, districts with design review are structured to have two types of projects: those that may go ahead without design review (often called 'outright') and those that are subject to design review (often called 'conditional' or 'discretionary') because they receive additional density, or approval of a conditional use, in return for meeting the design guidelines.

Another type of district is the CD-1 or Comprehensive Development district. Many of these are tailored to a specific site, such as Britannia Community Services Centre and the Broadway Campus of Vancouver Community College. Others cover a broad area, such as First Shaughnessy or the Downtown. This tool is used where a typical District Schedule and Guidelines approach is not suitable.

1.2 How Zoning is Changed

Anyone may apply to alter the zoning – property owner, resident, or the Director of Planning. However, only City Council may actually adopt or change zoning or guidelines. Staff do the analysis and processing of applications and then make recommendations to City Council. During processing there is always public notification and some consultation. A formal Public Hearing is always required at the end of the rezoning process before City Council decides if the zoning will change.

Because rezoning is time-consuming and expensive, City staff usually advise potential applicants before they make an application whether or not staff would 'consider' the rezoning (that is, fully process it), rather than quickly reporting it to Council with a recommendation to refuse the application. Staff give this advice based on existing City plans and policies, including Community Visions.

2. Rezoning Under the Renfrew-Collingwood Community Vision

Making some of the Renfrew-Collingwood Vision Directions happen will require rezoning or amendments to zoning. For most, additional area planning will be required before any zoning changes would be considered, and individual rezonings would not be considered prior to this planning (section 2.2 below). However, there are some cases where individual rezoning could be considered without additional area planning (section 2.1 below). Note that ‘considered’ refers to being taken into the system for processing, it does not necessarily mean that the applications will receive support from staff or approval from City Council.

2.1 Additional Area Planning Not Required Before Rezoning

Rezoning applications for the types of projects listed below could be considered without additional area planning because they further adopted city-wide policies, would further an adopted Vision Direction, or are normal practice in the public interest. Most are ‘site specific’ rezonings on individual sites. There would be community consultation in each case. In considering these rezonings, staff would look at not only the needs of the project but also how it relates to its existing surroundings, and to the future of the area as described in the Community Vision.

Table 2.1 Additional Area Planning Not Required Before Rezoning

Type of Project that Could be Considered for Site Specific Rezoning	Comments
Heritage Retention Projects - involving retention of buildings on the Vancouver Heritage Register (also Vision Direction 13.1)	City-wide policy to encourage retention of heritage resources
Social or Affordable Housing Projects - non-profit projects, housing agreement projects, special needs residential facilities (SNRFs) Note on definitions Housing agreement: a contract between the City and developer to guarantee some of the housing units as rental or low income, etc. SNRFs: housing and support services for people with special needs including the elderly, children in care, the mentally or physically handicapped, people with substance abuse problems, etc.	City-wide policy to encourage housing for lower income and special needs residents
Housing Demonstration Projects (HDP) - in order to be considered as a HDP, a project ‘must demonstrate a new housing form in the neighbourhood, improved affordability, and a degree of neighbourhood support; any increase in land value beyond the normal profit allowed by the City’s standard bonussing process, must be converted into improved affordability’ (January 3, 1996 City Council report) - in addition, in Renfrew-Collingwood, any HDP proposals would need to conform to Visions directions about type, location, scale, etc.	City-wide policy to permit demonstration of new housing types
Institutional uses Projects focusing on expansion, downsizing, or reuse of publicly owned or non-profit institutional, cultural, recreational, utility, or public authority uses	Normal City practice
Housekeeping amendments; zoning text amendments - initiated by the Director of Planning to update, correct, or make minor revisions to District Schedules or Guidelines	Normal City practice
In Renfrew-Collingwood: Changes to Existing CD-1 Zones - as per Vision Direction 14.1 Seniors Housing - as per Vision Direction 15.10 Adding a Supermarket in ‘Norquay Village’ and a ‘Mini-node’ - as per Vision Direction 19.6 and 20.7 The 2400 Motel and Eldorado Hotel Sites - as per Vision Direction 19.2	Renfrew-Collingwood Community Vision

2.2 Additional Planning Required Before Rezoning

The Renfrew-Collingwood Vision Directions listed below require additional planning study before rezoning occurs. For some Directions, the study would cover a portion Renfrew-Collingwood, others might be city-wide in scope. The types of things that would be studied could include the size, height, locations, and design of developments, traffic and parking, parks and green space, service needs, developer contributions to cost, phasing and so forth. Planning studies would be initiated by the City, but might be undertaken by City staff, consultants, community members, or a combination. In all cases, there would be community consultation throughout the study.

Timing and priorities for these studies, as well as other aspects of implementing the Visions, will be determined with community input, as well as through City Council consideration of available resources and competing work priorities. Individual site rezonings will not be considered in advance of the planning, other than as noted in Section 2.1 (above).

Table 2.2: Additional Planning Required Before Rezoning

Renfrew-Collingwood Vision Direction	Possible types of additional planning study
Design of New Single Family Homes 12.1 Design Review for New Single Family Houses	Mini-program to make design review available again in interested areas
Older Character Buildings and Heritage 13.2 Retaining Other Character Buildings	Specific planning study on feasibility of this in Vision areas
Additional Housing Around Shopping Areas 18.1 Neighbourhood Centres and Housing (Collingwood) 19.1 Neighbourhood Centres and Housing (Norquay) 20.1 Neighbourhood Centres and Housing ('mini-nodes')	Detailed local planning for areas around existing important shopping areas identified in the Vision
Expand 'Renfrew Heights' Shopping Area 20.2 Create 'Renfrew Heights' Shopping Area	Detailed local planning to add more mixed use development in this area
Housing Several Directions classified as 'Uncertain' identify housing types (15.1-15.4, 15.6, 15.8) or locations (16.1-16.6) which had more community support than opposition. These could be the subject of more community discussion.	Detailed local planning and consideration of housing options in a City initiated process.

2.3 Other

The sections above provide guidance for most rezoning inquiries. However, there may be rare sites for which development under the existing zoning would involve the loss of features which the community, in its Vision, views as assets. The prime example is trees and landscaping, but in some cases buildings or structures may also be valued (but not qualify as heritage). In these cases, rezoning that would maintain the assets may be considered. Further, this will apply only to large sites that were in single ownership at the time of the Vision adoption. Finally, achieving Vision Directions would remain the focus while considering the rezoning.