

Residential conversion with commercial at grade



Restaurant over 3000 square feet



General Proposed Change	Policy Supports from OW/CC	Rationale	Areas of City affected	Details of Proposed Change
Downtown Residential				
Permit residential above the ground floor throughout "C" and "M" zoning sectors.	Complete Communities Policy Section 03-1 : Ensure that streamlined regulatory processes are in place to support residential development goals in defined Downtown areas.	Residential infill Downtown is a key theme of Complete Communities. These changes will make it easier to achieve residential infill in more Downtown locations. On Portage Ave., Main St. and Graham Ave., the City will continue to encourage an active commercial frontage on the main floor.	"C" and "M" Sectors	Currently, any new residential development on Portage Avenue, Main Street, Graham Avenue, Osborne Street, Memorial Boulevard and Broadway is subject to discretionary review (a conditional use application).
Permit residential on the ground floor in all Downtown areas except along Main Street, Graham Avenue and Portage Avenue, where this would be a Conditional Use				Currently, residential on the ground floor is only permitted within the Downtown Living Sectors. In other areas, a residential building without ground floor commercial is subject to discretionary review (a conditional use application).
Eliminate yard setback requirements for residential conversions.	Facilitate the adaptive reuse of viable and underutilized heritage building space... in support of increased residential and mixed-use development.	Historical buildings rarely meet current yard setback standards, yet repurposing historical buildings for residential uses is strongly supported by the Complete Communities Direction Strategy.		Residential development requires a 20 foot rear setback and a 20 foot side yard setback for buildings over four storeys. In order to convert a commercial building to residential use, it must either comply with these dimensions or apply for a variance.
Downtown Commercial				
Increase the maximum size for restaurants in the Character Sector.	Complete Communities Policy Section 03-1 : Further define and enhance the identity and character of downtown's unique districts, destinations and clusters.	The Warehouse Character Sector has been rapidly evolving into a vibrant neighbourhood in recent years. The addition of new restaurants has enhanced this neighbourhood development, despite the fact that all have been larger than 3000 square feet.	"C" Sectors	Current size limit is 3000 square feet. Proposed amendment would increase this to 10,000 square feet.
Require discretionary approval for drinking establishment patios over 1000 square feet in the Character Sector.		Drinking establishments, while part of a complete community, have occasionally been a source of contention for residents. Better oversight and limitations of large outdoor drinking areas could help address this issue.		Although areas outside the Downtown limit patios to 100 square feet, there has never been a similar limit within the Downtown. The proposed 1000 square foot size limit will provide oversight to large drinking establishment patios. This amendment would not affect restaurant patios or patios situated on the public sidewalk.

Location of reduced maximum building heights





Edmonton Street - 2-6 storeys



Vacant lot



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Downtown Building Heights				
Require a minimum building height for Downtown development.	Complete Communities Policy Section 03-1 : Define appropriate goals and targets for redevelopment and intensification. Further define and enhance the identity and character of downtown's unique districts, destinations and clusters.	Minimum buildings heights help discourage template chain store buildings and other pre-fab architecture. They encourage a scale of development appropriate to a downtown with existing services and infrastructure.	All Downtown sectors	There is currently no minimum building height in the Downtown. The proposed amendment would require that some portion of any new building on Portage Avenue, Main Street and Broadway be at 35 feet in height (equivalent to about three storeys), and on all other streets, 25 feet in height (equivalent to about two storeys).
Reduce maximum building heights South of Broadway, west of Donald Street		The existing 8 FAR (Floor Area Ratio) size limit is intended to accommodate high-rise buildings, however, a blanket zoning approach to some neighbourhoods does not respect the unique character of different streets.	South Broadway "D" Sector	The current 8 F.A.R. size limit can accommodate buildings over 20 storeys. The proposed amendment would affect properties south of Broadway fronting on Kennedy Street, Edmonton Street, Carlton Street, Hargrave Street, and the south side of Assiniboine Avenue west of Donald Street. Revised maximum building height would be 60 feet except on corner lots where the maximum height would be 100 feet. (Throughout the Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-Law, it is recommended that heights be expressed in feet instead of by number of storeys.)
Downtown Vacant Land				
Clarify expectations around the creation of vacant land by demolition.	Complete Communities Policy Section 03-1 : Promote the completeness of established neighbourhoods while supporting intensification and densification where appropriate.	Similar to the process for heritage buildings, oversight may be warranted in cases where non-heritage buildings are proposed for demolition without firm plans for any new development. Vacant land creates pressures for use as surface parking and can detract from the character of its surroundings. Where vacant land is approved, clear standards will ensure that it cannot be used for surface parking and that it will be landscaped in a way that enhances its surroundings.	All Downtown sectors	• Provide criteria around when demolitions may be approved. • Provide clear landscape standards and a timeline for interim site treatment when demolition is supported. • Currently, these requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis through Urban Design Review. This proposed amendment would lay out the minimum expectations so it is clear and transparent.
Downtown Parking				
New parking must include a proportion of accessible spaces.	OurWinnipeg Policy Section 03-1: Collaborate with developers, community organizations and other partners to foster an age-friendly and accessible urban environment.	The provision of accessible parking spaces ensures that we have an age-friendly and accessible Downtown.	All Downtown sectors	Currently, there is no requirement for the provision of parking Downtown. However, where surface or structured parking is being constructed, or where an existing parking facility is being revamped, the proposed amendment would require that 4% of parking stalls meet universal accessibility standards and be signed accordingly. A minimum of one accessible parking space would be required for any parking area with over two spaces.





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Require surface parking areas to meet minimum standards for fencing, lighting, paving and landscape planting.	Complete Communities Policy Section 03-1 : Support viable alternatives to Downtown surface parking as recommended through the city's Sustainable Transportation Direction Strategy and through the development of a Downtown Parking Strategy, in order to: ...reduce the amount of surface parking Downtown. Discourage the introduction of any new surface parking or stand alone auto oriented services, such as drive-throughs or gas stations.	Surface parking occupies a vast amount of land in our Downtown. The quality of these parking facilities reflects on the image of our Downtown and our city. The City's recently adopted Downtown Parking Strategy sets higher expectations for the design of surface parking with the acknowledgement that most of them will continue to be part of our transportation infrastructure for many years to come.		Currently, these requirements are determined on a case-by-case basis through Urban Design Review. The proposed amendments would include landscape planting specifications similar to those applied outside the Downtown. Fencing must be of a robust and attractive construction (decorative metal or brick). Grading plans must clearly demonstrate that accessibility is being achieved. Existing Downtown parking lots lacking paving, lighting, landscaping or fencing would be required to submit a proposal to meet the new standards within five years.



Minimum design standards for parking lots – paving, landscaping, fencing, etc.



Digital Event Sign with sponsorship component



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Prohibit parking at grade fronting on Portage Avenue, Main Street or Graham Avenue.		As development occurs, there will be the need to develop new parking facilities to support it. Where those are located in relation to buildings, streets and sidewalks is extremely important. The proposed zoning changes further emphasize the expectation that the majority of new parking being created Downtown should be either below grade, behind buildings, or in mixed-use structures.		The proposed amendments would require parking on these three streets to be located behind the building such that it is not visible from the street. For interior parking and structured parking, there would need to be an office, commercial or residential component on the main floor across the whole frontage. Currently up to 40% of the site (25% in the Exchange District) can be used as parking.
Limit surface parking on other streets to 10% of the lot area or behind a building.				Currently up to 40% of a site (25% in the Exchange District) can be used as parking. For all Downtown areas other than the streets listed above, only 10% of the site could be used for parking at grade under the proposed recommendations. If surface parking is behind a building and not visible from the public sidewalk, the 10% limit would not apply. Similarly for parking structures, only 10% of the main floor may be used for parking, unless there are other building uses that occupy the frontage.
Downtown Digital Signs				
Establish operational standards for brightness, dimming, etc.	per Council motion	Digital signs can be part of a dynamic urban environment provided their placement respects traffic and pedestrian safety, residential livability and the character of the location in which they are situated.	All Downtown sectors	Per the recently adopted amendments to the Winnipeg Zoning By-Law, digital signs: a) must not display graphics which imitate or resemble any traffic control device; b) must not exceed a brightness level of 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light conditions; and c) must utilize automatic dimming. No such standards currently exist in the Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-Law. Where there is potential for visual interference with traffic control devices, these will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
Allow digital signs (digital static copy and digital moving copy) in most Downtown areas, but prohibit them in residential areas, riverbank areas, on heritage buildings and along Broadway. In Character Sectors, limit their use to Event Signs.			See Details.	Currently, approvals for digital signs are determined on a case-by-case basis through Urban Design Review. The practice has been effectively the same as what is proposed to be written into the zoning by-law. Digital signs would not be permitted on buildings on the Historical Buildings Conservation List or the Historical Buildings Inventory List. They would also not be permitted within Riverbank Sectors, Downtown Living Sectors or on properties fronting on Broadway.



Zoning Sectors with restrictions on digital signs

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Revise Event Sign definition and allow for third party sponsor's content		Although advertising billboards are not permitted Downtown, there has been strong interest in being able to recognize donors and sponsors at our cultural and entertainment venues. These establishment are important to the vitality of our Downtown and sponsors are key to their success.	All Downtown sectors	The current definition of Event Signs is, "a sign that indicates the time, date, or type of event or events scheduled for a venue located on the same property. May include readerboard, changeable copy, electronic message, or combination. Event signs are associated with 'Public & Institutional' and 'Cultural & Entertainment' use categories and 'restaurant' and 'drinking establishment' uses." The recommendation is to simplify and broaden this definition so that it is not limited to just showing time and date of events, but may also be used to display cultural content or promote the venue generally. However, the types of properties entitled to have an Event Sign will be limited to Cultural & Entertainment venues.



Monument sign



Construction sign

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Incorporate projection signs into the zoning by-law.		Projection signs use a projector to display images on a wall, primarily for night time viewing. These were not contemplated when the by-law was written and it is unclear how they would be regulated.	See Details.	It is proposed that these be included in the Definitions section of the Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-Law and be permitted as Event Signs wherever Event Signs are allowed. (See above.)
Downtown Freestanding Signs and Window Signs				
Prohibit new freestanding signs except for ground-oriented signs.	Promote walking as a mode of preference within the Downtown by focusing investment in pedestrian improvements along routes that… Contribute to the continuity of pedestrian-oriented, street-level activity	Large pylon signs are typically suburban in character and are not suited to a street with large buildings that come right up to the sidewalk. The premise behind Downtown sign regulations is that the Downtown is a pedestrian oriented environment, and signage should respect the human scale.	All Downtown sectors	The Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-Law currently allows freestanding signs up to 25 feet tall in the Multiple Use Sectors, as well as in the Forks Character Sector and on Waterfront Drive in the Downtown Living Sector. Elsewhere, "Ground-oriented" is permitted up to 10 feet in height. The proposed recommendations would reduce all freestanding sign heights to 4 feet. Signs attached to building surfaces are not restricted to these sign heights.
Require signs, stickers, and vinyl wraps in or on a window, covering over 50% of the window surface area, to comply with zoning standards.		Large window signs significantly affect the overall appearance of buildings and reduce the transparency between the interior of building and the street, reducing vibrancy and potentially increasing safety concerns.		Currently signs affixed to the interior or exterior of windows are exempt from Urban Design Review and the dimensional standards of the zoning by-law. The proposed recommendation would require a permit for windows signs that result in 50% coverage of any window pane. This would apply to any sign situated to be seen primarily from outside the window even if not affixed directly to the window. Sticker, wraps or panels covering a window would be subject to Downtown Urban Design Review even where there is no "sign" content. Where there may be concerns about loss of transparency at grade with a window proposal, the City may suggest an alternate configuration.
Downtown Temporary Signs				
Limit vinyl fascia banner signs to a shortened timeframe.	Develop distinct identity and design elements that reflect the development goals of each defined Downtown district.	Vinyl banners are typically used for special events or to promote a new business because they are inexpensive to produce and install. However they tend to not to be of a lasting quality and often are applied to buildings without architectural consideration.	All Downtown sectors	Vinyl fascia banners are currently regulated just like other fascia signs. It is recommended that fascia banners be added to the list of definitions. It is recommended that these types of banners be approved for 120 days only, after which time they must be removed. An exemption of up to two years may be applied to signs associated with new construction or site redevelopment, as well as for banners of a non-commercial nature (art murals or civic campaigns).
Increase size allowance for construction signs, but limit them to the duration of the construction project.		Many construction sites line the fencing with project and contractor information. While it amounts to a greater total surface area than the by-law has permitted, it simply makes use of an existing temporary surface. However, construction signs would not be permitted to be erected in advance of any construction activity.		Construction signs do not require permits if they are under 80 square feet per frontage in area. The recommendation is to increase this to 200 square feet, but to allow them only for the duration of construction activity on the site.

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Errors and Omissions				
Eliminate the ability to transfer and combine allowable sign area across frontages/facades.		Sign area limits were intended to relate to the width of a building façade. A loop hole allowed for the erection of one mega-sign by transferring sign area entitlements from other sides of the buildings.	All Downtown sectors	Signs would continue to be allowed on the sides of buildings without frontage by transferring sign area entitlements from an adjacent frontage. However, sign area entitlements would not be able to be combined to increase the amount of signage applied along any one frontage.
Change all “Plan Winnipeg” references to “OurWinnipeg”		OurWinnipeg replaced Plan Winnipeg as the City's primary municipal development plan		
Update references to the "City of Winnipeg License By-Law" to reflect the "Doing Business in Winnipeg By-Law"		The Doing Business in Winnipeg By-Law replaced the Winnipeg Licence By-Law		
Correct spelling and typographical errors in -				
Section 210(11)h (alcoves and vestibule projections)				Replace "maximum t foot depth" with "maximum 5 foot depth"
Section 400 (first sentence)				Replace "separation o uses-in these diverse areas" with separation of uses in these diverse areas"
Section 700(2) "foot" definition				Replace "03.408 metres" with "0.3048 metres"