



CITY OF VANCOUVER

POLICY REPORT DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

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Author: Michael Gordon
Phone No.: 604.873.7665
RTS No.: 05449
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TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: The Director of Current Planning, in consultation with the Managing Director of Cultural Services and the Director of Legal Services.

SUBJECT: Proposed Elimination of Pacific Centre Atrium and Replacement with Alternative Public Benefit - 777 Dunsmuir Street (Holt Renfrew, Pacific Centre)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorses the proposed elimination of the publicly accessible atrium at Pacific Centre (777 Dunsmuir Street), as proposed in Development Application 409483.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services recommends approval of the foregoing

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

The Downtown District Official Development Plan (DDODP) prescribes permitted land uses and maximums for building heights and densities in downtown Vancouver. The site containing Phase II of the Pacific Centre (777 Dunsmuir Street) has a maximum permitted density of 7.0 floor space ratio (FSR). The DDODP also includes provisions for the exclusion, from the calculation of floor space ratio, of publicly accessible atriums up to the lesser of 10 per cent of the permitted floor space or 6,000 square feet (557 m²). The DDODP also permits the

transfer of density from off-site designate heritage buildings, up to 10% of the permitted density for a site.

PURPOSE

This report seeks Council endorsement of the proposed elimination of a publicly accessible atrium contained within the Pacific Centre Mall Phase II (777 Dunsmuir Street - See Figure 1). Planning staff anticipate that Cadillac Fairview will soon be applying for rezoning for Phase I of Pacific Centre, in order to make improvements there, and that the appropriate replacement amenity can be dealt with at that time.

BACKGROUND

The Development Permit Board recently considered the approval of development application 409483 that includes the enclosure a portion of an existing amenity space (atrium) at levels 1, 2 and 3 of Pacific Centre to provide a single-tenant retail space (Holt Renfrew) and a new corridor system. This will increase the floor space ratio of the development from 7.0 to 7.21 floor space ratio. The project involves a request to transfer approximately 14,000 sq. ft. of heritage density to the site, which will be the mechanism to achieve the added density. The proposal also eliminates the atrium, which is currently available for public events and gatherings. This is the subject of this report.

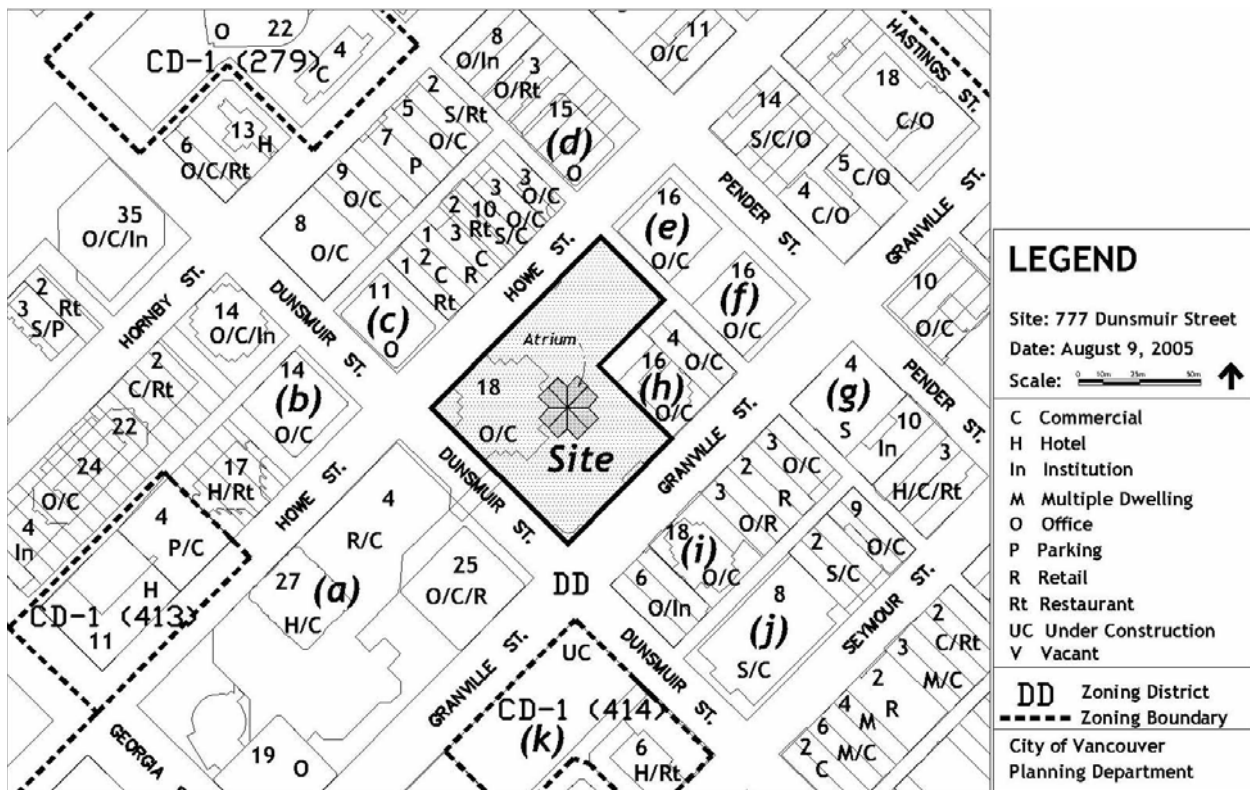


Figure 1 - Location Map

Phase II of Pacific Centre (i.e. that portion of the mall, north of Dunsmuir Street) was originally approved by the Development Permit Board on July 22, 1986 (Development Permit 203415) including the exclusion of 5,985 sq ft of floor area for the public amenity atrium from the calculation of floor space ratio, in accordance with Section 6 of the DDODP. A section 215 covenant providing a statutory Right of Way for this public amenity space was executed as required by the DDODP. Conditions for approval of this floor area exclusion were as follows:

1. The owners are required to construct, complete and furnish the atrium space for the enjoyment of the public.
2. The owners are required to encourage, promote and programme the atrium space for community, cultural and artistic activities, to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning, in consultation with Director of Social Planning (a responsibility since assumed by the Manager Director of Cultural Services).
3. The atrium shall not be used for commercial purposes.

This atrium space has always been problematic functioning as a public space, being hidden well inside the building, and being difficult to program for events.

Staff believe that it is advisable to seek Council's endorsement of the proposed elimination of the existing publicly accessible atrium, considered by the Development Permit Board, as part of a development permit application to reconfigure Phase II of Pacific Centre.

DISCUSSION

The Director of Current Planning supports elimination of the current atrium (see Figure 2 and 3) as it is anticipated that it will be replaced with a public benefit of an equivalent value elsewhere on the Pacific Centre Mall site. The options under discussion at this time are:

- The provision of a more publicly accessible atrium, suitable for public gatherings and events at the corner of Georgia and Howe Streets (see Figure 4); and/or
- The provision of a major, high profile entrance to the Richmond Airport Vancouver rapid transit station, on the Pacific Centre plaza (see Figure 5), adjacent to the corner of Georgia and Granville Streets.

With respect to the first, Cadillac Fairview intends to pursue a reconfiguration of the Georgia/Howe site, asking the City to consider improvements and additional floor space. With respect to the second, detailed discussions and conceptual design are well underway. A general resolution on the costs and benefits to the respective parties should happen in the next month or two. A rezoning will be needed for either or both of these, at which time the replacement amenity can be considered.

Although at this time we do not have a rezoning application in hand, planning staff are supporting the consideration of their development application at this time because Cadillac Fairview and Holt Renfrew are facing significant time constraints in renovating and completing the new anchor store.



Figure 2: Elevated perspective of Pacific Centre atrium adjacent to basement-level food court, which is proposed for enclosure, corner of Granville Street and Dunsmuir Street.



Figure 3: Ground perspective of Pacific Centre atrium, which is proposed for enclosure, adjacent to the corner of Granville Street and Dunsmuir Street.



Figure 4: Pacific Centre atrium and plaza, corner of West Georgia Street and Howe Street. There may be the opportunity to expand this existing atrium and provide a publicly accessible atrium and space for cultural programming.



Figure 5: Pacific Centre plaza, corner of West Georgia Street and Granville Street. This is a potential location for the entrance to the RAV Robson rapid transit station.

Recommendation A seeks Council's endorsement of this approach.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

CONCLUSION

Staff believe that it is in the public interest to allow enclosure of the atrium space in Pacific Centre Phase II, in return for achieving other public benefits of equivalent value, and likely more public usefulness in future. There are two benefit options under active discussion. If Council agrees with this approach, staff will report back at the appropriate time.

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