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**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"](#)  
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**Subject:** Broadway Plan - questions re view protection

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Good morning Mayor and Council,

Our Planning team has prepared the following information in response to a number of questions regarding the City's existing policy framework for view protection. Should you have any further questions regarding this matter, please let us know.

Protected public views fall into two categories: **Category 'A' - Council-approved Protected Public Views** and **Category 'B' - Council-adopted development guidelines views**. Whether found in A or B, all views involved public consultation, technical analysis, and Council approval. There are no "formal" vs "informal" protected views. Instead there are those that are applicable to a larger number of development sites for which a more formalized process is needed for consistency and fairness (category 'A'); and those for which the number of related development sites is significantly smaller and a less formalized process is needed (category 'B'). Since the nature of development in the city is changing, views may change from category 'B' to category 'A'.

Applicants with a site falling under a category 'A' view are directed to request a free [View Cone Assessment](#) from the City. This process is administered by staff using professionally surveyed, data-driven GIS modelling that automatically generates accurate geodetic reference points. Internally, the process takes between 5 and 10 minutes, and we typically respond to applicants between 0.5 and 3 business days depending on volume. This process has been designed to mitigate human error and subjectivity as much as possible for the sake of clarity and fairness. The vast majority of recent applications that fall under these views (over 95% of cases) comply with the view cones.

Views falling into category 'B' are unusual. The most prominent of these are the City Hall views in the *Central Broadway C-3A Design Guidelines*, adopted by City Council in 1977 (last amended 2022). As development in C-3A has historically been shaped by other development factors (max density in zoning and market demands), administration of these views was done on a site-by-site basis from one of a series of origin points along the False Creek seawall. With the nature of development along Central Broadway fundamentally changing with the *Broadway Plan*, staff are proposing that the two City Hall views with little to no impact to potential development be converted to category 'A' views, and the remaining seven be eliminated altogether to open up development capacity.

Aside from the C-3A views, staff have identified only two other category 'B' views. These are as follows:

1. The view of Mt. Baker from Everett Crowley Park in the [East Fraser Lands Area 1 Guidelines](#) which applies to four private development sites (two completed, one proposed, one forthcoming), and one future school site in the East Fraser Lands (River District); and,
2. A view corridor from E Broadway through the Vancouver Community College toward the North Shore Mountains as secured by way of a rezoning condition of approval in 1980 for [CD-1 \(141\)](#). Note: the City no longer secures views through individual CD-1s.

	<b>Council-approved Protected Public Views</b>	<b>Council-adopted development guidelines views</b>
<b>How many are there?</b>	<b>17</b> <b>Note:</b> Many of these views are divided into sub-views within a broader view corridor.	<b>~11</b> (9 City Hall views in C-3A, 1 Mt Baker View in East Fraser Lands, 1 North Shore view in CD-1 (141)) <b>Note:</b> Of these views, the C-3A views and the Mt Baker View have been recently administered. There may be additional view corridors referenced in dated CD-1s or policy documents, but these have not been administered recently and would not have meaningful impact to future development.
<b>Where can I find them?</b>	In the <i>View Protection Guidelines</i> and <a href="#">here</a>	In the <i>Central Broadway C-3A Design Guidelines</i> , the <i>East Fraser Lands Area 1 Guidelines</i> , and CD-1 (141).
<b>Why A vs B?</b>	These views: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cross a <b>large number of sites and many different zones</b>.</li> <li>2. Are considered <b>irreplaceable public assets</b>.</li> <li>3. Are <b>valued</b> by a large number of <b>residents and visitors</b>.</li> <li>4. Are important parts of <b>Vancouver's unique civic image</b> – they set us apart.</li> </ol>	These views: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Cross a <b>smaller number of sites</b>.</li> <li>6. Usually relate to a <b>single zone or area</b>.</li> <li>7. Are important public assets but <b>potentially less universally valued</b>.</li> <li>8. May be an <b>important part of a specific neighbourhood's image</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>How are views added to A or B?</b>	Following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Multi-year stakeholder engagement and public consultation</b> as part of either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Council-directed review of all Protected Public Views (e.g. – Historic Area Height Review (2011), Vancouver Views (2011), etc) or</li> <li>2. A major area planning process (e.g. – <i>Broadway Plan</i> (2022), <i>West End Plan</i> (2013), etc);</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Comprehensive <b>technical analysis and modelling</b>; and,</li> <li>3. <b>Approval of the addition by City Council</b>.</li> </ol>	Following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>Public consultation</b> as part of an <b>area-specific design guideline or rezoning</b> application where a prominent view has been identified as being important;</li> <li>5. <b>Higher-level technical analysis</b> and modelling; and,</li> <li>6. Approval of the guideline or rezoning application by <b>City Council</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>How are views amended or removed?</b>	Following the <b>same procedures as above</b> .	Following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Council-approval of ending</b>, superseding, or cancelling of the <b>relevant guidelines or by-law</b>; or</li> <li>2. <b>Council-approval of removing the view(s)</b> from the guidelines and adding them <b>to the Protective Public Views list</b>.</li> </ol>
<b>How do we know where they begin and where they end?</b>	These views have <b>professionally surveyed and GIS modelled</b> : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Origin points</b>: the exact spot(s) where people can stand and enjoy the protected view;</li> <li>1. <b>Reference points</b>: prominent spots between the origin point and the view subject used to set the extents of the protected view (typically major landmark buildings downtown); and,</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. The <b>C-3A City Hall views currently use words and images</b> rather than geodetic data to identify origin points.</li> <li>4. The <b>Mt Baker View</b> in the <i>East Fraser Lands Area 1 Guidelines</i> includes a surveyed view point.</li> <li>5. The <b>CD-1 (141)</b> view corridor includes neither images nor data.</li> </ol>

	2. <b>View subjects:</b> the focus of the view or a geodetic elevation above which the view is expected to be clear of obstructions.	
<b>How are they administered?</b>	6. Applicable developments require a <b>View Cone Assessment from the City.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. These are provided <b>free of charge.</b></li> <li>2. Response time is between <b>0.5 to 3 days.</b></li> <li>3. Provides applicants with <b>CAD drawings, data points, and 3D reference images</b> to integrate into their development applications.</li> </ol>	<b>Individual applicants and City staff teams to undertake modelling</b> and demonstrate compliance with these views. In the case of CD-1 (141), it is unlikely that this view would be administered without further consultant with Vancouver Community College, City management, and Council.
<b>Pros? Cons?</b>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Objective and non-negotiable</li> <li>8. Easily administered by View Cone Assessment process</li> <li>9. Clear, consistent, transparent, and fair</li> <li>10. Minimal or no impact to approvals timelines</li> </ol> <p><b>Cons</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Establishing new views or amending views is a significant undertaking</li> <li>12. Fairness requires inflexible administration</li> <li>13. Variances are limited to select instances (<i>Higher Buildings Policy</i>)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Pros</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Flexible and can be more negotiable</li> <li>15. Easier to add new views or remove outdated views</li> <li>16. Secure less prominent but still important views</li> <li>17. Are often already secured by other form of development factors (max height, density, etc)</li> </ol> <p><b>Cons</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18. Less objective and subject to human error / differing interpretations.</li> <li>19. More difficult to administer consistently and fairly (no View Cone Assessment process)</li> <li>20. Can result in prolonged timelines and complex reviews</li> </ol>
<b>How many applicants comply vs not?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. &gt;95% compliance by recent applications</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. East Fraser Lands developments all comply or are expected to comply with the Mt Baker view.</li> <li>3. Pre-Broadway Plan C-3A developments all complied with the City Hall views either by virtue of other factors governing form of development, or by working with City staff to achieve compliance.</li> <li>4. The CD-1(141) view was complied with at the time of development of the site but has not been recently administered.</li> </ol>

**Some additional information about protected views here and elsewhere**

1. In Canada, only Vancouver and Montreal have protected views to mountains. Montreal has **87** protected views to Mount Royal and **23** protected views from Mount Royal.
2. In Vancouver, the only protected views of a landmark building are the views to City Hall. These are also the only protected views that will be more prominent at night than during the day.
3. Halifax, Toronto, and Ottawa have protected views of landmark buildings and/or natural features.

4. London, UK has 27 protected views, most of which are to St Paul's Cathedral and the Palace of Westminster.
5. Edinburgh has 170 protected "key" views.

Best,  
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̍əm (Musqueam), Snw̓x̓w̓čú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.