



NOTICE OF MEETING

VANCOUVER HERITAGE COMMISSION

AGENDA

DATE: Monday, May 5, 2025

TIME: 11:00 am

PLACE:

In-Person: Joe Wai Room
Ground Floor, City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue

Electronic

Means: Watch live via <https://vancouver.ca/your-government/vancouver-heritage-commission.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE:

- *This meeting is to be convened in person and via electronic means as authorized by Part 14 of the Procedure By-law.*
- *Members: If you are unable to attend this meeting, please advise Taimiya Khalid at 604-877-5161 or e-mail Taimiya.Khalid@vancouver.ca.*

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Chair to acknowledge we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Peoples.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – February 3, 2025

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|---|----------------------|
| 1. 8-36 W Cordova St. – Rezoning Application (RZ-2025-00014) | 11:10 – 12:00 |
| Dunn and Miller Block, VHR-listed, M (8-28 W Cordova St.) | |
| Callister Block, VHR-listed, M (30-34 W Cordova St.) | |
| McIntosh Block, VHR-listed, M (36 W Cordova St) | |

The City of Vancouver received a policy non-compliant application to rezone 8-36 West Cordova Street from HA-2 (Gastown Historic Area) to CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) under the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan. The focus of this review would be on the proposed rezoning of the West Cordova site within the *Gastown Historic District and National Historic Site of Canada*, particularly the conservation strategy for the three designated heritage properties by way of façade-only retention.

Key relevant policies on built form strategies under Downtown Eastside Plan

Gastown Historic Area (HA-2) District

- the maximum density is determined through site-specific context, heritage considerations, and urban design performance.
- the permitted height for a heritage building is its existing height, with a maximum height of up to 22.9 meters (or 75 feet).
- rezoning applications will not be considered for market residential development or for increasing the heights and densities from what current zoning permits.

Rezoning Proposal

The proposal for the West Cordova site is a 20-storey mixed-use building with 219 rental units, including 20% of the residential floor area for below-market rental units, a 179-room hotel, and ground floor retail space. A height of 66.4 m (218 ft.) and an FSR of 7.03 are proposed. More information is contained with the [Rezoning Application Booklet](#), along with other application documents, that available in the [shapeyourcity](#) webpage.

Heritage Conservation Plans: Façade-only Retention

The West Cordova site includes three landmark historic buildings that are legally protected by municipal designation: the Dunn and Miller Block (8-28 W Cordova St); the Callister Block (30-34 W Cordova St); and the McIntosh Block (36 W Cordova St). They form part of an important historic commercial streetscape, notable as early buildings to be constructed of load-bearing masonry walls after the great fire of 1886. Their historic value is also associated with providing single-room accommodation for resource industry workers and travelers, illustrative of the early development of this historic area.

The Heritage Conservation Plans were prepared by Luxton and Associates for the three protected heritage buildings, with the primary conservation treatment as façade-only retention. Substantial demolition of the exterior and structure of the heritage buildings is proposed to accommodate the construction of a contemporary, multi-storey addition behind the three retained historic façades. Based on their preliminary assessments, none of the changes over time, particularly the later concrete structures, have become character-defining elements that would merit conservation.

Issues:

- i. The proposal, as presented, includes substantial structural demolition, severe alteration, replacement of original building structure, removal of character-defining elements or loss of heritage value, and façade-only retention of three protected heritage properties.
- ii. The detrimental impacts of the proposed height and overall scale of development to the federally designated Gastown Historic District National Site (exceeding maximum two-storey addition up to a height of seventy-five feet, with substantial setback from the historic façades).
- iii. There are no rezoning enabling policy within the Gastown Historic Area (HA-2) District under which the proposal for the West Cordova site can be considered. Although the application is considered policy non-compliant, the proposal was formally submitted for a comprehensive rezoning review process.

Staff: Chee Chan, Rezoning Planner, COV

Hiroko Kobayashi, Development Planner, COV
Elijah Sabadlan, Heritage Planner, COV

Applicant: Jacqui Cohen, Army Navy Properties
Jill Wanklin & Nathaniel Funk, Bosa Properties
Chris Knight & Rachel Wakelin, Michael Green Architecture
Gwyn Vose, Arcadis
Levi Stoelting, Glotman Simpson Consulting Engineers
Donald Luxton & Chelsea Dunk, Luxton & Associates

Attachments: Conservation Plans, Rezoning Booklet

2. Downtown Eastside (DTES) Housing Implementation DTES Oppenheimer District (DEOD) and Thornton Park Areas Heritage Evaluation Framework

12:00 – 12:50

Background

The City of Vancouver is proposing policy changes that will increase social and below-market rental housing options in the Downtown Eastside (DTES), including for those living in Single Room Occupancy buildings (SROs). The proposed changes follow [City Council direction](#) to explore policy updates that would make it easier and more affordable for governments, non-profits and the private sector to build low-income housing and replace aging SROs. Proposed changes align with the vision outlined in the [2014 DTES Plan](#) of providing diverse housing options, fostering a mixed-income community and enhancing the quality of life for low-income residents.

Staff are currently seeking input from residents, community organizations, service providers, businesses and other interest holders to help inform recommendations to City Council later this year. For more information on the proposed changes and other engagement opportunities, see <https://www.shapeyourcity.ca/dtes-housing>.

Heritage Evaluation

To support the delivery of more affordable housing in the DEOD and Thornton Park areas, staff are conducting a pre-review of VHR-listed heritage buildings to simplify the process for potential future redevelopment. The goals are to reduce time, uncertainty, and costs for non-profits and developers planning to build social or affordable housing.

For the purpose of this review, Heritage Planning staff have developed a draft framework for reviewing VHR-listed buildings in the Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District (DEOD) and Thornton Park sub-areas. The framework provides an early, high-level assessment of these sites to streamline potential future redevelopment or rehabilitation processes and clarify expectations for owners, developers, investors, and other stakeholders.

Framework Purpose and Methodology

The draft framework serves as a pre-application heritage review to guide future development applications. Each building was assessed using six integrated criteria:

1. Heritage Values and Evolution – Significance, character-defining elements, and integrity
2. Building Condition and Structural Integrity – Physical state, maintenance history, seismic resilience
3. Functional Appropriateness – Suitability for current use and potential adaptation

4. Capital Investment History – Past upgrades and implications for future redevelopment
5. Ownership, Tenure and Management – Tenure arrangements and stewardship capacity
6. Development Potential – Zoning context, form of development, and feasibility constraints

Based on the assessment, buildings will be classified in one of two groups:

- **Group 1: Streamlined Process (No Future Heritage Review)**
Owners of these buildings may redevelop their sites without being subjected to further heritage review or conservation requirements. Owners may still choose to preserve the heritage assets and apply for grants or incentives to support rehabilitation.
- **Group 2: Retention & Renovation (Simplified Process)**
These buildings will still go through the heritage review process with a focus on keeping and preserving the building. For buildings on this list that currently operate as social housing or as an SRO and are seeking to renovate, they will go through a simplified heritage review to streamline the process.

Buildings with a legal protection like heritage designation or HRA, will go through the heritage review process, requiring compliance with Heritage Policies and Standards & Guidelines.

Staff are seeking input from the Vancouver Heritage Commission on a proposed proactive approach and the heritage evaluation framework's methodology.

Staff: Edna Cho, Senior Housing Policy Planner, COV
Jenni Pace, Heritage Planner, COV
Allison Lasocha, Housing Policy Planner, COV
Zlatan Jankovic, Senior Heritage Planner, COV

Attachments: See embedded links above.

3. Break **12:50 – 12:55**

4. Granville Street Planning **12:55 – 1:45**

First launched in 2023, the Granville Street Planning Program will present a final plan to Council for approval in early June. The *Granville Street Plan* will deliver a new vision for Granville Street and the Granville Entertainment District (GED) to help re-establish Granville as an exciting, welcoming, safe and inclusive downtown destination.

The Plan focuses on supporting economic stimulus and cultural revitalization for the area, including new opportunities for entertainment and live performance, dining and tourism, retail and office space, and strategic housing opportunities, all while honoring the area's unique historic character. It also lays out a framework for a high-quality, destination public space with a pedestrian zone. The Plan includes a comprehensive update to land use and zoning, development and design guidelines, and heritage policies. The Plan also identifies a phased plan for public realm and transportation improvements, and outlines actions to support the City's arts and culture priorities.

Here is a link to the [proposed directions on the future of downtown Granville Street](#).

Staff:

- Thomas Daley, Planner, Downtown – Community Planning, COV
- Jacopo Miro, Planner, Downtown – Community Planning, COV
- Zlatan Jankovic, Senior Heritage Planner, COV

Attachments: [Granville Street Cultural Heritage Study](#)

5. Liaison Updates

1:45 – 1:55

6. New Business

1:55 – 2:00

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