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POLICY REPORT URBAN STRUCTURE

Report Date: July 2, 2009
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Meeting Date: July 21, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Director of Planning
SUBJECT: DODP Text Amendment- Increase of Permitted Office Density in Area H

RECOMMENDATION

THAT, in order to strengthen and intensify commercial uses in the Downtown, the Director of Planning be instructed to make application to amend the Downtown Official Development Plan to increase the maximum permitted density for office uses in area H to floor space ratio 6.0, generally as set out in Appendix A ,and that the application be referred to a Public Hearing and be approved.

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare amendments to the DODP and Zoning and Development Bylaw generally in accordance with Appendix A for consideration at the Public Hearing.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval of the foregoing.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan-Terms of Reference (2005)
Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan- Issues and Directions Report (2007)

In April 2009, City Council passed the following resolution:
"THAT Council direct staff to report back on the removal of the floor space ratio 5.0 limitation on office space in area 'H' of the Downtown Official Development Plan in order to allow office uses to achieve the existing maximum permitted overall density of floor space ratio 6.0"

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

Council expressed a desire to remove a 5.0 floor space ratio (FSR) limitation on office use in the Downtown Official Development Plan (DODP) Area 'H' at a Public Hearing on April 21, 2009 on other amendments to the DODP for the Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan. This amendment would allow office use to achieve the current maximum permitted density of 6.0 in Area 'H'.

Following consultation with Legal Services, it was determined that this amendment would need to be the subject of a future Public Hearing. The purpose of this report is to seek Council direction to refer the DODP Area 'H' text amendment to Public Hearing.

DISCUSSION

Area 'H' of the Downtown Official Development Plan (DODP) consists of approximately four blocks adjacent to the Central Business District and the Provincial Government Law Courts, as identified in Figure 1 below:

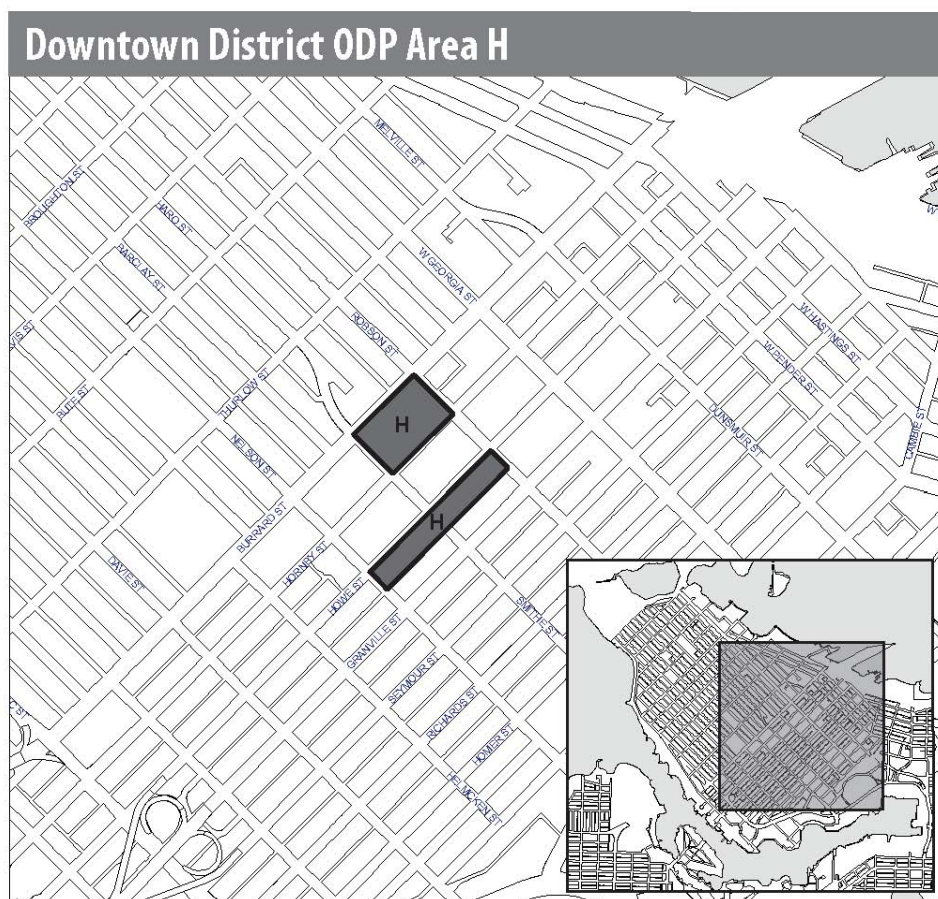


Figure 1: Map of Downtown Official Development Plan Area 'H'.

Area 'H' is identified as part of the CBD Shoulder in the Metro Core Study. The CBD Shoulder contains a mixture of both residential and non-residential uses and is intended to provide a

transition from the intense commercial uses of the CBD, to the largely residential areas in Downtown South.

At the Public Hearing on April 21, 2009, Council adopted a text amendment to require a minimum of 2.0 FSR of non-residential use (e.g. commercial or office use) in all new development in Area 'H'. At the same time Council expressed a desire to remove the existing limitation on office use of 5.0 FSR to allow office use to achieve the maximum overall permitted density of 6.0 FSR. Staff consulted with Legal Services who advised that due to process issues the proposed amendment to remove the 5.0 FSR limitation would have to proceed in a separate, future public hearing.

This report recommends that Council refer to Public Hearing the amendments to Area 'H' of the DODP, generally as laid out in Appendix A, to allow office use to achieve the maximum overall density permitted in this area. This is consistent with the intentions of the Metro Core Jobs and Economy Land Use Plan to strengthen the commercial character of the downtown.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for the City's budget.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The zoning amendments will be publicly advertised prior to the Public Hearing. Property owners in DODP area H will also be notified by mail prior to the Public Hearing.

CONCLUSION

The removal of the existing limitation on office use in DODP Area 'H' will help to enhance the commercial character of the CBD Shoulder. Staff recommend that Council refer these amendments to Public Hearing.

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PROPOSED MISCELLANEOUS TEXT AMENDMENTS
DOWNTOWN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
[All additions are shown in *bold italics*. Deletions are shown in strikeout]

By-Law amendments will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below and are subject to change and refinement prior to by-law posting.

Amend the Downtown Official Development Plan (By-Law no. 4912), as described in this report to:

1. Revise Section 3.1 as follows:

H in the area denoted by the letter 'H', the total density for all permitted uses must not exceed a floor space ratio 6.00 except that:

- ~~office use shall not exceed a floor space ratio of 5.00, and~~
- residential uses shall not exceed a floor space ratio 3.00,

and, for new construction, and addition to an existing building that increases the residential floor area, or a change in use in an existing building that increases the residential floor area, the total density for non-residential uses must not be less than a floor space ratio of 2.00.