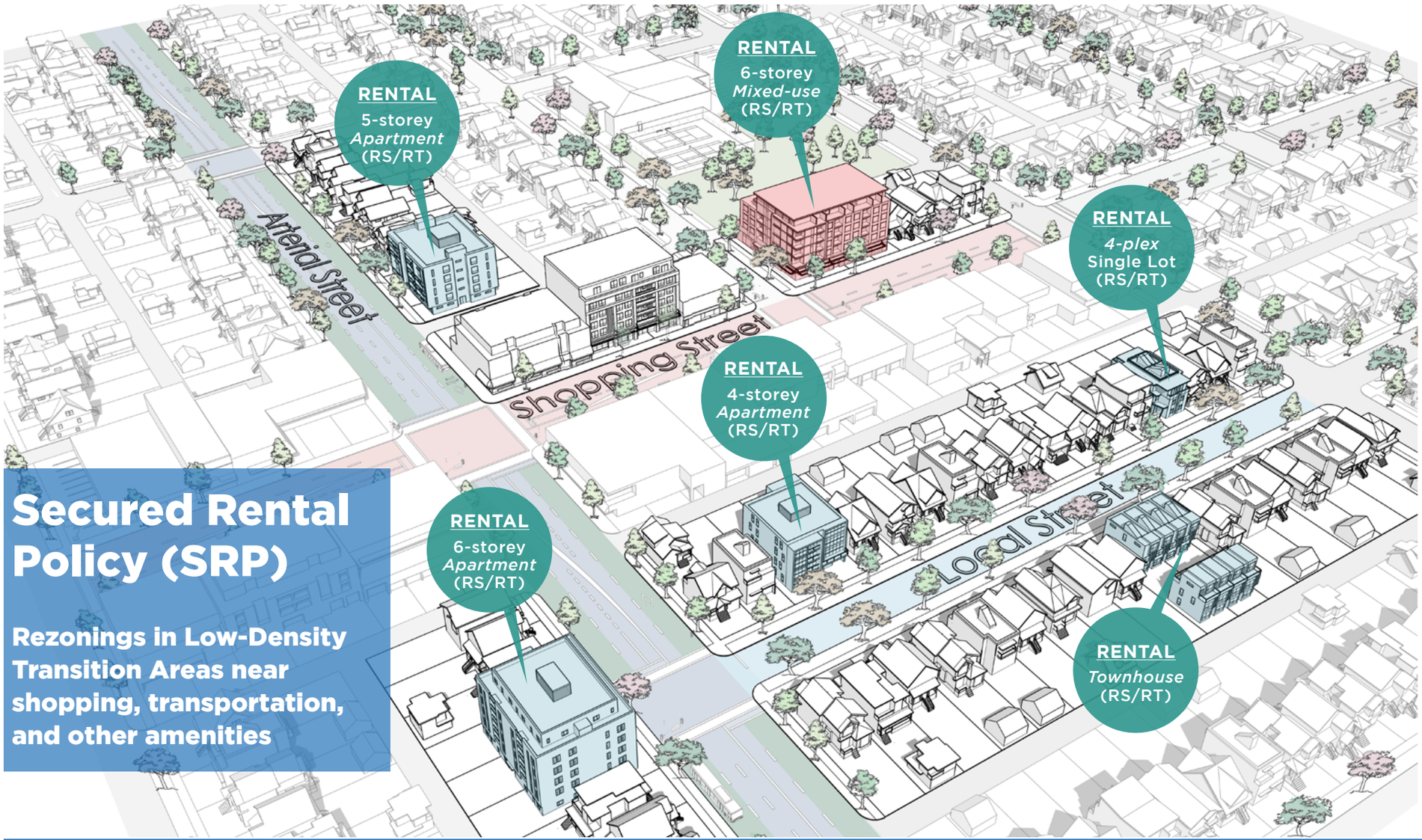
REZONING VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

CITY OF VANCOUVER



Secured Rental Policy (SRP)

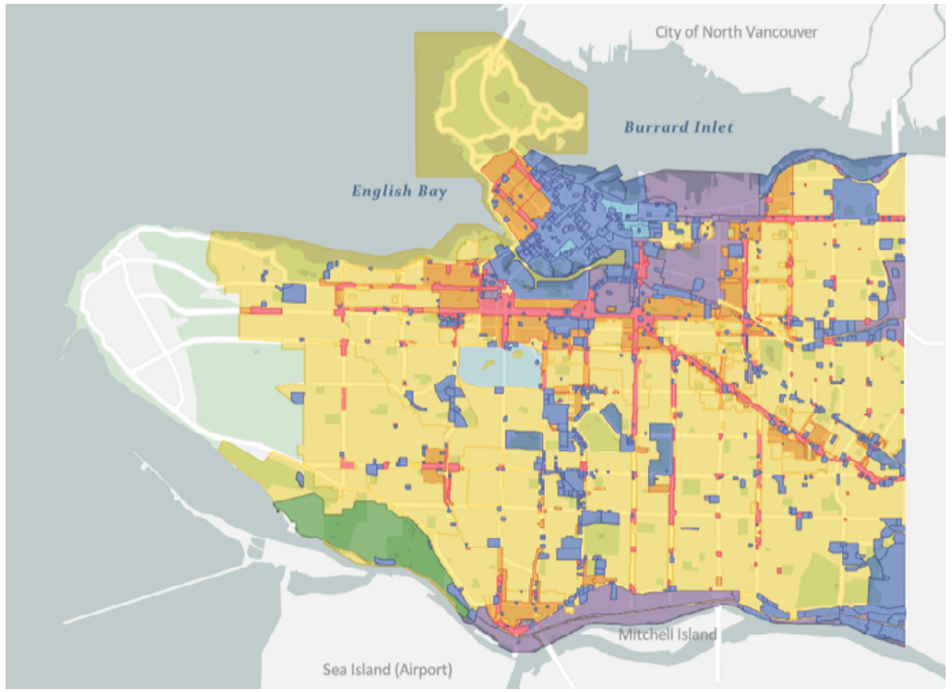
Rezonings in Low-Density Transition Areas near shopping, transportation, and other amenities

What is Rezoning?

The City of Vancouver is divided into zoning districts. The Zoning and Development By-law sets out the rules for development in each zoning district, including the use (e.g. multiple dwelling, general office, retail store) and physical form (e.g. height, density).

Rezoning changes how a property can be used or developed through a regulation change. It is required when a proposal does not conform with existing zoning. The purpose of rezoning is to:

- change land use regulations to enable development in line with City objectives; and
- secure public benefit contributions to help address increased demand on City facilities resulting from the rezoning.



Rezoning to a District Schedule

Rezoning to an existing zoning district differs from rezoning to a site-specific (CD-1) district. A proposal's form of development is not reviewed during the rezoning stage. The proposal is expected to comply with zoning regulations and associated guidelines, which will be fully reviewed at the development permit stage.

This approach provides certainty on the built form for residents and applicants and streamlines the review process.

What Guides a Rezoning?

Council-approved plans and policies outline where rezoning applications can be considered and what may be allowed on a site.

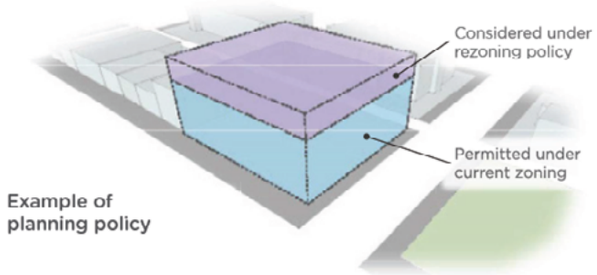
Community and area plans

The City of Vancouver has community and area plans that set out the long-term vision for a community area. These plans provide a framework to guide change and development over a period of approximately 20 to 30 years. They may also work within broader objectives established for the entire city and at regional and provincial levels.

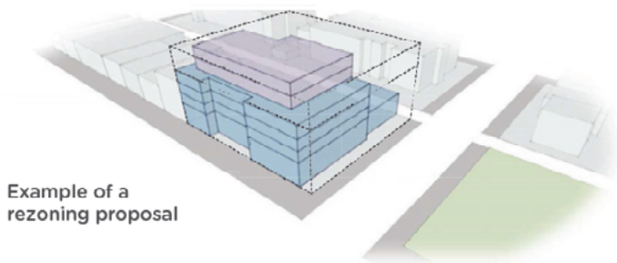
Community and area plans provide guidance and direction on a variety of topics, from land use and urban design, to housing, transportation, and community facilities.

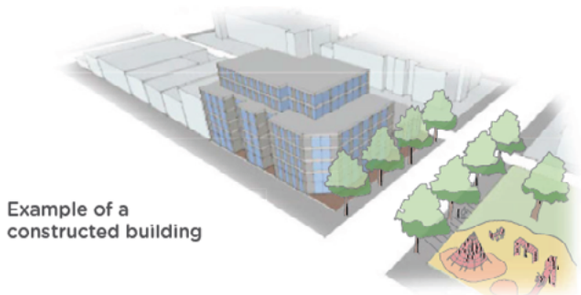
Rezoning policies

Rezoning policies provide guidance for developing or using a property in ways that may not be possible under existing rules or zoning. They provide a framework to achieve City objectives by enabling and incentivizing development across the city.



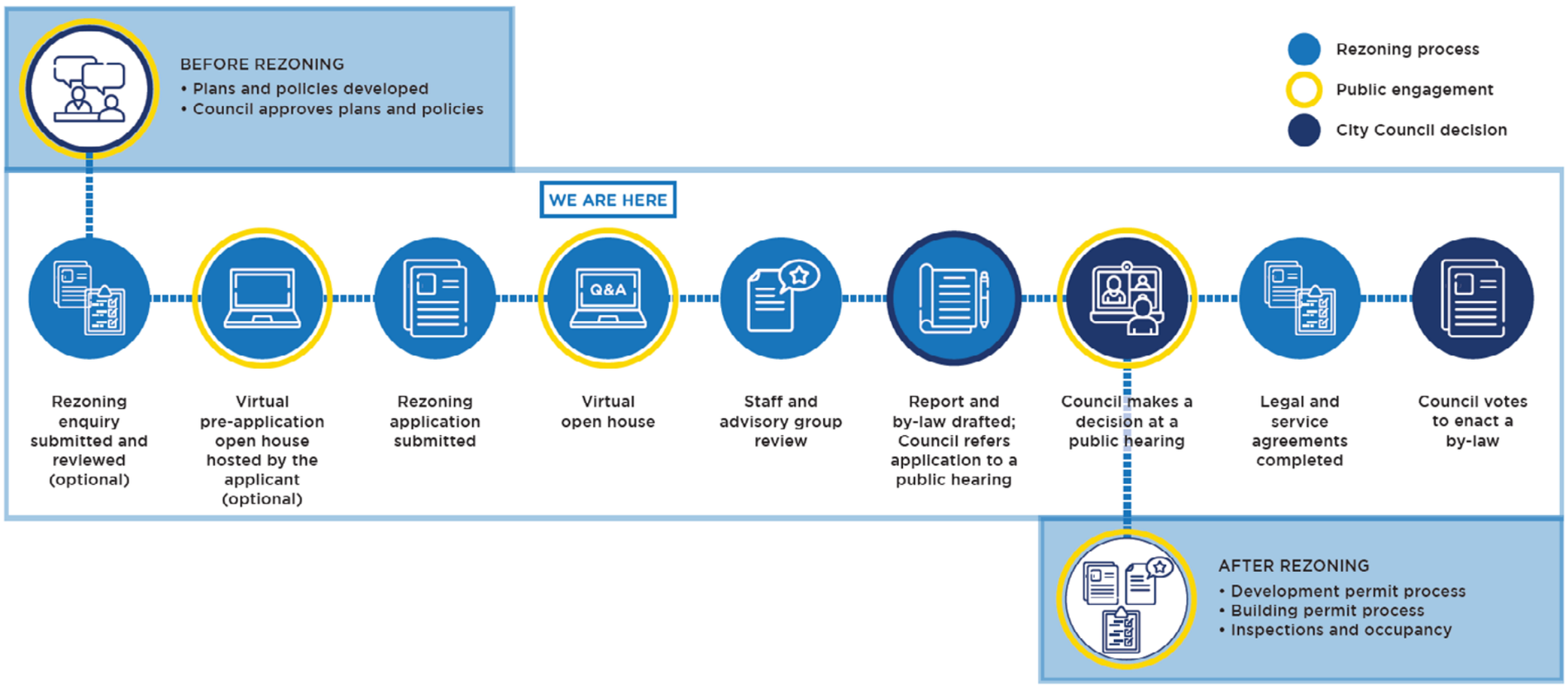
Example of planning policy


Example of a rezoning proposal


Example of a constructed building



Rezoning Process: Key Steps



Housing Vancouver Strategy

As Vancouver grows and evolves, it's important to ensure there are housing options that meet the needs of the diverse array of current and future residents. This is the aim of the City's Housing Vancouver Strategy (2018-2027).

A key part of creating a more equitable, resilient and diverse housing system requires building more secured rental housing across all areas of the city. More than half of Vancouver households already rent their homes, and very high and rapidly rising homeownership costs make rental housing increasingly important.

What is Secured Rental Housing?

Secured rental housing is purpose-built and permanently secured as rental tenure. Legal agreements ensure it cannot be converted to a strata (condo) unit.

Other types of rental housing, such as rented basement suites or condo units are less secure. Owners can evict tenants to move in themselves, and renters are often forced to move when the unit is sold to a new owner.

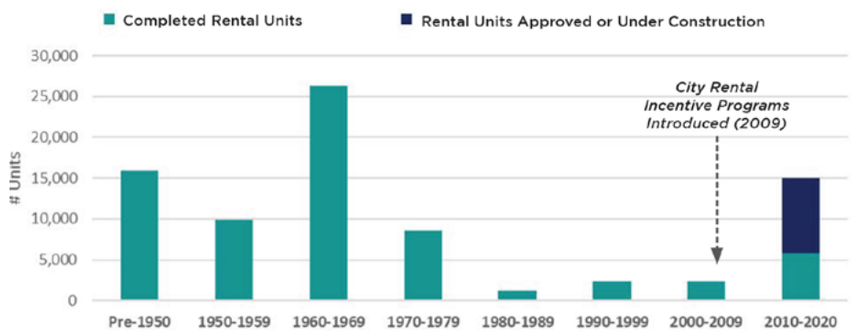
Starting in the 1980s, for almost 30 years new secured rental housing wasn't being built in Vancouver. This contributed to a significant gap in our housing stock that has compounded the current housing crisis. Though City incentives to build secured rental housing have been in place for the last decade, the demand for rental housing continues to outpace supply. Renters in Vancouver face significant challenges in finding housing that meets their needs.



The Secured Rental Policy is one of a broad array of policies that deliver on key objectives of the Housing Vancouver Strategy.

For more information, visit: Housing Vancouver Strategy

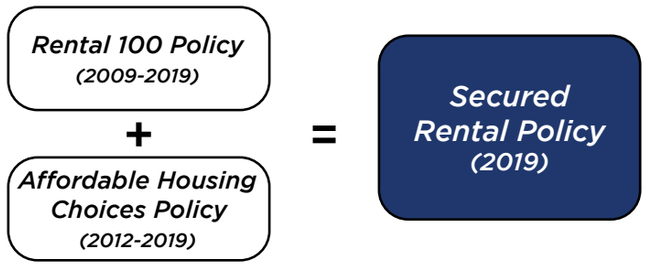
Very Little New Supply and High Demand For Rental Housing Has Led to Persistently Low Vacancy Rates



- Vacancy rates for secured rental housing in Vancouver have averaged ~1% over the last 30 years
- Generally a healthy vacancy rate indicating a more balanced rental market is considered to be 3-5%

Secured Rental Policy (SRP)

The Secured Rental Policy encourages the construction of new purpose-built rental housing in Vancouver. This policy is an updated and consolidated version of previous market rental incentive programs that were first introduced in 2009.



How the Secured Rental Policy Works

The SRP includes several key incentives:

- Increased building height and floor area
- Waiver of some development cost levies
- Reduced car parking requirements
- Unit size relaxations

In exchange, all units are secured permanently as rental, enhanced energy efficiency is required, and at least 35% of the units must be family-size (2+ bedrooms). Some buildings are also required to include at least 20% permanently secured below-market rental units.

Policy Review and Updates

Key updates to the SRP were approved by Council in November 2019 and December 2021 following a comprehensive policy review process. These included:

1. Changes to C-2 (commercial mixed-use zoning) to permit new 6-storey rental buildings through the same process as 4-storey condo buildings
2. Updates to simplify the rezoning process for rental housing in low-density (RS or RT) transition areas near shopping, transit and other daily needs

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

The updated Secured Rental Policy is the outcome of extensive public and stakeholder engagement that began in early 2019. Between then and fall 2021, that included:

- 8 public information sessions
- 25+ stakeholder and advisory committee meetings
- 40+ online “office hours” meetings
- Surveys and comment forms that received 3,500+ responses

For full details on the rental incentive programs review and associated public engage ment, see: Creating & Protecting Purpose-Built Rental Housing



Secured Rental Policy (SRP)

Rezoning in Low-Density Transition Areas

The Secured Rental Policy contains policies for rezoning in low-density transition areas, which includes sites on blocks adjacent to arterial roads that have RS or certain RT zoning, and are:

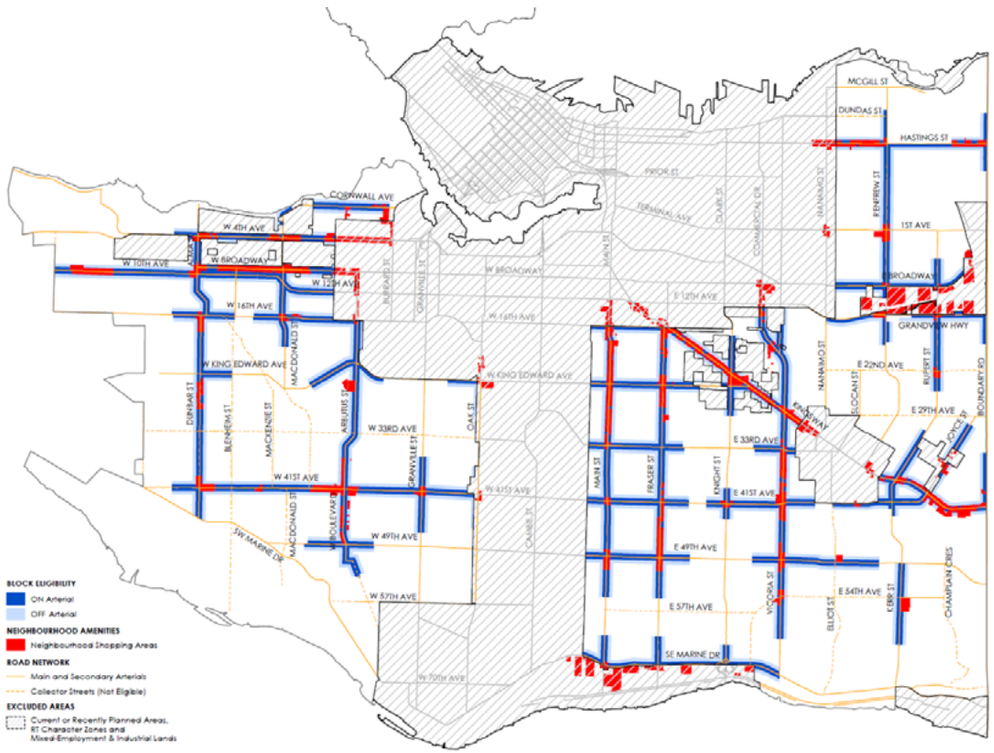
- Close to a local shopping area (within approximately 400 m or about a 5 minute walk), and
- On a Translink bus route or near a rapid transit station (e.g. a B-Line stop or SkyTrain station), and
- Outside of recently-approved neighbourhood plan areas (or areas undergoing a planning process where an interim rezoning policy restricts eligibility)

Sites on arterial roads may be eligible to rezone to build 4-6 storey apartments. Sites on local streets adjacent to arterial roads may be eligible for 4 storey apartments, 3-4 storey townhouses or a multiplex.

Simplified Rezoning Process

Most proposals in low-density transition areas are eligible for a simplified rezoning process. This involves rezoning to a standard rental district (or "zone") instead of creating customized and negotiated regulations for each individual site (a "CD-1" zone). This streamlines process and ensures greater clarity, certainty and consistency on the type of projects that can be considered.

Low-Density Transition Area Eligibility Map



For a high resolution version of the map with supporting graphics that illustrate how eligibility applies at the block level, see the Rezoning Guide

Residential Rental Zone (RR-2C)

6-Storey Apartment

KEY REGULATIONS	
Max. Height	19.8 m (65 ft)
Storeys	6
Max. Density	
Mid-Block Site	2.4 FSR
Corner Site	2.7 FSR
Shallow Site	2.7 FSR
Social Housing	2.7-3.0 FSR
Building Standards	
Front Yard (Min.)	3.7 m (12 ft)
Side Yard (Min.)	2.4 m (8 ft)
Rear Yard (Min.)	7.6 m (25 ft)
Building Depth (Max Avg.)	21.3 m (70 ft)
Site Standards	
Area (Min.)	920 m^2 (9,900 ft^2)
Frontage (Min.)	30.1 m (99 ft)
Frontage (Max.)	N/A
Depth (Min.)	30.5 m (100 ft)



Example RR-2C Building

Options That Apply On Some Larger Sites

Type of Site	*Building Option*
Corner Site	"L" Shaped Building
Deep Site	Secondary Building (e.g. townhouses along the lane)
Large Site	Multiple Apartment Buildings

For additional details and graphics illustrating these options, see the Residential Rental Districts Schedules Design Guidelines



Below-Market Rental Housing

All 6 storey rental projects built in RR-2C are required to permanently secure a minimum 20% of the residential portion of the building as below-market rental units.

- Rents for the below-market rents must be at least 10% below CMHC average market rents for all rental aparment units (approximately 30% below current average rents in newer buildings).
- A limit on rent increases at unit turnover ("vacancy control") applies to the below-market units. Maximum rents when a new tenancy begins are established by applying the 10% discount to the current-year CMHC average market rents.
- To ensure the below-market units are made available to households with moderate incomes, renter eligibility criteria apply, including household size and maximum income requirements. More details can be found in the Rental Incentive Programs Bulletin





Example 2022 Maximum Below-Market Rents vs Average Market Rents in Newer Buildings

Unit Type	2022 Market Rents (Newer Buildings)*	Household Income to Afford (Spending 30%)	2022 Below-Market Rents (10% Discount)**	Household Income to Afford (Spending 30%)
Studio	$1,690	$67,600	$1,211	$48,440
1 Bedroom	$2,039	$81,560	$1,368	$54,720
2 Bedroom	$2,724	$108,960	$1,894	$75,760
3+ Bedroom	$3,759	$150,360	$2,579	$103,160

*Average rents for apartment units built in Vancouver in 2005 or later as published by the CMHC in the 2021 Rental Market Survey Data Tables
**Discount from the average rents for all units in Vancouver as published by the CMHC in the 2021 Rental Market Survey Data Tables

What Happens Next



Referral report

Staff review all comments received and summarize the feedback into a referral report for City Council. This report contains a recommendation to refer the application to a public hearing, along with a recommendation to approve or refuse the application. Conditions to address public concerns may also be included, where feasible.

Referral and public hearing

If an application is referred to a public hearing, surrounding properties and those who have selected to be contacted about the application will receive a public hearing notification. At that point, all comments regarding the application are to be directed to City Council through the City Clerk's Office for consideration at the public hearing.

Public hearings are held to consider and decide on rezoning applications. At public hearings, City Council's role is to listen to all concerns in order to inform their decision on a rezoning application.

Find out more:

- What happens at public hearings
- Contact City Council about public hearing agenda items