

What is a Special Development Permit?

A Special Development Permit is required for all developments within the area outlined on the map below.

Under the *New Westminster Redevelopment Act*, the City was given special authority to regulate urban redevelopment in these specified areas.

All owners of land in these areas are obligated to obtain a Special Development Permit before any development proceeds.

The *New Westminster Redevelopment Act* authorizes the Director of Development Services to issue Special Development Permits. The legislation also makes provision for all development proposals to be submitted to the New Westminster Design Panel.

Other City Departments and Committees will be involved in processing the Special Development Permit application, including the Development Services, Engineering and Fire Departments.

Special Development Permits

Under the *Official Community Plan*, objectives and guidelines were established for Development Permit areas and the Special Development Permit area to direct and control, among other things, the form and character of the built environment, as it relates to architectural design and landscaping.

Special Development Permits are, therefore, required for facade improvements and minor changes to the building envelope, as well as for new buildings or major additions.

If the proposed project needs minor variances to the *Zoning Bylaw* regulations, a Development Variance Permit may be necessary. Development Permits and Development Variance Permits would be processed concurrently. For more information please refer to the *Development Variance Permits: A General Guide* handout.

Pre-Application

The pre-application stage is an opportunity to discuss the project concept with the Development Services Department, Planning Division. It is advisable to bring a site plan and photos of the site and surrounding properties to this first meeting.

Staff will discuss with the applicant how the proposal addresses, or needs to address, community goals and objectives. The proposal will receive an initial assessment for its conformance to the New Westminster Official Community Plan, and other policies and regulations that may apply to the property.

If the site has particular challenges, such as parking, traffic, tree retention or fire access, these should be given consideration early in the process to avoid later costly surprises.



Special Development
Permit Area

Submit the Formal Application

Once the pre-application is finalized and the applicant has received feedback from City staff, the formal application can be submitted. The following information is required to make a formal application:

- The Special Development Permit Application form, provided by the Planning Division staff, signed by all persons whose names appear on the Title Certificate;
- Special Development Permit application fee;
- Current State of Title Certificate;
- If the applicant is applying on behalf of the registered owner(s) who appears on the State of Title Certificate, a letter of authorization signed by the owner(s) is required;
- Architectural drawings and a landscape plan in the following formats:
 - four (4) 11x17 sets
 - two (2) full sized sets (2' x 3')
 - digital copies in PDF format, formatted for printing to 11x17 paper;
- A covering letter briefly explaining the application;
- A completed Sustainability Report Card; and
- A completed Site Profile, where required.

Application Review

The Development Services Department reviews your proposal and, if necessary, forwards it to other City departments for specific review. Staff will notify you of the projects progress and, if necessary, will ask for additional information. Applicants should check with the City's Financing Growth Section of the website for all pertinent development costs.

Public Consultation

After submitting a formal application, applicants are required to host a community open house and present the proposal to the residents association. City Staff can offer assistance with this requirement.

The New Westminster Design Panel

The Director of Development Services will submit the application to the New Westminster Design Panel for review and recommendations. Submission guidelines for the panel are available on the web site or in the Planning Division office.

The New Westminster Design Panel will make comments and recommendations that may translate into adjustments to the project's design. This comment/revision process may occur several times depending on how well the committee's concerns are addressed, particularly if the site is difficult or the proposal is controversial. The panel's final comments will be forwarded to the Development Services Department.

If approval is given by the Director of Development Services, City staff will register a "Notice of Permit" at the Land Titles Office. The title of the property will then carry a notice stating that a Development Permit applies to the property.

Application Timing

Specific time estimates for processing a Special Development Permit application are difficult to provide as the time required varies depending on the type, size and complexity of the project, the number of applications in progress, committee meeting schedules, approvals from outside agencies and the ability of the applicant to provide information when required. Basic applications, such as minor special development permits, may take only a few months, while more complex applications may take much longer to finalize.

Applicants may save time by first discussing the proposal with Planning Division staff, employing design professionals familiar with the Special Development Permit process (such as architects and landscape architects), and providing, in a timely manner, all the information required by the City throughout the process. The more information an applicant can initially provide in support of the application, the faster it can be processed.

If you are submitting a Special Development Permit Application in addition to a Rezoning Application, the same process applies; however, the Director of Development Services cannot issue the Development Permit until the rezoning has been given final adoption.

Notes:

1. The Special Development Permit states that, if construction does not substantially commence within a specified time after the Special Development Permit issuance date, the Special Development Permit will lapse.
2. The Special Development Permit application process may require the submission of a Landscape Letter of Credit to ensure that construction respects the approved design.
3. A Special Development Permit is not a building permit. Before construction, the applicant must obtain a building permit. Please consult the Building Division for further details at 604.527.4580.

For more information:
Development Services Department,
Planning Division
604.527.4532