



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Planning Committee

Date: October 22, 2025

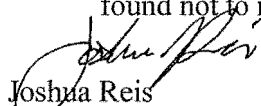
From: Joshua Reis
Director, Development

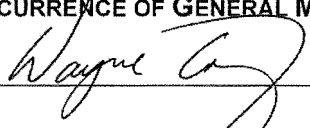


File: 08-4045-01/2025-Vol 01

Re: Updating Development Permit Area Exemptions

Staff Recommendations

1. That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000 Amendment Bylaw 10719, to update the Development Permit Area Exemptions criteria to provide an inflationary adjustment to the exterior alterations exemption threshold and to add a new exemption for exterior envelope repairs required due to water ingress, be introduced and given first reading;
2. That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000 Amendment Bylaw 10719, having been considered in conjunction with:
 - a. the City's Financial Plan and Capital Program; and
 - b. the Greater Vancouver Regional District Solid Waste and Liquid Waste Management Plans;is hereby found to be consistent with said program and plans, in accordance with Section 477(3)(a) of the *Local Government Act*; and
3. That Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000 Amendment Bylaw 10719, having been considered in accordance with Section 475 of the *Local Government Act* and the City's Official Community Plan Bylaw Preparation Consultation Policy 5403, is hereby found not to require further consultation.


Joshua Reis
Director, Development
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JR:ac
Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Policy Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Building Approval Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

Staff Report

Origin

The Official Community Plan (OCP) includes Development Permit (DP) Areas and Guidelines that inform the project approvals process and are intended to promote a high standard of development, support community character and safety and protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA).

As part of staff's regular monitoring of development controls and through developer and builder feedback, it is proposed that the DP exemption criteria for renovations to existing buildings be updated to reflect current economic conditions and local development needs, and to streamline approvals for building envelope repair in response to water ingress. The proposed changes to the exemption criteria generally include the following and apply to all DP Areas except ESAs, protected heritage properties and properties within the Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Area (SVHCA):

- Inflationary increase to the construction value for exterior renovations for all buildings except neighbourhood public houses, from \$75,000 to \$150,000; and
- Exempting the repair of a building's exterior envelope where such works are required due to water ingress, and the repairs are comparable with the building's existing materials, colours and general form and character.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth:

Strategic and sustainable growth that supports long-term community needs and a well-planned and prosperous city.

2.2 Develop and implement innovative and proactive solutions that encourage a range of housing options and prioritize affordability.

Background

The Local Government Act gives local governments the authority to designate Development Permit Areas. Section 14 of the OCP establishes DP areas and exemptions. Where new development is in a DP Area, a DP is required prior to the issuance of a Building Permit (BP), unless otherwise exempted from a DP in accordance with criteria outlined in the OCP.

Public Consultation

Attachment 1 includes a summary of consultation with respect to the Local Government Act and the City's OCP Bylaw Preparation Consultation Policy No. 5043 requirements. Should Council grant first reading to the proposed amendments, the bylaw will be forwarded to the next Public Hearing, where members of the public will have an opportunity to participate.

Analysis

1. Increasing the DP construction value exemption threshold to \$150,000 for all exterior building renovations (except neighbourhood public houses, protected heritage properties, development within the SVHCA, or development in an ESA).

The existing DP exemption threshold for exterior renovations to all buildings is where the construction value is less than \$75,000, excluding neighbourhood public houses, protected heritage properties, development within the SVHCA and development in an ESA. Where construction value of the exterior works are \$75,000 or greater, a DP is required. This threshold was established in 2012. The DP construction value exemption ensures that minor façade improvement projects with limited impact on community form and character are able to proceed without the requirement for a detailed technical and design review process.

Based on inflation adjustments informed by the Building Construction Price Index (BCPI) for Vancouver, construction costs have increased by approximately 73.4 per cent since 2012. This increase means that the current exemption threshold, which is based on 2012 costs, no longer accurately reflects today's construction costs. Raising the threshold to account for inflation and current market conditions better enables the exemption criteria to maintain its original purpose.

When the existing construction value threshold of \$75,000 is adjusted in line with this inflation rate, it establishes an equivalent construction value for 2025 of approximately \$130,000. This analysis shows that the existing construction value threshold of \$75,000 is significantly lower than current construction values.

The proposed amendment would increase the construction value exemption threshold to \$150,000 to account for both inflation and ongoing market conditions and construction cost increases. Establishing a rate marginally above the inflation rate for 2025 reduces the need for frequent threshold adjustments to address short-term inflation and construction cost fluctuations, thereby providing greater predictability for developers, builders and staff. Staff will periodically review the construction value exemption threshold to ensure it reflects market conditions and maintains its original purpose and value. This could be undertaken at the time of the provincially mandated five-year OCP reviews to ensure it continues to reflect current market conditions at that time.

The proposed amendments do not affect the type of development subject to a DP within the SVHCA. A DP is required for all development in the SVHCA with the exception of: interior renovations: minor repair and maintenance that does not involve a change in design, materials, finishes of appearance; demolition associated with a development application (e.g. rezoning); and exterior renovations to identified heritage resources that are subject to a Heritage Alteration Permit or Heritage Revitalization Agreement.

2. Exempting exterior building repairs where they are associated with building envelope failure and resultant water ingress (except protected heritage properties, development within the SVHCA, or development in an ESA).

As buildings age, they require repair and maintenance to ensure they are safe for their intended use. In some instances, the repair of a building envelope is urgently required, and a timely

permitting process is necessary. This is particularly important for residential buildings where a compromised building envelope can impact resident safety.

Staff regularly receive inquiries from property owners seeking to understand whether repair works to address building envelope failure and resultant water ingress require a DP.

The City has a practice of not requiring a DP where the repairs are necessary to address water ingress issues that pose a public or resident safety concern, provided the exterior form and character of the building are not being substantially altered. In such cases, staff have undertaken a preliminary review of the proposed works and require a signed and sealed letter from a qualified professional confirming the necessity of the repairs and verifying that materials are being replaced on a like-for-like basis.

The proposed amendment clarifies and formalizes this existing practice of exempting these works from a DP and creates transparency around the City's service level response to building envelope failures that present safety concerns. Staff will continue to require the submission of a signed and sealed letter from a registered professional engineer verifying the requirement for the repair works, and replacement of exterior building materials and colours being comparable to the building's existing materials, colour and general form and character. Qualifying repair works would still be required to obtain a BP prior to commencement. Given the narrow scope of these types of applications, staff are able to promptly review and process them.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Amendment Bylaw 10719 proposes changes to the current DP exemption requirements, including an increase to the construction value exemption threshold for exterior building renovations to account for inflation between 2012 and 2025 and ongoing market conditions, and an exemption for exterior building repairs where they are associated with water ingress, verified by a registered qualified engineer and are comparable to the building's existing form and character. The proposed amendments are expected to improve efficiency and generally maintain the City's form and character objectives.

It is recommended that OCP Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10719, be introduced and given first reading.



Alex Costin
Planner 1
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AC:js

Att. 1: OCP Consultation Policy and Summary of Consultation with Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Referral Comment (No Referral necessary)
Agricultural Land Commission	No referral necessary because the the scope of the proposed amendment does not impact agricultural uses.
Richmond School Board	No referral necessary because the proposed OCP amendment does not increase number of dwelling units or number of households with school aged children. (See below)
Board of Metro Vancouver	No referral necessary because the scope of the proposed OCP amendment does not affect the City's Regional Growth Statement.
Councils of adjacent Municipalities	No referral necessary because adjacent municipalities are not affected.
First Nations (e.g., Sto:lo, Tsawwassen & Musqueam)	No referral necessary.
TransLink	No referral necessary.
Vancouver Port Authority & Steveston Harbour Authority	No referral necessary.
Vancouver International Airport Authority (Federal Agency)	No referral necessary because the proposed amendment does not affect Transport Canada's maximum permitted building height or Aircraft Noise
Richmond Coastal Health Authority	No referral necessary.
Community Groups & Neighbours	No referral necessary, the public will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment at the Public Hearing.
All relevant Federal & Provincial Government Agencies	No referral necessary because Federal and Provincial Government Agencies are not affected.



**Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000
Amendment Bylaw 10719
(Development Permit Area Exemptions)**

The Council of the City of Richmond, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, as amended, is further amended at Subsection 14.1.6.1 (Development Permit Area Exemptions) by:
 - a. inserting the following as a new first bullet:
 - “• repair of all buildings where a signed and sealed letter from a registered professional engineer identifies that such repair to the building’s exterior envelope is required due to water ingress and where the repair works are comparable to the building’s existing materials, colours, and general form and character;”
 - b. replacing the bullet “exterior renovations of all buildings, except neighbourhoods public houses, which cost less than \$75,000” with “exterior renovations of all buildings, except neighbourhoods public houses, which cost less than \$150,000;”
2. This Bylaw may be cited as **“Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 9000, Amendment Bylaw 10719”**.

FIRST READING

PUBLIC HEARING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

ADOPTED

CITY OF RICHMOND
APPROVED by <i>Ac</i>
APPROVED by Manager or Solicitor <i>SH</i>

MAYOR

CORPORATE OFFICER