



City of Vancouver *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

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REZONING POLICY FOR CHINATOWN SOUTH (HA-1A)

Adopted by City Council on April 19, 2011

Contents

	Page
1	Intent 1
2	Application 1
3	Definitions 2
4	Early Review Process..... 2
5	Height and Massing 2
6	Urban Design Provisions 3
7	Connectivity to a District Energy System 4
8	Public Benefits through Rezoning 4

1 Intent

The intent of this policy is to provide guidance on rezonings in Chinatown South (HA-1A), specifically related to proposals for additional height beyond provisions in the Zoning and Development By-law. Development of higher buildings in this area shall balance the opportunity for additional growth and resulting public benefits with preserving the important heritage and cultural character of Chinatown.

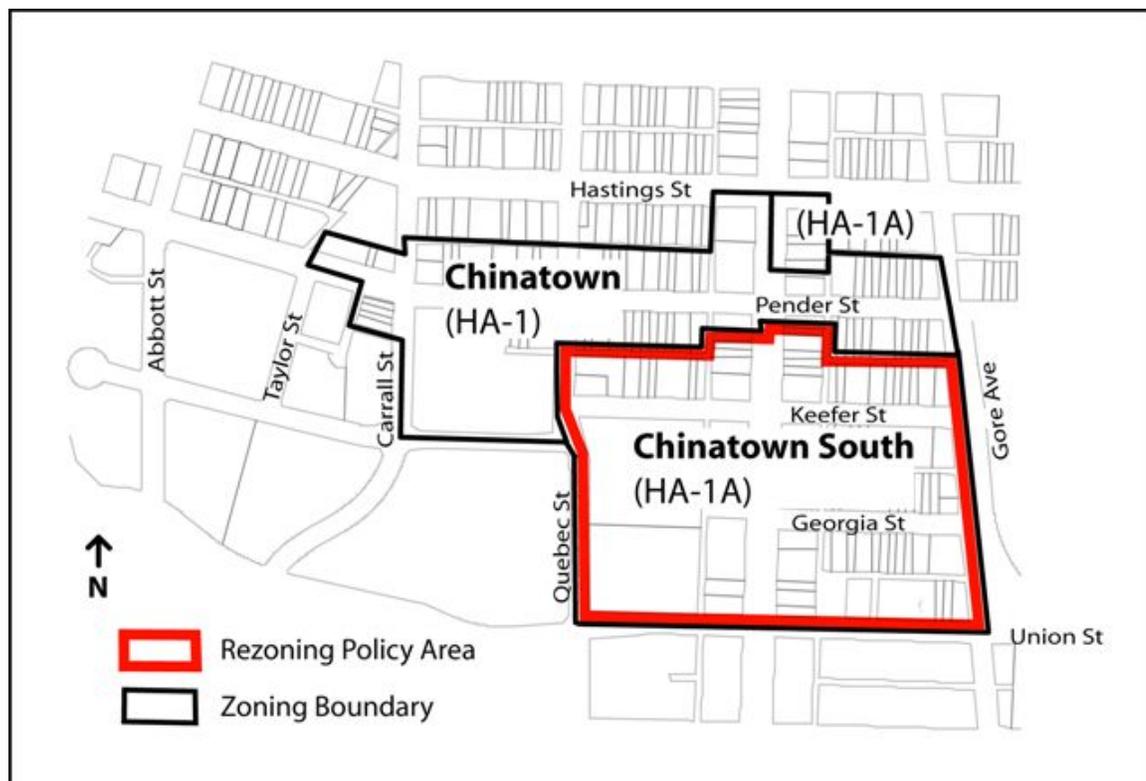
Established in the 1880's, Chinatown is one of the two formative communities of Vancouver. The community has an evolving and enduring cultural identity, with many active community organizations, a distinctive urban and cultural landscape, and a unique vernacular architecture. As such, the overall development scale of the Chinatown, in particular the HA-1 (Pender Street) area, should continue to reinforce and support the prevailing heritage context, fine-grained character, and generally low to mid-rise building forms. Higher buildings are appropriate in HA-1A (Chinatown South) only as outlined in this policy.

Future growth in Chinatown South resulting from this policy is expected to contribute to the overall economic revitalization and residential intensification of Chinatown (HA-1 and HA-1A), as well as to support innovative heritage, cultural and affordable and social housing projects in the Chinatown area.

In addition to the provisions that follow, proposals for higher buildings in Chinatown South (HA-1A) shall adhere to the existing, applicable Council-approved plans, policies, and guidelines for each site. Further, the provisions in this rezoning policy do not preclude additional requirements that will be determined during the enquiry and rezoning process.

2 Application

This Rezoning Policy applies to the HA-1A area, as identified in Map 1 below. For the purposes of this policy, Chinatown South is defined as the portion of the HA-1A zoning district south of Pender Street. In order to maintain an appropriate scale adjacent to the historically significant Pender Street (HA-1, as showing in Map 1) this policy does not apply to the small HA-1A area north of Pender Street.



Map 1 – Rezoning Policy Area for Chinatown South

3 Definitions

For the purposes of this document:

- (a) “Chinatown South” means that portion of the HA-1A zoning district that is south of Pender Street.
- (b) “Higher building” means a development proposal that exceeds the maximum height provided for in the site’s zoning district schedule and other applicable Council-adopted policies.
- (c) “Main Street Sub-area” means that portion of Chinatown South with properties fronting on Main Street, south of Keefer Street.

4 Early Review Process

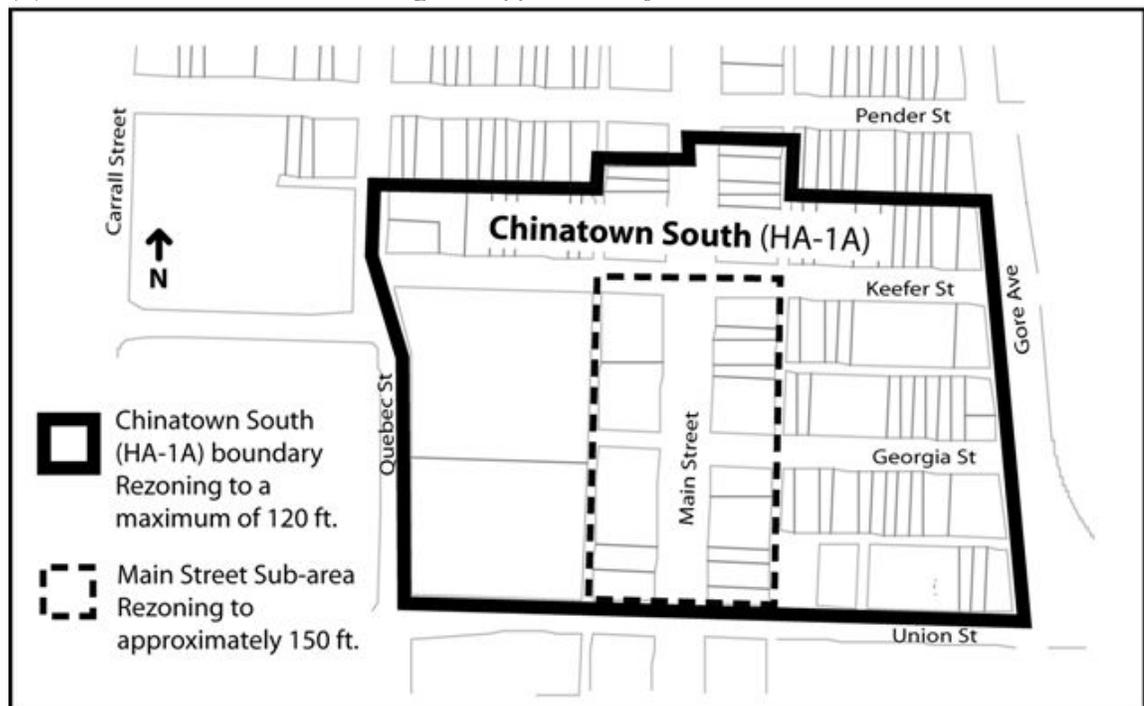
Prior to submitting a written rezoning enquiry for any site in Chinatown South, applicants shall meet with City staff early in their design process. The purpose of this meeting is to review the development concept, ensure proper contextual influences are considered, and clarify design strategies to meet heritage, land use, built form, scale and character objectives. Applicants are encouraged to prepare a site context analysis and preliminary urban design response for discussion at this meeting.

The processing of rezoning applications that may result from this policy will include the typical review by City advisory bodies, including but not limited to the Urban Design Panel, Vancouver Heritage Commission, and the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee. Depending on the nature of a proposal, additional special review may be required, and could include: presentation of proposals at the enquiry stage, joint committee workshops, inclusion of guest panel members on committees, etc.

5 Height and Massing

The following height limits shall apply to rezonings in Chinatown South, and as identified in Map 2 below, subject to consideration of the urban design provisions outlined in this policy (including view cones, shadow, and context analysis):

- (a) Chinatown South — Height up to a maximum of 120 ft. will be considered.
- (b) Main Street Sub-area — Height of approximately 150 ft. will be considered.



Map 2 – Possible Heights through Rezoning

There is no floor area density provision in the HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule, therefore floor areas achievable and related building forms result from the application of maximum heights and the design guidelines to the context of a specific site and proposed development. This approach to managing achievable floor area shall continue under this rezoning policy, noting that both the urban design provisions listed below and the Chinatown HA-1A Design Guidelines shall be applied.

6 Urban Design Provisions

- (a) Respect historic Chinatown (HA-1) in terms of adjacent architectural scale, orientation, massing expression, details and materials.
- (b) The recommended development site frontage for rezoning to heights above the zoned maximum of 90 ft. is 75 to 125 ft.
- (c) Vary building facades in order to convey incremental development, and to reflect historic development patterns such as 25 ft. lots, sawtooth building heights, and the resulting asymmetrical streetwall character.

Composition of the facades to incorporate the following:

- (i) On all developments over 90 ft. in height, and for all developments on parcels with Main Street frontage over 50 ft., all street-facing facades should be modulated into distinct increments of 20 – 35 ft. vertical bays, and emphasize vertical proportions up to 90 ft.
 - (ii) Street facing facades should exhibit distinctly different architectural treatments for each 50-66 ft. frontage increment, as if developed incrementally over time and designed by different architects, and should not repeat an immediately adjacent design treatment.
 - (iii) Facades should include at least one strong horizontal expression or 'beltline' between 20 – 35 ft. above grade; this does not need to align with adjacent beltlines and is in addition to the required horizontal expression of the lower street façade and storefront level, per the Chinatown HA-1A Design Guidelines.
 - (iv) Any primary street wall longer than 66 ft., and taller than 70 ft., should vary the upper height of the primary street façade to create a sawtooth profile at 90 ft.; the vertical step should be a minimum of 2 stories, and align with the modulations described in (i) and (ii) above. The resulting sawtooth form does not need to be symmetrical on the parcel or align with street wall profiles adjacent.
- (d) Setbacks are described in the Chinatown HA-1A Design Guidelines. Additional setbacks for that portion of the building above 90 ft. will be determined upon contextually-based analysis towards effective and appropriate transition in form/massing, scale, and character.

Setbacks and modulation of the upper building massing to incorporate the following:

- (i) The building form above 90 ft. should exhibit façade articulation and modulation that is compatible with the building forms below, but need not follow exactly the street wall increments described in (c) above.
 - (ii) A setback of 25 ft. minimum should be provided at 90 ft. along the entire primary facade of the building, and a setback of 15 ft. minimum should be provided at 90 ft. from all other street fronting property lines.
 - (iii) For all developments over 120 ft. in height, the building form above 90 ft. should exhibit a modulated skyline profile; any continuous roofline length over 66 feet, should step a minimum of 3 stories to break the roofline. Roof profiles other than flat are encouraged.
- (e) For all sites where a higher building would have a visual impact on the protected Olympic Village Pier view cone (G.1.2), upper building massing and roof profile shall be shaped to maintain and respect the mountain profile and further, modulated to provide permeable views to the mountain range and valley profile beyond. Where possible, floor plate dimensions and shape shall be oriented to maximize the open view to the mountains and valley.

- (f) Developments with frontages on Main Street should emphasize it as a neighbourhood high street with street-oriented retail uses at grade, and lighting and signage distinct from historic Pender Street.

7 Connectivity to a District Energy System

New developments in Chinatown shall be designed to include a hydronic heating system in order to easily connect to a district energy system when one becomes available.

These developments will also require agreements to ensure that they connect to such a system when it is in place. Building design for connectivity and the connection agreement must be to the satisfaction of the City Engineer. For further information, please refer to the “District Energy Connectivity Standards - Information for Developers” available online at: <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/BYLAWS/bulletin/D006.pdf>

Other Council-approved policies relating to the City’s sustainability goals shall also apply, including but not limited to, the “Green Buildings Policy for Rezoning” available online at: <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/guidelines/G015.pdf>

8 Public Benefits through Rezoning

Appropriate public benefits shall be provided by developments rezoned through this policy, typically in the form of Community Amenity Contributions (CACs), transferable heritage density, or affordable or social housing. Public benefits will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis as part of a rezoning application, according to the Council-adopted policy “Community Amenity Contributions - Through Rezoning”, available online at: <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/guidelines/C025.pdf>

Public benefits provided by rezonings can help to address increased demands that may be placed on City facilities as a result of the rezoning, mitigate impacts on the surrounding community, as well as address neighbourhood needs as identified in plans and policies for the area. For Chinatown, Council endorsed the additional height through rezoning described in this policy for the purposes of supporting innovative heritage, cultural and affordable and social housing projects, as well as to support residential intensification and economic revitalization of the broader Chinatown area.