Interim Development Review Framework

Planning and Development Department

Policy Title:	Interim Development Review Framework
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1. Framework Purpose

Through 2025 and 2026, the City updated its Official Community Plan (OCP), other bylaws and policies to align with new Provincial legislation. To meet legislated deadlines, a “light touch” approach was taken on many updates, and further policy refinement is needed.

This Interim Development Review Framework clarifies implementation of the City’s updated policy and regulatory framework, identifies further work underway, and provides interim policy. This framework is intended to provide supplemental detail to ensure transparency for the community, applicants and developers while final policy work is completed.

This document will be updated as the City continues to implement new provincial legislation.

2. Framework Application

The following policies, as updated from time to time, apply to all development applications in New Westminster.

3. Public Hearings and Notification

Legislation allows municipalities to not hold Public Hearings for zoning amendments which are consistent with an OCP, and prohibits Public Hearings for OCP-consistent zoning amendments that propose a majority residential use. Generally, Public Hearings and notification in New Westminster will continue as follows:

- Public Hearings will not be held for zoning amendment bylaws that are consistent with the OCP and where residential use is not the majority use, unless specifically directed by Council.
- Notification of Public Hearing Not Held will be distributed prior to Council consideration of bylaw readings.
- Public consultation on applications for zoning amendments will continue to apply as per City processes in advance of the Public Hearing Not Held, except in exceptional circumstances.

- Public Hearings will be held for other bylaws where required by the Local Government Act (e.g. OCP Amendments, Heritage Revitalization Agreements and Designation Bylaws).

The City's development application review process continues to allow opportunities for public feedback. These include the opportunity for feedback to be provided by mail or email following a Public Hearing Not Held/Restricted notice and may, depending on the scale and complexity of the application, include other opportunities such as applicant-led open houses. Delegations to Council are not permitted on applications that are subject to Public Hearing or Public Hearing Not Held/Restricted as per the *Local Government Act*. All public notifications will continue to be issued consistent with legislated requirements.

4. Low, Mid and High Rise Buildings

The City is developing detailed lot consolidation requirements to promote logical development patterns, ensure functional access, protect privacy and solar access and provide appropriate transitions between uses. A key objective of these requirements will be to ensure development proceeds on feasible sized lots and to prevent the creation of 'locked-in' lots, limiting development potential on adjacent lots. Until these standards are finalized, projects that do not meet the following minimum conditions will be considered premature:

Building Form	Minimum Lot Size	Minimum Frontage
Six Storeys or Less	1532.90 square metres (16,500 square feet)	27.43 metres (90 feet)
More than Six Storeys	2229.67 square metres (24,000 square feet)	39.62 metres (130 feet)

Applications meeting these conditions will be required to demonstrate that surrounding properties could be consolidated to also meet the above captioned conditions based on the maximum allowable building form within the OCP land use designation and that these sites would have supportable site access.

Single-egress Stair Designs

In 2024, the BC Building Code was updated to allow for single-egress stair designs in residential buildings of up to six stories. The City will not consider applications for single-egress apartment buildings at this time, pending future full review of this development form by the City of New Westminster's Fire & Rescue Services Department.

5. Transit Oriented Development Areas (TOD Areas)

The City has updated the OCP to be consistent with Transit Oriented Area legislation and the Transit Oriented Development Areas as identified in Bylaw No. 8460, 2024.

The attached maps (Appendix A) illustrate properties which are located within Tier 1 (green), Tier 2 (pink) and Tier 3 (blue) for each Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Area, as of December 2023 when the Provincial legislation came into effect. A number of properties are exempt from the requirements of the legislation (grey) as they are not zoned for residential use, have formal heritage protection, are Federal Crown lands, or are located within hazard and riparian areas, or other environmentally sensitive areas.

a. Policy and Design Guideline Alignment for Development within TOD Areas

All applications within TOD Areas will be evaluated based on all applicable City policies, regulations and guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to key polices such as: the OCP, Inclusionary Housing Policy, rental replacement policies, and tenant assistance requirements. A list of relevant policies found on the *Considerations for New Development* webpage.

All design expectations and design guidelines (including Development Permit Area design guidelines) remain in place and are applicable to development within TOD Areas. Guidelines include, but are not limited to, design elements such as: tower separation, floorplates sizes, architectural expression, massing, functional consolidation, and urban design.

Design guidance is currently being prepared for new mid-rise forms (between 7 and 12 storeys). Until this specific guidance is in place, development will be reviewed against appropriate comparable City design guidelines.

b. Ground Oriented Housing within TOD Areas

The City is seeking to balance opportunities for both lot consolidation and redevelopment as low-rise/mid-rise within the TOD Areas, while also allowing for a diversity in housing through other lower density ground oriented building forms. The City intends to create comprehensive guidance on when consolidation would be required and where lower density ground oriented building forms (infill housing and townhouses) could be considered to optimize housing choice.

Until new policy is created, applications for infill housing and townhouse developments within TOD Areas are considered premature unless the applicant can: 1) demonstrate compliance with all other City requirements; 2) demonstrate logical and functional site access; and, 3) demonstrate the proposed development site meets one of the following criteria:

i. potential for lot consolidation for development of higher density forms is limited due to adjacencies on both/all sides due to:
  - a legally protected heritage asset (e.g. heritage designation or conservation covenant),
  - an existing low-rise, or higher density development constructed in 1990 or later,
  - an existing purpose-built rental development containing more than 6 units;
  - an existing major institutional use, or
  - one or more exterior side lot line (road or lane); or

ii. the proposal is for lands within the Queens Park Heritage Conservation Area.

Development of infill and townhouse building forms should be consistent with the City's 2026 Infill Housing and Townhouse programs. Infill housing projects are expected to rezone to RGO-A or RGO-B zoning districts and townhouses are expected to rezone to RT-A or RT-B zoning districts, or either may apply through a Heritage Revitalization Agreement.

c. Parking and Transportation Demand Management within TOD Areas

Residential developments within TOD Areas are exempt from minimum off-street parking requirements. However, applicants are encouraged to provide parking levels that align with anticipated market demand.

The parking rates included in Appendix B reflect a recent, comprehensive evaluation of local vehicle ownership trends, particularly in areas with high transit accessibility. As such, residential developments are encouraged to follow these rates as a primary benchmark for correlating provision with current market demand, and resident need.

All other parking regulations, standards and policies continue to apply within TOD Areas, including, but not limited to: non-residential and accessible parking space minimums, size and configuration of all stalls, loading, accessible stalls, and bicycle parking. These regulations are included in Section 140 of the Zoning Bylaw.

Transportation Demand Management measures continue to be expected within TOD Areas to ensure livability and long-term viability.

6. Study Areas

Where an area is subject to a study or active review (e.g. land use or infrastructure), applications for Rezoning or Official Community Plan amendments are considered premature, as that work is required to enable the City to provide clear, informed direction to applicants. Such areas include:

a. 22nd Street Station Vision Area; and
b. Areas designated Lower Twelfth and Sharpe Street Study Area.

7. Official Community Plan (OCP) Amendments

The recent updates to the Official Community Plan per the provincial legislation has opened up significant new areas for high density development, more than sufficient to support projected growth. The OCP is now considered to be current, aligned with long-term growth objectives, and more than sufficient to provide opportunities for new housing supply across the City. As such, site-specific amendments are generally not anticipated to be needed, and will generally not be supported.

It is recognized that exceptional circumstances may arise that warrant further review. The City is working towards an OCP amendment policy. In the interim, the City will only consider spot amendments to the OCP to be reasonable if the application:

a. provides a compelling, clear land use rationale demonstrating the exceptional circumstances underpinning the need for the proposed amendment;
b. meets the City's Inclusionary Housing Policy requirements, including meeting all specified affordability levels and ownership structures, despite any exemptions in the Inclusionary Housing Policy;
c. demonstrates through detailed analysis, inclusive of financial analysis, that the development provides infrastructure and other community benefit contributions to off-set impacts of additional growth above that which could be considered under current OCP designations and which have informed the Amenity Cost Charge and Development Cost Charge program; and,
d. provides other community benefits aligned with Council policy and priorities commensurate with the proposed increase in building height and/or density triggered by the OCP amendment, to support accommodation of the requested unplanned growth;
e. outside an area under active review (e.g. land use or infrastructure review); and,
f. meets all other baseline requirements, regulations and policy expectations.

8. Development Finance

In accordance with the intent of Provincial legislation, the City is transitioning away from negotiated amenity contributions in favour of using fixed rate contributions with the objective of increased clarity and transparency. This is primarily being implemented through updated Development Cost Charges (DCCs) which collect growth related contributions for infrastructure and services and the introduction of interim Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) which collect growth related contributions for amenities. The DCC Bylaw was updated on January 12, 2026 and the interim ACC Bylaw was adopted on December 1, 2025.

In addition, development contributions to housing affordability are expected to be provided through the Inclusionary Housing Policy. This policy was updated and endorsed by Council on September 8, 2025 and all relevant applications are expected

to provide inclusionary housing units within the development in alignment with this policy.

All other requirements continue to be applicable to new development, such as compliance with City policies, design guidelines, and all other regulation including works and servicing requirements. Adhering to these policies may result in provision of public benefits above and beyond ACCs, DCCs and Inclusionary Housing.

In-Stream Applications (Received Prior to December 1, 2025)

Applications received prior to the adoption of the ACC Bylaw on December 1, 2025 and identified by the City as "in-stream" will still be evaluated under previous amenity contribution systems as applicable and as summarized in the table below:

Date of Application	Applicable Charges
Prior to September 22, 2024	Negotiated amenity charges (supported by financial analysis), Density Bonus or fixed rate charges as applicable and DCCs, Inclusionary Housing Policy, other City policy, guidelines and regulations.
September 23, 2024 – November 30, 2025	Fixed rate Interim Density Bonus Policy within TOD Areas and DCCs, Inclusionary Housing Policy, other City policy, guidelines and regulations.

Townhouse applications received prior to December 1, 2025 will continue to be charged fixed rate voluntary contributions as follows:

Location	Expected Voluntary Contribution
Mainland	$10,000 - $12,000
Queensborough	$1,000 - $1,500

Heritage Revitalization Agreements (HRA) applications received prior to December 1, 2025 may require financial analysis to evaluate the value of amenities and benefits proposed, where determined to be warranted.

All other requirements continue to be applicable to in-stream development, such as compliance with City policies, design guidelines, and all other regulation including works and servicing requirements.

9. Rental Housing Applications

The exemptions in the Inclusionary Housing Policy endorsed by Council on September 8, 2025, which apply to rental housing projects shall not apply to:

a. Rental housing development applications that are or would be for properties owned/leased and operated by societies, health boards, charities, or non-profits, including faith-based organizations; and,
b. Rental housing development applications that require an Official Community Plan amendment, which would be a requirement in addition to any other amenities and infrastructure needed to offset growth related impacts associated with the additional density arising out of the OCP amendment.

These developments must fulfill all policy requirements, including meeting specified affordability levels and ownership structures.

10. Infill Housing

The City zoning districts RGO-A (up to 4 units) and RGO-B (up to 6 units) permit infill housing consistent with Provincial small scale multiple unit housing (SSMUH) legislation. Infill housing is expected to proceed as guided by these zoning districts. Variances may be considered where there is an opportunity to advance a City objective (e.g. for supporting tree protection or heritage retention). Other variances will only be considered under unique and exceptional circumstances. Applicants would be required to clearly demonstrate these site-specific conditions and articulate a meaningful hardship.

Infill housing works most efficiently on properties where vehicle access can be provided from a lane or local road at the rear of the site. In general, where a site can be accessed from a continuous lane of at least 4.27 metres (14 feet) (i.e. the entire block has a lane of at least the minimum width), vehicle access may be supported from the lane. For properties where this condition cannot be met, the City may require vehicle access to be provided from a front or flanking street.

Infill housing is not currently permitted in Queensborough, due to this area's location within a floodplain and the complexity of local sewer and water systems. Further technical analysis is required to ensure infrastructure in Queensborough can support increased density through infill housing.

11. Townhouses

Townhouse development is expected to proceed as guided by the new RT-A and RT-B zoning districts. Variances may be considered where there is an opportunity to advance a City objective (e.g. for supporting tree protection or heritage retention). Other variances, such as variances to parking for suites, will generally not be supported, except under unique and exceptional circumstances. To proceed, applicants would be required to clearly demonstrate these site-specific conditions and articulate a meaningful hardship.

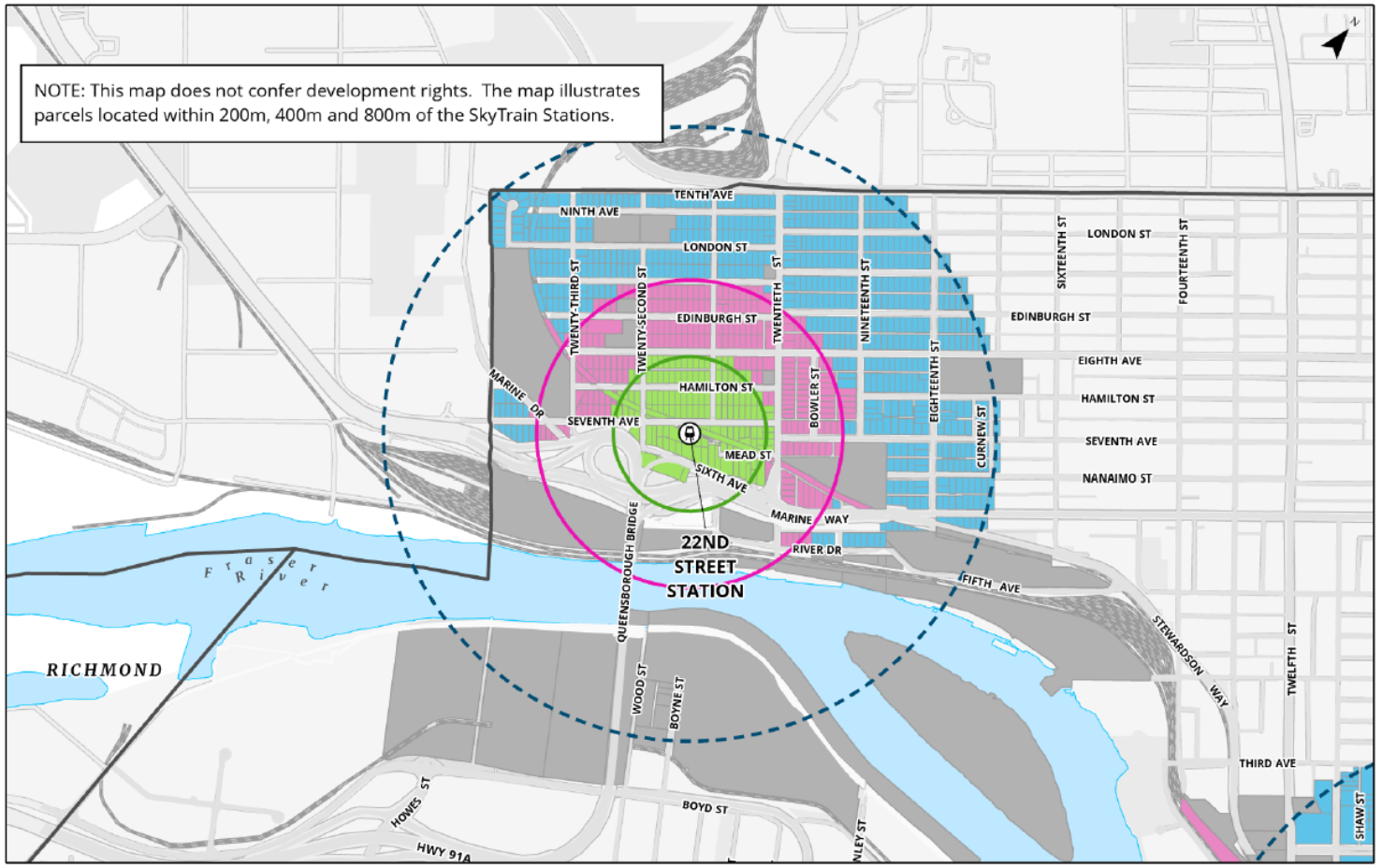
For areas designated Townhouse (RT) in the OCP but not yet zoned to RT-A or RT-B, rezoning applications for townhouse use are considered premature, unless the applicant proposes to rezone to one of these townhouse districts and completes an advanced

street plan for the block, subject to approval by the Director of Engineering, which demonstrates ultimate lane configuration and how each lot would be provided lane access. Use of comprehensive development zones is not supported.

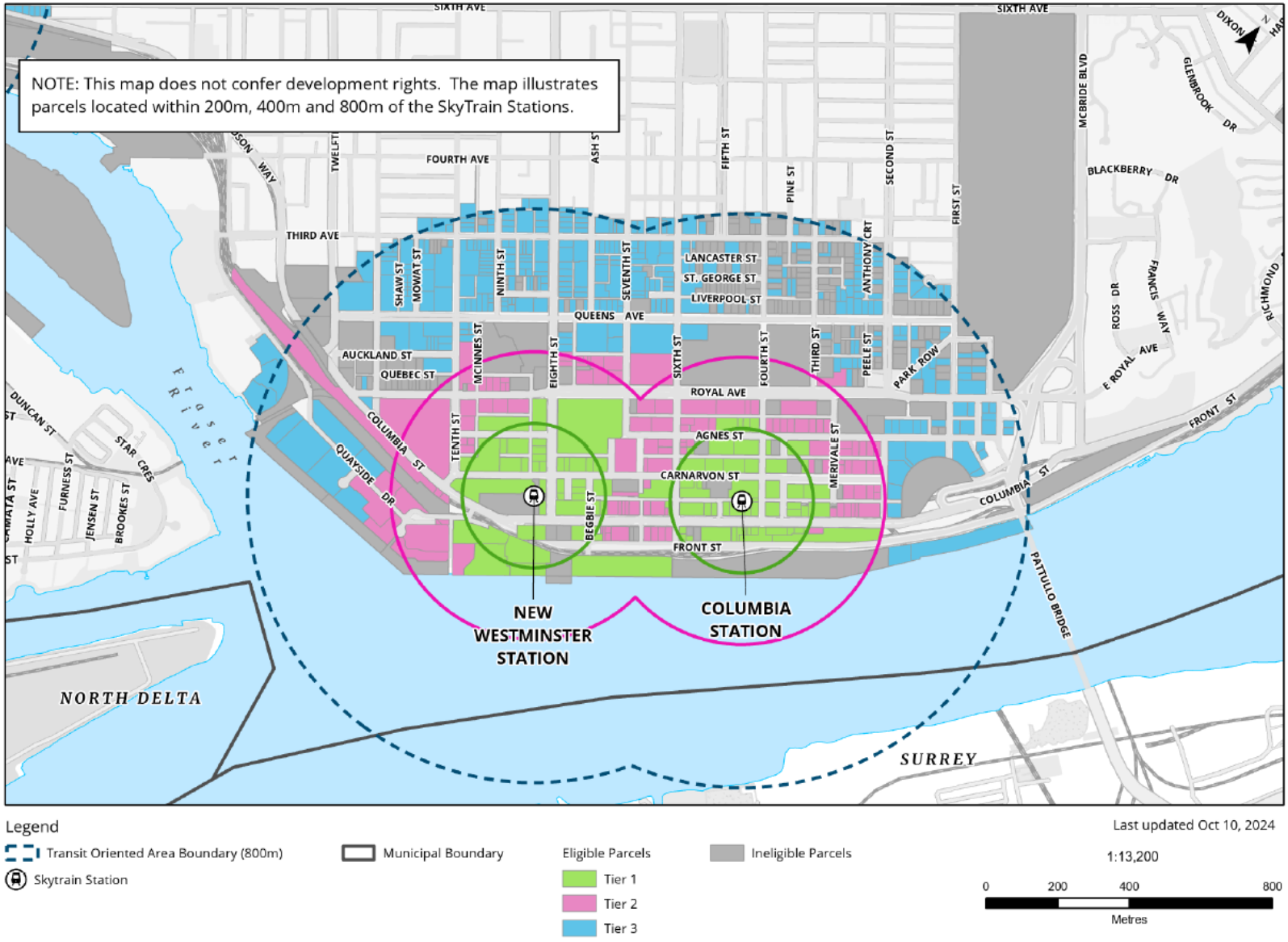
Townhouse development in Queensborough is expected to continue under the existing programs in the Queensborough Community Plan and the Zoning Bylaw and not this Framework.

Appendix A – Transit Oriented Area Maps

22ND STREET STATION



NEW WESTMINSTER STATION AND COLUMBIA STATION



Legend

- Transit Oriented Area Boundary (800m)
- Skytrain Station
- Municipal Boundary
- Eligible Parcels
  - Tier 1
  - Tier 2
  - Tier 3
- Ineligible Parcels

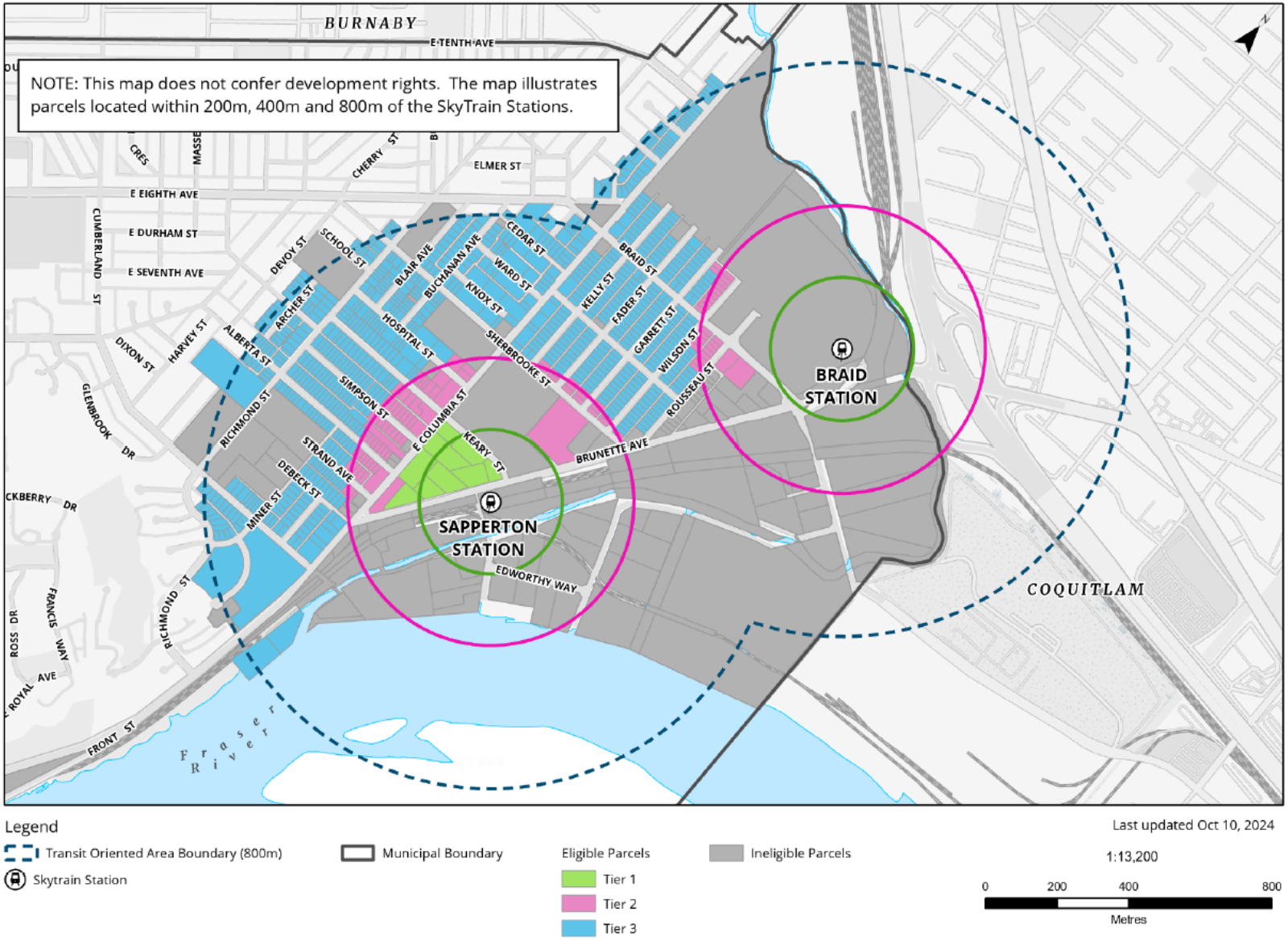
Last updated Oct 10, 2024

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Metres

SAPPERTON STATION AND BRAID STATION



Legend

Transit Oriented Area Boundary (800m)

Skytrain Station

Municipal Boundary

Eligible Parcels

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

Ineligible Parcels

Last updated Oct 10, 2024

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Metres

Appendix B – Recommendations for Multiple Dwelling and Secured Rental Off-Street Parking in TOD Areas

Use	Minimum Recommended Off-Street Parking Spaces
Multiple Dwellings	0.9 spaces per studio and dwelling unit with one bedroom 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit with two bedrooms 1.5 spaces per dwelling unit with three or more bedrooms 0.1 spaces per dwelling unit for visitor parking
Multiple Dwellings *Sites located within Downtown or within 500 metres of a SkyTrain station*	0.75 spaces per studio and dwelling unit with one bedroom 1.0 spaces per dwelling unit with two bedrooms 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit with three or more bedrooms 0.05 spaces per dwelling unit for visitor parking
Secured Rental Units	0.8 spaces per studio and dwelling unit with one bedroom 1.0 space per dwelling unit with two bedrooms 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit with three or more bedrooms 0.1 spaces per dwelling unit for visitor parking
Secured Rental Units *Sites located within Downtown*	0.5 spaces per studio and dwelling unit with one bedroom 0.6 space per dwelling unit with two bedrooms 0.8 spaces per dwelling unit with three or more bedrooms 0.05 spaces per dwelling unit for visitor parking
Secured Rental Units *Sites located within 500 metres of a SkyTrain station*	0.6 spaces per studio and dwelling unit with one bedroom 0.8 spaces per dwelling unit with two bedrooms 1.0 spaces per dwelling unit with three or more bedrooms 0.05 spaces per dwelling unit for visitor parking