

16.0 Development Permit Area

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA

Development Permit Areas are identified in this Plan to provide guidance to potential investors and outline the City's expectations regarding future growth and development. By conforming to the guidelines, new development helps to achieve the goals included in this Plan and to implement the Downtown Vision.

The Downtown, identified as the Downtown Development Permit Area on Map 1, is the cultural and historic heart of the city. This Development Permit Area is designated to support its Regional City Centre designation in *Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping our Future*, the regional growth strategy. This Development Permit Area establishes the objectives and guidelines for:

- The form and character of commercial, multi-family, institutional and intensive residential development.
- Protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and biological diversity.
- Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted.
- Objectives to promote energy and water conservation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

In this area, special development permits will be issued as authorized by the *New Westminster Development Act*.

[BYLAW NO. 8151, 2019]

GENERAL EXEMPTIONS

A Development Permit and a Special Development Permit will not be required for:

- Construction of single detached dwellings and non-residential structures accessory to single detached dwellings, and consequential site alterations.
- In relation to an existing building or structure, any of the following maintenance work, provided the work not involve a change in the exterior design or material composition of the building or structure: repainting or recladding of a building, roof repair including replacement of shingles, restoration or replacement of windows, doors, stairs or exterior trim elements, and replacement of awnings.
- Maintenance of landscaping that does not involve a change in design.
- Exterior building or structure painting.
- Construction of accessory buildings or structures with a floor area equal to or less than 10 square metres (108 square feet).
- Construction, building alterations or site alterations associated with approved temporary use permits.
- Internal alterations made to buildings and structures.
- Signs.
- Subdivision of land.

OBJECTIVES

The City of New Westminster will ensure that new development supports a vibrant, pleasant, and people oriented downtown. The guidelines for Downtown are based upon the following objectives for development:

- Reflect the context of New Westminster and unique characteristics such as history, views and topography.
- If building in the Columbia Street Historic District, form, height and character will be evaluated based on adjacencies to heritage assets. If building outside the historic district but next to a heritage asset, factors such as sympathetic design and materials must be considered.
- Support the protection and revitalization of heritage buildings and the neighbourhood's heritage character.
- Provide safe and pleasant streets and public spaces where pedestrians feel comfortable and welcome.
- Create a positive, people oriented connection between new buildings and the street, between public and private spaces.
- Promote excellence in architectural design and creativity in the architectural form, massing and character of new development.
- Protect important public views, and ensure light and air penetration to the street.
- Promote a vibrant and diverse local economy through the encouragement of attractive and functional commercial areas.
- Guide the development of new buildings which conserve energy, materials and water.
- Encourage new habitat and a greened built environment which supports ecological cycles and reconnects people with nature.
- Minimize negative impacts on air quality and the water quality of the Fraser River.
- Maximize opportunities for rooftop features which generate energy, minimize runoff and create multi-purpose green spaces.
- Promote sustainable modes of transport (e.g., walking, cycling, transit).

GUIDELINES

1. BUILDING FORM AND MASSING

The massing and form of buildings should showcase high level design and creativity, respecting the pedestrian scale and heritage assets of the Downtown.

- a. Vary the shape, massing, and exterior finishes of buildings in order to avoid a repetitive appearance when the development is viewed as a whole. Extra attention should be paid to doorways and corners.
- b. Create focal points and prominence in building design at the corners of street intersections. Gateway elements are encouraged at visually prominent intersections.
- c. Design the building with continuity throughout. Design elements or key proportions from the tower may extend through the podium and be reflected at street level.
- d. Provide a consistent and cohesive colour palette utilizing colours appropriate to a New Westminster context. Consider the heritage colour palette in the older buildings of New Westminster.
- e. Quality, natural materials that are historic to New Westminster are encouraged.
- f. Contribute to the unique character of the city through clear architectural references. While it is important not to mimic heritage buildings, the use of traditional materials, proportions and details that help reinforce New Westminster as a historic place are encouraged.
- 16 g. Buildings located adjacent to heritage assets must ensure the form, massing and design of the building is sympathetic to the heritage building.
- h. The spacing of towers and units should be staggered so that private views are directed past neighbouring high-rise developments.
- i. Locate the portion of commercial buildings below 12 metres (40 feet) in height close to the edge of the sidewalk. Special attention should be given to the first 3 or 4 storeys to reinforce the pedestrian scale.
- j. Provide a minimum 4.5 metre (15 foot) setback from the edge of the top of a podium fronting a pedestrian oriented street. This does not apply to lanes or narrow streets intended primarily for access, utilities and servicing.

- k. Reinforce the scale and character of heritage buildings through ensuring the top edge of the heritage façade forms the edge of the podium of the building. The setback from the edge of a street front heritage façade should be at least 4.5 metres (15 feet).
- l. When designing point towers:
 - Integrate the design of the podium with the tower.
 - Shape buildings above the 7th storey as tall and slender towers that respect views, and provide for light and air penetration to the street.
- m. Reinforce the conclusion of the building design through special consideration of the form, massing and detail of the top several floors and roof of the building. Provide organized rooftops that are attractive when seen from above as well as the street. Rooftop mechanical and service equipment should be screened in a way that incorporates it as an integral part of the building’s architectural design.
- n. Provide some variety and unique characteristics of each building where there are multiple buildings in one development to reinforce individual building identity.
- o. Creativity in the design of the building and landscaping is encouraged to promote interest and whimsy in the Downtown.
- p. Interior sidewalls, created as a result of construction/redevelopment phasing, should be designed to complement the overall appearance of development, and should not appear temporary or unfinished.

2. COLUMBIA STREET HERITAGE DISTRICT

These guidelines are based on the conservation and enhancement of heritage buildings along Columbia Street. The intent is to provide appropriately rehabilitated heritage buildings, while providing guidelines for new development that adds to the ambience of the Columbia Street Heritage District.

- a. Original materials should be left in place and new materials should be sympathetic and compatible.
- b. New development will respect the scale and historic street pattern.
- c. The saw-tooth profile of the historic streetscape must be maintained.
- d. New construction will be compatible with adjacent heritage assets and complement the overall Columbia Street Historic District.
- e. New buildings should provide an appropriate transition between differing scales and heights of neighbouring buildings.
- f. New construction will respect and enhance the horizontal alignments on neighbouring heritage buildings.
- g. The first storey will maintain a similar articulation to the heritage buildings on either side and upper storeys should respect or continue the decorative details and articulation of neighbouring heritage buildings.
- h. Storefronts should respect the existing pattern of building widths along the street.

- i. A new building that is wider than 20 metres (66 feet) should maintain the rhythm of the streetfront building pattern, such as using strong vertical design elements at the centre and sides of the new building.
- j. Display windows should reflect the repetitive and vertical pattern of display windows in adjacent heritage buildings.
- k. Upper storey windows should reflect the fenestration pattern of neighbouring heritage buildings and may be of punched design.
- l. Signs should add to the interest of the building and respect the historic character of the area, and not create visual clutter.
- m. Signs and awnings on heritage buildings will follow the HARP design guidelines for size, colour and material.
- n. New awnings should have a traditional profile, with sloped awnings being preferred. Material should be of high quality canvas or glass.
- o. Where structurally possible, awnings should align horizontally with neighbouring canopies.

3. SOLAR ORIENTATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF BUILDINGS

The intent is to maximize energy conservation opportunities through application of passive design principles. These principles lead to buildings designed to require less energy input to cool in hotter months and heat in colder months. Further, the intent is also to limit the energy consumed by buildings by encouraging use of alternative energy sources and the use of high quality durable materials with a long lifespan.

- a. Orient and mass buildings to maximize opportunities for passive solar heating and cooling, solar hot water and photovoltaics, and natural lighting and ventilation. Where possible, situate the long axis of major building elements in the east-west direction.
- b. Site and orient buildings to take advantage of prevailing winds for cross ventilation. Buildings should have units with exterior ventilation (operable windows) on two sides to encourage passive cooling through cross ventilation.
- c. Building massing that promotes units with potential for exterior ventilation on two sides is strongly encouraged.
- d. Incorporate the use of roofing materials and colours with a high “albedo” (e.g., materials that reflect heat energy from the sun) to reduce the absorption of heat into the building and reduce the “heat island effect.”
- e. Use exterior shading devices to manage heat gain from solar exposure. These may be adjustable, such as fixed awnings or retractable canopies, or fixed, such as projecting roofs, deep balconies, light shelves, fixed fins and similar features into building design to shade during the summer but provide solar access in winter.

- f. Limit the amount of glazing, especially on west and southwest exposures, where mid-afternoon summer sun is difficult to shade effectively. Maximize glazing on building facings with limited sunlight exposure. For mid- and low-rise facades, a maximum of 50% glazing is permitted. Above 3 storeys, glazing of less than 60% is encouraged.
- g. Encourage glazing technologies that allow daylight penetration into buildings and minimize heat conduction.
- h. Produce 10% of the building's annual energy demand from on-site renewable sources (solar, geo-exchange [earth energy]). "Solar ready" design is encouraged to extend energy production later.
- i. Select exterior materials with low embodied energy and long lifespan to minimize energy used in building construction.

4. COMMERCIAL STREET FRONT

The orientation and design of commercial buildings should add to the street vitality and safety by promoting active, street level uses and informal surveillance of the area.

- a. Locate uses to reinforce a vibrant, safe pedestrian experience. Encourage retail and service activity on the first floor immediately adjacent to the sidewalk on important commercial streets.
- b. Ensure a direct relationship between commercial activities and the pedestrian. Where commercial activities front the street level there should be:
 - Clear or tinted (not reflective or opaque) windows on the street
 - Prominent doorways
 - Architectural building detail at the pedestrian eye level
 - Visual interest including lighting, awnings, landscaping containers, and/or creative use of colour
 - Varied store fronts (large storefronts without fenestration detailing are strongly discouraged)
- c. Signage should not create visual clutter.
- d. Outdoor seating, cafes, tables or outdoor displays are encouraged to promote street activity, where possible.
- e. Provide a separate, safe, covered entrance for residents where residential and commercial uses are in the same building. The residential entrance should be located on the less prominent street if possible and not interrupt a continuous commercial street front.
- f. Large blank walls that front streets, including retaining walls, are strongly discouraged. If unavoidable, they should be mitigated by:
 - Using different textures, materials and colours on the wall to articulate the surface and make it more visually appealing.
 - Murals or other forms of public art.
 - Installing a trellis or living, green wall.
 - Providing a raised or terraced planter bed with adequate area to plant landscaping that can grow to screen the wall.
 - Incorporating the wall into a patio or sidewalk café area.

5. RESIDENTIAL STREET FRONT

Residential buildings should be oriented and designed to balance a sense of community and neighbourliness while still allowing privacy of individual units.

- a. Emphasize residential scale and street orientation through changes in architecture and articulation of building form.
- b. For medium density developments, reduce the building's bulk and volumetric impact on the street by setting back upper portions of the building.
- c. Provide a comfortable separation between residences and the street to allow for landscaped front yards, porches or patios. A set back of at least 3 metres (10 feet) from the property line should be included.
- d. Ensure a relationship between residential activities and the sidewalk through building and site design. There should be:
 - Expression of individual units reflected in the overall form of the building as well as at street level;
 - A visual and physical connection between residences (townhouse or apartment) and the street with ground level units having individual front doors that are directly accessible and visible from the street;
 - large windows facing the street and useable outdoor space;
 - Oversight of the street from the building; and
 - Design of walking areas, patios, retaining walls, lighting and fences that are detailed, decorative and reflective of the individual precinct.
- e. Where patios are located along the street front, they should be elevated slightly to provide a degree of privacy while still allowing street surveillance.
- f. If the building has a main pedestrian entrance, it should be clearly evident, directly connected to the street and integrated within the design of the building. There should be direct sight-line into the elevator lobby from the street.
- g. If the building has a main pedestrian entrance, provide a gateway transition feature for walkways which are intended for use by residents, thereby delineating the private property. Locate the feature near the sidewalk and integrate it with the design of the development.
- h. Large blank walls fronting streets, including retaining walls, are strongly discouraged. If unavoidable, they should be mitigated by:
 - Using different textures, materials and colours on the wall to articulate the surface and make it more visually appealing.
 - Using murals or other forms of public art.
 - Installing a trellis or living, green wall.
 - Providing a raised or terraced planter bed with adequate area to plant landscaping that can grow to screen the wall.
 - Incorporating the wall into a patio or sidewalk café area.

6. THE PUBLIC RIVERFRONT

The public riverfront will promote active and recreational uses along the Fraser River and encourage high quality open space and development that improves public access and views of the river.

- a. Apply guidelines regarding pedestrian comfort and circulation (Section 8) and public open spaces (Section 9) to important pedestrian and public riverfront places.
- b. Commercial buildings located adjacent to the Esplanade are encouraged to have outdoor seating areas that open onto the walkway and contribute to the activity of the space.
- c. Buildings are to reflect the marine character of the Fraser River.
- d. Suitable space for entertainment and tourism uses that contribute to the vitality and activity along the riverfront are strongly encouraged.

7. PEDESTRIAN COMFORT AND CIRCULATION

These guidelines aim to create a high quality, comfortable and pleasant experience for pedestrians in the Downtown.

- a. Provide for the comfort and interest of pedestrians on the sidewalk and in public spaces through lighting, signage, seating and continuous weather protection such as canopies and awnings.
- b. Provide high quality and pleasant public streetscapes with sidewalk details such as interesting tree grates, paving inlays, stamps, or colour, and are consistent with existing sidewalk patterns.
- c. Provide easy access that is suitable for all ages and abilities from the street to building entrances and for important walkways within the development. Provide smooth, non-skid walking surfaces and gentle grades. There may be changes in the grade of walkways from individual units to the public street.
- d. Provide shielded, down lighting to ensure the safety and comfort of pedestrians on the public sidewalk. Provide for security and ambient lighting but minimize light pollution. Energy efficient lighting such as LED or solar powered lighting should be used where ever possible.
- e. Ensure safe circulation by distinguishing areas for walking and cycling from parking and traffic.
- f. Provide street trees in public right-of-ways along streets to soften the urban environment and reduce the scale of the street to a more human level.
- g. Ensure lanes and narrow streets are pleasantly designed and safe by indicating an edge between the public street and private land. Consider interesting paving details that delineate pedestrian circulation and drainage patterns. Provide opportunities for visual oversight and lighting from buildings onto narrow streets or lanes.

- h. Incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) such as lighting, visibility or natural surveillance, control of trespass, prevention of blind spots or hiding places, clear access, and safe parking garages. Seek professional evaluation for large or complicated proposals.
- i. Within CPTED guidelines, minimize exterior lighting energy demand by minimizing lighting and using high-efficiency luminaires and bulbs such as LEDs.

8. OUTDOOR SPACES

Open spaces should be thoughtfully designed to maximize daylight and provide functional space that is comfortable for a variety of ages and users.

- a. Accessible, outdoor public spaces are encouraged in all developments, including commercial and institutional buildings.
- b. Provide high quality, interesting, and durable outdoor spaces. Coordinate the design of all elements including lighting, paving, outdoor furniture, and garbage receptacles. The design of the gathering area should be integrated with the site and building.
- c. Incorporate public art in all open spaces where ever possible.
- d. Provide for pedestrian permeability with multiple opportunities to access and move through public open space.
- e. Locate outdoor spaces to capture the sun and create an inviting gathering space. Suitable overhangs, canopies and trees for shade and rain protection should be incorporated.
- f. Spaces should be designed to be programmable for inter-generational activities and uses. They could include:
 - a playground suitable for a variety of ages and that is visible from residential units
 - benches and/or tables
 - landscaping
 - a patio to encourage social interaction
- g. Lower flat roofs should be structurally and architecturally designed to accommodate forms of rooftop landscaping and outdoor activity.

9. PUBLIC VIEW CORRIDORS

Care should be taken to avoid disrupting views to Downtown's primary element, the Fraser River, as well as to Mt. Baker.

- a. When a development occurs along a significant street (Fourth Street, Sixth Street and Eighth Street), the applicant will provide an view impact analysis evaluating how the proposal affects views to the Fraser River and Mt. Baker.

10. LIGHT AND AIR PENETRATION

Ensuring adequate light and air circulation of new development and minimizing its negative impact on existing buildings is important in the urban context of Downtown.

- a. Provide for light and air penetration through a minimum separation between towers of 27 metres (89 feet). For the purposes of the guidelines a tower is deemed as a building 7 storeys or higher.
- b. Shape towers so that views are maximized around and between them.
- c. Provide a shade/shadowing study and view analysis for all buildings.

11. NOISE

Due to the proximity to rail, SkyTrain and the truck route in the Downtown, new development needs to consider noise abatement techniques to enhance the livability of residential units.

- a. An array of design and construction techniques should be used to buffer residential units from noise, including:
 - orienting outdoor areas and bedrooms away from noise sources
 - using alternate ventilation (to provide an alternative to opening windows)
 - using concrete construction
 - using glass block walls or acoustically rated glazing
 - using sound absorptive materials and sound barriers on balconies
- b. Provide a report prepared by qualified persons trained in acoustics and current techniques of noise measurements demonstrating that the noise levels in residential units meet CMHC levels.

12. PLANTS AND LANDSCAPE

Abundant landscaping should be used to maximize the ‘green-ness’ of Downtown and soften the urban landscape.

- a. Make substantial use of landscaping and contribute to a green Downtown. Use landscaping in all areas including walkways, patios, public spaces or other hard surfaces, and include setbacks from the property line.
- b. Provide landscaped (“green”) roofs on all concrete podiums to manage runoff, add visual appeal, improve energy efficiency and reduce heat island effects, and provide amenity value.
- c. Landscaping integrated into the building roofline, patio and podium edges, and along the building facade at grade is encouraged to soften building edges, provide a degree of privacy, and reduce summertime solar gain. Landscaping should provide only a partial screen to enable surveillance of the street, transparency of commercial frontages, and to provide for safety.

- d. Retain good quality existing landscaping where possible. Ensure any retained mature trees will be safe when construction is complete.
- e. Provide good quality plants and support long-term maintenance through using professional standards. Specify these or higher standards on the landscape plan:
- Plant material in the specified container size must meet the BC Landscape Standard of the BC Nursery Trades Association
 - All trees shall be staked in accordance with the BC Landscape Standards.
- f. Mulch planting beds to a minimum depth of 50 mm to reduce evaporative losses and increase absorption of soils.
- g. Choose plants that are species native to the area and:
- Provide complex multi-storey habitat through a combination of groundcover, shrubs and trees, and the use of species that provide nesting habitat, protection from predators, and food for songbirds;
 - Are hardy, drought-tolerant, perennial species, reducing the need for maintenance, pesticide use, and irrigation.
- h. Design and place landscaping to facilitate year round moderation of the internal building climate. Appropriate deciduous trees on the south and west side of buildings will shade in summer and allow sunlight through in winter.
- i. Communal gardens and private balcony or roof gardens are encouraged, to provide residents with space to garden and grow food. Edible decorative landscaping is also encouraged.
- j. Consider rainwater collection and storage in cisterns to use for landscape irrigation.
- k. Design landscapes, including planters and decorative landscape areas, to incorporate low-impact storm water features that retain and/or infiltrate run-off in order to treat it to storm water quality objectives set out in the applicable storm water management plan, or as required to meet Water Quality Objectives for the receiving water body.

13. PARKING

The location and design of parking structures should avoid negative impacts on the pedestrian environment and to adjacent properties.

- a. Development should support vibrant, safe streets by ensuring people oriented uses in buildings front prominent sidewalks where substantial pedestrian use is expected. Parking structures and parking lots will be designed to be unobtrusive to the pedestrian environment.
- b. Above ground open air parking lots will be strongly discouraged.
- c. Parking structures are strongly encouraged to be located below ground. Where below ground structures are not possible, above ground parking structures should be located behind active, street level uses.
- d. Above ground parking structures that dominate the pedestrian environment are not permitted. Attention and detail should be given to the design of the structure, including:
 - Decorative grating applied to any face of the structure fronting a street
 - Creative use of colour
 - Colourful landscaping
- e. Soften the views and reduce the visual scale of parking from the sidewalk and street with landscaping. Ensure that landscaping supports public safety through allowing visual surveillance of parking areas.
- f. Provide access to parking and utilities from a lane or narrow street and ensure a continuous pedestrian interface and neighbourhood quality on the primary street. Where lane access is available, access to parking areas or structures from a street will generally not be permitted.
- g. Integrate the access to parking with the design of the building. Minimize the number of sidewalk crossings and impacts upon pedestrians.
- h. Provide secure and separate parking for residential and commercial activities where both share a parking structure.
- i. Ensure underground parking for commercial uses is readily accessible, well signed and easily used by customers.
- j. Support transportation options such as carpools, cooperative car use, parking for people with disabilities through providing appropriately sized and conveniently located parking spaces.

- k. Plant trees and shrubs throughout any surface parking areas to intercept precipitation, reduce surface heating, enhance appearance and protect pedestrians from the elements. The use of native plants is preferred.
- l. Design parking and other paved areas to minimize negative impacts on surface runoff volume and quality. Use an appropriate selection of strategies such as the following:
 - Install oil/water separators for high traffic areas.
 - Direct runoff to landscaped filter strips, bio-swales, and bio-filtration strips.

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- m. Infrastructure for electric vehicles for residential parking areas are required to meet electric vehicle charging provisions in the zoning bylaw. Infrastructure for electric vehicles for visitor parking should also be provided.
- n. Infrastructure for electrical vehicles for commercial and institutional uses with more than 10 parking spaces, should provide an energized outlet Level 2 or higher for a minimum of one parking space for every 10 spaces, plus one space for additional parking spaces that number less than 10. In some cases, in addition to an energized Level 2 outlet, electric vehicle supply equipment may be required.

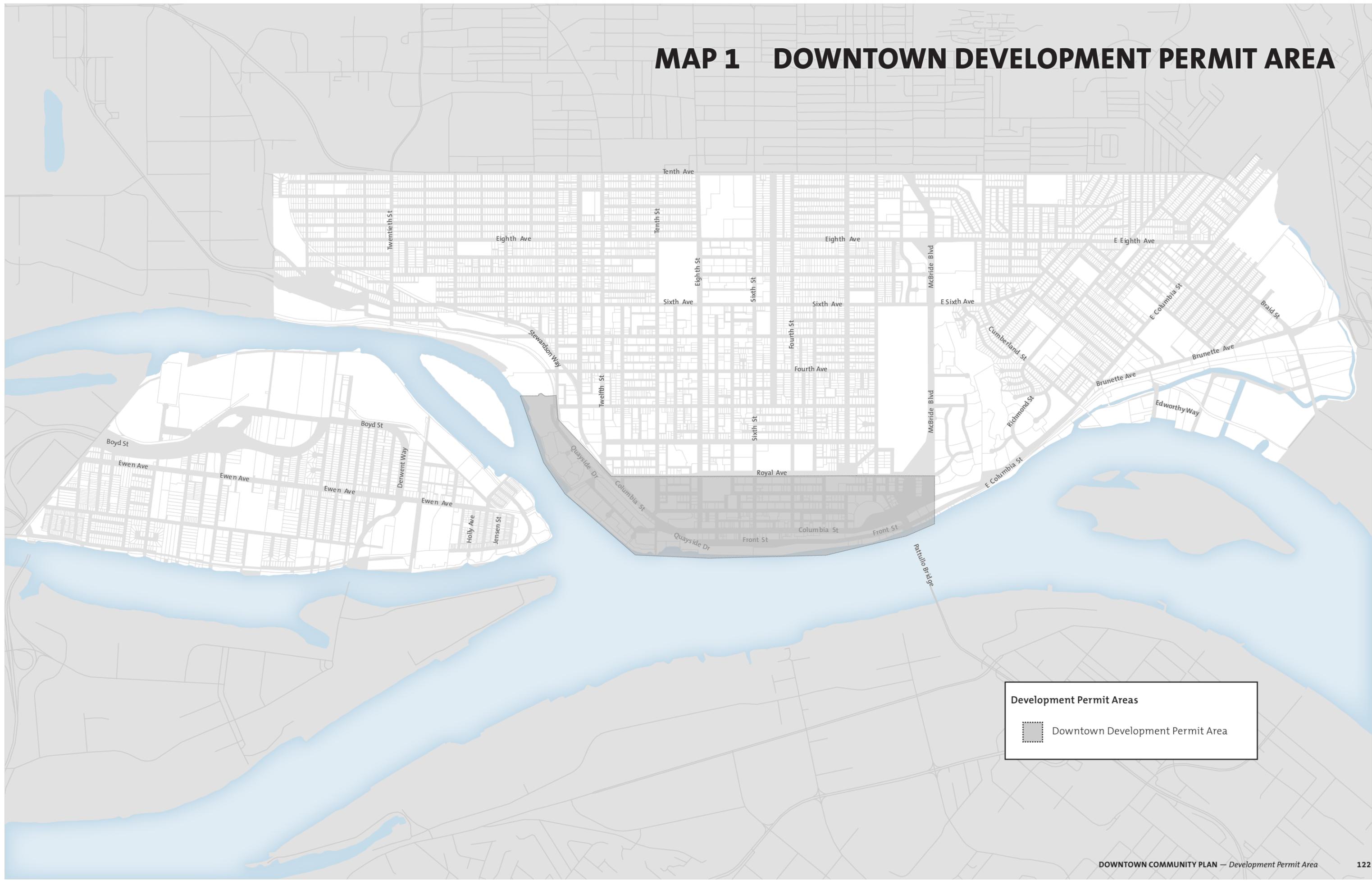
14. RECYCLING, GARBAGE AND COMPOST RECEPTACLES

The location of recycling, garbage and compost receptacles should be given thoughtful design to encourage the reduction of solid waste and promote sustainability within individual developments.

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- a. Encourage the installation or provision of space for a 3-stream (compost, recyclable, waste) collection facility in all residential units and food service establishments, and/or in common areas in buildings to ensure that centralized organics collection facilities are in-place once organics collection is mandatory in the coming years.
- b. Ensure the 3-stream collection facility is located in a secure, well designed, screened area that is safely accessible by both residents and service trucks.
- c. Encourage the incorporation of 3-stream separation into kitchen areas to make recycling convenient.
- d. Reduce the impact of odor from compost bins through careful location and an enclosed design complementary to the design of the building.
- e. Access to waste should be located off of lanes or secondary streets.

MAP 1 DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA



Development Permit Areas

-  Downtown Development Permit Area