



9.0 DEVELOPMENT PERMIT GUIDELINES

Application & Intent
General Guidelines
Multiple-Family Guidelines
Commercial Guidelines
Industrial Guidelines
**Environmentally Sensitive Area
Guidelines**
Heritage Guidelines
Marina Guidelines

Justification

In the early stages of the Richmond 2021 Official Community Plan (OCP) Review the City, by various means, consulted the people of Richmond about their vision for the future of their community. The public input process revealed strong support for:

- Protection for and improvements to agriculture;
- Protection for and enhancement of the natural environment;
- Conservation of low-density urban neighbourhoods;
- Provision of greater housing choice within neighbourhoods;
- Improvement of the visual appeal, use, and enjoyment of the City.

The OCP is the blueprint for achieving this vision. One of the tools it will use for this purpose is the designation of development permit areas and the specifying of development guidelines for these areas as permitted by the Municipal Act. The special conditions that justify the designation of development permit areas in the plan are as follows:



Protection of farming

The principal farming areas are in the designated Agricultural Land Reserve. Farms along the edge of the Reserve which abut or are across a road from residential, commercial, or industrial development require special protection. Consequently, all significant new development outside of, but at the edge of, the Reserve requires a development permit to reduce the impact on the adjacent farm by adequate setbacks, screening, or other appropriate measures.

Protection of the natural environment

While the importance of preserving as much as possible of the natural environment in a developing urban area is generally recognized, it has special significance for Richmond because of its island character, extensive estuarine and marine environments, and location on the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. Attachment 3 to the Plan is a map showing the most important environmentally sensitive areas, and these are designated as development permit areas.

Protection of development from hazardous conditions

Because it is on an estuarine island, all development in Richmond has to be protected from flooding. The principal method used is to construct and maintain perimeter dykes. This is an ongoing task in which all three levels of government have participated from time to time.

A secondary method of protection is to minimize potential flood damage by raising vulnerable building areas above the maximum anticipated flood level. This raises questions of form and character where new commercial, industrial, or multi-family development is interspersed with older development. The OCP contains guidelines to minimize the impact of new development on its surroundings.

Finally, since the foreshore area is the front line of protection against flooding, it deserves special consideration. In the majority of cases, the foreshore area is also environmentally sensitive and the guidelines serve the dual purpose of flood and environmental protection. Marinas are also subject to special development guidelines because of their foreshore location.



Form and character of commercial, industrial, or multi-family residential development

Commercial and industrial developments have the potential for causing significant aesthetic, environmental, or other adverse impacts on surrounding uses. All commercial developments are deemed to merit the site-by-site consideration afforded by the development permit process, particularly in the City Centre where harmonious civic design is a major consideration. Industrial uses grouped together, as in an industrial park, do not merit the same consideration, but do where they are:

- Adjacent to specified non-industrial uses;
- In the City Centre; or
- Abutting No. 3 Road.

A key housing policy of the OCP is to carefully integrate new housing development into existing neighbourhoods. All multiple-family projects merit site-by-site consideration for form and character in order to achieve the desired relationship to surrounding areas, and to ensure high standards of new housing design.

