



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: April 9, 2024  
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Meeting Date: April 23, 2024  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: Chief Building Official  
SUBJECT: Housekeeping and Miscellaneous Changes to the Building By-law

### Recommendations

THAT Council approve, in principle, various housekeeping and miscellaneous updates to the Building By-law #12511 as set out in this report and as generally attached in Appendix A;

FURTHER THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward the necessary by-law amendments for enactment by Council, generally as outlined in Appendix A.

### Purpose and Executive Summary

This report presents proposed housekeeping and miscellaneous updates to the Building By-law with a focus on the collection and correction of known inconsistencies, errata, and editorial concerns. Council's acceptance of the proposed updates will provide increased clarity for existing regulatory requirements.

### Council Authority/Previous Decisions

On July 19th, 2019, Council enacted the Building By-law No. 12511 regulating the construction of buildings and related matters in the City of Vancouver.

This was enacted under the authority granted by section 306 of the Vancouver Charter, permitting Council to make By-laws to regulate the construction of buildings, and under section 306(w), by which Council may adopt by reference in whole or in part and with any change Council considers appropriate, any code relating to fire safety or energy conservation or affecting the construction, alteration, or demolition of buildings.

## City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

## Context and Background

Council has previously enacted the 2019 Building By-law which adopted the 2018 British Columbia Building Code (BCBC) as the base document with “Unique to Vancouver” provisions reflective of the local concerns and objectives of the City. The current model of adoption and amendment is consistent with the model used by the province in developing the BCBC, which is in turn derived from the National Building Code of Canada (NBCC) along with specific provincial enactments to form the BCBC.

This mechanism of adoption and amendment is consistent with City and Provincial harmonization objectives in the field of building construction, allowing Vancouver to focus its resources on establishing construction policies that serve local development and construction objectives, and on achieving key policy outcomes in key areas concerns such as the environment adaptation and accessibility in the built environment. Regular housekeeping updates to maintain alignment with the parent documents are typical.

Further, Staff are aware that a new 2024 BC Building Code has been recently introduced by the Province of BC. Staff expect to bring forward a further report to Council later this year, with recommendations for greater harmonization with this Building Code in response to Council's motion on Accelerating Housing Delivery through Transformative Change.

## Discussion

The “Unique to Vancouver” (UTV) amendments that form the proposed amendments to the Building By-law are provided in **Appendix A**. The proposed set of regulatory enhancements recommended in this report, clarify or correct known inconsistencies, errata, and editorial concerns.

This includes addressing an oversight in the adoption of the changes to Book I of the Building By-law changes to calculation of the value construction, which did not see these changes introduced into Book II as they should have been. The remainder of changes include a collection of miscellaneous errata and clarifications.

Council's acceptance of the proposed updates will provide increased clarity and simplification of existing regulatory requirements and support City objectives with respect to life and fire safety, health, equity, and environmental stewardship. This report does not propose any changes to existing policy.

## Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report's recommendations.

**Environmental Implications**

The Building By-law is a key mechanism through which the City’s environmental and climate change adaptation objectives in the built environment are achieved.

**Legal Implications**

The proposed miscellaneous and housekeeping amendments fall within the authority granted to the City under the Vancouver Charter under Section 306. This permits Council to enact changes that Council considers appropriate or vary from adopted codes under these regulations, as it pertains to fire safety, energy conservation, or affecting the construction, alteration, or demolition of buildings.

\* \* \* \* \*

**APPENDIX A**  
**Draft Building By-law Amendments**

**DRAFT**

*Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.*

**BY-LAW NO.**

**A By-law to amend Building By-law No. 12511**  
**Regarding 2024 Housekeeping and Miscellaneous Amendments**

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of Building By-law 12511.
2. In Book I, Division B, Article 9.10.13.2., Council:
  - (a) strikes out “*principal*” and substitutes “principal”, and
  - (b) strikes out “*provided that the door conforms to*” and substitutes “provided that the door conforms to”.
3. In Book I, Division C, Articles 1.6.2.3. and 1.6.2.5., Council:
  - (a) strikes out “building” wherever it appears and substitutes “*building*”,
  - (b) strikes out “construction” wherever it appears and substitutes “*construction*”, and
  - (c) strikes out “permit” wherever it appears and substitutes “*permit*”.
4. In Book II, Division B, Sentence 2.2.11.4.(3), Council strikes “(See Note A-2.2.11.4.(2).)” and substitutes “(See Note A-2.2.11.4.(3).)”
5. In Book II, Division B, in the Notes to Part 2, Council renumbers Note A-2.2.11.4.(2). as Note A-2.2.11.4.(3).
6. In Book II, Division C, Council strikes out Article 1.6.2.3 and substitutes the following:

**“1.6.2.3. Valuation for Permit**

(see Note A-1.6.2.3)”.

**1)** The value of the proposed work for new *construction* stated on the application for the *permit* shall be determined as

- a) the net *floor area* in square meters (m<sup>2</sup>) multiplied by \$2691.25 (\$250/ft<sup>2</sup>) for a single detached house or duplex,
  - b) the net *floor area* in square meters (m<sup>2</sup>) multiplied by \$2691.25 (\$250/ft<sup>2</sup>) for an *ancillary residential building*, or
  - c) the total current monetary worth of all proposed materials, *construction* and work related to the *building* for all other cases.
- 2)** The value of the proposed work for an *alteration* to an *existing building* stated on the application for the *permit* shall be determined as
- a) the renovated *floor area* in square meters (m<sup>2</sup>) multiplied by \$1937.69 (\$180/ft<sup>2</sup>) for a single detached house, duplex, or *ancillary residential building*,
  - b) the new or renovated vertical wall area in square meters (m<sup>2</sup>) where only the walls are being altered or added, multiplied by \$968.85 (\$90/ft<sup>2</sup>) for a single detached house, duplex or *ancillary residential building*, or
  - c) the total current monetary worth of all proposed materials, *construction* and work related to the *building* for all other cases.
- 3)** The value of the proposed work established in Clause (1)(c) and (2)(c) shall include the total current monetary worth of all labour and all fees and costs incurred for design, investigative testing, consulting services, *construction*, *construction* management, *contractor's* profit and overhead, sales taxes, and *construction* insurance related to the *building*.
- 4)** The total current monetary worth referred to in Clauses (1)(c) and (2)(c), and Sentence (3) shall include the market value of all labour, including unpaid labour provided by an *owner* or volunteer, and the market value of all materials, including donated, recycled or used materials.
- 5)** The total current monetary worth referred to in Clause (1)(a) and Sentence (2) shall include all components of the *building*, notwithstanding the fact that some components of the *building* may be subject to other *permits* and fees.”.
7. In Book II, Division C, Article 1.6.2.4., Council strikes out Sentence (1) and substitutes the following:
- “**1)** The *Chief Building Official* may review the value of the proposed work stated in an application, and may substitute a different value for the proposed work, based on a cost estimate prepared by a registered quantity surveyor using an *acceptable* valuation method.”.
8. In Book II, Division C, Notes to Part 1, Council inserts a new note as follows:
- “A-1.6.2.3.(1)(b) and (c) Value of Proposed Work.** The value of proposed work is a reference construction value used for the purposes of determining the applicable permit fees for a given project.

For new detached homes, duplexes, and ancillary residential building such as laneway houses, this may be determined through a simplified process based on the net floor area. This refers to the total aggregate floor space within the building and any associated accessory structures supporting human occupancy or storage. The area so established is to be considered the sum of all horizontal floor area located within the outermost extents of the exterior walls on each floor level, inclusive of all normally occupied space. This is intended to include service rooms or ancillary uses to support normal building operation and maintenance.

The total area to be used in the determination of the value of proposed work is to be determined to the first decimal place. This is multiplied by the factor identified in Sentences 1.6.2.3.(1) or (2) as applicable in order to establish the value of the proposed work.”.

9. In Book II, Division C, Council strikes out Article 1.6.2.5. and substitutes the following:

**“1.6.2.5. Fee Schedule**

1) Except as permitted by Sentence (2), *permit* fees shall be calculated in accordance with the Fee Schedule at the end of this Part and the fees for *construction* without a *permit* are as outlined in Article 1.6.1.2.

2) The *Chief Building Official* may reduce *permit* fees in accordance with Part A, Section 4 of the Fee Schedule at the end of this Part for a *building* considered Social Housing, as defined in the Zoning and Development By-law.”.

10. In Book II, Division C, Sentence 1.6.2.6.(1) Council strikes out “or Article 1.6.4.5.”.
11. In Book II, Division C, Council strikes out Article 1.6.4.5.
12. A decision by a court that any part of this By-law is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this By-law, and is not to affect the balance of this By-law.
13. This By-law is to come into force and take effect upon enactment.

