

# NEW DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG ZONING BY-LAW GUIDE

## INTRODUCTION

This guide introduces the new downtown zoning by-law and how to use it. Unlike a plan, a zoning by-law is not intended to be read cover-to-cover. It should be evident, however, that the new downtown zoning by-law is based on both *Plan Winnipeg* and *CentrePlan*.

## USING THE ZONING BY-LAW

There are two typical ways to use the zoning by-law:

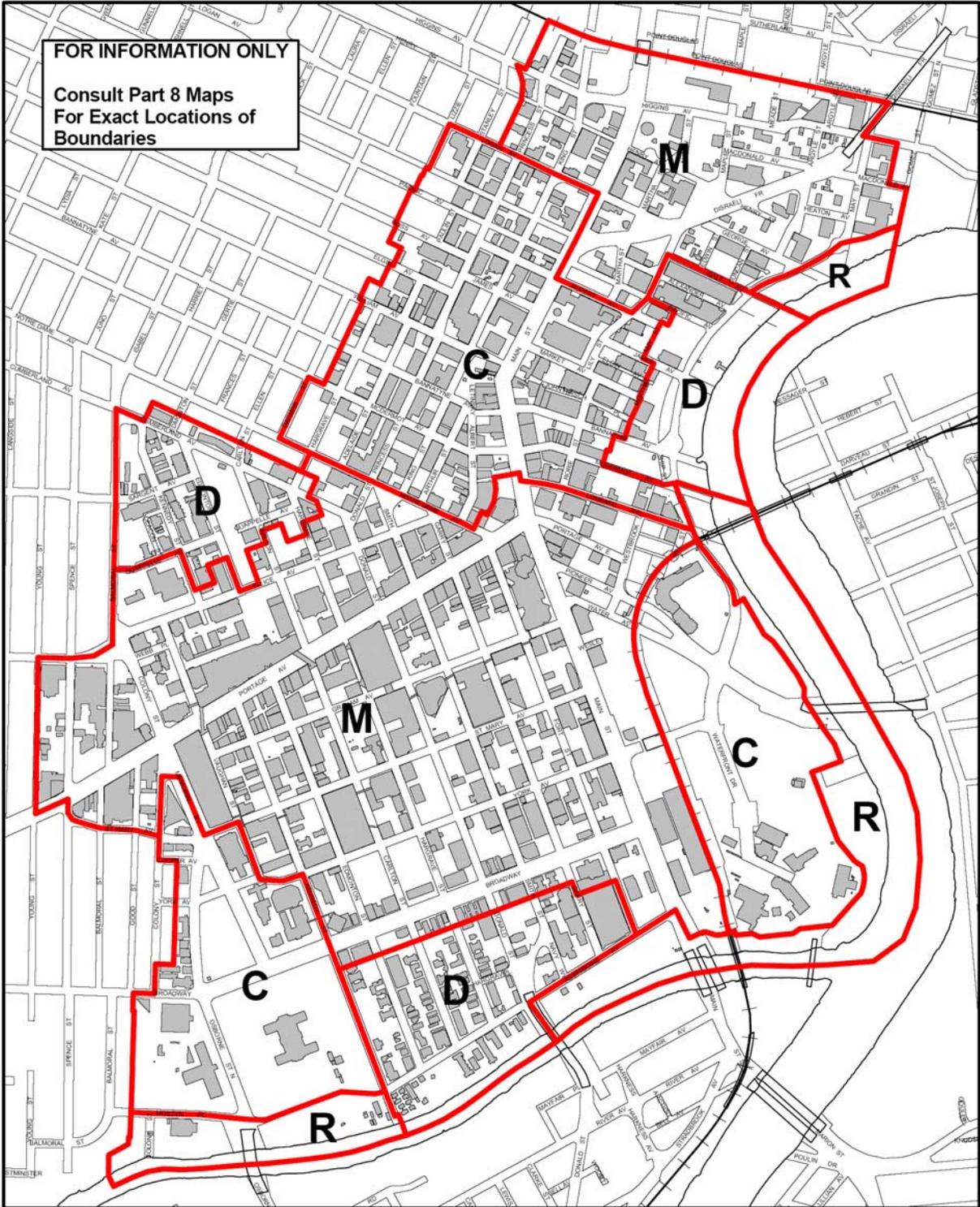
### 1 Start with a particular property

- what can I do with my property?
- can I do “this” with my property?
- depending on the specifics of your development proposal, you’ll want to know if a particular use can be established, what size building can be accommodated, or some other particular
- there are regulations that pertain to the entire downtown (found in the General Provisions section), but there are more particular regulations that apply to more specific portions of the downtown (found in one of the four Sector sections)
- in addition, each sector has an Intent Statement that expresses what its regulations are intended to achieve
- regardless of where you start looking, each section of the zoning by-law provides cross-references to other relevant sections

### 2 Start with a potential development concept

- where would my potential development best fit in the downtown?
- why wouldn’t it fit anywhere in the downtown?
- in this case, you may have a development proposal in mind, but haven’t nailed-down a specific location
- the zoning by-law provides charts that compare sector regulations, in at-a-glance table format
- the charts guide certain types and forms of development to the Sector or Sectors that can best accommodate their specific attributes

# DOWNTOWN SECTORS



**FOR INFORMATION ONLY**  
 Consult Part 8 Maps  
 For Exact Locations of  
 Boundaries


**SECTOR MAP**  
 By-Law No. 100/2004

<b>M</b> Multiple-Use Sector	<b>D</b> Downtown Living Sector
<b>C</b> Character Sector	<b>R</b> Riverbank Sector



## IMPORTANT FEATURES

There are several important new characteristics of the new zoning by-law that distinguish it from its predecessor and other local zoning by-laws:

### **3 It's organized on a geographic basis**

- regulations have been crafted to apply to specific geographic areas called Sectors
- the geographic areas are distinct in terms of look, function, or character—these distinctions are valued by Winnipeggers, as expressed in Plan Winnipeg and CentrePlan

### **4 Regulations are bundled**

- there are four Sectors: Multiple-Use, Character, Downtown Living, and Riverbank
- each Sector has its own land use, bulk, sign, parking, loading, and urban design regulations—ranging from the almost wide-open Multiple-Use Sector to the more restrictive Riverbank Sector
- each Sector's bundle of regulations reflects its distinct values—if Plan Winnipeg and CentrePlan declare particular values for the Exchange District (that differ from other parts of Downtown Winnipeg), those values are accommodated and enhanced in its zoning regulations

### **5 There are no longer overlapping layers of zoning regulations, a significant feature of the previous zoning by-law**

- the previous zoning by-law (#4800/88) required the application of six layers of regulations to every property—over 9 000 potential combinations of regulations applicable to any property
- in the new zoning by-law, a property is located within one of only four Sectors, each with a different set of regulations

### **6 Residential development is encouraged throughout Downtown Winnipeg**

- residential development is permitted in every Sector, with the exception of the Riverbank Sector—which is intended to enhance public views and access to, from, and along the rivers

### **7 Parking is not required to be provided in conjunction with development**

- while new developments, adaptive reuse developments, and additions to existing developments can provide offstreet parking spaces voluntarily, they are not required to do so

### **8 Built form regulations (such as building height, density, and setbacks) are simplified**

- while respecting valued built forms (both current and anticipated), the new zoning by-law has modified the building separation approach to accommodate adaptive reuse developments
- the number of building height and floor area ratio (density) categories has been reduced

## ZONING BY-LAW BASES

The new zoning by-law is based on Council policy, stakeholder input, and feedback:

### **Downtown policy**

- Plan Winnipeg: 2020 Vision
- CentrePlan: Vision & Strategies
- CentrePlan: Development Framework

### **Project benchmarks**

- regulations must reflect policy
- regulations must be clearly described and organized
- by-law boundaries must correspond with expanded CentreVenture mandate area

### **Project inputs and feedback**

- Council Seminar (Jan/02)
- Getting Down to Business (Sep/02)
- public forums (Nov/02)
- CentreVenture/Planning Department workshops (Mar/03)
- CentreVenture/Planning Department report back (Jan/04)

## RELATED INITIATIVES

In addition to the new zoning by-law, there are a number of other important downtown development review initiatives:

### **New downtown standing committee**

- downtown standing committee will direct local area plan preparation and will provide focus for significant development decisions, with delegation of routine matters to advisory committees or administration

### **New peer review**

- urban design review to be delegated by downtown standing committee to an advisory committee, composed of design professionals

### **New urban design guidelines**

- urban design guidelines to be prepared in order to augment or replace the Key Considerations provided in the zoning by-law

### **Forthcoming local area plans**

- downtown standing committee directed planning initiatives in smaller portions of Downtown Winnipeg may result in revised zoning by-law regulations and guidelines

# NEW DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG ZONING BY-LAW CASE STUDIES

Nobody should expect a zoning by-law to be compelling reading—why would you read zoning regulations unless you have a specific purpose in mind? In reference to the Phoenix zoning code, the chairman of the local planning committee stated: “It’s like 4000 pages of stereo instructions that you’re asking people to make decisions on. It’s not Steinbeck.” That said, for anyone interested in downtown development—citizen, developer, property owner, politician, administrator, contractor—the zoning by-law should be reasonably simple to understand, the zoning regulations well-organized, it should be clear what the zoning regulations are intended to achieve, and the zoning by-law should be easy to interpret and enforce.

Those interested in downtown development also shouldn’t need to wade-through thousands of pages or numerous overlays—in the new downtown zoning by-law, zoning regulations and maps comprise barely 40 pages. With a particular development proposal in mind (e.g. any of the following Case Studies), you should be able to navigate the new zoning by-law to determine if a proposal is permitted with a reasonable degree of certainty.

To demonstrate how well the proposed new downtown zoning by-law meets the characteristics listed above, a series of development proposal Case Studies is provided. The Case Studies include a range of development proposals—from new buildings and adaptive reuse of existing buildings to more day-to-day but ubiquitous proposals, such as new signs and parking amenities.

## 1 Office Conversion

Location: Portage/Donald (north east corner)  
Current: vacant 3-storey former office buildings  
Proposal: to establish a retail store with associated office and loading facility in the existing building and in a building addition

## 2 Warehouse Adaptive Reuse

Location: Princess/Pacific (north west corner)  
Current: vacant 4-storey former restaurant supply warehouse  
Proposal: to establish street level retail, restaurant, and personal service uses with dwelling units above street level in an existing building

## 3 New Mixed-Use

Location: Waterfront/Pacific (south west corner)  
Current: vacant lot, formerly steam-heat generating plant  
Proposal: to establish street level restaurant, drinking establishment, and retail store uses with dwelling units and office uses above street level in a new building

## 4 New Sign

Location: Broadway/Donald (north east corner)  
Current: 10-storey office building (15 000 square foot building wall)  
Proposal: to establish a 200 square foot Building Identification (sign type) Fascia sign (sign form), below 10th floor roofline on the existing building

## 5 Surface Parking

Location: Main/Graham (south west corner)  
Current: vacant 2-storey former retail store  
Proposal: to establish at-grade parking area, once vacant building has been demolished

## 6 Prohibited Use

Location: Higgins (south side, west of Maple)  
Current: at-grade parking area  
Proposal: to establish an automobile salvage and wrecking yard

# CASE STUDY SHORT-CUTS

## **1 Office Conversion (Portage/Donald)**

- visit Administration section (Sector Map, following section 160) to determine in which sector the property is located
- visit Multiple-Use Sector section to determine the intent of the sector (section 300), relevant Land Use (section 310) and Bulk (section 320) regulations, and Urban Design guidelines (section 360)
- follow cross-references indicated within each component, if applicable

## **2 Warehouse Adaptive Reuse (Princess/Pacific)**

- visit General Provisions (Sector Map, following section 160) section to determine in which sector the property is located
- visit Character Sector section to determine the intent of the sector (section 400), relevant Land Use (section 410) and Bulk (section 420) regulations, and Urban Design guidelines (section 460)
- follow cross-references indicated within each component, if applicable

## **3 New Mixed-Use (Waterfront/Pacific)**

- visit General Provisions (Sector Map, following section 160) section to determine in which sector the property is located
- visit Downtown Living Sector section to determine the intent of the sector (section 500), and relevant Land Use (section 510), Bulk (section 520), Signs (section 530), Parking (section 540), and Loading (section 550) and Urban Design guidelines (section 460)
- follow cross-references indicated within each component, if applicable

## **4 New Sign (Broadway/Donald)**

- visit General Provisions (Sector Map, following section 160) section to determine in which sector the property is located
- visit Multiple-Use Sector section to determine the intent of the sector (section 300) and relevant Signs regulations (section 330)
- follow cross-references indicated within the Signs component, if applicable

## **5 Surface Parking (Main/Graham)**

- visit General Provisions (Sector Map, following section 160) section to determine in which sector the property is located
- visit Multiple-Use Sector section to determine the intent of the sector (section 300) and relevant Land Use (section 310) and Parking (section 340)
- follow cross-references indicated within each component, if applicable

## **6 Prohibited Use (Higgins/Maple)**

- visit General Provisions (Sector Map, following section 160) section to determine in which sector the property is located
- visit Multiple-Use Sector section to determine the intent of the sector (300) and relevant Land Use regulations (310)
- follow cross-references indicated within the Land Use component, if applicable (section 200, subsection 4)