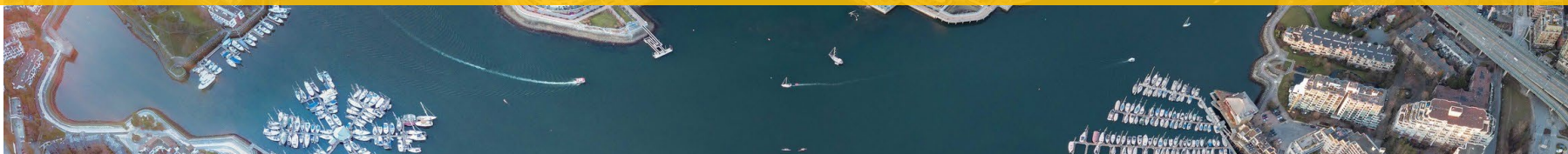


# City-wide Design & Development Guidelines

## Phase Two Actions

Solar Access Guidelines, Legacy Guideline Document Repeal and TOA Rezoning Policy Amendments

Standing Committee on City Finance and Services  
July 23, 2025





An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the city's coastline, harbor, and surrounding mountains. A large, semi-transparent yellow rectangle is centered over the city, containing the title and introductory text. The background image shows the city's urban layout, including residential areas, commercial districts, and the harbor with numerous ships and boats. The mountains in the background are partially covered in snow.

# Introduction

Support housing and economic development while continuing to honour the things that make Vancouver a great place to live, work and visit.





## Background

# CDDG Overview



## Objectives

- Help to **streamline housing**
- **Improve the approvals process** and simplify the regulatory structure
- **Improve certainty**, predictability and transparency
- **Right-size efforts**
- Align with **Council priorities**



## Related Work Plans

- Vancouver Plan Implementation
- Process Improvement Program (PIP)
- Policy, Regulations and Process (PRoP [RR & DPR])

## CDDG Overview



### Early Actions

July 2024

Focus on solar access, residential tower floor plates and view cones without public engagement.



### Phase Two Actions

July 2025

Focus on solar access in downtown and repeal of legacy guidelines, along with amendments to the TOA Rezoning Policy.



### City-wide Design & Development Guidelines

Early 2026

Consolidate and modernize 2,200+ pages of Vancouver's built form policies and guidelines.





# Council Direction (July 2024)

## Recommendation A

THAT Council approve the Solar Access Guidelines for Areas Outside of Downtown, generally as presented in Appendix C of the Report dated June 28, 2025, entitled “Citywide Development Guidelines Early Actions – Public Views, Solar Access, and Residential Tower Floorplates”

FURTHER THAT Council approve the proposed consequential amendments related to solar access in policy documents, generally as presented in Appendix D in the above-noted report;

**FURTHER THAT** Council instruct staff to **report back** on the impacts of changing the **solar access timeframe from 10 am to 4 pm PDT to 10 am to 2 pm PDT** from the spring through the fall equinoxes in Q1 2025.

## Recommendation C

THAT Council direct staff to initiate a **comprehensive review of solar access in public spaces in downtown neighbourhoods** and assess the impacts of shadow policies on the delivery of housing and jobs space;

**FURTHER THAT** Council direct staff to report back with a **balanced solar access strategy for downtown** as part of the City-wide Design and Development Guidelines.

**FURTHER THAT** Council instruct staff to **report back** on the impacts of changing the **solar access timeframe from 10 am to 4 pm PDT to 10 am to 2 pm PDT** from the spring through the fall equinoxes in Q1 2025.

## Sun in public space supports...



Vibrant  
Public Life



Mental and Physical  
Well-Being



Usable Play Spaces  
and Sports Fields



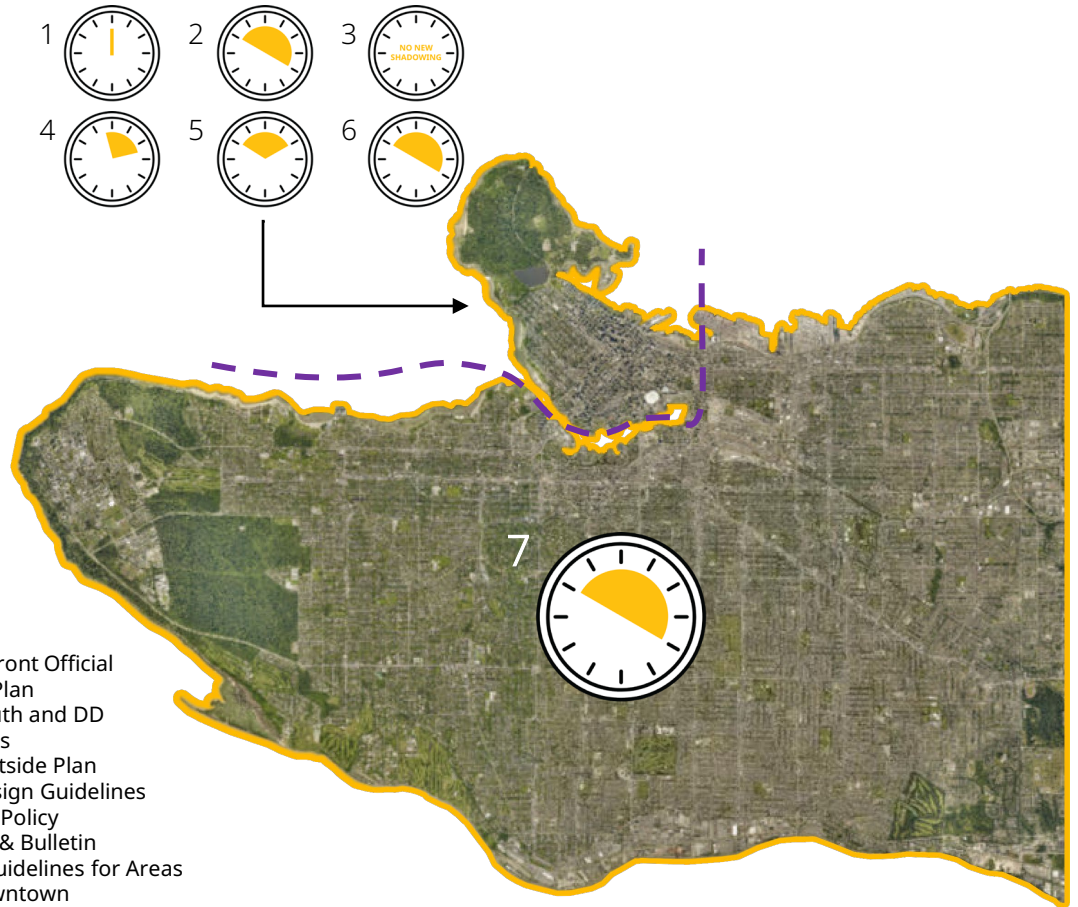
Healthy Urban  
Vegetation



Sense of Place and  
Community



## Solar Access Policies Current State



1. Central Waterfront Official Development Plan
2. Downtown South and DD Character Areas
3. Downtown Eastside Plan
4. Downtown Design Guidelines
5. Victory Square Policy
6. West End Plan & Bulletin
7. Solar Access Guidelines for Areas Outside of Downtown

An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the city's skyline, the harbor, and the surrounding mountains. A large, semi-transparent yellow rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing text. The text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

10 am – 4 pm vs 10 am – 2 pm  
Solar Fans

## Base Statistics and Findings

**39,580**

**Total residential development parcels** outside of downtown

**720**

**Parcels within a 10 am – 4 pm solar fan area**

**570**

**Parcels within a 10 am – 2 pm solar fan area**



## Base Statistics and Findings

A vertical yellow bar with two white circles. The top circle contains the number 200,000 and the bottom circle contains the number 300.

200,000

### Estimated Dwelling Count (30 Year)

Estimated **total housing units** with 10 am – 4 pm solar fan

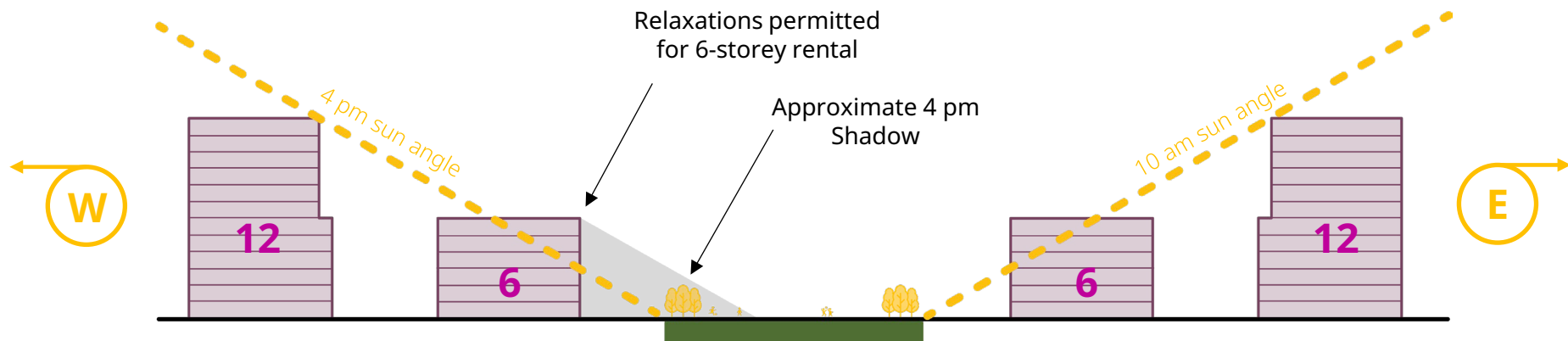
300

Estimated **additional housing units** with 10 am – 2 pm solar fan

# Base Statistics and Findings



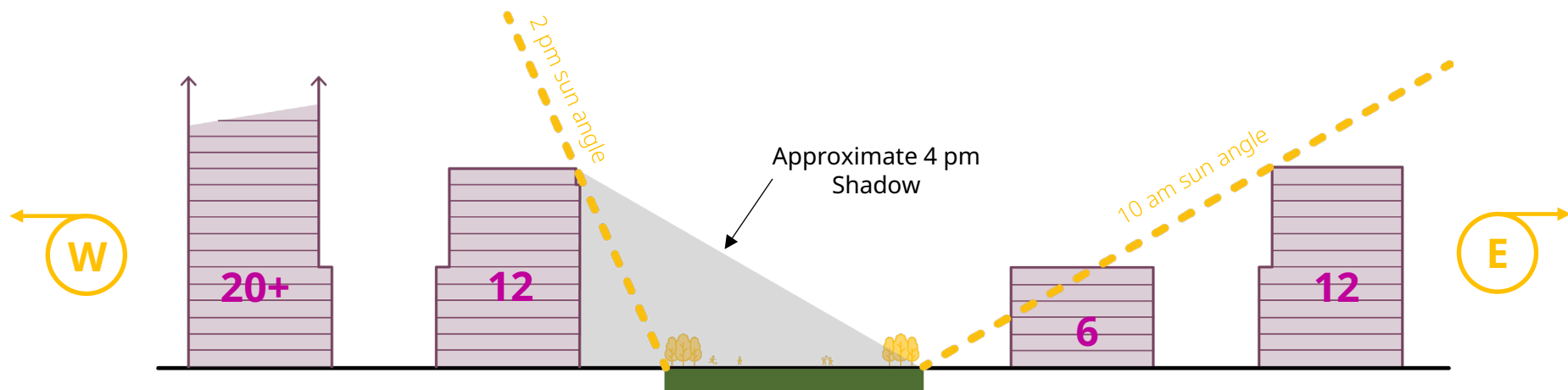
## 10 am – 4 pm Solar Fan



# Base Statistics and Findings



## 10 am – 2 pm Solar Fan



+300 of 200,000 Housing Units



## Maintain Existing Approach



### Maintain 10 am – 4 pm PDT solar access timeframe outside of downtown

#### Why?

- **Protects park sunlight** during peak afternoon use (after 2 pm)
- **Limited development benefit** – less than 2% of parcels affected and nominal additional benefit
- **Existing flexibility** already in place for:
  - **Six storey rental** buildings
  - **100% social housing** of any size

An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the city's skyline, the harbor, and the surrounding mountains. A large, semi-transparent yellow rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "Downtown Solar Access".

## Downtown Solar Access



CDDG Phase Two Actions 17



# Contextual Analysis Review



## VanPlay, Downtown Public Space Strategy & Observed Public Space Usage



## Policy Alignment



### Vancouver Plan Three Big Ideas



#### Enabling Housing and Complete Neighbourhoods

Support complete communities by **ensuring high-quality public spaces** while introducing **flexibility in support of housing** in the city centre.



#### An Economy that Works for All

Ensure that solar access policies are right-sized to **foster active commercial districts** while also **supporting growth** in downtown.



#### Climate Protection and Restored Ecosystems

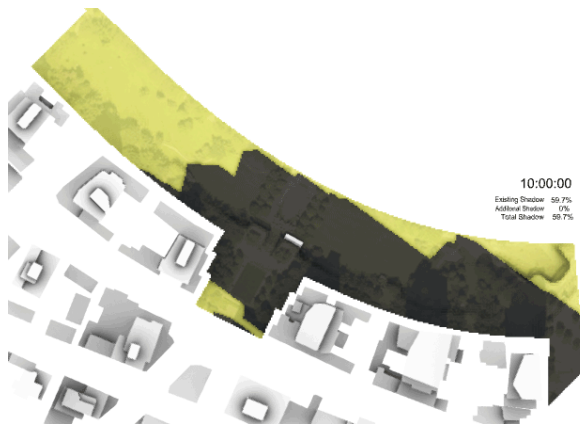
Balance solar access to **promote healthy urban greenery and tree canopy**, also allowing for **shade during hot summer months**.

# Example Technical Analysis

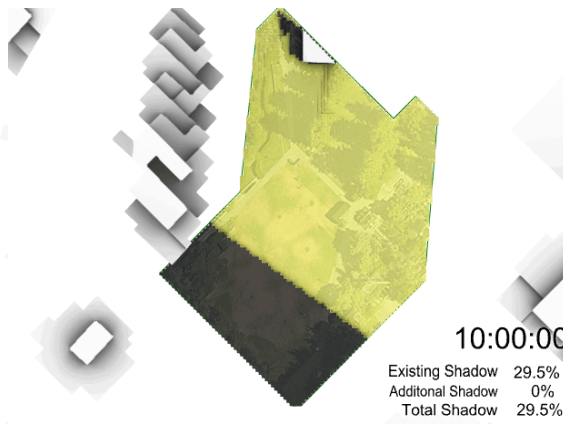


## Parametric Modelling and Animations

Harbour Green Park



Marina Square Park



Andy Livingstone Park

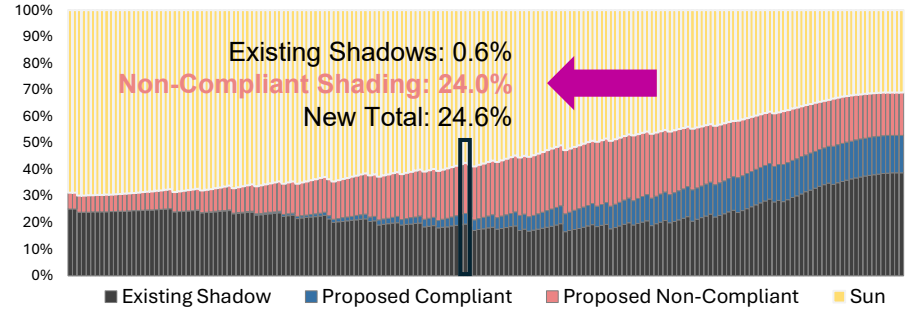
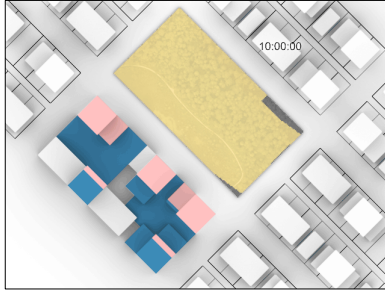
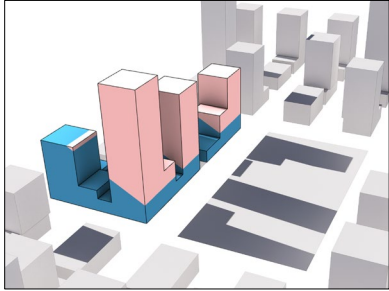


**Note for Printed Copies and PDF:** Images above are animations demonstrating the movement of existing and additional new shadowing generated by test case developments.

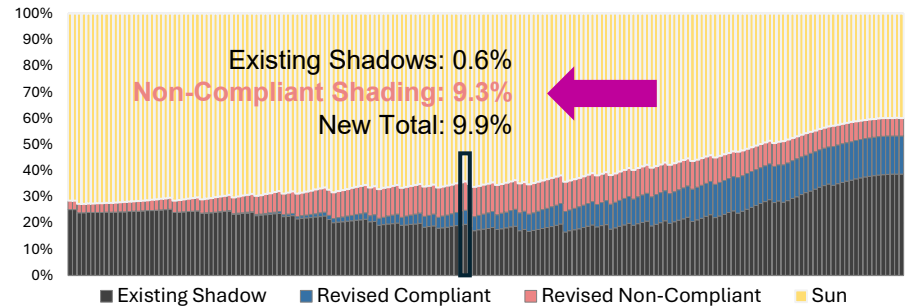
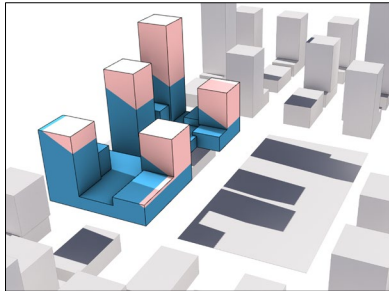


## Example Technical Analysis

### Generic Proposal



### Solar Budget Revision





# Findings



## Impact to Development

- **Outcomes vary widely** by street orientation, building form, park location and size
- Rigid rules may be **easy for some, punitive for others**
- **Solar Fan is straightforward** but can create unbalanced development opportunities



## Impact to Open Spaces

- **Summer shadowing is minimal** regardless of development scale or orientation
- **Shade** needs are better met with **trees and shade structures**
- **Small changes** at one time of year can cause **major shadowing** in others



## Technical Complexity

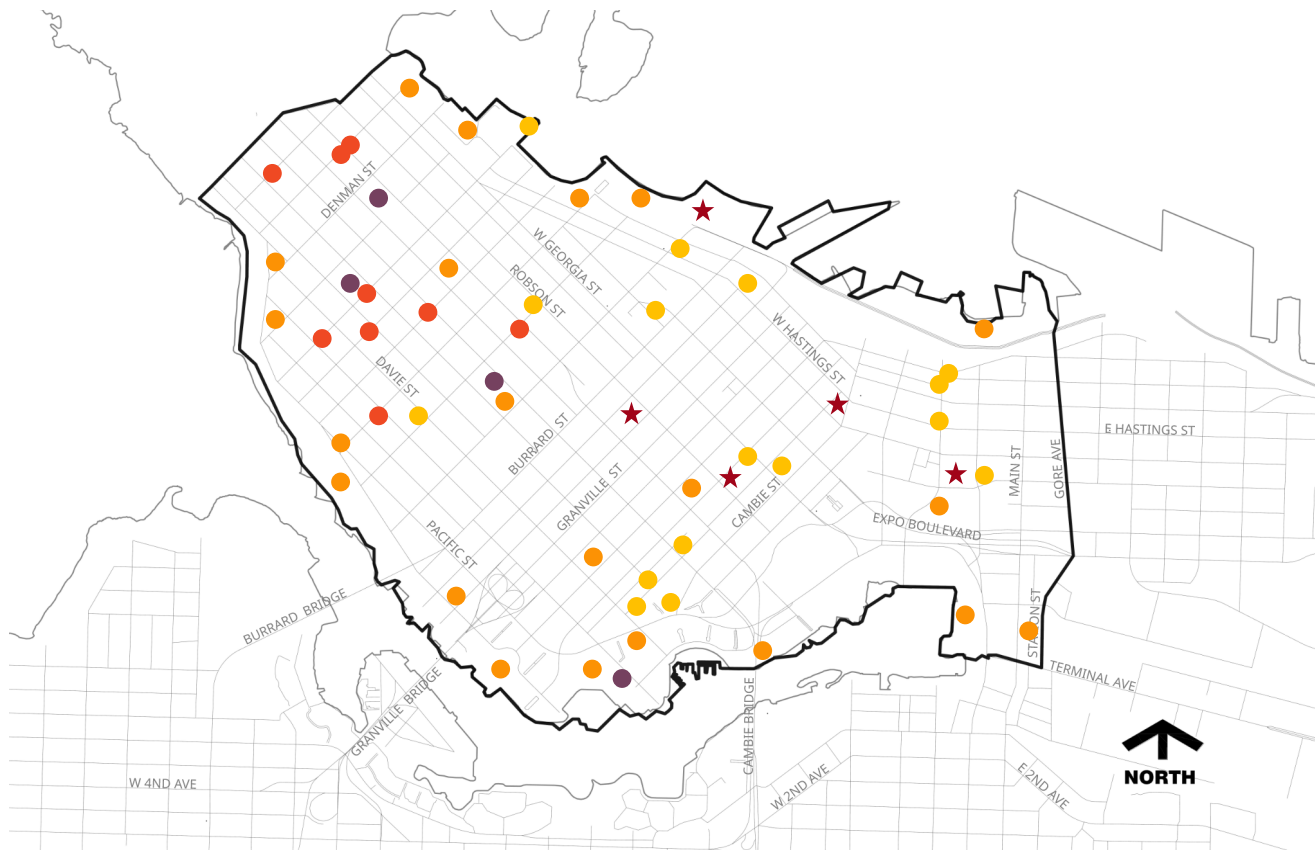
- Full solar budgeting requires **specialized modeling and 'digital twin' tools**
- **Solar Fan is simplest** for applicants and staff—least need for technical expertise

## Recommendation



### *New Solar Access Guidelines for the Downtown Peninsula*

- Reinforce the **established baseline performance** criteria to give most applicants an **easy path forward**
- Provide for **flexibility** designed to support **public benefits, encourage rigor** and help shape future policy approach

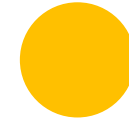
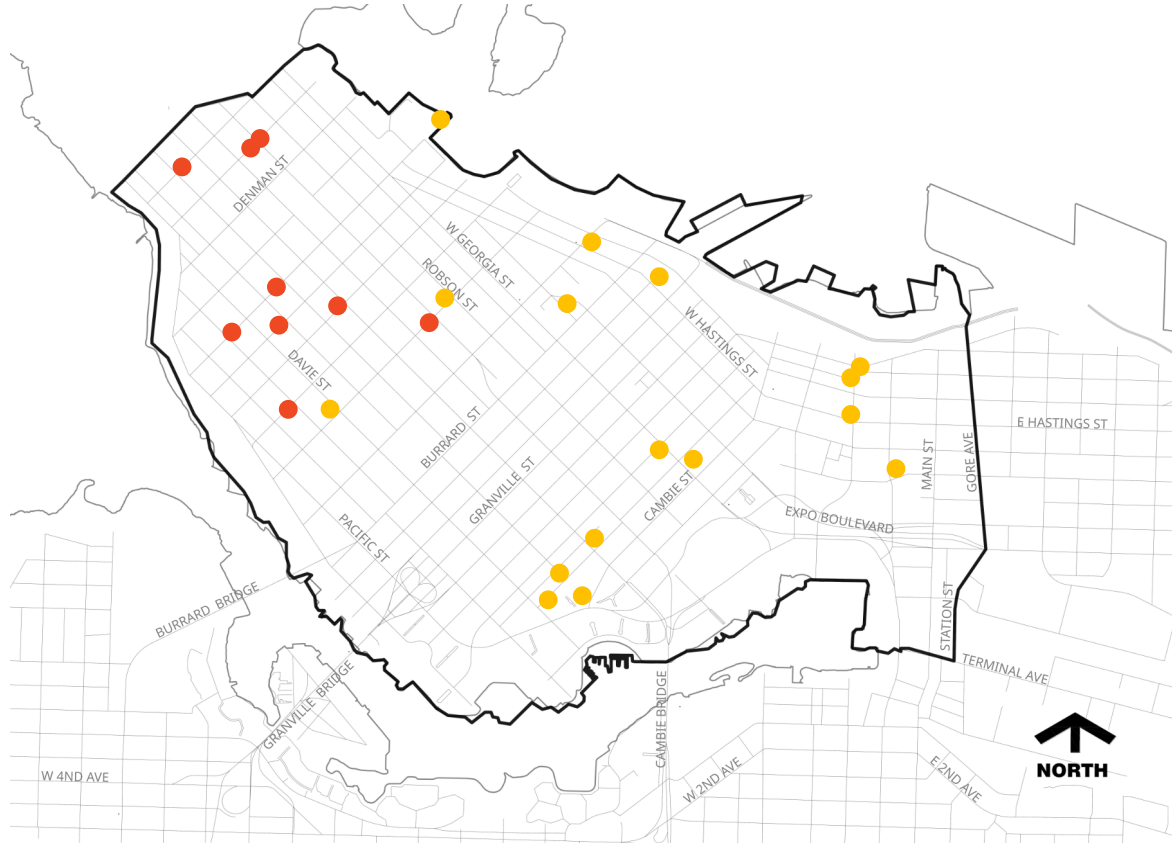




## West End Miniparks + Urban Plazas

Developments should explore **minimizing shadowing where possible**





Urban Plazas (17)



West End Miniparks (9)



# Baseline Policy

**Community, Neighbourhood + Local Parks**

**School Sites**

**Davie Street Village + Robson Street Village**

No new shadowing from **10 am to 4 pm PDT on the Fall Equinox\***

\* 10 am to 3 pm PDT on Robson Street



# Exception to Baseline Policy

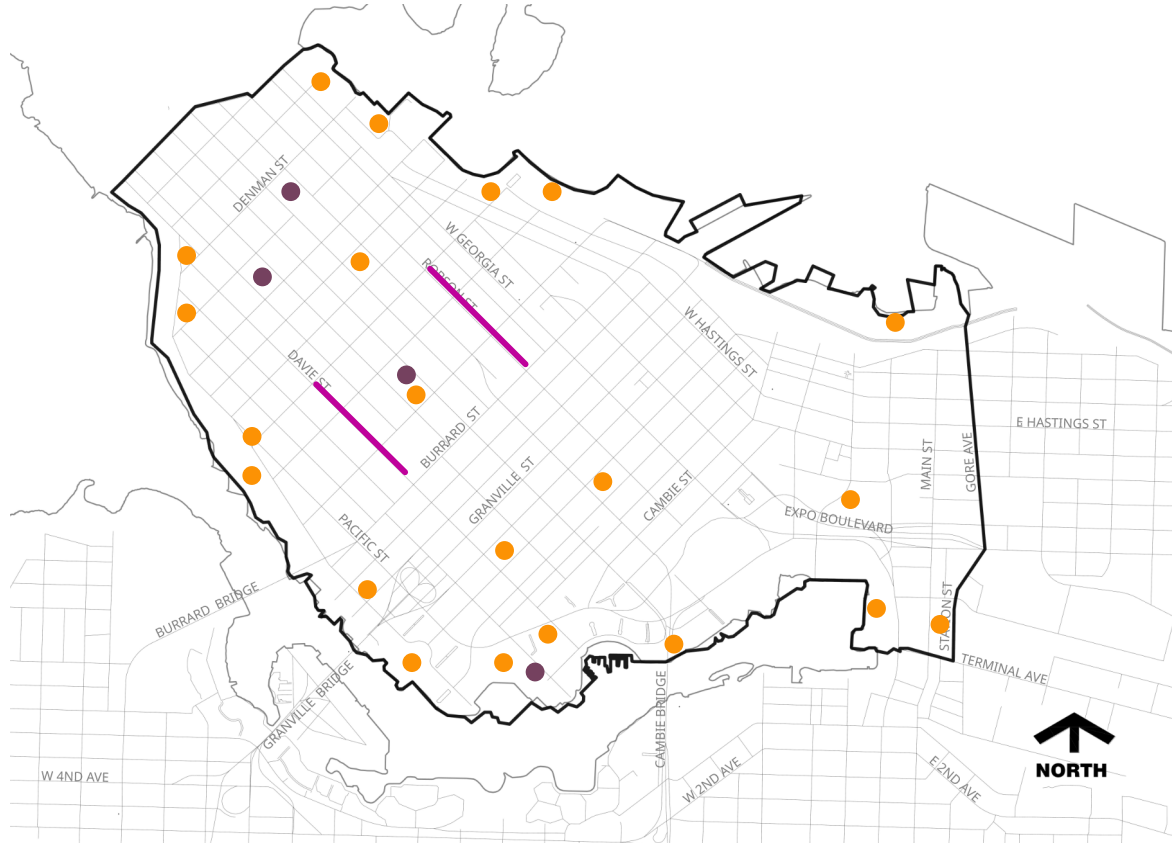
Community, Neighbourhood + Local Parks

School Sites

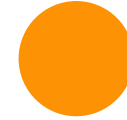
Davie Street Village + Robson Street Village

New shadowing considered on a site-by-site basis if:

- Project includes, **affordable housing, social housing and / or other major public amenity**
- Applicant submits a **detailed fall equinox solar budget analysis** in consultation with staff



School Sites (4)



Community,  
Neighbourhood &  
Local Parks (21)



Davie & Robson  
Villages (2)



## Special Cases



Dr Sun Yat-Sen  
Classical Chinese  
Garden & Park



Victory  
Square



Robson  
Square



Jack Poole  
Plaza



Library Square  
South Plaza



## Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden & Park

**No new shadowing** at any time between **10 am and 4 pm PDT** on the fall equinox.



## Victory Square

**No new shadowing** of the Victory Square Cenotaph and Circle at **11 am PST** on Remembrance Day.



## Robson Square

Despite classification as an Urban Plaza, **applicants should consult the guidelines for Community, Neighbourhood, Local Parks, and School Sites.**



## Jack Poole Plaza

Despite classification as an Urban Plaza, **applicants should consult the guidelines for Community, Neighbourhood, Local Parks, and School Sites.**



## Robson/Homer Library Square Plaza

**No new shadowing** at any time between **10 am and 4 pm PDT** on the fall equinox.



Special Cases (5)



## General Exemptions



Exemptions may be generally applied to:

- Low-rise buildings ( $\leq$  **Four Storeys**)
- **100% social housing** developments

## Next Steps



### Ongoing study and refinement, including:

- Monitoring applications during implementation
- Research and testing of new technologies
- Exploring and implementing strategies to streamline processes
- Assessing potential further policy evolution (e.g. park-by-park solar budgeting)





An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the city's skyline, the harbor, and the surrounding mountains. A large, semi-transparent yellow rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "Legacy Guidelines Repeals".

## Legacy Guidelines Repeals



## Summary

80

Total **guidelines** and policies under review

27

**Guidelines to repeal today** as part of Phase Two

53

Ongoing reviews and **future repeals**



Guidelines being repealed as part of Phase Two:

- Are for **CD-1 developments that are complete**
- Are **no longer relevant** to the current development context
- Will be **replaced by the CDDG in 2026**



27

13

### **CD-1 Guidelines**

e.g. CD-1 (229) – 900 Burrard Street CD-1 Guidelines

7

### **District Schedule Guidelines**

e.g. Arbutus C-7 and C-8 Guidelines

5

### **Area Specific Guidelines**

e.g. Southeast False Creek: Additional Penthouse  
Storeys Guidelines

2

### **General Guidelines**

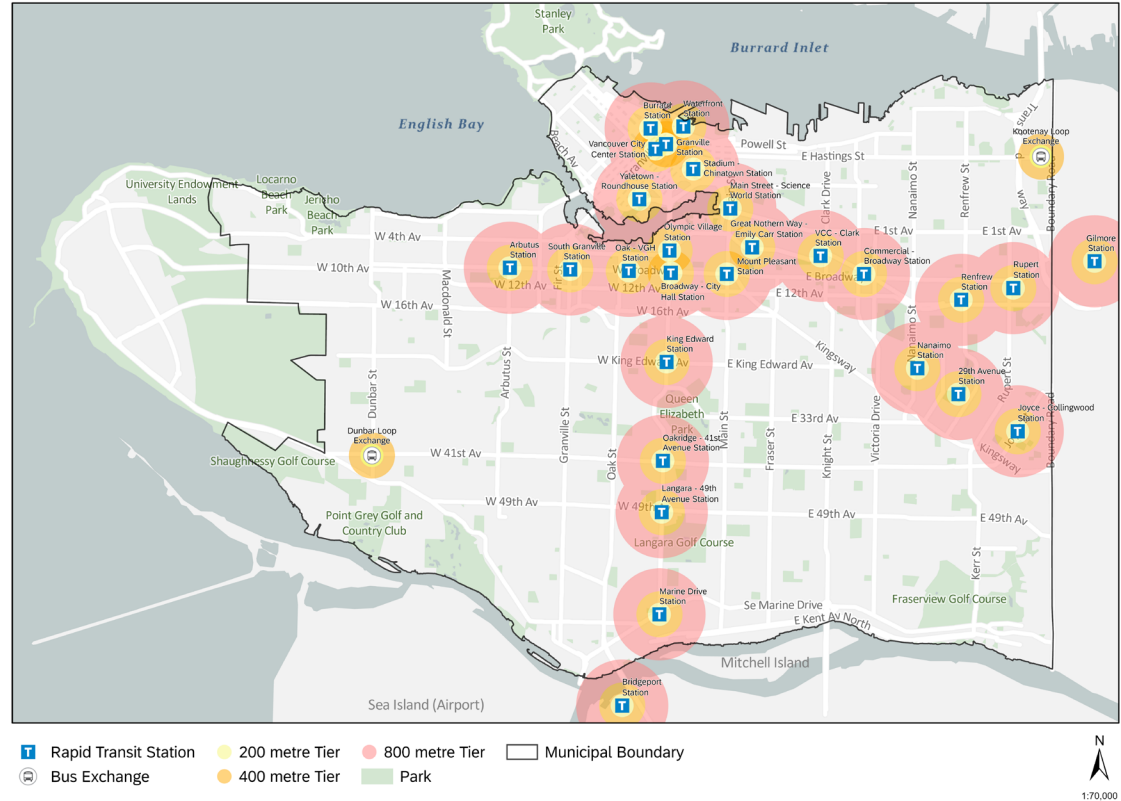
e.g. Plaza Design Guidelines

An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the city's skyline, the harbor, and the surrounding mountains. A large, semi-transparent yellow rectangle is centered over the city, containing the title text. The background image shows the city's layout, including the harbor, the mountains, and the city's infrastructure.

## TOA Rezoning Policy Amendments

# TOA Rezoning Policy Overview

## Transit-Oriented Areas - Catchments





# TOA Rezoning Policy Amendments



## Wording Updates

Clarify **how the policy relates to new or updated area plans** which have integrated TOA regulations (e.g. Broadway Plan and Rupert-Renfrew Area Plan).



## Clarification on Built Form Expectations

More **clearly outline form of development expectations** of one site in relation to another **to avoid precluding future development opportunities**.



## References to City-wide Liveability Policies and Guidelines

Add **clearer references to existing City liveability policies** and guidelines (e.g. solar access and public views) to better clarify applicability.





An aerial photograph of Vancouver, British Columbia, showing the city's dense urban landscape, the harbor, and the surrounding mountains. A large, semi-transparent yellow rectangle is centered over the city, containing the text "Thank You".

Thank You