

City of Vancouver

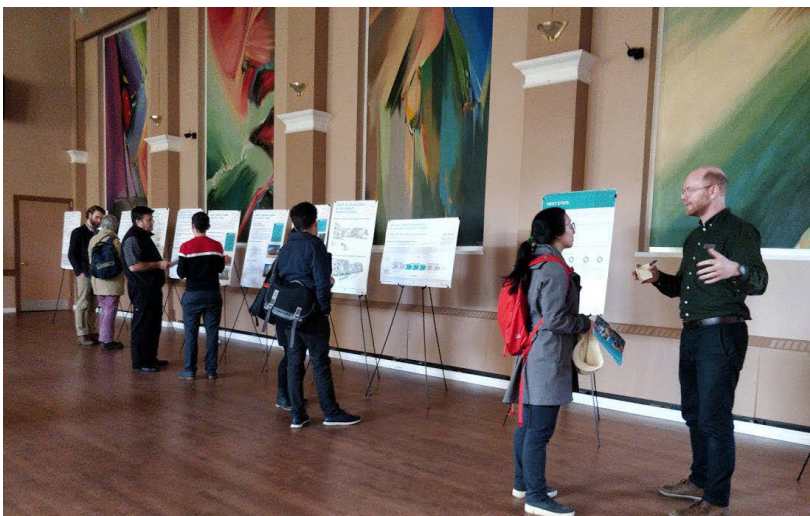
Secured Rental Policy Implementation

Engagement Overview - April 2020 Update

Emerging Themes and What We've Heard

As part of next steps for the implementation of the Secured Rental Policy, City staff are continuing to review public and stakeholder feedback received to date. This document provides an initial overview of the input gathered through six public information sessions and online and written comment forms received between March 3 and April 3, 2020.

Once staff have completed full analyses of the input received to date, and future input that is received as part of additional engagement on the proposed actions that relate to low-density transition areas, more comprehensive summaries of public and stakeholder engagement will be made available. Please continue to visit vancouver.ca/rentalhousing for updates.



Fraser Street Information Session. March 12, 2020



Kitsilano Information Session. March 11, 2020

C-2 Commercial Areas: Emerging Themes

Fairly limited feedback on the proposed changes to C-2 commercial areas was received, both at public information sessions and through online comment forms. Of the feedback received, some residents were supportive of the proposed changes for rental housing in C-2 commercial areas, and believed that this will create more rental housing options. We also heard some concerns around the compatibility and scale of the proposed building forms, and potential for displacement of local businesses and renters due to redevelopment.

Desire for more rental housing options

- Many respondents supported 6 storey rental projects, which are currently considered through rezoning. People generally agreed that eliminating the rezoning process will speed up rental projects and increase housing options for renters.
- Some respondents mentioned that new rental housing in commercial areas will help accommodate the growing population and economy, allowing more people to live and work in Vancouver.
- Several respondents felt that commercial streets with frequent transit could accommodate greater building height and density than the 6 storey buildings proposed.

Addressing the climate emergency

- Some respondents mentioned that creating more rental housing options on local shopping streets is a positive step to building more walkable communities and are supportive of the green building requirements being proposed.

Concerns over loss of neighbourhood character, pressure on local businesses, and scale of development

- Some respondents expressed concern that the proposals will result in uniform streetscapes, shadowing on the public realm, and potential business displacement due to redevelopment.
- Park and recreation space, school capacity, traffic congestion, and parking were also points of concern.

Low-Density Transition Areas: Emerging Themes

Overall, the proposed actions for low-density transition areas (zoned RS or RT) received more comments and questions than proposed actions for commercial (C-2) areas. Comments were split, with some expressing concern about the impact of changes in low-density areas, particularly in locations off-arterials, and others expressing interest and support for more rental housing, including in areas away from arterial roads.

Staff noted some common misunderstandings related to the policy, which showed a need for staff to provide additional information and clarification for participants. For example, many meeting participants assumed that the policy is new, rather than an incremental update to existing rezoning policy. Many participants also assumed that the proposed changes would mean all areas identified as eligible on the map would be rezoned, which is not the effect of the proposed changes as they would only be applied through future site-specific rezoning applications.

Desire for more rental housing options

- Some respondents expressed a desire for more rental housing options in neighbourhoods away from busy arterial roads, noting noise, air quality, general quality of life and equity as key reasons.
- Other respondents noted the need to implement this policy, and other similar policies, more quickly or across a greater extent of the low-density areas of the city.

Housing affordability, tenant and homeowner displacement, property tax

- Some respondents expressed opposition to purpose-built rental buildings in low-density areas, especially in locations away from arterial roads.
- Concerns over the scale, design and potential location of new rental buildings were noted, and often related to aesthetics, loss of neighbourhood identity, sunlight access and shadowing impacts.
- Some expressed a desire for rental buildings to conform to the scale of the existing buildings and suggested prioritizing the retention of existing neighbourhood character and character homes by only allowing for lower-scale buildings like townhomes and multiplexes.
- Many comments specifically referenced Kitsilano or Point Grey as particular neighbourhoods of concern regarding these impacts.

Pressure on public amenities and services, parking

- Some respondents were concerned about potential displacement of renters living in existing secondary rental units, including converted houses and basement suites.
- Some were concerned about the potential for these changes to increase property taxes, while others were concerned that property values would decrease.

Engagement process

- Some participants thought that additional notification of the proposed actions should have been provided, or noted a need for additional time to review the proposal, ask questions and comment as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.

Addressing the climate emergency

- Some respondents felt that the environmental impact of demolition and redevelopment would be worse than retaining existing buildings.

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