

Tools and Incentives to Encourage Mass Timber

February 27, 2024

direction



amendment adopted by Council during Broadway Plan in 2022

P. THAT Council direct staff to explore and report back on additional incentives to advance:

- wood including mass timber in construction; and
- zero emissions standards including Passive House;

Consideration should be given to amending the Vancouver Building By-law to allow mass timber construction exceeding 12 stories outright, relaxation of zoning requirements, increases in density, and streamlining permit requirements.

what is mass timber

- wood that is fastened together in layers to create larger panels, posts, and beams
- Policy allows for hybrid mass timber, including concrete cores and steel posts and beams



121 E 6th Av – 12 storeys – image: T3 Mount Pleasant – Hines and PC Urban

why mass timber

- reduced embodied carbon
- improved energy efficiency
- faster and less intrusive on-site construction
- potential to reduce costs over time through innovation and scale



121 E 6th Av – 12 storeys – image: T3 Mount Pleasant – Hines and PC Urban

why incentives

- 8 tall mass timber sites in last five years
- current perception of cost and risks compared to concrete
- incentives needed to drive adoption and normalize
- incentives have been effective in other areas



1766 Frances Street – 9 storeys – image: GBL Architects

consultation

- Staff
 - keep it simple, ideally outright
 - make it City wide
 - avoid process impacts
- Industry
 - early advice is valuable
 - density is a key incentive



Mjøstårnet, Norway – 18 storeys – image: Moelven Limtre

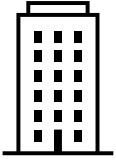
incentive design goals

- effective amount
- avoid complicated and complicating policy
- integrate with existing approvals process
- timely



River District Parcel 19.1 - 18 storeys – image: Wesgroup

recommended incentive 1



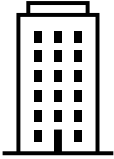
additional storeys with commensurate density for mass timber through rezoning

- incremental storey heights to align with plan areas and other policies
- number of additional storeys predefined to simplify administration



Middle income housing in Seattle – 8 storeys - image: Blanton & Turner

incentive 1 policy



Mass Timber Policy for Rezonings

In areas of the city where existing plans and policies already enable redevelopment to 8 storeys or more, allow modest increases in height and density for projects which meet the definition of mass timber construction. This policy does not apply in areas where the height limit is less than 8 storeys.

Additional height and commensurate density will be considered generally up to:

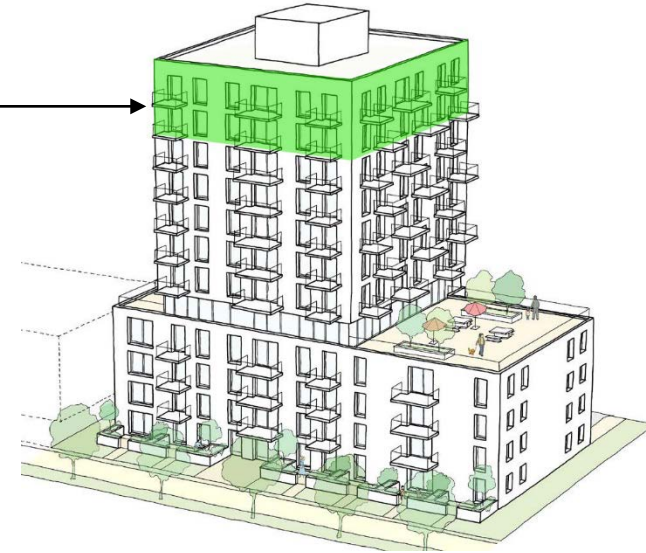
- (a) **Two additional storeys** for sites where 8 to 11 storeys are enabled, or
- (b) **Three additional storeys** for sites where 12 or more storeys are enabled.

The building must maintain the use and tenure requirements specified in the area plan or policy after the additional storeys are added.

Projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with proposals for additional height and commensurate density evaluated alongside public realm impacts and urban design considerations, including view cones and shadow impacts on significant public spaces.

example

Plan	Area Plan - page	Maximum Storey Height in Plan	Additional Storeys for Mass Timber
Broadway	Granville/Burrard Slopes – Area D - 127	10 for secured market and below-market rental	2 more secured market and below-market rental
	Mount Pleasant RT Areas - Area D - 260	12 for secured market and below-market rental	3 more secured market and below-market rental
Grandview Woodlands	Hastings Slope – South side of Hastings St – Commercial to Victoria - 62	8 for mixed-use development for sites with min. 200 ft. frontage	2 more mixed-use
	Hastings Plateau – North side of Hastings St – McLean to Woodland - 59	15 for mixed-use development on sites with min. 200 ft. frontage and min. 20% residential as non-market	3 more mixed-use with min. 20% residential as non-market



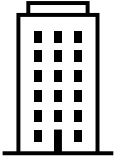
limits

- rezoning policy is designed to avoid conflict with other civic outcomes such as sunlight on parks and heritage retention
- can be combined with incentives for below-market housing in locations without those incentives in area plans
- incentives are intended to be time-limited



Granville St – 9 storeys - Intelligent City and LWPAC

recommended incentive 2



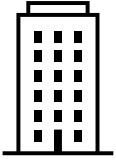
increase the permitted height by 10% outright in district schedule areas

- builds on existing height increase by adding an incentive amount for projects not in rezoning
- easier to plan for compared to conditional increases



2150 Keith Drive – 10 storeys – Dialog Design

recommended incentive 3



provide a pre-application meeting with representatives from:

- Chief Building Official
- Development Planning
- Project Facilitation

to advise on the supportability of the key mass timber elements



305 Main Street – 11 storeys

next steps

- ensure effective implementation
- continue parallel work on permit process and the Building By-law



2150 Keith Drive – 10 storeys – Dialog Design

Thank you

