

## Cathedral Hill Precinct Development Permit Area and Guidelines

Map 65: DPA 14: Cathedral Hill Precinct



## DPA 14: CATHEDRAL HILL PRECINCT

1. Pursuant to Section 919.1 (1) (d) and (f) of the Local Government Act, the area that is shaded and circumscribed by solid lines in Map 65 is designated as Development Permit Area DPA 14, Cathedral Hill Precinct, for the purposes of:
  - (a) Revitalization of an area in which a commercial use is permitted.
  - (b) Establishment of objectives for the form and character of commercial, industrial and multi-family residential development.
2. Application and Exemptions:
  - (a) Development Permits are required in accordance with the Local Government Act, subject only to the General Exemptions identified in the “Overview” section of this Appendix and the following exemptions.
  - (b) Specific Exemptions for DPA 14, Cathedral Hill Precinct:
    - (i) A Development Permit is not required for the following:
      - (1) residential single family dwellings and their accessory buildings and structures;
      - (2) residential duplexes and their accessory buildings and structures;
      - (3) the construction, placement or alteration of a building or structure having a total floor area, including any floor area to be added by alteration, no greater than 9.2m<sup>2</sup>; or
      - (4) changes to existing landscaping, other than landscaping identified in a development permit for the property
3. The special conditions that justify this designation include:
  - (a) The Cathedral Hill Precinct is a unique six-block area in the northwest corner of Fairfield. It is part of the Core Residential area, which is a major residential centre on the edge of a regional commercial and employment district. It has some capacity for growth through intensified multi-unit residential development with commercial activity at grade. The portions of Blanshard Street between Fort and Broughton Streets are currently under-utilized with capacity for commercial development adjacent to the Core Business area.
  - (b) High- and medium density multi-unit residential and commercial development are identified in this plan for the west portions of the Cathedral Hill Precinct with built form and place character appropriate to an urban setting, and transitioning to areas characterized by park space and lower density Urban Residential in the east portion of the Precinct and beyond.
  - (c) As a transition area, the Cathedral Hill Precinct contains a diverse range of land uses, building types and forms, streetscapes, parks and open spaces and an irregular street grid pattern, resulting in built form and character that varies from block to block.
  - (d) There is a collection of heritage resources throughout the Precinct which contribute to its unique character, including Christ Church Cathedral which is a significant heritage landmark located at a terminated vista at the head of Courtney Street with its bell tower as a skyline feature.
  - (e) There is potential for revitalization of the Cathedral Hill Precinct through redevelopment of sites including surface parking lots, and public realm improvements in balance with heritage conservation.
  - (f) The Cathedral Hill Precinct contains important public spaces, including Pioneer Square, which provides passive outdoor gathering and recreation space for residents, employees and visitors.
4. The objectives that justify this designation include:
  - (a) To revitalize an area of commercial use through redevelopment of sites including surface parking lots and public realm improvements to increase vibrancy, complement the adjacent Core Business area and strengthen commercial viability.
  - (b) To enhance the Cathedral Hill Precinct through a high quality of architecture, landscape and urban design that reflects the function of a major residential centre on the edge of a central business district in scale, massing and character, while respecting prominent heritage properties and landmarks.
  - (c) To recognize the transitional nature of the area between a high density Downtown and the medium to lower density residential neighbourhood through sensitive infill and the enhancement of streetscapes.
5. Guidelines:
 These Guidelines are to be considered and applied for Development Permits:
  - (a) Advisory Design Guidelines for Buildings, Signs and Awnings (1981).
  - (b) City of Victoria Heritage Program Sign & Awning Guidelines (1981).
  - (c) Downtown Core Area Plan (2011).
 Section Three: Districts – with special attention to the following policies:
  - 3.100;

> 3.102.

Section Five: Transportation and Mobility – with special attention to the following policies:

- > 5.26 to 5.30;
- > 5.73.

Section Six: Urban Design – with special attention to the following policies

- > 6.1 to 6.6
- > 6.18 to 6.25
- > 6.28;
- > 6.42 to 6.47;
- > 6.164 to 6.171;
- > 6.176 to 6.186.6;
- > 6.188

Section Seven: Heritage – with special attention to the following policies:

- > 7.22

- (d) Guidelines for Fences, Gates and Shutters (2010).
- (e) Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, prepared by Parks Canada
- (f) The following guidelines from the Cathedral Hill Precinct Plan (2004):
  - (i) Where mid-block walkways (through-block passageways) are possible and desirable, they should be designed with the following in mind:
    - (1) Properties and development adjacent to the walkways should be designed to open onto and look over the walkway.
    - (2) Pathways should be activated and supervised by active uses on them.
    - (3) Universal design should be considered.
  - (ii) Uses that are “dull” to pedestrians, e.g., space devoted to vehicles and service functions, fire exits, lobbies, blank walls, etc., should be kept to a minimum along all streets and walkways.
  - (iii) Large buildings should be visually broken into “human scaled” proportions. This could be achieved in a number of ways, including breaks in form, projections, balconies, bay windows, surface treatments and articulation.
  - (iv) New residential or commercial buildings should be sited and oriented to provide sufficient building separation to maintain livability for residences in both existing and planned future residences. In locations that allow for taller buildings (over 8 storeys), modest

increases in envisioned building height, up to two additional storeys, may be considered in order to achieve more slender, simpler, vertically proportioned building forms within the envisioned density.

- > Desired setbacks are: a minimum 6m side yard set back for portions of the building between 10m and 30 m in height; a minimum 9m setback for portions of the building above 30m; and minimum 10m rear yard set back. (See Fig. 23, 24)

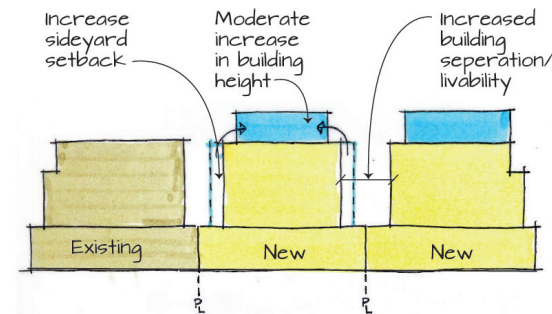


Fig. 23. Building Separation for Taller Buildings, Cathedral Hill: At a given density, modest increase in height can support greater building separation and more slender buildings, enhancing livability for current and planned future residences.

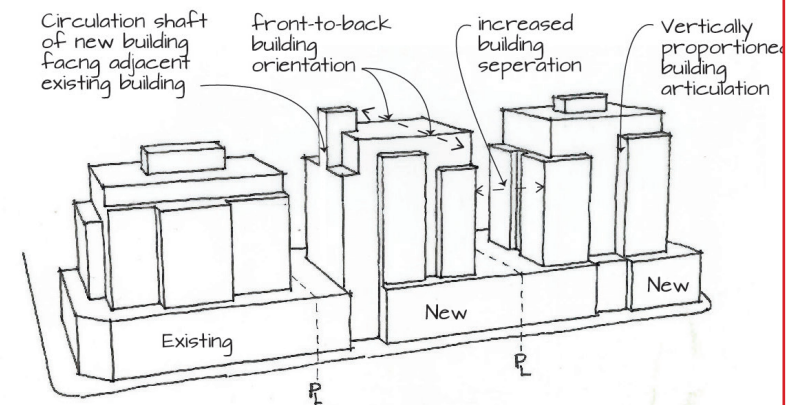


Fig 24. Building Orientation for Taller Buildings: Examples of strategies for building orientation which encourage livability

- (v) Facade design along sidewalks should provide features attractive to pedestrians: e.g. windows to people places or retail displays; doorways providing direct access; canopies; rounded corners at walkway intersections.
- (vi) Ground floor retail and commercial uses should maximize the amount of glazing and windows to make activities and merchandise inside visible from the sidewalk to increase the interaction between pedestrians and businesses.
- (vii) Overhangs and canopies are encouraged, especially on commercial buildings, to provide shelter from the elements and should be well designed to be compatible with local architecture. Backlit vinyl awnings are strongly discouraged. Aerial encroachment into the public right-of-way will require special approval.
- (viii) Entrances to buildings should be clearly identified, visible and accessible from the principal frontage streets. A separate entrance should be provided if residential use is proposed for the building.
- (ix) Individual street-oriented entrances for new residential development are encouraged.
- (x) Principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design should be incorporated into all design proposals.
- (xi) With the exception of frontages along portions of Blanshard Street and Quadra Street falling within the Cathedral Hill Precinct, new development should incorporate setbacks, responsive to context, sufficient to accommodate a soft landscaped transition or amenity space between the building and the public sidewalk. This is to establish a streetscape pattern which transitions from the more urban downtown to surrounding neighbourhoods.
- (xii) New buildings should have minimal setbacks at street level. Buildings should incorporate setbacks at upper floors in order to allow sunlight to reach the street.
- (xiii) Consideration should be given to the inclusion of open space for residential development in the form of public, semi-private or private space.
- (xiv) Building massing should respect the smaller scale and the collection of forms that is the overriding characteristic of the area.
- (xv) Features and landmarks should be respected and perpetuated. All opportunities should be explored to create a fitting backdrop to these features in texture, colour and details.
- (xvi) Development proposals should clearly delineate the hierarchy of spaces – public, semi-private and private.
- (xvii) Where a building has a significant street frontage, consideration should be given to the creation of landscaped open space accessible from the adjacent right-of-way. Possible locations include the corners of lots, at building entrances, at mid block walkways, and so on.
- (xviii) Building massing, siting and design should respond to Pioneer Square and the Provincial Law Court Green in order to maintain sunlight access to this public space, as evaluated by a shadow assessment, while providing “eyes on the park” through the location of windows, balconies and storefronts.