

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 10/4/2021 8:22:35 AM
Subject: Memo: Policy Enquiry Process - official launch - RTS 14492
Attachments: Policy Enquiry - Memo to Mayor and Council - 2021-10-01.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find enclosed a memo which provides an update on the official launch of the Policy Enquiry Process - RTS 14492. As Council will recall, this is a new process stream for enquiries for development concepts that do not comply with Council-approved policy ("policy non-compliant enquiries").

- On July 8, 2021, Council received a report with a recommended approach and criteria for sorting, ranking and processing such enquiries. Council approved the report recommendations, with modifications. The report sought to establish a process, based on guiding principles and review criteria, for staff to use in considering and processing policy non-compliant enquiries (through the Policy Enquiry Process).
- Over the last few months, staff have been working diligently to finalize the implementation processes to enable this new initiative. Procedures have now been finalized, and staff have developed the appropriate application forms, fees and review streams to undertake the review of policy non-compliant enquiries.
- The Policy Enquiry Process will formally launch today, October 1, 2021.
- Staff will be reaching out to enquirers and applicants who previously expressed an interest in submitting their proposals through the Policy Enquiry Process. Staff will also issue a public notification through our Civic Engagement and Communications staff teams, as well as to the Urban Development Institute (UDI). Staff will be launching our formal website and intake process today.
- Please refer to the new webpage for more information (<http://vancouver.ca/policyenquiry>). Staff have also created a dedicated email to intake and process enquiries at policyenquiry@vancouver.ca
- Staff have been directed to provide Council with a list of enquiries received on a quarterly basis (complete applications, including fee paid). Since this process is launching today, our Q3 report out of the list of enquiries will be issued at the end of October, and will include enquiries received within the first month of the process officially being launched.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [Theresa O'Donnell](#)

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

October 1, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Maria Pontikis, Director, Civic Engagement and Communications
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Andrea Law, General Manager – Development, Building and Licensing
Susan Haid, Deputy Director, Long-Range and Strategic Planning, PDS
Marco D'Agostini, Regulatory Framework Project Manager, PDS
Templar Tsang-Trinaistich, Issues Manager, PDS

FROM: Theresa O'Donnell
General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Policy Enquiry Process – Official Launch

RTS #: RTS: 14492

Introduction

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the official launch of the Policy Enquiry Process – a new process stream for enquiries for development concepts that do not comply with Council-approved policy ("policy non-compliant enquiries"). The work is being led by the Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (PDS) department in partnership with other City departments.

Background

Staff have received a number of enquiries in 2020 and 2021 which do not comply with established Council policies and by-laws that relate to rezonings ("Policy Non-Compliant Enquiries"). Further to direction previously provided in two Council Motions in February and March 2021, staff prepared a report which was considered by Council on July 8, 2021 with

regards to a recommended approach and criteria for sorting, ranking and processing such enquiries. Council approved the report recommendations, with modifications. The report sought to establish a process, based on guiding principles and review criteria, for staff to use in considering and processing policy non-compliant enquiries (through the "Policy Enquiry Process"). This process will seek to advance Council priorities and objectives while informing and supporting the future vision of the city being developed through the Vancouver Plan process. The report also provided clarity on Council's role in the governance and decision-making process by setting out guiding principles and criteria for Council's endorsement, which will inform staff's evaluation of these proposals. While staff will utilize these guiding principles and criteria to offer advice to applicants, it is ultimately Council's discretion to consider the merits of these proposals through a future rezoning application and Public Hearing. A copy of the Guiding Principles and Criteria are found in the Appendix.

Work Underway/Completed

A major milestone for this project was Council's approval of a new Policy Enquiry Process (RTS 14492) on July 8, 2021. The Policy Enquiry Process responds to Council direction earlier this year through two motions, and addresses a recommendation from external stakeholder groups, as part of the Development Process Redesign (DPR) External Group (DPREG).

Over the last few months, staff have been working diligently to finalize the implementation processes to enable this new initiative. Procedures have now been finalized, and staff have developed the appropriate application forms, fees and review streams to undertake the review of policy non-compliant enquiries.

The Policy Enquiry Process will formally launch today, October 1, 2021.

Upcoming Work

Staff will be reaching out to enquirers and applicants who previously expressed an interest in submitting their proposals through the Policy Enquiry Process. Staff will also issue a public notification through our Civic Engagement and Communications staff teams, as well as to the Urban Development Institute (UDI).

Staff will be launching our formal website and intake process today. Please refer to the new [webpage](#) for more information. Staff have also created a dedicated email to intake and process enquiries at policyenquiry@vancouver.ca



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Appendix – Policy Enquiry Process, Guiding Principles & Criteria
<http://vancouver.ca/policyenquiry>

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA FOR THE POLICY ENQUIRY PROCESS

Guiding Principles

- Respect the intent of Council-adopted policy while recognizing some policies may be outdated, others may conflict with other higher priority policies, and some policies may contain inherent limitations;
- Recognize that significant departures from Council-adopted policy will require public consultation to maintain public trust;
- Recommend outcomes based on sound planning principles and professional judgment, rooted in the public interest; comprehensive / area-related policy outcomes, versus site-by-site planning, will be prioritized above single site considerations.

Baseline Criteria

As part of the Policy Enquiry Process, proposals that meet one or more of these Baseline Criteria will be prioritized for consideration against other Policy Non-Compliant Enquires. A high level assessment against the **Baseline Criteria** is to be conducted at an early stage (Policy Early Advice).

1. **Reconciliation and Cultural Redress:** Provides for housing, employment opportunities, health and wellness strategies, and/or funding for projects that furthers Reconciliation work, with First Nations and Indigenous peoples/communities as partners/involved; and/or seeks to deliver outcomes that achieve objectives of cultural redress, equity, and social/cultural infrastructure needs of the First Nations, urban Indigenous people, or other systemically marginalized Ethno-Cultural communities.
2. **Housing:** Delivers 100% secured rental housing units with a component of below-market rental units.
3. **Jobs/Economy:** Provides and/or intensifies job space in alignment with the Employment Lands and Economy Review.
4. **Other City-Serving Amenity:** Includes a significant public amenity pursuant to the City's Community Amenity Contributions Policy for Rezoning.

Review Criteria

A more detailed assessment against the **Review Criteria** is to take place at the next Policy Enquiry stage. Proposals should strive to meet or exceed the goals(s) outlined below, as determined by an assessment of the associated criteria.

1. Housing

Goal: Provide a range of affordable housing choices by shifting towards a focus on rental, social, and supportive housing as well as owner occupied homes for first-time buyers

Criteria:

- If the proposal is located within the boundaries of a community / area plan, does it exceed the requirements of the plan (e.g. deeper affordability or a larger number of affordable units) or achieve the plan objectives in an all-rental development?
- Does the proposal retain existing purpose-built rental units, or if not possible, replaced with affordability retained and tenants supported?
- Does the proposal meet the City's housing affordability goals, focusing on households with incomes below \$80,000? Does it achieve deeper levels of affordability for households with lower incomes and/or other housing barriers and/or underserved tenant populations (e.g. lone-parent families, people with disabilities, etc.)?
- Does the proposal support the shift to the right supply of housing, with strong emphasis on rental housing and community-based housing?
- Does the proposal include strata floor area? (Note: strata developments that are not compliant with existing policy should be considered only in exceptional circumstances due to potential for speculative impacts on land value.)

2. Jobs

Goal: Ensure a resilient local economy that provides a broad range of employment opportunities for all with a particular focus on fostering a strong green, creative and sectors

Criteria:

- Does the proposal assist with addressing the challenges identified through the Employment Lands and Economy Review?
 - Provides major office or hotel space in high demand areas (DT West, Broadway Corridor, Oakridge)
 - Increases small office / retail-commercial space above what is typically delivered in residential or choice of use areas
 - Delivers stacked light industrial space
 - Provides secured space for non-profit operators / arts and culture / social services / social enterprise / childcare
- Does the proposal maintain capacity for jobs in industrial and other employment only areas (e.g. CBD) and does not introduce residential in these areas?

3. Cultural, Social, and Other City-Serving Amenities

Goal: Fulfill a City goal and/or meet City targets that is otherwise difficult to achieve through existing mechanisms or policy, including social or cultural infrastructure, i.e. Culture|Shift

Criteria:

- Does the proposal include a significant public amenity(ies), including social and/or cultural public amenity(ies), based on an identified need in the community and cannot be

delivered through existing mechanisms (e.g. childcare, community facilities, cultural spaces, new park space)?

- Is there an immediacy of the opportunity based on funding / partnership opportunities?
- If the proposal is located within the boundaries of a community / area plan, does the proposal include a significant public amenity, pursuant to policy direction in the plan and/or the area Public Benefit Strategy, that is beyond what would be expected as a CAC in the proposed development under plan policy?
- Does the proposal meet a City goal and/or target, i.e. Culture|Shift goals, priorities and cultural space targets?
- Does the proposal secure significant cultural space and meet Reconciliation and/or Cultural Redress infrastructure needs of the community?

4. Energy and Greenhouse Gases

Goal: Eliminate dependence on fossil fuels, helping residents and local businesses survive and thrive in a post-carbon era

Criteria:

- Is the proposal in an area well-served by sustainable active transportation networks, such as pedestrian, public transit and bike infrastructure (or can be provided through development) to meet City goals for safety and sustainable transportation (including Transportation 2040 & Climate Emergency Action Plan)?
- Is the project light wood frame or mass timber? Will it be built to exceed building code energy requirements by at least 50%? Is there on-site renewable energy provided?

5. Neighbourhoods

Goal: Ensure our neighbourhoods are places where residents and workers have access to open space, shops and community amenities and where urban land use and street networks support everyone's ability to walk, roll, and take transit for their daily needs

Criteria:

- Is the proposal located in an area that has convenient access to shops, community centres or neighbourhood houses, childcare, parks, plazas, or other open space amenities?
- Will the proposal make a significant contribution to the completeness of the neighbourhood, through a combination of increased affordable housing, local-serving retail, and/or public amenities which meet a demonstrated community need?
- Does the proposal retain existing local-serving commercial or non-profit spaces, or if not possible, replace these with affordability retained and tenants supported?
- If the proposal is located within the boundaries of a recently approved community / area plan (2010 onward), are there other specific factors that need to be considered (will vary by plan area policies)?

6. Ecology

Goal: Enhance biodiversity and connect natural habitat areas and waterways

Criteria:

- Does the proposal offer opportunities to enhance a local environmental area, create a park connection, and/or create a biodiversity corridor?
- Is the proposal located within the Still Creek or Musqueam Creek catchment areas?

7. Municipal Infrastructure

Goal: Ensure existing infrastructure capacity is protected by analyzing the impact on water, wastewater, drainage services, transit/ transportation, structures and climate adaptation and enabling opportunities to create more resilience and ability to respond to climate change

Criteria:

- What is the City's understanding of infrastructure capacity to support the proposed development (e.g. potable water, sewer, drainage, roads, transportation, public safety)? What resources (\$, time, people) are needed to evaluate the proposal?
- Does the proposal deliver on the goals of climate adaptation, such as green infrastructure and onsite rainwater management or enabling increases in sustainable modes of transportation?
- Will it trigger additional technical analysis/review and funding needs and/or infrastructure planning discussions (and how much)? Are there off-site improvements, or other regional utilities implications?
- Is the proposal in an area well-served by the transportation network and transit capacity to meet City goals for safe and sustainable active transportation (including Transportation 2040 & CEAP)?