

May 29, 2020

*In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City has established an interim development review process to enable development applications to move forward for review and public engagement, while maintaining safe physical distancing measures. This process affects development-related City committees, applicant-led consultation, Public Hearings, Opportunities to be Heard, and City-led consultation.*

Under this interim process, applications will be able to proceed to committee review and public consultation if they address one of Council's strategic priorities and/or will generate relatively low public interest, and do not require an amendment to the Official Community Plan. Strategic priorities include institutional and infrastructure projects, affordable housing, rental housing, non-profit child care, reconciliation, or economic development. Once the interim development review process has been tested and adjusted, a broader range of applications will be able to move forward in July and August.

The interim development review process modifies the standard development review process as outlined below:

- **Land Use and Planning Committee.** Only applications (including Pre-Application Reviews) which require an Official Community Plan amendment or are outside the City's established land use policy framework will be required to present to the LUPC.
- **Advisory Planning Commission.** Only applications which require an Official Community Plan amendment or are quite inconsistent with other City policies are required to present to the APC. In such cases, meetings will be held with staff and the commission attending virtually and/or using physical distancing protocols; the meetings will be live-streamed; and all feedback will be accepted by the public by virtual meeting, or by letter or email prior to the meeting.
- **Community Heritage Commission.** Statement of Significance (SOS) and restoration plans will be presented to the Community Heritage Commission for applications which modify existing heritage buildings or propose heritage protection.
- **New Westminster Design Panel.** Applications will continue to be required to present to the NWDP at meetings. The meetings will be conducted virtually and a video of the meetings will be live-streamed.
- **Resident Associations.** Applicants are to send information to the RA in the form of an email with details about their development application, details on upcoming engagement opportunities, and contact information for providing comments. The RAs could then circulate this information to their membership.
- **Applicant-Led Public Consultation.** Applicants may replace traditional methods of in-person public consultation with digital engagement platforms. The applicant may still be required to include a mailout notification and newspaper notices as well as accommodate telephone discussions or allow for in-person consultation with appropriate physical-distancing measures in place, if requested by staff and in response to unique circumstances. The process must be open, transparent, and allow for accurate reporting out.

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### **Opportunities to be Heard.**

For Development Variance Permits and Temporary Use Permits, an Opportunity to be Heard will not be required. Notice for DVPs and TUPs will continue to be provided as per City practice and legislative requirement. Feedback on DVP and TUP applications can be provided to the City by email or mail. The feedback will then be provided to Council prior to consideration of a motion to issue a DVP or TUP.

### **City-Led Consultation**

For applications which require a Public Hearing, City-led consultation will be conducted as a potential alternative to Public Hearings and a more meaningful form of consultation, prior to an application being advanced to Council for formal consideration.

City-led consultation will include a webpage with relevant information for each project, notice, and multiple ways of providing feedback. Notification methods include development notice signage on the site, mail, and online information. Feedback may be received through the website, mail, phone, or in-person meeting in accordance with physical distancing protocols.

### **Public Hearings**

Following City-led consultation, staff will summarize the outcomes of the City-led consultation in a report to Council and recommend whether or not to waive a Public Hearing, with a view to waiving public hearings in cases where there was sufficient support and/or the applicant had addressed public feedback to the City's satisfaction. When a Public Hearing is not waived, it will be conducted electronically in accordance with Ministerial Order M139.