



POLICY REPORT
DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

Report Date: May 17, 2014
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Meeting Date: June 10, 2014

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Planning and Development Services
SUBJECT: CD-1 Text Amendment: 555 Great Northern Way

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the application by Great Northern Way Campus Trust, to amend *CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) District (402) By-law No. 8131 for 555 Great Northern Way [PID 027-789-624; Lot Q District Lots 264A and 2037 Group 1 New Westminster District Plan BCP39441]* to create new height sub areas with conditional building height limits, and a further amendment to the CD-1 By-law to remove Section 7, Parking and Loading, as recommended by staff, be referred to Public Hearing together with:
- (i) draft by-law provisions, generally as presented in Appendix A;
 - (ii) draft CD-1 (402) Design Guideline revisions, generally as presented in Appendix B; and
 - (iii) the recommendation of the General Manager of Planning and Development Services to approve the application;

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary amending by-law generally in accordance with Appendix A for consideration at Public Hearing.

- B. THAT, at the time of enactment of the CD-1 By-Law, the General Manager of Development Services be instructed to bring forward for approval the amendments to the CD-1(402) Design Guidelines, generally as presented in Appendix B.

- C. THAT Recommendations A and B be adopted on the following conditions:
- (i) THAT the passage of the above resolutions creates no legal rights for the applicant or any other person, or obligation on the part of the City; any expenditure of funds or incurring of costs is at the risk of the person making the expenditure or incurring the cost;
 - (ii) THAT any approval that may be granted following the public hearing shall not obligate the City to enact a bylaw rezoning the property, and any costs incurred in fulfilling requirements imposed as a condition of rezoning are at the risk of the property owner; and
 - (iii) THAT the City and all its officials, including the Approving Officer, shall not in any way be limited or directed in the exercise of their authority or discretion, regardless of when they are called upon to exercise such authority or discretion.

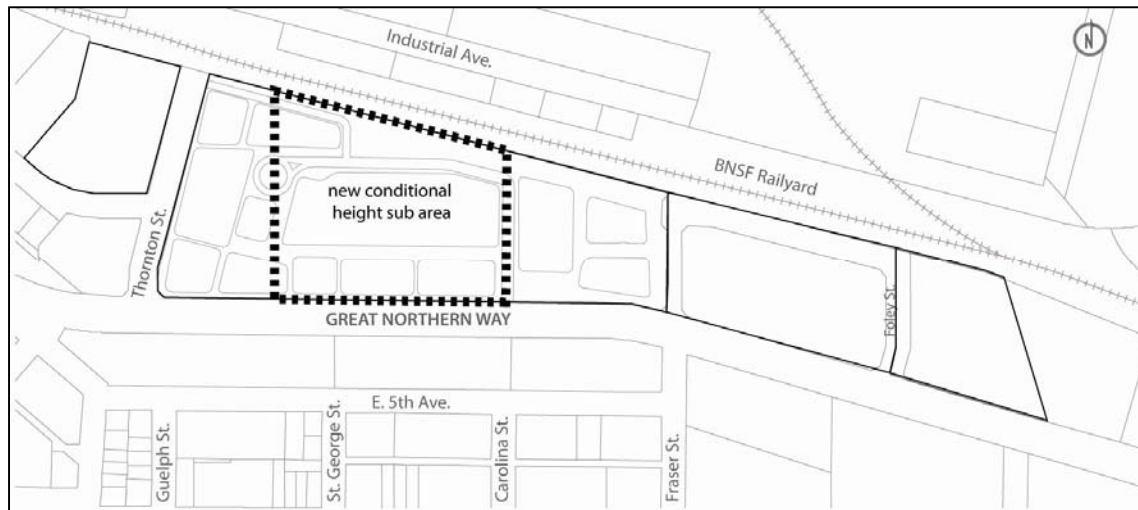
REPORT SUMMARY

This report assesses an application by the Great Northern Way Campus Trust (GNWC Trust) to amend CD-1 (402) By-law No. 8131 for 555 Great Northern Way to create new height sub-areas with conditional building height limits; this new height area is located in the middle of the CD-1 District, extending generally from St. George Street to Carolina Street (figure 1). Existing building height limits in this area are 13.7 m (45 ft.) and 18.2 m (60 ft.); the amendment would permit an additional 4.5 m (15 ft.) in this area, conditional on enhanced architectural performance and sustainable infrastructure, potentially resulting in new building heights of 18.3 m (60 ft.) and 22.9 m (75 ft.).

This amendment to the height limits would not create any additional density and would simply permit the allowable floor space in the current CD-1 District to be contained in slightly taller building forms. Staff support the height increase, and recommend approval of the application, subject to Public Hearing.

This report also recommends an amendment to the CD-1 (402) By-law No. 8131 to remove Section 7, Parking and Loading. Parking and loading for developments in the CD-1 District would then be regulated by the Parking By-law. This would bring the CD-1 into line with current practice and it would allow the parking requirements to more accurately reflect the current vision for the site.

Figure 1: Area within CD-1 (402) proposed for conditional height increases



COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- CD-1 (402) By-law No. 8131 (*enacted November 30, 1999 and amended up to July 20, 2010*)
- Public Realm Plan for 555 Great Northern Way (2002)
- Modified Structure Plan (Thornton Street alignment) (2008)
- Vancouver Economic Action Strategy 2011
- Great Northern Way Technology Park CD-1 Guidelines (*adopted November 30, 1999 and amended February 5, 2014*)
- Great Northern Way Campus Revised Structure Plan (*adopted February 5, 2014*)

REPORT

Background/Context

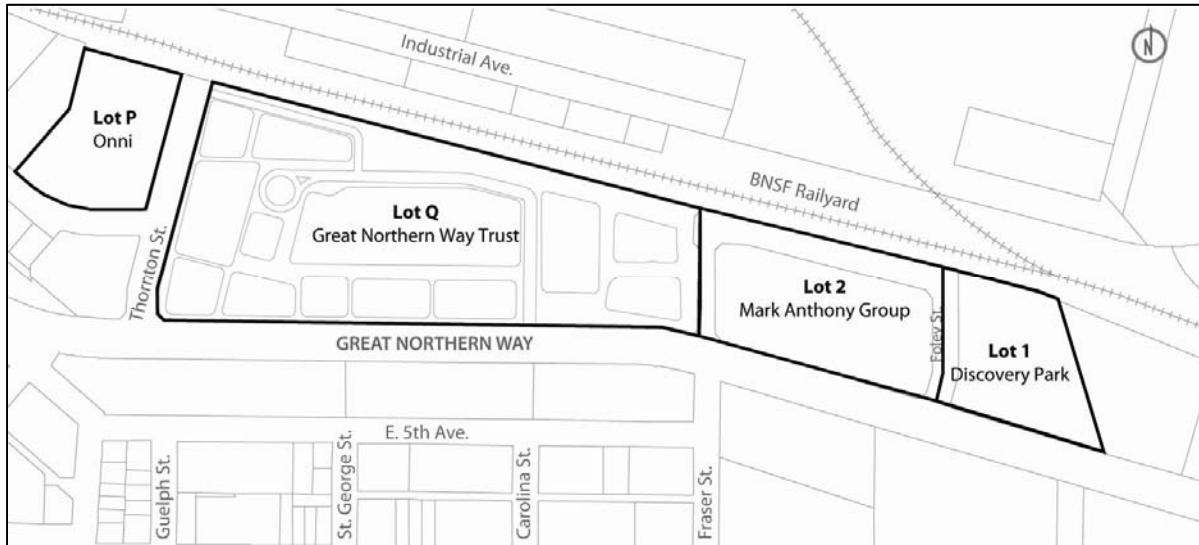
The CD-1 District comprises 11 ha (28 acres) of land within the False Creek Flats located north of Great Northern Way, east of Thornton Street and south of the BNSF rail yard.

Current ownership within the CD-1 District consists of four landowners: Discovery Park (Lot 1), the Mark Anthony Group (Lot 2), the Onni Group (Lot P) and the four academic institutions: UBC, SFU, Emily Carr University (ECU) and BCIT, represented by the GNWC Trust (Lot Q) (see Figure 2).

The GNWC Trust envisions developing Lot Q into a revitalized cultural and artistic district by co-locating creative industry tenants with educational institutions, including the new Emily Carr University.

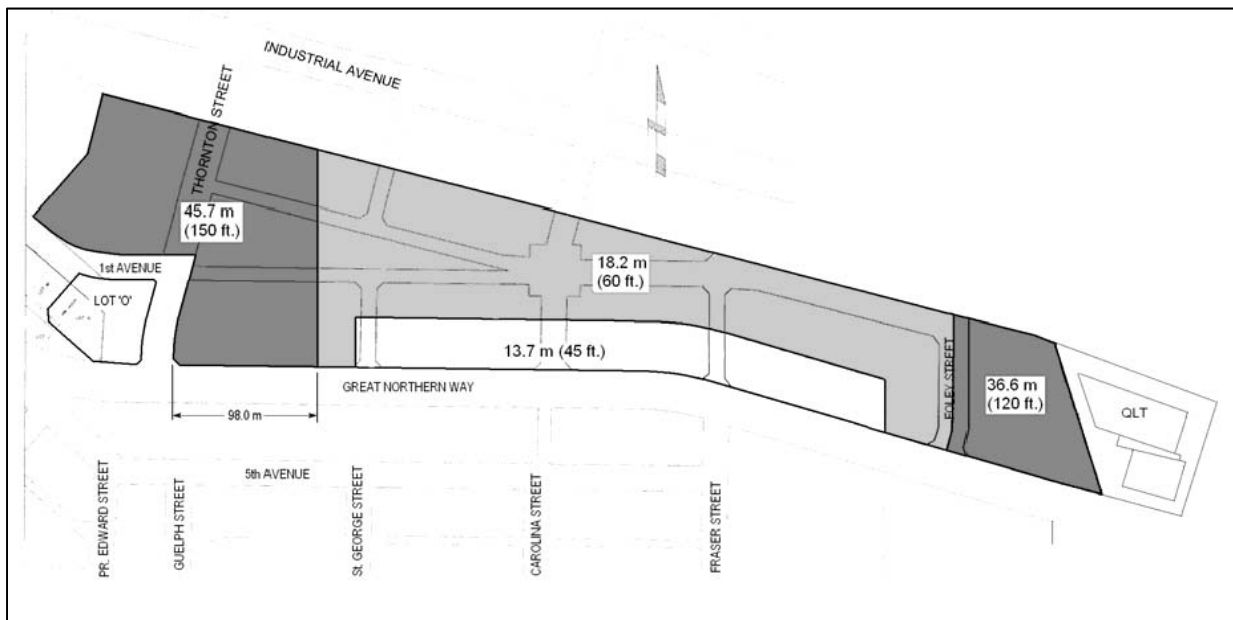
In January 2013, the Provincial Government approved \$113 million in funding for the relocation of the Emily Carr University from Granville Island to Lot Q. Currently, Emily Carr University along with Partnerships BC, is undertaking a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select a proponent to design, construct and operate the new building. Shortly after the selection of a preferred proponent in late 2014, a development proposal will be submitted to the City.

Figure 2: Land ownership within CD-1 (402)



Current maximum building height limits are prescribed within four sub-areas across the CD-1 site, with greater heights located to the western (45.7 m) and eastern (36.6 m) edges and lower heights of 13.7 m and 18.2 m located within the middle of the site (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Current maximum building height limits (Diagram 2 of the CD-1 By-law)



On February 4, 2014 Council approved a revised Structure Plan for Lot Q which was developed through a collaboration between City staff, the GNWC Trust and Emily Carr University. The Structure Plan established a new system of roads, parcels and open space to guide future development of Lot Q, including the relocation of Emily Carr. Amendments to heights, density and land use were not within the scope of the Structure Planning Program.

Strategic Analysis

Through the Emily Carr University Relocation RFP process, City staff have had the opportunity to meet with the project proponent teams, and to review and comment on the designs as they develop. Through this process a height amendment has been proposed to create greater opportunities for enhanced architectural and urban design excellence for the Emily Carr building. Potential benefits resulting from the height increase include:

- A more expressive roof design, including the potential for greater articulation, varied rooflines and sustainability features such as green roofs.
- Increased ability to accommodate the required program of uses for Emily Carr University. A greater street presence along Great Northern Way.

To achieve these benefits the application proposes to create a new height sub-area on the Emily Carr site within the middle portion of Lot Q. The amendment would permit an additional 4.5 m (15 ft.) in building height, conditional on enhanced architectural performance and sustainable infrastructure, potentially resulting in new building heights of 18.3 m (60 ft.) and 22.9 m (75 ft.).

Figure 4 Proposed conditional height limit areas



	Area (from figure 4)					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Permitted Height	45.72 m [150 ft.]	18.29 m [60 ft.]	13.71 m [45 ft.]	18.29 m [60 ft.]	13.71 m [45 ft.]	36.60 m [120 ft.]
Conditional Height	n/a	22.86 m [75 ft.]	18.29 m [60 ft.]	n/a	n/a	n/a

To aid in assessing the implications of a 4.5 m (15 ft) height increase, a view analysis was produced by the applicant which considered the potential impacts of the additional height on northerly views of the North Shore mountains from the Mount Pleasant area to the south. Views were assessed from four locations: St. George Street at 5th Avenue, Carolina Street at 5th Avenue, St. George Street at Great Northern Way, and Carolina Street at Great Northern Way. In reviewing the analysis, staff determined that there were no significant additional view impacts associated with the application.

Given the limited view impacts and the potential for improved architectural and urban design performance, staff have concluded that the proposed height increase is acceptable.

The proposed amendment to the CD-1(402) By-law is set out in Appendix A.

The development on the site is also guided by the CD-1 (402) Design Guidelines. Staff are also recommending an amendment to the Guidelines to ensure it is aligned with the changes to the CD-1 (402) By-law.

The proposed amendment to the CD-1 (402) Design Guidelines are set out in Appendix A.

Parking and Loading

The CD-1 By-law contains site-specific parking and loading requirements which were based on the technology park concept for the site at the time of the original rezoning to CD-1. These requirements exceed the current standards in the Parking By-law for comparable land uses and they are no longer relevant given the development plans of the GNWC Trust. To be consistent with current practice, staff recommend removing these standards from the CD-1 By-law which would allow sections 4 and 5 of the Parking By-law to govern parking and loading requirements for all development in the CD-1 District.

Public Input

The City of Vancouver Rezoning Centre webpage included notification and application information as well as an online comment form. An information sign was installed on site on April 1st, 2014. Neighbours were notified and a community open house was held on April 15th, 2014 with staff and the applicant team present. Approximately 35 people attended the event and 18 people provided feedback on the application by phone, email or comment form (eight in support, eight opposed and two maybe/unspecified).

Those in support of the application stated a desire to allow Emily Carr University to achieve programming goals while enabling the university to have a more significant presence in the area.

Concerns relating to this application included: loss of views to the mountains and a desire that increased heights should be related to architectural performance.

A full summary of public input is provided in Appendix C.

Public Benefits

As the proposed height will not create any additional density and will simply permit a reapportioning of the current allowable floor space within the CD-1 District, there is no Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) associated with the amendment.

The site is subject to the City-wide Development Cost Levy (DCL) which will be paid at building permit issuance for each phase of development.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk (if applicable)

Financial

As noted in the above section on Public Benefits, the increase in permitted height will not result in a CAC. The City-wide DCL will be applicable with each phase of building.

Approval of the report recommendations or consideration item will have no financial implications with respect to the City's operating expenditures, fees, or staffing.

CONCLUSION

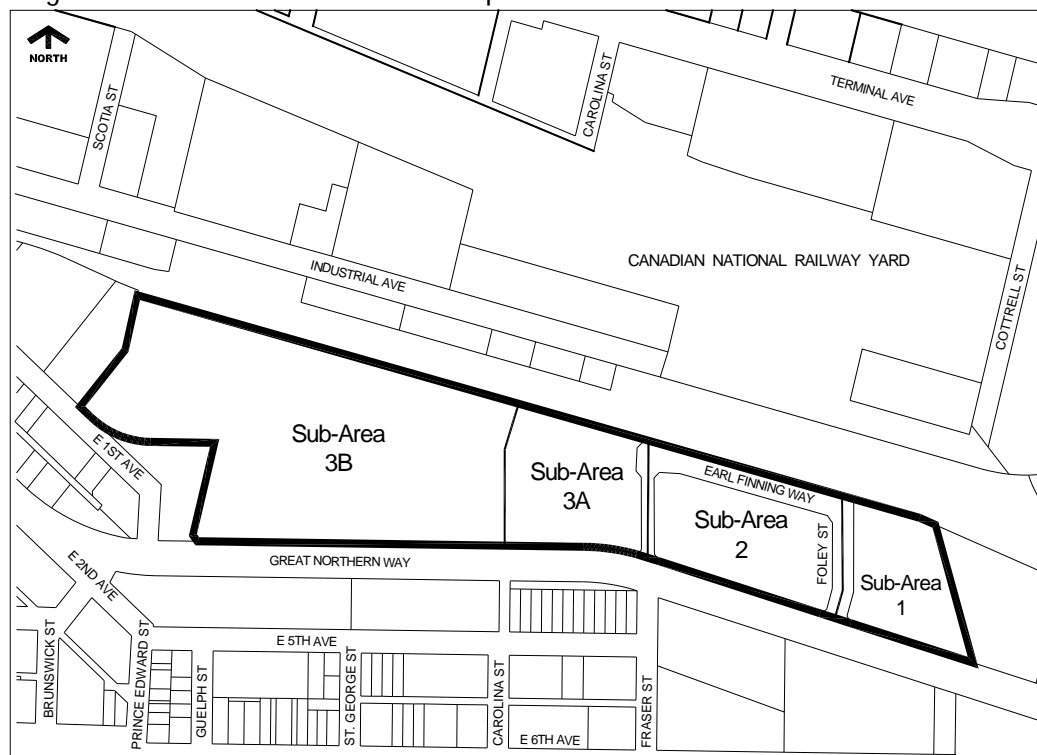
Staff have reviewed the application to amend the maximum height areas of CD-1 (402) By-Law No. 8131 and conclude that this is supportable. Staff recommend a further by-law amendment, to update parking and loading for the CD-1 District, be included in the application. Amendments to the CD-1(402) Design Guidelines are also being recommended to ensure they are aligned with the changes to the CD-1 (402) By-law. The General Manager of Planning and Development recommends that the application be referred to Public Hearing, together with the draft by-law provisions generally as set out in Appendix A and, subject to the public hearing, that it be approved.

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555 Great Northern Way
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO CD-1 (402) BY LAW NO. 8131

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of CD-1 (402) By-law No. 8131.
2. Council strikes out Section 4 Sub- Areas and substitutes:
"4 Sub-Areas
- 4.1 The site shall consist of four sub-areas approximately as illustrated in Diagram 1 below, solely for the purpose of calculation of maximum permitted floor area and maximum permitted number of residential units.

Diagram 1- Sub -Areas for maximum permitted floor area and residential units



- 4.2 The site shall consist of six sub-areas approximately as illustrated in Diagram 2 below, solely for the purpose of calculation of maximum permitted height.

Diagram 2 - Sub-Areas for Maximum Building Heights



3. In section 5.7, Council strikes out the words “set out in Table 3 below.” And substitutes “as set out in Table 3 below” .
4. Council strikes out Section 6 Height, and substitutes:
“6 Height
- 6.1 The maximum building height, excluding the mechanical penthouse and roof, must be as set out in Table 4 below.

	Sub- Area (Diagram 2)					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Permitted Height	45.72 m	18.29 m	13.71 m	18.29 m	13.71 m	36.60 m

- 6.2 Despite the provisions of section 6.1, if the Director of Planning first considers associated shadow impacts upon public open spaces and all applicable Council policies and guidelines, the Director of Planning may permit an increase in the permitted height of a building in sub-areas 2 and 3 of Diagram 2, in order to accommodate:
 - (a) the provision of decorative roof and enclosure treatments that achieves an enhanced architectural roof expression and appropriately integrates mechanical appurtenances such as elevator machine rooms; and
 - (b) access and infrastructure required to maintain green roofs or urban agriculture, roof- turbines mounted energy technologies including solar panels and wind turbines;

except that the maximum permitted height must not exceed 22.86 m in sub-area 2 of Diagram 2 and 18.29 m in sub-area 3 of Diagram 2.”

5. Council strikes out Section 7.

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555 Great Northern Way
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
CD-1 (402) Great Northern Way Design Guidelines

- In section 5.7, strike out (c) as shown:

5.7 Roofs and Mechanical Penthouses

- a) Roofs should be designed to be attractive as seen from above as well as from ground level. Large, monotonous expanses of roof should be avoided.
- b) Vents, mechanical rooms and equipment, elevator penthouses, and other rooftop devices should be integrated into the roof architectural treatment or should be grouped and screened with materials and finishes compatible with the building.
- ~~c) Mechanical penthouses and screening enclosures should not cover more than 25% of the roof area or project more than 6 m (20 ft.) above the maximum building height. They should be oriented with the longer dimension in a north-south direction to minimize view impacts to residential developments to the south.~~

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**555 Great Northern Way
PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUMMARY**

Public Notification

A rezoning information sign was installed on the site on April 1st, 2014. A community open house was held on Tuesday April 15th, 2014. Notification and revised application information, as well as an online comment form, was provided on the City of Vancouver Rezoning Centre webpage (vancouver.ca/rezapps).

April 15th, 2014 Community Open House

A community open house was held on April 15th, 2014, at the **Centre for Digital Media (685 Great Northern Way)**. A total of 933 notification letters were distributed to surrounding residents on April 1st, 2014. Staff, the applicant team, and a total of approximately 35 people attended.

Public Response

Public comments for this proposal totaled 18 and have been submitted to the City as follows:

- In response to the 15th April 2014 open house, a total of 14 comment sheets were submitted from individuals (approximately 57% in favour/29% opposed/14% maybe/unspecified).
- A total of 4 letters, e-mails, and online comment forms were submitted from individuals (approximately 0% in favour/100% opposed/0% unsure or unspecified).
- Below is a summary of all feedback (both online and from the open house) related to the proposal:

Support	Yes	No	Maybe/ Unspecified
1. Do you support the proposed redevelopment of this site?	8 (44%)	8 (44%)	2 (11%)

Public Feedback

Comments are in order from most frequently occurring to least

Density and Height

Many who voiced support for the proposed height increase did so because this would allow Emily Carr University to achieve their programming goals. Enabling Emily Carr University to have a presence in the area is seen as making the industrial False Creek Flats a livelier place.

At the same time, many opposing respondents identified the proposed height increase would mean loss of views of the north mountains, and that these views were key characteristics of the neighbourhood. They worry this increase could set a precedent for the area.

Those respondents who were "maybe" were supportive in principle as the proposed height increase is minimal, but support would be conditioned on the actual design of the building.

Design

Many supportive respondents wanted some assurance the Emily Carr building would not be a “shoe box,” but rather a “shining star” for the area. There were suggestions for the eventual architectural design to honour the indigenous peoples/cultures of Vancouver and its region by ensuring the Emily Carr building to have “good Coast Salish bones.” However, some opined that a sophisticated urban design and roof expression is not enough, and that how additional height needed for programming should be demonstrated more clearly.

Open Space + Green Innovations

Some welcomed the opportunity for green innovations like green roofs and stormwater management systems that both beautifies and remediates the environment to take place.

Parking

One respondent noted concerns with increased traffic volume at the site.

Miscellaneous

One respondent noted concerns for earthquake conditions in the Flats.

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