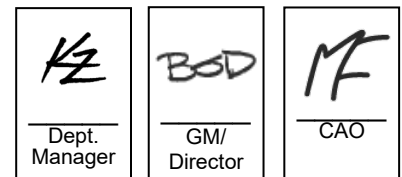


AGENDA INFORMATION	
☒ Council Workshop	Date: April 7, 2026
☐ Finance & Audit	Date: _____
☐ Advisory Oversight	Date: _____
☐ Other:	Date: _____



The District of North Vancouver REPORT TO COMMITTEE

March 25, 2026
File: 09.3900.30/003.001

AUTHOR: Tamsin Guppy, Senior Development Planner
Neonila Lilova, Business and Economic Development Manager

SUBJECT: Zoning Bylaw Rewrite – Commercial Zoning Options

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the March 25, 2026 report titled “Zoning Bylaw Rewrite – Commercial Zoning Options” is received for information.

AND THAT Council provide staff with direction on regulations for commercial zones.

REASON FOR REPORT:

Staff are returning to Council with information requested at prior Council Workshops on the Zoning Bylaw Rewrite ([February 10](#) and [February 23](#), 2026) related to Commercial Zoning, with a focus on:

1. **Businesses in the District’s Commercial Areas** – an overview of existing businesses in the District’s commercial areas, trends driving uses, and the importance of maintaining business diversity.
2. **Regulatory Approach in Support of Business Flexibility and Adaptability** – a brief background on how zoning terminology can help provide business flexibility.
3. **Drivers of Vibrancy** – a list of the conditions present in vibrant commercial areas.
4. **Where Businesses Locate** – a brief overview of the distribution of businesses in the District.
5. **Case Studies of Vibrant Commercial Areas** – a review of five Metro Vancouver commercial areas that are considered vibrant and the conditions supporting vibrancy.
6. **Business Perspective** – A summary of input from industry on regulating commercial areas.
7. **Impacts of Becoming Non-conforming** – discussion on the impacts to businesses and District processes and staff levels from creating non-conformance.

- 8. Regulatory Options** – Four Options for Council’s consideration that include different methods of regulating businesses.

SUMMARY:

Based on further analysis of existing businesses, market conditions and economic trends, industry input, subject matter expert analysis and comparable jurisdictions, staff have developed four options for regulating Commercial Zones. All four options can be considered independently but to achieve the District's goal of achieving vibrancy in commercial areas while maintaining residents' access to services, minimizing negative impacts to businesses and restricting additional regulatory burden, staff are recommending a combined approach that would consist of Options 1, 2 and 4.

All four options can be considered independently

- 1. Option One – Minimal Zoning Restrictions** – this is the most permissive option and is in line with Lower Lonsdale regulations. This option will apply as the Zoning Bylaw is enacted, and will require commercial space and building designs that support the pedestrian experience, but the location of commercial use (upstairs/ downstairs etc) is not regulated.
- This option has minimal impact on existing businesses.
- 2. Option Two – Introducing More Restrictions as Sites Rezone/Redevelop** - This option will be brought in on sites as they redevelop and add second storey commercial space. This option introduces restrictions on office style uses (Office, Health Services, and R&D) and on Child Care, limiting these uses to the upstairs or side street locations. This is similar to the requirements used in Vancouver for 4th Avenue where additional restrictions are considered as sites redevelop.
- This option has low impact on existing businesses.
- 3. Option Three – Introducing Restrictions to All Commercial Sites** – This option would apply both upon enactment of the bylaw and as sites redevelop. This option would introduce the same restrictions as option two but apply them to existing sites and businesses across the District in addition to applying these more restrictive regulations as sites rezone. This option includes restrictions on office style uses (Office, Health Services, and R&D) and on Child Care, limiting them to the upstairs or side street locations.
- This option has significant impact on existing businesses, having direct and indirect impacts to approximately 692 businesses within the District.
- 4. Option Four – Strengthening Design Guidelines to Support Vibrancy** – This option can be stand-alone or in addition to any of the above options, and explores strengthening existing Design Guidelines to ensure commercial buildings are designed with store front style facades that support the pedestrian experience. This tool is similar to the approach used in other municipalities to support vibrancy while giving businesses flexibility.
- This option has minimal impact on existing businesses.

BACKGROUND:

- [Report](#) titled “Zoning Bylaw Rewrite – Project Update” dated January 21, 2026 and presented at the February 10, 2026 and February 23, 2026 Council Workshops.
- [Staff presentation](#) from February 10, 2023 Council Workshop.
- [Staff presentation](#) from February 23, 2023.

EXISTING POLICY:

The commercial and industrial updates to the proposed Zoning Bylaw support multiple District policies and initiatives, including:

[Official Community Plan \(2030\)](#)

- Objective 3 – enabling a diverse range of economic uses within employment lands (3.3) and ensuring a high-quality business environment in employment lands (3.4); and
- Objective 8 – ensure a diverse and resilient local economy, including maintaining the attributes of a competitive community.

[Economic Development Strategy](#)

- Objective 1 – Create Employment Space, including updating of land use policies and regulations to create additional commercial space; and
- Objective 2 – Improve Business Services, including modernization and streamlining of permitting and licensing regulations.

The Zoning Bylaw Rewrite also reflects the key objectives of the [Development Application Process Review \(DAPR\)](#) initiative, including streamlined development approval processes with increased timeliness and effectiveness, improved predictability, improved transparency about time and cost, and enhanced customer satisfaction.

DISCUSSION:

1. Businesses in the District’s Commercial Areas

There are approximately 1,500¹ businesses currently located in commercial areas in the District of North Vancouver (on commercial and CD zoned land). Below are key findings of how various commercial uses on commercially zoned land are distributed in the District’s commercial areas, with additional data included in Attachment A – *Review of Business Licence Data*.

¹ Unless stated otherwise, business counts data is generated from the District of North Vancouver Business Licenses and GIS Databases for 2025.

1.1 Distribution of District Businesses by Zoning Category

The following table shows the number of businesses by their use-category as defined in the Zoning Bylaw. The uses have been loosely grouped into traditional “vibrant” uses of restaurant and retail uses which make up 349 businesses, and those less vibrant, uses that support the community (and in this report are referred to as “supportive” uses) that include 1,004 businesses. By understanding this split in businesses, we can better quantify the potential impacts of the alternative regulatory Options included in this report for limiting the location of uses in commercial areas.

The right-hand column also speaks to whether the use needs, or benefits from a location at grade which also informs the subsequent discussion on which uses might be suitable for restricting.

Zoning “Use” Category	Number of Businesses	Business Typology Requires an “at grade” Location
Vibrant Commercial Uses	349	
Food and Beverage (restaurants and cafes)	150	Adds vibrancy if located at grade
Retail	199	Adds vibrancy if located at grade
Supportive Commercial Uses	1004	
Animal Care Service	15	Requires direct access for pets
Arts and Culture	11	
Auto Services	13	An at grade service
Child Care Services	23	
Financial Services	46	
Fitness and Sport	33	
Fuelling Service (gas station)	13	An at grade service
Health Care Services	331	
Hotel	4	
Instructional Services	70	
Office	332	
Personal Service	107 (mix of vibrant and supportive)	Potential to add vibrancy if located at grade (e.g. barber shops)
Research and Development	6	
Service Use	47	Typically, at grade/ but not typically permitted in commercial zones
Industrial	127	
Total	1540	

The presence of vibrant and supportive uses differs among the various District commercial areas, in part due to the stage of neighbourhood development and the existence of office buildings. Further detail is in Chart 2 of Attachment A.

Interestingly, shopping centres (such as Lynn Valley Centre, or Parkgate Shopping Centre), where the owners of the malls have the ability to manage the tenant mix, also have a similar mix of businesses with ground floor commercial units being leased to health care providers

(dentists and optometrists), animal care (vets), personal service businesses (hair salons, nail care etc.) and offices (lawyers, insurance brokers, etc.).

1.2 Geographic Distribution of Businesses

Businesses in the District's commercial zones are evenly split between the town and village centres and areas outside of the town and village centres. Nearly half of the businesses located outside of the town and village centres are concentrated in the Marine Drive corridor commercial area, with the remaining businesses distributed between Maplewood and other smaller commercial areas such as the Delbrook, Parkgate, Queensdale, Deep Cove, and other neighbourhoods (Charts 3a and 3b, Attachment A).

1.3 Economic Resilience and the Importance of Business Diversity

The District benefits from a diverse range of businesses in our commercial areas. Business diversification makes our local economy more resilient to changing economic conditions. The growth of on-line shopping is shrinking the traditional physical storefront retail sector, and rising costs and larger economic trends are impacting the restaurant industry. Having a mix of services that give people reasons to still go to shopping areas, such as getting a haircut or visiting the dentist, helps bring customers into the shopping area when more traditional retail and restaurant sectors are shrinking. (See Attachment B – *Market Input from B&A Consultants*.)

Over two-thirds of District businesses serve the local population and therefore require commercial locations that provide proximity to their customer base. The availability of, and cost of real estate, combined with the cost of inputs in a volatile economy, play a critical role in the decision to start, locate, or grow a business.

Locally owned retail shops and restaurants are becoming an increasingly challenging business model, with slowing demand, high input costs, and narrow margins named as the primary factors threatening those businesses². By contrast, health and personal services³ are among the few growing segments of opportunity⁴ in the commercial sector.

At the District level and in line with demographic, regional, and national trends, supportive commercial businesses have grown faster (15%) than vibrant businesses (6%) over the last 5 years (Chart 4, Attachment A). In 2025, there were almost as many Health Care Service (331) and Office (332) business as Food and Beverage Service (150) and Retail (199) businesses combined in the District (Chart 3a, Attachment A). These trends are indicative of the demand for the types of uses in commercially zoned areas and the requirement to accommodate these types of businesses to serve the full gamut of shopping, service, and amenity needs of District residents.

² [BC Restaurant and Food Services Association – Member Survey \(November 2025\)](#)

³ [Statistics Canada – The Daily – Retail Trade \(December 2025\)](#)

⁴ [Retail Insider – Healthcare Retail Expansion Surges as Traditional Stores Face High Vacancy Rates \(March 2026\)](#)

Additional analysis on the pressures that affect the functioning and makeup of existing business clusters and the risks associated with narrowing commercial permissions has been prepared by B&A Consultants and is enclosed in Attachment B.

2. Regulatory Approach in Support of Business Flexibility and Adaptability

About 15 years ago, the District heard from many businesses that wanted to expand or change their business model and could not because the use classes were too narrowly defined. Since then, the District has introduced (in CD Zones and the Employment Zones) modern, broader definitions that make it easier for businesses to evolve and reduce municipal involvement in business decisions. This approach will be expanded to all zones with the update to the Zoning Bylaw.

Two examples of the application of these broader terms and their benefit are included in the table below (the full list is found in Attachment C - *Commercial Use Categories*):

Common Term	Zoning Use Category	Benefit of Broader Definition
Doctor	Health Services	Health Service businesses frequently see practitioners coming together to work out of a single location and provide services to their clientele. Example: <i>Blue Sky Physiotherapy and Wellness Centre</i> provides a mix of health services including physiotherapy, massage therapy, and counselling.
Dentist		
Physiotherapist		
Optometrist		
Massage Therapist		
Hairdresser	Personal Service	Personal Services operations are regularly evolving as trends, science and demographics change business models. Example: <i>The Bare Lab</i> includes waxing, lashes, eyebrow treatment, spray tans, and makeup.
Barber Shop		
Brow and Lash Bar		
Skin Care Clinic		
Beauty Salon		

3. Drivers of Vibrancy

Looking at the most vibrant parts of the District, and other popular shopping areas in Metro Vancouver, vibrancy is driven by a variety of factors (see below, Section 5 for more information on Five Case Studies and Attachment D):

- **A key destination:** Most vibrant areas have a reason for people to visit. For Lower Lonsdale, it is the SeaBus and the Shipyards; for Dundarave, it is the proximity to the beach. But in some cases, it is an “anchor” business, typically a large supermarket, that draws customers to the area.
- **Comfortable public realm:** Wide sidewalks, buffered by street trees, and bike lanes give pedestrians a greater sense of comfort and an ability to linger when strolling through a commercial area. Where shopping streets are busy, several municipalities

have also started opening pop-up plazas on the side streets to support the main street while recognizing the transportation function of the corridor.

- **Neighbourhood Character:** Existing characteristics supported by a Local Area Plan, or Local Design Guidelines, can help strengthen the “sense of place.” Edgemont has candy cane streetlights, that make Christmas shopping in Edgemont extra special. Granville Island has successfully integrated old industrial buildings into the fabric of the place.
- **Building Design:** While there were a mix of old and new buildings, tall and short buildings in the areas studied, the most vibrant spaces had buildings next to sidewalks and not set back behind parking.
- **Things to Look At and Pride of Place:** The most vibrant places surveyed had the most outdoor patios, and the most interesting window displays making the area fun to visit. For example, on Main Street in Vancouver, a diverse mix of businesses took pride in their frontages and took on the challenge of adding window displays, benches, planters, or a “joke of the day” to add to the charm of the area, regardless of the type of business. In these areas, vibrancy is not due to the type of use (retail vs. artisan) but to the approach taken to a business’s storefront.
- **Business Mix:** All of the areas visited and surveyed had a broad mix of uses, with every area having a combination of vibrant and supportive commercial uses. In many cases, additional civic uses like places of worship, community centres, legions, and other uses drew people to an area but may not in themselves be perceived as “vibrant.” It was clear that every successful area did include retail, restaurant, and personal service uses.

4. Where Businesses Locate

There are three primary locations for businesses in the District of North Vancouver:

- Home based businesses operate out of residential zones but are limited in size, scope and ability to display product and attract customers.
- Industrial (service, manufacturing, port oriented) businesses are located in and limited to industrial lands.
- Almost all other businesses are located in commercially zoned and mixed-use areas which are intended to be areas that support a mix of businesses to grow our local economy and support our residents.

A table illustrating where businesses by zoning category are permitted is in Attachment E – *List of Permitted Uses By Zone*.

With low vacancy rates and high lease rates, businesses don’t always have their first choice for an ideal location, but to the degree that choice is available, businesses look for:

- Proximity to customers / clients or a “catchment area”; and
- Proximity to service, recognizing that staff and customers benefit from proximity to the mix of services found in town centres.

Many of the supportive businesses that serve the community take advantage of less prominent commercial locations, choosing less expensive upstairs, side-street or tucked away commercial space. However, two key factors make businesses choose at-grade commercial space are:

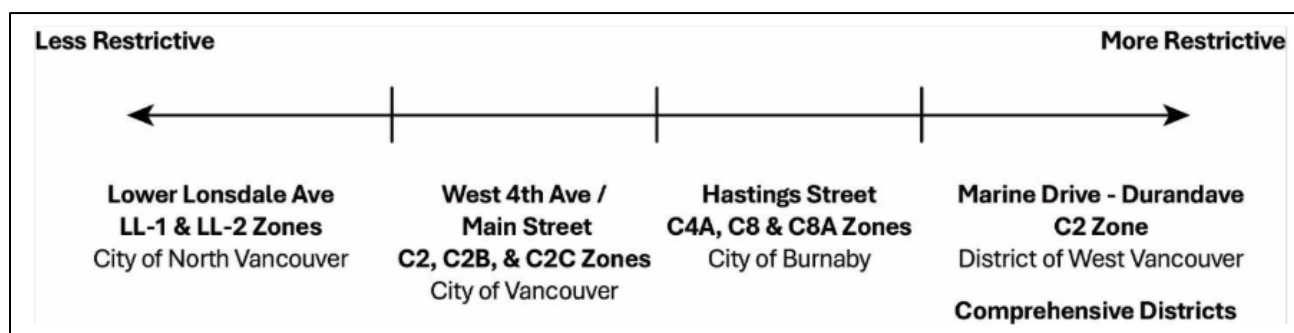
- a) Lack of available upstairs/side street options; and
- b) Need for a high-profile location.

The need for a high-profile location is especially critical for new businesses that may not have a client base. As businesses develop their client base, they may then relocate to a less high-profile and less costly location.

5. Five Case Studies of Popular Shopping Districts in the Region

To determine the value in regulating commercial zones to restrict uses by location (upstairs, side street, number per building or per block) a detailed analysis of 5 popular shopping districts – Lower Lonsdale, Dundarave, West 4th Avenue in Vancouver, Burnaby Heights and Main Street in Vancouver – was conducted. The review compared what was occurring on the ground to the actual zoning regulations and explored other factors that led to the relative success of each area. A summary of the findings is provided in Attachment D.

The study did not find any correlation between restrictive zoning and successful and vibrant shopping areas. Both Lower Lonsdale and Main Street (Vancouver) are considered popular places to spend time, with these areas having the most permissive zoning regulations.



The following table compares the key findings in terms of available regulatory tools (recognizing that none of the case studies used all of the tools) with the District's proposed Commercial Zones and existing Design Guidelines:

Regulatory Tool	Is this Proposed for DNV?
Minimum requirements for Commercial Space	Yes , a minimum requirement for employment generating floor space is proposed to help maintain and grow the supply of commercial space.
No Dwelling Units permitted at Grade	Yes , Dwelling Units will be prohibited at grade

Regulatory Tool	Is this Proposed for DNV?
Buildings relate to the sidewalk and help frame the street	Yes , proposed Zoning setbacks and existing Design Guidelines ensure new projects support the pedestrian realm.
Buildings frame smaller “units” while permitting businesses to stretch across multiple units	Yes , the District’s existing Design Guidelines require a rhythm of small CRUs but do not prevent businesses from expanding into adjacent units.
Minimum requirements for glazing on building facades	Yes , the District’s existing Design Guidelines require a strong relationship to the street.
Maintaining views into the unit (not used in any of the case study areas)	Not at this time. This requires significant education and enforcement to be effective, especially for south facing units which often lower blinds to reduce glare or heat inside the commercial space. However, the District’s Sign Bylaw does have enforced limits for window signs to ensure signage does not become the dominant view.
Supporting Neighbourhood Character and enhancing the “sense of place”	Yes , the District has unique design guidelines for each town and village centre to reinforce neighbourhood character.
Restricting Uses as sites redevelop/ rezone (for example requiring in a new develop that child care or office use be on the second floor)	This is Option Two for Council’s consideration. The proposed Core Commercial zone to be used as properties rezone, could restrict some uses to side street or upper storey locations.
Restricting specific uses (typically child care, or office style uses) at grade and only permitting them upstairs or on side streets.	This is Option Three for Council’s consideration. The General Commercial zone could include restrictions for a limited number of less vibrant uses, recognizing that each category of uses that is restricted results in real impacts to existing businesses.
Restricting uses per building or per block (the West Van model)	No , this is not recommended as an option for the District. This is very labour intensive for the applicant and results in longer and more complex processing times as it requires a detailed knowledge of regulations <u>and</u> existing conditions for an entire block or sub-area. These types of regulations also come with a variety of unintended negative side effects for the long-term viability of businesses caught by these regulatory constraints.

6. Business Perspective

Staff conducted webinars with local industry representatives to discuss the upcoming changes to the Zoning Bylaw. A follow up webinar was also held on March 23 to have a more focused discussion of commercial zoning and the potential to regulate the location of specific less vibrant uses. Key findings from those discussions and inputs are outlined in this section

and additional insights from the targeted industry poll on commercial zones is included in Attachment F.

- **Protect Development Rights:** Industry representatives not only supported the general principle of the zoning bylaw update to maintain density and development rights, but also specified that a reduction in permitted uses also equated to “down-zoning” and was not supported. *In a poll of industry representatives, 90% did not support restricting permitted uses in commercial areas.* The lack of location options for current businesses and the costs to deliver second storey commercial were cited as key reasons. Industry representatives were unanimous in stating that, if changes to commercial uses are to be made by the District, they should only be introduced as sites redevelop and more second storey commercial space is created.
- **Expand the Pie:** Recognizing low vacancy rates (sustained at < 2%) and limited choices, businesses want more, not fewer, choices to locate in the District, as well as greater flexibility of uses and associated regulations in choosing a location.
- **Streamlined Regulations:** Businesses consistently express a desire to see simpler, more flexible and easier to use regulations, as well as quicker and simpler permitting processes. Businesses do not want additional or more complex regulations as a result of new zoning restrictions and additional permitting requirements.
- **Loss of Local Businesses:** Narrowing the list of possible locations for a business is problematic and poses a risk to their operational viability and ability to remain in the District. The impacts are worse when vacancy rates are low and alternative locations are relatively limited or non-existent.

7. The Impacts of Becoming Non-Conforming

When zoning regulations are updated and a use is no longer permitted, any existing businesses in that use category become “legally non-conforming.” These businesses have the right to continue to operate but that right is limited, as follows:

- Businesses cannot relocate (unless they relocate to a zone / municipality where the use is permitted).
- Businesses cannot expand outside of the existing building or intensify the use on the “non-conforming” site.
- Businesses cannot operate after a pause of greater than 6 months, or open a new similar business in the same location after conducting renovations.
- Limitations on additions or structural alterations to buildings containing a non-conforming use.

The impacts of becoming non-conforming were also discussed with industry. Many of the industry representatives’ comments reflect the research to date. Respondents state that becoming “legally non-conforming” leads to:

- Reduced opportunities for existing businesses to expand or intensify use on site or elsewhere in the District.
- Significant barriers for new businesses to open⁵ in the District and existing businesses to re-locate⁶.
- Inability for businesses to evolve and add now non-conforming uses.
- Greater difficulty securing loans for tenant improvements or upgrades.
- Potential for further escalation of lease rates due to reduction in the supply of locations, and/or the landlord recognizing that then tenant has no option to move.
- Potential for businesses to leave the District.

8. Regulatory Options

The following sections contain four regulatory options, including: three options for regulating permitted uses and one option for regulating through design. Based on the above analysis all four options can be considered independently but to achieve the District's goal of achieving vibrancy in commercial areas while maintaining residents' access to services, minimizing negative impacts to businesses and restricting additional regulatory burden, staff are recommending a combined approach that would consist of Options 1, 2 and 4.

Option One – Minimal Zoning Restrictions (Recommended)

Option One would apply upon enactment of the bylaw to commercial sites across the District. This option does not restrict commercial uses by location. This option recognizes that all commercial use categories serve residents and that there are currently few alternatives for businesses (including those less vibrant supportive commercial uses) to locate upstairs or on side streets, so this option does not restrict or place locational criteria on any commercial uses, but it does:

- A. Prohibit Residential Dwelling Units and Live Work Units on the ground floor (in the General Commercial zone) or on the lower 2 floors (in the Core Commercial Zone) to maximize commercial space and opportunities for more vibrant street fronts.
- B. Require a minimum floor space ratio (FSR) of employment generating floor space to ensure new commercial floor space is built over time.
- C. Ensure buildings are designed to frame the street and support the pedestrian experience with appropriate setbacks and in keeping with Design Guidelines.

⁵ Approximately 250 new businesses start up in the District every year (District Business License Data)

⁶ Approximately 50 existing businesses re-locate in the District every year (District Business License Data)

Option One – Minimal Restrictions on Location of Use Applies Immediately
Uses redirected from the ground level of the main street front to upper floors or side streets are shown in orange
Animal Care Services
Arts and Culture
Child Care Services
Civic Service
EV Charging Hub
Financial Services
Fitness and Recreational Use
Food and Beverage Services
Fueling Service / Gas Station
Health Care Service
Hotel
Instructional Services
Live Work
Manufacturing - Artisan
Microbrewery
Office Use
Personal Service Use
Research & Development
Residential Use
Retail Use
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use
Youth Centre Use

Pros:

- No businesses become non-conforming
- Supports business start-up, retention and expansion location needs
- Enables the addition of employment space
- Does not interfere with market demand
- Is in keeping with Council policies and industry input

Cons:

- Will see the continued location of supportive commercial uses at ground level in place of more vibrant uses.

Option Two: Introducing More Restrictions as Sites Rezone/ Redevelop (Recommended)

To reduce impacts on existing businesses but explore adding use restrictions over time, Option Two introduces restrictions on the location of use at time of Rezoning. In this Option, as properties rezone to the Core Commercial Zone which requires additional commercial space (on the second floor or side street), the resulting zone would require Child Care, Office Use, Health Care Services and Research and Development to be located away from the primary shopping street on either an upstairs or side street location.

Option One – Minimal Restrictions on Location of Use Applies Immediately	Option Two – Restrictions on Location of Use Applies at Time of Rezoning
Uses redirected from the ground level of the main street front to upper floors or side streets are shown in orange	
Animal Care Services	Animal Care Services
Arts and Culture	Arts and Culture
Child Care Services	Child Care Services
Civic Service	Civic Service
EV Charging Hub	EV Charging Hub
Financial Services	Financial Services
Fitness and Recreational Use	Fitness and Recreational Use
Food and Beverage Services	Food and Beverage Services
Fueling Service / Gas Station	Fueling Service / Gas Station
Health Care Service	Health Care Service
Hotel	Hotel
Instructional Services	Instructional Services
Live Work	Live Work
Manufacturing - Artisan	Manufacturing - Artisan
Microbrewery	Microbrewery
Office Use	Office Use
Personal Service Use	Personal Service Use
Research & Development	Research & Development
Residential Use	Residential Use
Retail Use	Retail Use
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use
Youth Centre Use	Youth Centre Use

Pros:

- No existing businesses become non-conforming
- Enables the addition of employment space
- Provides more options for less vibrant, supportive uses to locate off the main street

Cons:

- Reduces flexibility
- Reduce options for business
- Harder for some businesses to build up their customer base

Option Three – Introducing Restrictions Immediately to All Commercial Sites

In this option, restrictions of use would be applied to all commercial sites when the new Zoning Bylaw is brought into effect. The restrictions of use would be the same as in Option Two, and include restrictions on Child Care, Office Use, Health Care Services and Research and Development. The difference is that new use-restrictions would be in effect immediately upon adoption of the new Zoning Bylaw, rendering approximately 700 businesses legally non-conforming.

Option One – Minimal Restrictions on Location of Use Applies Immediately	Option Two – Restrictions on Location of Use Applies at Time of Rezoning	Option Three – Restrictions To all Commercial Sites Immediately
Uses redirected from the ground level of the main street front to upper floors or side streets are shown in orange		
Animal Care Services	Animal Care Services	Animal Care Services
Arts and Culture	Arts and Culture	Arts and Culture
Child Care Services	Child Care Services	Child Care Services (23 existing businesses)
Civic Service	Civic Service	Civic Service
EV Charging Hub	EV Charging Hub	EV Charging Hub
Financial Services	Financial Services	Financial Services
Fitness and Recreational Use	Fitness and Recreational Use	Fitness and Recreational Use
Food and Beverage Services	Food and Beverage Services	Food and Beverage Services
Fueling Service / Gas Station	Fueling Service / Gas Station	Fueling Service / Gas Station
Health Care Service	Health Care Service	Health Care Service (331 existing businesses)
Hotel	Hotel	Hotel
Instructional Services	Instructional Services	Instructional Services
Live Work	Live Work	Live Work
Manufacturing - Artisan	Manufacturing - Artisan	Manufacturing - Artisan

Option One – Minimal Restrictions on Location of Use Applies Immediately	Option Two – Restrictions on Location of Use Applies at Time of Rezoning	Option Three – Restrictions To all Commercial Sites Immediately
Microbrewery	Microbrewery	Microbrewery
Office Use	Office Use	Office Use (332 existing businesses)
Personal Service Use	Personal Service Use	Personal Service Use
Research & Development	Research & Development	Research & Development (6 existing businesses)
Residential Use	Residential Use	Residential Use
Retail Use	Retail Use	Retail Use
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use
Youth Centre Use	Youth Centre Use	Youth Centre Use
		Total Businesses Impacted: 692

Pros:

- Starts acting on new businesses immediately (i.e. upon bylaw adoption)

Cons:

- Impacts 692 existing businesses in Commercial and CD zones, either rendering them non-conforming or reducing the available locations for them to expand or relocate into.
- Reduces flexibility
- Significantly reduces location options for business
- Introduces challenges for businesses to expand, relocate or build up their customer base
- Substantial and sustained non-conformance management and compliance enforcement costs
- Reduces resident's ability to access various services

Option Four – Strengthening Design Guidelines to Support Vibrancy (Recommended)

Recognizing the importance of creating “store front” style development where all businesses have a frontage that relates to the street, but also avoiding the creation of non-conforming businesses, this option proposes updates to District's Design Guidelines to support a pedestrian friendly street front by:

- Ensuring buildings relate to and frame the street
- Requiring a percentage of glazing on store fronts
- Requiring layouts at time of redevelopment that foster store front designs
- Supporting and building on existing regulations to limit perceived store front width.

This option can also be combined with updates to Local Area Plans and existing neighbourhood based design guidelines to further enhance neighbourhood character and the sense of place within each shopping area.

Pros:

- No businesses become non-conforming
- Adds minimal additional regulation to businesses

Cons:

- Introduces enforcement challenges and costs
- Potential increased regulatory burden to the development review process.

Timing/Approval Process:

Subject to Council direction, staff are progressing work on the Zoning Bylaw update and the work is tracking towards Bylaw Introduction in May/June to facilitate Bylaw enactment within this Council's term.

Concurrence:

This report is prepared with the support of the Economic Development Office.

Conclusion:

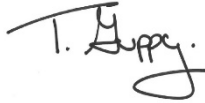
The report presents information to address questions raised by Council during the February 2026 workshops and present options for consideration for the future commercial zones that will be part of the Zoning Bylaw Rewrite.

Options:

For Council's consideration and discussion at the Council Workshop Staff are presenting 4 options for potential approaches to zoning regulations that would support vibrancy in our commercial districts. Options One and Three are mutually exclusive but either can work with or without options Two and Four. They include:

1. Option One – Minimal Zoning Restrictions (Recommended);
2. Option Two – Introducing More Restrictions as Sites Rezone/Redevelop (Recommended);
3. Option Three – Introducing Restrictions to All Commercial Sites;
4. Option Four – Strengthening Design Guidelines to Support Vibrancy (Recommended).

Respectfully submitted,



Tamsin Guppy
Senior Development Planner



Neonila Lilova
Business & Economic Development Manager

Attachment A – Review of Business License Data
Attachment B – Market Input from B&A Consultants
Attachment C – Commercial Use Categories
Attachment D – Summary of Five Case Studies
Attachment E – List of Permitted Uses by Zone
Attachment F – Details of Industry Poll

REVIEWED WITH:		
☐ Business and Economic	_____	☐ Finance
☐ Bylaw Services	_____	☐ Fire Services
☐ Clerk's Office	_____	☐ GIS
☐ Climate and Biodiversity	_____	☐ Human Resources
☐ Communications	_____	☐ Integrated Planning
☐ Community Planning	_____	☐ ITS
☐ Development Engineering	_____	☐ Parks
☐ Development Planning	_____	☐ Real Estate
☐ Engineering Operations	_____	☐ Review and Compliance
☐ Environment	_____	☐ Solicitor
☐ Facilities	_____	☐ Utilities
		External Agencies:
		☐ Library Board
		☐ Museum and Archives
		☐ NSEM
		☐ NS Health
		☐ NVRC
		☐ RCMP
		☐ Other:

Review of Business Licence Data (2025)

Breakdown of Businesses by Main Geography		Businesses Outside of Town & Village Centres	
Town & Village Centre	Licensed Premised Businesses	Neighbourhood	Licensed Premised Businesses
Edgemont Village Centre	138	Outside Town or Village Centre	708
Lions Gate Village Centre	155	Deep Cove	28
Lynn Creek Town Centre	162	Delbrook	51
Lynn Valley Town Centre	235	Dollarton	26
Maplewood Village Centre	72	Lower Capilano Marine	148
Outside Town or Village Centre	778	Maplewood	122
Grand Total	1540	Norgate	234
		Norwood Queens	29
		Parkgate	49
		Valley Centre	21
		Grand Total	708

Chart 1: Businesses by Geography (2025)

Commercial Area	Ratio of Vibrant to Less Vibrant Commercial Uses ¹	Possible Rationale
Deep Cove	60:40	Established and compact, significant day tourism
Edgemont Village	45:55	Established and compact commercial area, with upstairs/ side street locations and day tourism
Lion's Gate Village	15:85	New mixed-use community, developing in population density, housing, amenities, commercial space and infrastructure; low population counts; few businesses, concentration in 3-storey office building
Lynn Valley Town Centre	35:65	Established commercial area with parking availability, anchored by two large commercial development; large catchment area + day tourism; upstairs office space and a 3-storey medical building
Lynn Creek Town Centre	20:80	New mixed-use community, developing in terms of population density, housing, amenities, commercial space and infrastructure
Maplewood	35:65	Car-focused commercial area under development
Marine Drive	30:70	Car-focused commercial area under development

Chart 2: Ratio of Vibrant to Supportive Commercial Uses by Commercial Area (2025)²

¹ *Vibrant Uses* include Retail, Food & Beverage Services (restaurant), some Personal Services (hairdresser, barber) and gas stations; *Supportive Uses* include Office (lawyer, accountant), Health Services (chiropractor, dentist, doctor), some Personal Services (nail salon) and other commercial uses

² Ratios between uses do not distinguish between businesses located at grade and businesses located elsewhere (upstairs or around the corner) of a building.

Review of Business Licence Data (2025)

	Edgemont Village Centre	Lions Gate Village Centre	Lynn Creek Town Centre	Lynn Valley Town Centre	Maplewood Village Centre	Outside Town or Village Centre	Grand Total
Uses in Commercial Zones							
Vibrant Uses	57	16	28	73	23	195	392
Food and Beverage Services	16	5	14	28	8	79	150
Personal Service	6	4	1	6	4	22	43
Retail	35	7	13	39	11	94	199
Supportive Uses	80	132	125	153	44	487	1021
Animal Care Services	1		1	3		10	15
Arts and Culture				2	1	8	11
Auto Sales			1			10	11
Automobile Services		3	1			9	13
Child Care Services	1	2	3	1		16	23
Financial Services	11	1	4	9	2	19	46
Fueling Service/Gas Station	1	1	2	4		5	13
Health Care Services	28	14	45	89	21	134	331
Hotel		3				1	4
Indoor Fitness and Sport	2	3	2	2	4	20	33
Instructional Services	8	19	9	12		22	70
Office	18	69	39	21	9	176	332
Personal Service	9	11	9	7	4	24	64
Research and Development		1				5	6
Residential						2	2
Service Use	1	5	9	3	3	26	47
Industrial	1	7	9	9	5	96	127
Grand Total	138	155	162	235	72	778	1540

Chart 3a: Businesses by Geography and Specific Use – All Commercial Areas (2025)

Review of Business Licence Data (2025)

Uses in Commercial Zones 	Deep Cove	Delbrook	Dollarton	Lower Capilano Marine	Maplewood	Norgate	Queensdale W	Parkgate	Total
 Outside Town or Village Centre	28	51	26	148	122	234	29	49	687
 Vibrant Uses	17	9	12	41	5	49	17	22	172
Food and Beverage Services	11	3	4	15	4	18	5	8	68
Personal Service	1	1	2	3		2	10	1	20
Retail	5	5	6	23	1	29	2	13	84
 Supportive Uses	11	41	14	107	74	142	12	27	428
Animal Care Services		2		2		2		3	9
Arts and Culture		1				4			5
Auto Sales		1		1	1	7			10
Automobile Services				3		6			9
Child Care Services	1	2		2		5		1	11
Financial Services			2	6	1	5		3	17
Fueling Service/Gas Station				1	1		1		3
Health Care Services	4	14	9	55	1	24	4	14	125
Hotel									
Indoor Fitness and Sport		1	1	3	3	10			18
Instructional Services		4		2		13	1		20
Office	5	13	1	20	58	49	3	1	150
Personal Service	1	2	1	7		5	1	4	21
Research and Development					4	1			5
Residential							1		1
Service Use		1		5	5	11	1	1	24
 Industrial		1			43	43			87
Total	28	51	26	148	122	234	29	49	687

Chart 3b: Businesses by Geography and Specific Use – Neighbourhoods (2025)

(Business count > 25, shaded in pink = Marine Drive)

Review of Business Licence Data (2025)

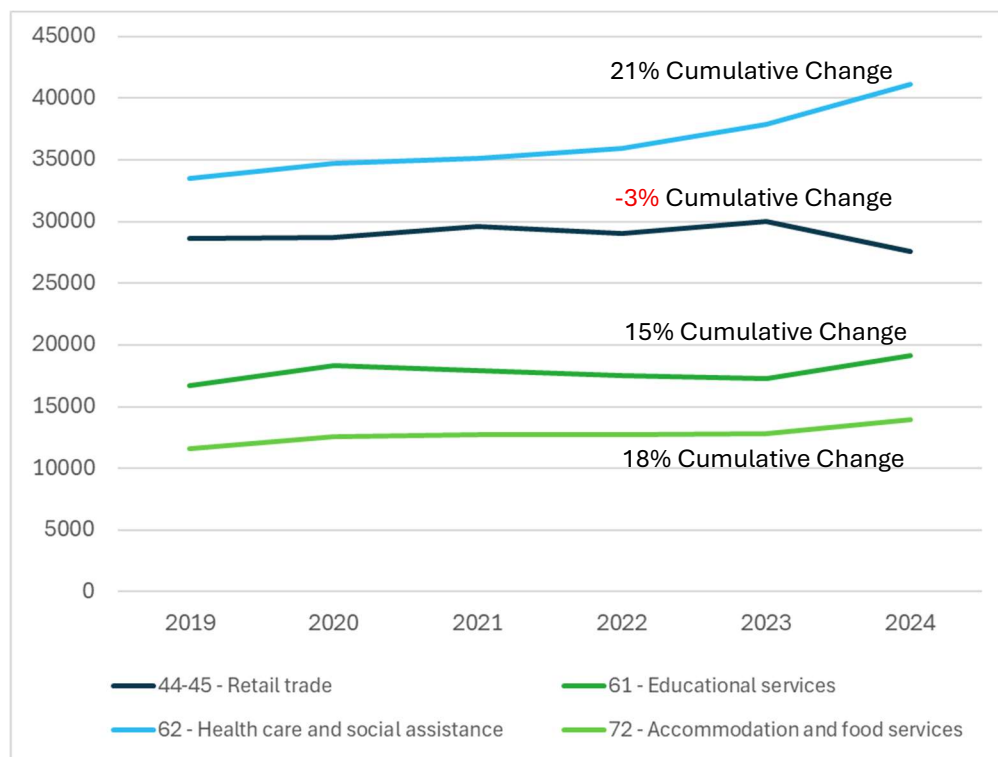


Chart 4a: Vancouver CMA Business Counts Select NAICS Industries (2019-2024)³

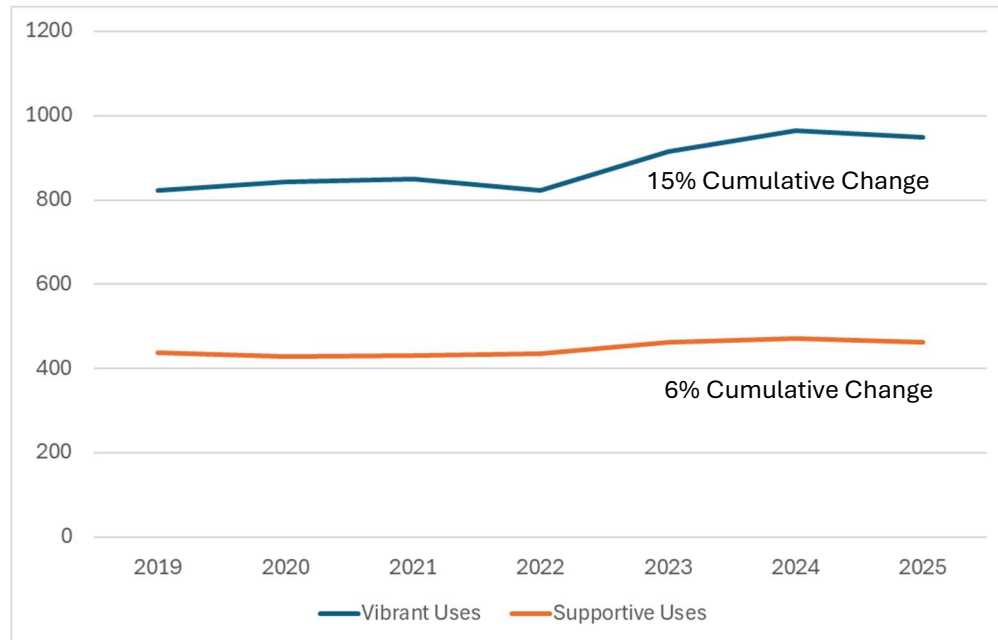


Chart 4b: Change in District Vibrant & Supportive Use Businesses (2019-2025)

³ Source: Statistics Canada



March 25, 2026

DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER ZONING BYLAW REWRITE – POLICY SUPPORT

Subject:	Additional Review of Issues Related to District Zoning Bylaw Update
To:	Daniel Broderick, Development Planner, District of North Vancouver
From:	Adam Mattinson, Associate, B&A
CC	Tamsin Guppy, Senior Planner, District of North Vancouver Neonila Lilova, Economic Development Manager, District of North Vancouver

Executive Summary

This memorandum provides additional analysis to support the District of North Vancouver’s Zoning Bylaw Rewrite, with a focus on the commercial outlook and the role of permitted uses in maintaining a resilient local economy. The District continues to face a shortage of employment-supporting space, particularly within neighbourhood commercial areas and its limited light industrial lands. As redevelopment pressures increase and demand for services grows, the zoning bylaw becomes an essential tool for ensuring that commercial districts can remain active, adaptable, and able to serve community needs.

Commercial retail areas across the District are experiencing intensified competition for space. Shifting consumer behaviour, rising demand for health, wellness, childcare, and personal services, and the District’s role as a significant destination are all contributing to persistently low vacancy in well-located commercial nodes. These trends have resulted in service-oriented tenants competing directly with traditional retail for scarce storefronts, highlighting the importance of maintaining a flexible mix of permitted uses that can accommodate evolving business models and neighbourhood-serving functions.

Maintaining this flexibility is particularly important as the broader economic climate remains uncertain. Rising costs, changing consumer spending patterns, and cautious investment sentiment are reshaping how businesses approach expansion or new leasing decisions. Restrictive commercial permissions risk unintentionally limiting viable business activity, undermining established clusters, and reducing the District’s overall economic resilience.

This memorandum outlines the risks associated with narrowing commercial permissions, identifies pressures that affect the functioning of existing business clusters, and reviews updated regional employment projections pointing to higher long-term demand for employment space than previously estimated. Overall, the analysis concludes that preserving flexibility within commercial zones, while strengthening the protection of scarce light industrial lands, will best support the District’s business

community, enable continued investment, and ensure that commercial areas remain vibrant, diverse, and responsive to changing market conditions.

Context and Purpose

This memorandum is intended to supplement the Zoning Update Considerations & Recommendations memorandum provided to the District of North Vancouver (DNV) in February 2026. This memorandum highlights and expands on select considerations previously identified for the future of Commercial and Light Industrial employment lands as the District undertakes the Zoning Bylaw Rewrite. Trends, opportunities, and risks referenced throughout this memorandum draws on the District's Employment Lands Analysis (2023) and Employment Development Strategy (2024), B&A's Employment Lands Update (2026), and supplementary regional sources.

Commercial Retail

For the purposes of this memorandum and analysis, Commercial Retail speaks to consumer-oriented uses including, but not limited to general retail, food & beverage, convenience & specialty retail, personal services, limited health services, and entertainment.

The Context for Employment Space Need in the District

Previous studies and ongoing District staff work have consistently identified a shortfall of employment-supporting space in the community, particularly within commercial retail areas and the District's limited light industrial lands. Efforts to date have focused on expanding overall employment space, retaining existing capacity during redevelopment, and ensuring that new development can accommodate a range of commercial formats and unit sizes.

As the District proceeds with the Zoning Bylaw Update, a central concern is how to maintain and encourage the growth of vibrant, well-functioning retail areas. The effectiveness of zoning in supporting these outcomes is shaped by several factors unique to the District, including constrained land supply, strong regional competition, shifting market demand, and the geographic distribution of commercial nodes across multiple neighbourhoods.

This context provides the foundation for understanding why the District must balance clear policy direction with flexibility, ensuring that zoning regulations continue to enable local businesses to establish, adapt, and grow within a highly competitive regional market.

Competition for Space is a Function of Changing Demand and Limited Supply

Competition for commercial space in the District continues to increase as a result of changing consumer behaviour, demographic shifts, and constrained land supply. These pressures reflect both local demand and the District's position within a regional visitor destination.

Key drivers of competition relevant to the commercial space in the District include:

- **Population aging increases pressure on location-dependent health and personal services.** British Columbia's population aged 65 and older grew 15.2 percent between 2019 and 2023¹. As older residents age in place across the North Shore, demand continues to rise for accessible health services, diagnostics, wellness clinics, and related supports that require ground-oriented premises in neighbourhood commercial centres. While telehealth services are making advancements, various health services, screenings, testing and diagnostic services require physical access and delivery. The push for convenient and tech-enabled care options is enabling retail and office to medical use conversions in suburban corridors and retail-adjacent sites².
- **Service-based tenants are driving leasing activity and paying premiums for central, accessible space.** Market data shows sustained expansion of medical, fitness, wellness, salon, veterinary, and other personal service operators across British Columbia and Metro Vancouver, reflecting steady demand for in-person, repeat-visit services. These uses rely on close access to their customers and are increasingly competing for the same storefronts required by neighbourhood-serving retail in the District. On the North Shore, retail strength is supported by strong household incomes and a tendency for residents to shop locally. Established nodes such as Lower and Central Lonsdale, Edgemont Village, Lynn Valley, and Park & Tilford benefit from limited new supply and consistent neighbourhood-scale spending³. As a result, vacancy in the best locations remains low, and pricing has proved resilient even as some discretionary retail formats elsewhere in the region face pressure.
- **E-commerce continues to reshape retail demand and storefront performance.** App-based delivery and online retail have reduced the need for frequent in-person trips for groceries, prepared food, and household goods⁴. While general consumer behaviour has slowed at the national level, large players continue to see rapid e-commerce growth⁵. Physical locations remain as vital players in the retail landscape, allowing for immersive experiences and in-person services that can not be serviced through online formats such as in-person food and beverage experience, and certain beauty, health and fitness services.
- **Childcare and family-serving uses continue to outcompete traditional retail for well-located space.** Metro Vancouver added 35 percent more licensed childcare spaces between 2019 and 2023, but supply still lags behind demand, averaging 25 spaces per 100 children compared with a

¹ [Fact Book on Aging, 8th Edition](#), Simon Fraser University, 2023.

² [Why traditional office buildings are opening their doors to medical tenants](#), Colliers, 2024.

³ [North Vancouver Commercial Real Estate Market Report 2025](#), Royal LePage Commercial, 2025.

⁴ [State of the Consumer 2025: When disruption becomes permanent](#), McKinsey & Company, 2025.

⁵ [B.C. retailers aim to bolster e-commerce as national data shows decline](#), Business in Vancouver, 2026.

national benchmark of 29 spaces⁶. These uses prioritize proximity to homes, transit, and schools, increasing competition in already low-vacancy neighbourhood nodes.

- **Tourism activity remains a major driver of commercial demand.** Canada's tourism sector achieved a record-breaking summer in 2025, driven by increasing rates of interprovincial tourism and rising international interest⁷. Domestic spending also reflected a growth of 6.9% year-over-year, offering increased benefits for jobs and local businesses that rely on tourism-related economic activity. The District and North Shore tourism sector contributes significantly to the local economy, capitalizing on the backyard access to many of Vancouver's premier attractions and all-season activities. This shift to domestic travel is likely to be a long-term shift as Canadians are looking to spend locally and international travel is reduced due to changing political sentiment, high airfares, surging jet fuel costs, and disruptions to travel operations. Tourist-friendly initiatives and activities in the District are likely to have a positive impact on local businesses and food and beverage outlets as an additional source of revenue.

A Mixture of Businesses Is Critical for the Vitality of Local Commercial Areas

A balanced mix of services, retail, and amenities supports active and resilient commercial districts. Engagement through the District's Economic Development Strategy identified the importance of this mix for both economic performance and community function, which is supported by several sources.

Evidence supporting the need for a diverse business mix includes:

- **Service-oriented businesses help sustain foot traffic needed by traditional retailers.** Many retail corridors across British Columbia are seeing increased activity in wellness, medical, fitness, and personal service tenants⁸. While these uses may not always be considered the best option for activating the street front, they often generate frequent repeat visits that strengthen surrounding retail performance and reduce vacancy risk.
- **Mixed clusters reduce the need for multiple trips.** Commercial areas that integrate core services, food and beverage, personal services, and convenience retail tend to maintain consistent daytime and evening activity. Regional market analysis highlights the growing reliance of retail centres on diverse tenant mixes to stay fully leased, particularly in suburban and grocery-anchored centres where vacancy has held near 0.7 percent through 2024 and 2025⁹.
- **Constraints on permitted uses can undermine functioning clusters.** When zoning limits flexibility, existing tenants can unintentionally become non-conforming or may be unable to

⁶ [Childcare Facility Shortage by Municipality in Metro Vancouver Area, BC, Canada](#), Jin Zhang, 2024.

⁷ [Canadian Tourism Delivers Almost \\$60B This Summer, Driving National Wealth and Unprecedented Dispersion Across the Country](#). Destination Canada, 2025.

⁸ [Return of foot traffic to key areas buoys B.C. retail demand](#). Western Investor, 2023.

⁹ [Greater Vancouver Retail Report H1 2026](#), Colliers, 2026

expand or relocate. Given the District's commercial vacancy rates are among the lowest in the region, a lack of flexible space increases the likelihood that businesses will move to other North Shore municipalities or leave the region entirely. This was noted as a prominent concern amongst businesses engaged as part of the development of the 2024 EDS.

- **Businesses may face long waits for suitable space.** Across Metro Vancouver, retail leasing conditions remain tight, with widespread competition for small frontage units and near-zero vacancy levels in suburban daily-needs centres. Limited supply means expanding or relocating businesses often defer investment or are forced to find opportunities elsewhere.

Attracting Investment in a time of Economic Uncertainty

While the District's commercial areas continue to experience tight leasing conditions and strong structural demand, broader economic headwinds are creating a more cautious investment climate for businesses across the North Shore. The same factors driving competition for limited storefronts, such as rising operating costs, strong neighbourhood-scale demand, and low vacancies, are occurring alongside macroeconomic pressures that are dampening confidence and influencing investment decisions. As a result, even well-located centres with resilient demand are seeing businesses take a more conservative approach to expansion or new leasing commitments for retail businesses.

Current indicators affecting business confidence include:

- **Softening consumer spending and increased budget sensitivity.** Region-wide shifts in consumer behaviour are contributing to a more challenging retail environment. Retail spending in Downtown Vancouver declined by 1.9 percent in 2024, with more than half of the year's weeks showing negative year-over-year growth, signalling tighter household budgets and cautious purchasing behaviour across the region—including North Shore residents who shop locally. Even where transaction volumes increased, average transaction size fell by 10.9 percent after inflation, reflecting a shift toward more value-oriented spending patterns that directly affect neighbourhood-serving retail, food and beverage, and service operators¹⁰.
- **Economic uncertainty and rising operating costs are dampening business investment.** Reports on Metro Vancouver's retail and commercial sectors indicate that uneven economic recovery, fluctuating capital availability, labour cost pressures, and ongoing supply-chain instability are limiting business expansion. At the same time, businesses in BC are expressing declining confidence due to rising energy prices, increased taxes, and broader geopolitical-related cost pressures.¹¹ These combined factors are prompting many operators, particularly those considering small storefronts and neighbourhood commercial units with

¹⁰ [Vancouver Retail Market Dynamics Fall 2025](#). JLL, 2025.

¹¹ [As PST expansion looms, BC businesses lose confidence about the future](#). Daily Hive, 2026.

already thin margins, to delay or scale back investment in new locations, a trend that is also affecting suburban areas such as the North Shore.

Impacts to Businesses that are Non-Conforming after Policy Change

As part of the Zoning Bylaw Review, the District has considered whether limiting certain office and service functions within commercial zones could help reinforce street-level activity and enhance overall community vitality. This discussion elevates the importance of understanding how such changes may affect existing businesses, particularly those that could become non-conforming if permissions are narrowed. When zoning or other land-use regulations are amended, ongoing operations may be rendered “legal non-conforming.” In British Columbia, these uses retain continuation rights, but those rights are limited, and the ability to alter buildings, expand operations, or rebuild after damage is constrained by both statute and case law. Two specific concerns are especially relevant in this context:

- **Risk to continuation of non-conforming uses after damage or discontinuance** - Where a non-conforming use continues, it may be lost if the use is discontinued for a period or if the building is damaged beyond a statutory threshold, after which reconstruction typically must comply with current zoning.
- **Reduced redevelopment and expansion options after downzoning** - Downzoning can remove previously permitted opportunities, leaving businesses reliant on narrow non-conforming rights that may not support desired expansion or redevelopment.

These risks are especially relevant in the District’s commercial zones, where many operators have already identified challenges through the Economic Development Strategy engagement process. Further constraints on existing businesses could create more unintended negative impacts than benefits, particularly for operators who depend on the ability to adapt, expand, or rebuild in response to changing market conditions.

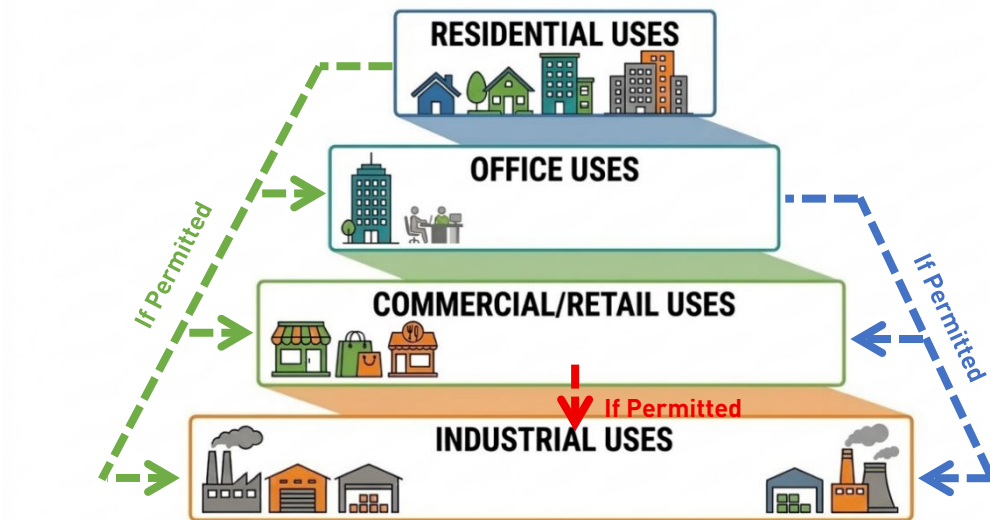
Why Is It Appropriate to Restrict Permissions for Light Industrial Uses?

While restriction of uses in the District’s commercial zones is not currently recommended, a targeted narrowing of permitted non-industrial uses in its industrial zones is considered appropriate. The District’s light industrial areas in Pemberton and Lynn Creek play an essential role in supporting local businesses and residents. These areas are long-established and provide space for activities such as repair services, trades operations, small-scale production, and other light manufacturing. These functions cannot be accommodated elsewhere on the North Shore due to space, cost, and operational needs.

These industrial areas are also experiencing growing speculative pressure. Major residential redevelopment nearby has increased interest from residential and service commercial businesses that view industrial parcels as attractive redevelopment opportunities. In land-constrained markets like the District, the North Shore, and Metro Vancouver as a whole, this type of pressure often leads to industrial

uses being displaced¹². Other uses can typically pay higher rents, adapt to smaller floorplates, or operate in a wider variety of building forms, making it difficult for industrial businesses to compete when permissions are broad.

Conceptual Visualization of Competition and Spillover Risk between Different Land Uses



Unlike commercial activity, which can be added through mixed-use development or expansion of existing commercial nodes, industrial lands do not have similar opportunities for growth or replacement. Once an industrial site is converted, it is effectively lost¹³. This creates long-term challenges for the district's economic resilience, as businesses that rely on industrial space have no alternative locations to move to within the community.

Restricting non-industrial uses in these areas helps protect the limited industrial land base and ensures continued access to services and activities that support the wider community and local economy.

Alternatives to Restricting Uses through Zoning

There are several tools available to encourage preferred commercial uses without relying solely on limiting or prohibiting uses through zoning. These tools can guide the form, character, and operation of development while reducing the risk of creating non-conforming businesses. They include:

- **Development Permit Areas** that focus on form, character, and streetscape elements to support active and attractive commercial frontages.

¹² [Vancouver's plan to rezone industrial land risks shrinking areas for businesses, advocates warn](#). The Globe and Mail, 2025.

¹³ [Protection of Industrial Lands for Future Prosperity](#). BC Chamber of Commerce, 2025.

- **Business licensing** approaches that set operating expectations for certain types of businesses and support a healthy main street environment.
- **Updates to other municipal bylaws** such as parking, loading, signage, screening, and landscaping to improve the viability of small commercial spaces.
- **Revitalization tax exemption** programs that encourage reinvestment in older commercial areas by offering time-limited municipal property tax relief for upgrades.

These tools can help shape outcomes, but each carries trade offs. They require staff capacity, funding, and administrative oversight, and tax exemption programs reduce potential municipal revenue for a period of time.

It is also important to note that the District's commercial areas are spread across multiple neighbourhoods and compete directly with nearby commercial nodes in adjacent municipalities. This makes it difficult for the District alone to curate commercial activity or control market outcomes through policy tools.

While these options can complement the Zoning Bylaw Update, each will require further research, cross-departmental coordination, and consultation with businesses and the community before being considered.

Other Areas of Council Inquiry: Updated Growth Projections

During previous workshops, it was noted that the regional employment projections that informed the job growth and employment land and space needs analysis in the Employment Lands Analysis have since been updated by Metro Vancouver. The updated projections provide new context for understanding the District's long-term employment capacity and land requirements.

Metro Vancouver Regional Planning released revised regional growth projections in 2025. These include updated estimates for population, dwelling units, and employment from 2024 to 2051 under low, medium or base, and high growth scenarios. Based on these new projections, the total number of jobs located in the District is expected to increase by 30 percent in the low growth scenario and 49 percent in the high growth scenario by 2051. This results in a total of 49,958 jobs under the low scenario and 53,729 jobs under the high scenario.

These updated forecasts are higher than the previous projection of 47,900 total jobs in 2051, which formed the basis for the floor space estimates in the 2023 Employment Lands Analysis. While updated employment by sector is not yet available at the municipal level, if the general distribution across sectors remains similar to past allocations, the District's need for most types of employment-supporting land and floor space will likely be greater than previously estimated.

Commercial Use Categories	
Common Businesses	Defined Use in Zoning (in alphabetical order)
Pet Training	Animal Care Services
Doggie / Pet Day Care	
Pet Grooming	
Vet	
Animal Hospital	
Automotive Repair	Automobile Services
Oil Change Services	
Car Wash	
Tire Service	
Vehicle Rental	
Banks	Financial Services
Credit Unions	
Insurance Agency	
Wealth Management	
Restaurant	Food and Beverage Services
Fast Food Restaurant	
Café	
Coffee Shop	
Pub	
Microbrewery	Microbrewery
Distillery with tasting room	
Gas Station	Fueling Service
Gas Bar	
Doctor / Medical Clinic	Health Care Services
Dentist	
Orthodontist	
Counselling / Therapy	
Physiotherapist	
Chiropractor	
Naturopathic Medical Clinic	
Occupational Therapist	

Commercial Use Categories	
Common Businesses	Defined Use in Zoning (in alphabetical order)
Optometrist	
Massage Therapy	
Medical Lab / Life Labs	
Hotel	Hotel
Motel	
Fitness Centres	Fitness and Sport
Personal Trainer	
Dance Studio	
Martial Arts	
Yoga Studio	
Pilates Studio	
Barre Studio	
Tutoring Centre	Instructional Services
Learning Centre	
Art Classes	
Music School	
Driving School	
First Aid Training	
Cooking School	
Office	Office
Accountant	
Registered Society Office	
Property Management Office	
Architect	
Lawyer	
Notary	
Engineer	
Corporate Office	
Leasing Office	
Immigration Offices	
Consultant Office	

Commercial Use Categories	
Common Businesses	Defined Use in Zoning (in alphabetical order)
Nail Salon	Personal Services
Skin Care	
Beauty Salon	
Wax Clinic	
Laser Clinic	
Tanning Salon	
Aesthetician	
Spa	
Barber	
Hair Salon	
Laundromat	
Tailor / Alterations	
Shoe Repair	
Phone Repair	
Watch Repair	
Laundromat	
Research Lab	Research and Development
Product Testing	
Grocery	Retail
Butcher	
Bakery	
Specialty Food Stores	
Pharmacy	
Liquor Store	
Cannabis Store	
Art Gallery	
Clothing store	
Shoe storey	
Other Retail	

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LOWER LONSDALE AVENUE – CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

ZONING – LL-1 & LL-2 ZONES

Use Category	Permitted	Conditions
Arts & Culture (Galleries)	✓	N/A
Clubs	✓	N/A
Child Care	✓	N/A
Fitness & Sport	✓	N/A
Financial Services (Banks)	✓	N/A
Food & Beverage (Cafes & Restaurants)	✓	N/A
Health Care Services (Dentists, Physio, etc.)	✓	N/A
Instructional Services (Cooking School, Drivers ed)	✓	N/A
Office (Notary, Law, Architecture etc.)	✓	N/A
Personal Service (Barber, hair salon, tailor, etc.)	✓	N/A
Retail	✓	N/A
Residential	✓	Only above second storey
Service (Repairs)	✓	N/A

Other Zoning Regulations: Podium in the first two storeys, step backs above second storey. • “Money Services Business” like currency exchanges, must be above the first storey.



COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVES & FACTORS

Attraction Factor: Mix of cultural destinations including the Shipyards, museums, SeaBus terminal, commercial activity, and waterfront public gathering spaces.

Public Realm Investments: Widened Sidewalks • Seating Areas • Public Squares • Waterfront Features • Boulevard Trees

Key Policies: 2022-2026 Council’s Strategic Plan • 2014 Official Community Plan

Building Design Guidelines: Shipyards DPA

Streetscape Design Guidelines: Yes

BIA: Lower Lonsdale BIA

KEY DATA

Municipality’s Population Density: 5,482 pop/km²

Vibrant/Supportive Uses Ratio:

66% Vibrant Uses / 34% Supportive Uses

Note: The ratio is based on Google Maps Streetview observations and is not a full market analysis or regulatory approach. Vibrant Uses are pedestrian oriented (restaurants, retail, cafés, etc.). Supportive Uses offer limited activation but provide community services (offices [doctor/dentist/insurance], pharmacies, banks, fitness/gyms). Vacant units are excluded from the assessment.

PHOTO STRIP



WEST 4TH AVENUE – CITY OF VANCOUVER

ZONING – C2B ZONE

Use Category	Permitted	Conditions
Arts & Culture (Galleries)	✓	N/A
Clubs	✓	Conditional Approval
Child Care	✓	Conditional Approval
Fitness & Sport	✓	Conditional Approval
Financial Services (Banks)	✗	N/A
Food & Beverage (Cafes & Restaurants)	✓	Conditional Approval
Health Care Services (Dentists, Physio, etc.)	✗	N/A
Instructional Services (Cooking School, Drivers ed)	✓	Conditional Approval
Office (Notary, Law, Architecture etc.)	✓	Conditional Approval
Personal Service (Barber, hair salon, tailor, etc.)	✓	N/A
Retail	✓	N/A
Residential	✓	Only above first storey
Service (Repairs)	✓	N/A

Other Zoning Regulations: Maximum unit frontage for any commercial use is 15.3 m. • Guidelines for pedestrian-oriented frontages, including transparency and quality materials.



COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVES & FACTORS

Attraction Factor: Mix of outdoor-lifestyle retailers, restaurants, and boutique shops creates an energetic, destination-oriented corridor.

Public Realm Investments:

Widened Sidewalks • Public Plazas • Boulevard Trees • Seating Areas • Patios

Key Policies: Vibrant Vancouver: City Council's Strategic Priorities • Broadway Plan • Transportation 2040 Plan

Building Design Guidelines: Commercial Zone Guidelines

Streetscape Design Guidelines: None

BIA: Kitsilano 4th Avenue BIA

KEY DATA

Municipality's Population Density: 5,750 pop/km²

Vibrant/Supportive Uses Ratio:

80% Vibrant Uses / 20% Supportive Uses

Note: The ratio is based on Google Maps Streetview observations and is not a full market analysis or regulatory approach. Vibrant Uses are pedestrian oriented (restaurants, retail, cafés, etc.). Supportive Uses offer limited activation but provide community services (offices [doctor/dentist/insurance], pharmacies, banks, fitness/gyms). Vacant units are excluded from the assessment.

PHOTO STRIP



MAIN STREET – CITY OF VANCOUVER

ZONING – C2 & C2C ZONES

Use Category	Permitted	Conditions
Arts & Culture (Galleries)	✓	N/A
Clubs	✓	Conditional Approval
Child Care	✓	Conditional Approval
Fitness & Sport	✓	N/A
Financial Services (Banks)	✓	N/A
Food & Beverage (Cafes & Restaurants)	✓	N/A
Health Care Services (Dentists, Physio, etc.)	✓	N/A
Instructional Services (Cooking School, Drivers ed)	✓	Conditional Approval
Office (Notary, Law, Architecture etc.)	✓	N/A
Personal Service (Barber, hair salon, tailor, etc.)	✓	N/A
Retail	✓	N/A
Residential	✓	Only above first storey
Service (Repairs)	✓	N/A

Other Zoning Regulations: Maximum unit frontage for any commercial use is 15.3 m. • Guidelines for pedestrian-oriented frontages, including transparency and quality materials.



COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVES & FACTORS

Attraction Factor: Mix of independent boutiques, creative studios, restaurants, and multicultural neighbourhoods form a strong eclectic streetscape with constant pedestrian activity.

Public Realm Investments:

Widened Sidewalks • Public Plazas • Boulevard Trees • Seating Areas • Patios

Key Policies: Vibrant Vancouver: City Council's Strategic Priorities • Broadway Plan • Transportation 2040 Plan

Building Design Guidelines: Commercial Zone Guidelines

Streetscape Design Guidelines: Yes

BIA: Mount Pleasant BIA

KEY DATA

Municipality's Population Density: 5,750 pop/km²

Vibrant/Supportive Uses Ratio:

78% Vibrant Uses / 22% Supportive Uses

Note: The ratio is based on Google Maps Streetview observations and is not a full market analysis or regulatory approach. Vibrant Uses are pedestrian oriented (restaurants, retail, cafés, etc.). Supportive Uses offer limited activation but provide community services (offices [doctor/dentist/insurance], pharmacies, banks, fitness/gyms). Vacant units are excluded from the assessment.

PHOTO STRIP



HASTINGS STREET – CITY OF BURNABY

ZONING – C4A, C8 & C8A ZONES

Use Category	Permitted	Conditions
Arts & Culture (Galleries)	✓	N/A
Clubs	✓	Only above first storey
Child Care	✓	N/A
Fitness & Sport	✓	Only above first storey
Financial Services (Banks)	✓	Max. Frontage 10 m
Food & Beverage (Cafes & Restaurants)	✓	N/A
Health Care Services (Dentists, Physio, etc.)	✓	Max. Frontage 10 m
Instructional Services (Cooking School, Drivers ed)	✓	Only above first storey
Office (Notary, Law, Architecture etc.)	✓	Max. Frontage 10 m
Personal Service (Barber, hair salon, tailor, etc.)	✓	N/A
Retail	✓	N/A
Residential	✓	Only above first storey
Service (Repairs)	✓	N/A

Other Zoning Regulations: Minimum frontage entrance width of 3 m for second storey uses. • Uses must be “oriented to pedestrian needs”.



COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVES & FACTORS

Attraction Factor: Mix of independent shops and cultural landmarks in a major throughfare in the Heights “village” that creates a lively, community-focused pedestrian environment.

Public Realm Investments:

Widened Sidewalks • Boulevard Trees

Key Policies: Burnaby 2050 Official Community Plan • Heights Community Plan

Building Design Guidelines: None

Streetscape Design Guidelines: None

BIA: Heights Merchants Association BIA

KEY DATA

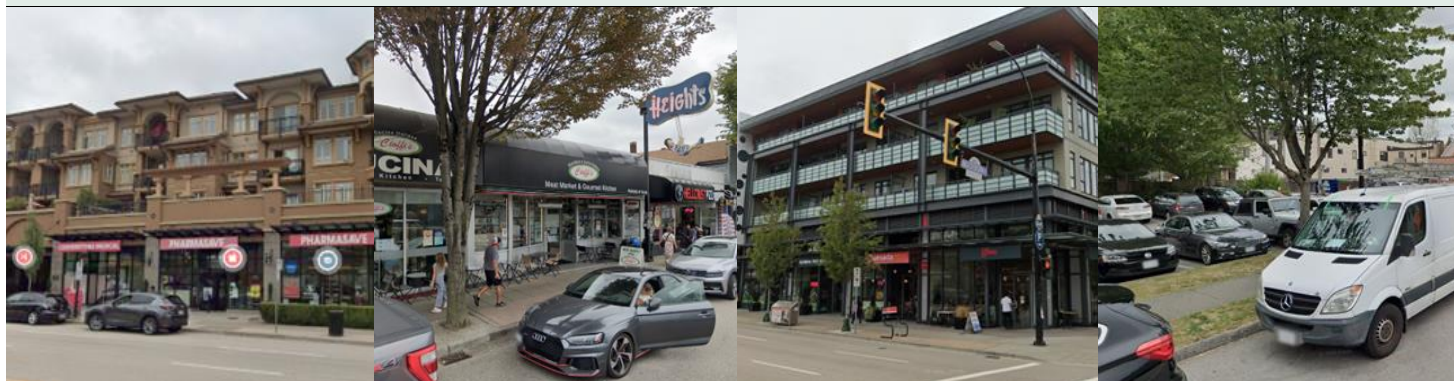
Municipality’s Population Density: 3,301 pop/km²

Vibrant/Supportive Uses Ratio:

60% Vibrant Uses / 40% Supportive Uses

Note: The ratio is based on Google Maps Streetview observations and is not a full market analysis or regulatory approach. Vibrant Uses are pedestrian oriented (restaurants, retail, cafés, etc.). Supportive Uses offer limited activation but provide community services (offices [doctor/dentist/insurance], pharmacies, banks, fitness/gyms). Vacant units are excluded from the assessment.

PHOTO STRIP



MARINE DRIVE – DUNDARAVE – DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER

ZONING – C-2 ZONE

Use Category	Permitted	Conditions
Arts & Culture (Galleries)	✓	N/A
Clubs	✗	N/A
Child Care	✓	N/A
Fitness & Sport	✗	N/A
Financial Services (Banks)	✓	Not allowed in the sidewalk frontage
Food & Beverage (Cafes & Restaurants)	✓	N/A
Health Care Services (Dentists, Physio, etc.)	✓	Combined must not occupy more than 20% of the width of the ground floor of each block face
Instructional Services (Cooking School, Drivers ed)	✓	
Office (Notary, Law, Architecture etc.)	✓	
Personal Service (Barber, hair salon, tailor, etc.)	✓	N/A
Retail	✓	N/A
Residential	✓	Only above first storey
Service (Repairs)	✓	N/A

Other Zoning Regulations: Pharmacy use is capped to just one location in the Dundarave area.



COMPLEMENTARY INITIATIVES & FACTORS

Attraction Factor: Mix of local shops, cafés, beach amenities, and small-scale storefronts creates an intimate village setting anchored by strong pedestrian and waterfront appeal.

Public Realm Investments:

Widened Sidewalks • Boulevard Trees • Patios

Key Policies: Council's Strategic Plan 2024-2026 • Official Community Plan

Building Design Guidelines: None

Streetscape Design Guidelines: Yes

BIA: Ambleside Dundarave BIA

KEY DATA

Municipality's Population Density: 532 pop/km²

Vibrant/Supportive Uses Ratio:

54% Vibrant Uses / 46% Supportive Uses

Note: The ratio is based on Google Maps Streetview observations and is not a full market analysis or regulatory approach. Vibrant Uses are pedestrian oriented (restaurants, retail, cafés, etc.). Supportive Uses offer limited activation but provide community services (offices [doctor/dentist/insurance], pharmacies, banks, fitness/gyms). Vacant units are excluded from the assessment.

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Legend:
 Principal Use
 Accessory Use

USE	Residential Zones								Commercial Zones				Tourism Zones		Industrial Zones			Institutional Zones			Park Zones		
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	C1	C2	C3	C4	T1	T2	E1	E2	E3	I1	I2	I3	PR	NP	CM
Animal Care Services																							
Arts and Culture																							
Automobile Services																							
Camping Use																							
Cemetery and Funeral Services																							
Child Care Services																							
Civic Service																							
Coach House																							
Community Centre Use																							
Conservation Use																							
Contractor Service Use																							
Elementary and Secondary Schools																							
Emergency Services																							
EV Charging Hub																							
EV Charging Stations																							
Financial Services																							
Fitness and Sport																							
Food and Beverage Services																							
Freight and Fleet Operations Use																							
Fueling Services																							
Health Care Service																							
Home Occupation																							
Hotel Use																							
Fitness and Sport																							
Instructional Services																							
Live-work																							
Lock-off Suite																							
Log Salvage																							
Manufacturing, Artisan																							
Manufacturing, Large-Scale																							
Microbrewery																							
Natural Resort Use																							
Office Use																							
On-Location Filming Uses																							
Outdoor Entertainment Use																							

List of Permitted Uses by Zone Proposed Zones from the 2019 Zoning Bylaw Repeal 2026

Legend:

: Principal Use : Accessory Use

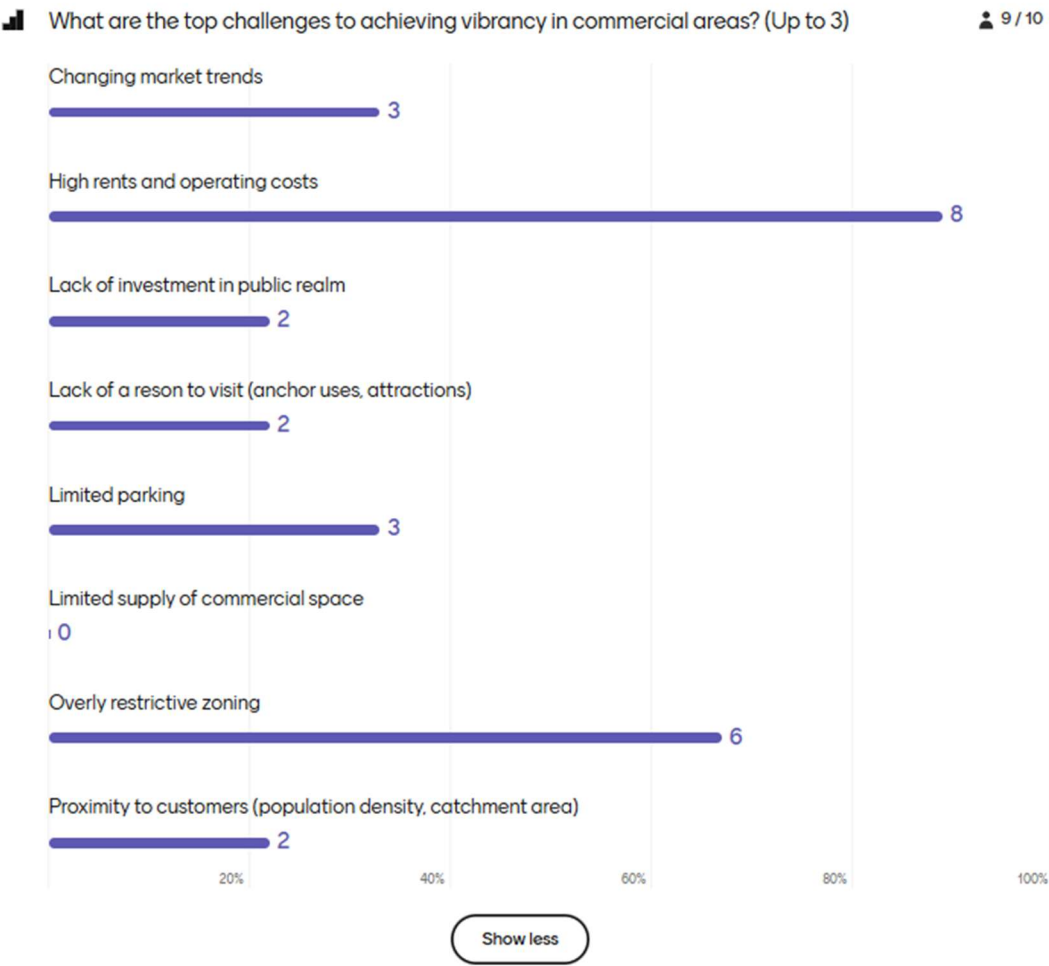
	Residential Zones								Commercial Zones				Tourism Zones		Industrial Zones			Institutional Zones			Park Zones		
USE	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	C1	C2	C3	C4	T1	T2	E1	E2	E3	I1	I2	I3	PR	NP	CM
Parking use																							
Parks Administration, Maintenance and Support																							
Parks and Open Space Use																							
Personal Service Use																							
Port-oriented Activity																							
Recreational Group Camp Accommodation																							
Religious Assembly																							
Research & Development																							
Residential Care																							
Residential Use																							
Resort Operations and Administration Use																							
Retail Use																							
Retail use, limited to Local Commercial Services																							
Secondary Suite																							
Service Use																							
Short-term Rentals																							
Specialized Outdoor Recreation Use																							
Thermal Spa																							
Tourist Accommodation Services																							
Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation Use																							
University Use																							
Warehousing Use																							
Water Supply and Watershed Management																							
Youth Centre Use																							

List of Permitted Uses by Zone Proposed Zones from the 2019-2026 City of Yuma Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance

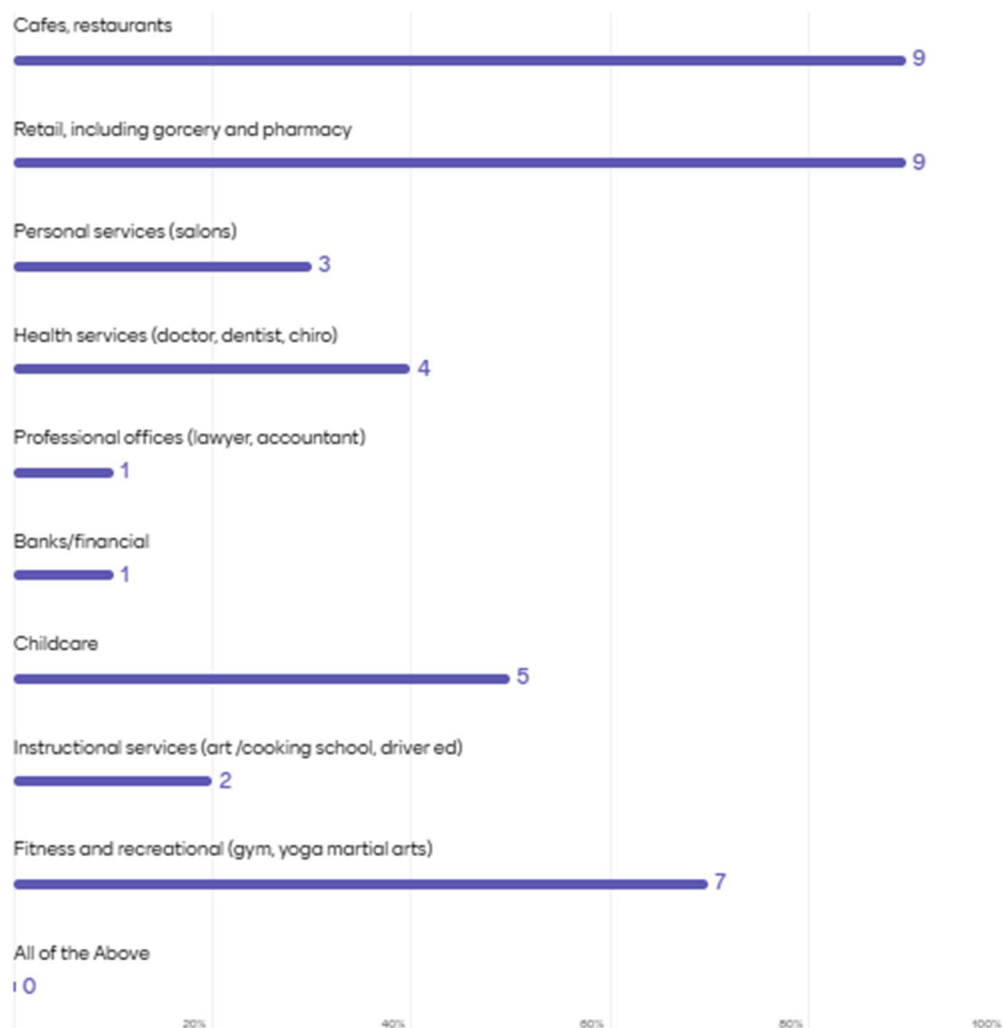
Residential Zones	
R1	Rural Residential Zone (outside the urban containment boundary)
R2	Urban Detached Residential Zone
R3	Residential - Houseplex Zone (SSMUH compliant)
R4	Residential Townhouse Zone
R5	Residential Stacked Townhouse Zone
R6	Residential Low-Rise Zone
R7	Residential Mid-Rise Zone
R8	Residential High-Rise Zone
Commercial Zones	
C1	Core Commercial Zone (Implement as sites rezone)
C2	General Commercial Zone
C3	Local Commercial Zone
C4	Hotel Zone
Tourism Zones	
T1	Tourism Resort - Mountain Zone
T2	Tourism Resort - Canyon Zone
Employment - Industrial Zones	
E1	Employment - Heavy and Port Industrial Zone
E2	Employment - Light Industrial Zone
E3	Employment - Business Park Zone (Implement in Phase 2)
Institutional Zones	
I1	Institutional - General Zone
I2	Institutional - School Zone
I3	Institutional - University Zone
Park Zones	
PR	Parks and Outdoor Recreation Zone
NP	Natural Parkland Zone
Cemetery Zone	
CM	Cemetery Zone

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Industry Poll from Webniar on March 23, 2026



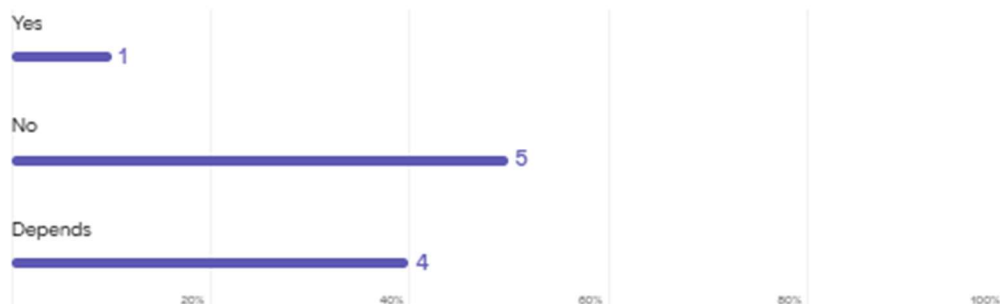
What types of businesses/uses are most important to neighbourhood-serving commercial areas? 10/10



Show less

Do you support zoning regulations that limit uses at grade and push uses upstairs or to side streets?

10 / 10



Please elaborate on your choice on limiting uses at grade and pushing them upstairs/side street

9 / 10

9

We need forces to push uses to 2nd floor. Consider physical challenges in building design, but drive the choice to 2nd floor.

Can't be a catch all. This needs to be purposeful and I'm not sure that this is the case currently. Staff should be extremely careful with this decision and there are accessibility concerns

Cost of construction will increase - projects won't pencil out. Floor loading issues. Thicker floors. Increase of rents for those limited and now non-conforming.

Some of the businesses you have marked to 2nd level will have a difficult time to operate there. Or will simply not choose to open.

Cost to construct second floor commercial is expensive so developers will opt not to do it, limiting availability. If they do build it, cost will force rent required to be high.

It's not that easy... operating a business on the second floor greatly impacts functionality not to mention rates, construction costs, accessibility, etc.

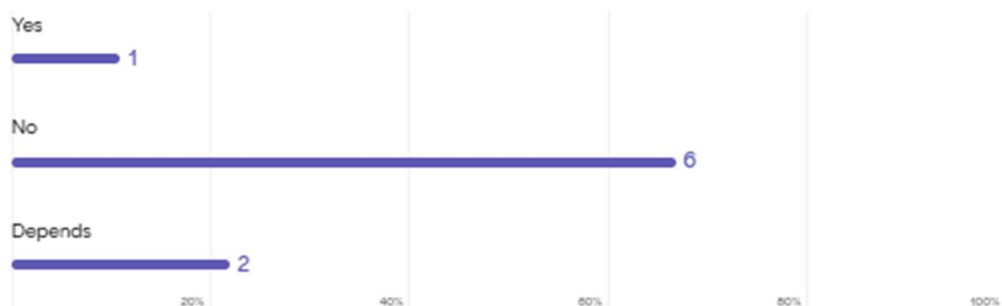
Need to be alternatives available. Cannot say "your business type must be on the second floor" if only a handful of such spaces exist.

Vibrant neighbourhoods develop organically, use restrictions will cause winners and losers in rent.

In this challenging market it is difficult to find tenants or purchasers to move in. Restricting only makes this more challenging.

Do you support other use regulations, such as limiting the number of uses per building or per block?

9/10



Please elaborate on your choice about limiting uses per block or per building

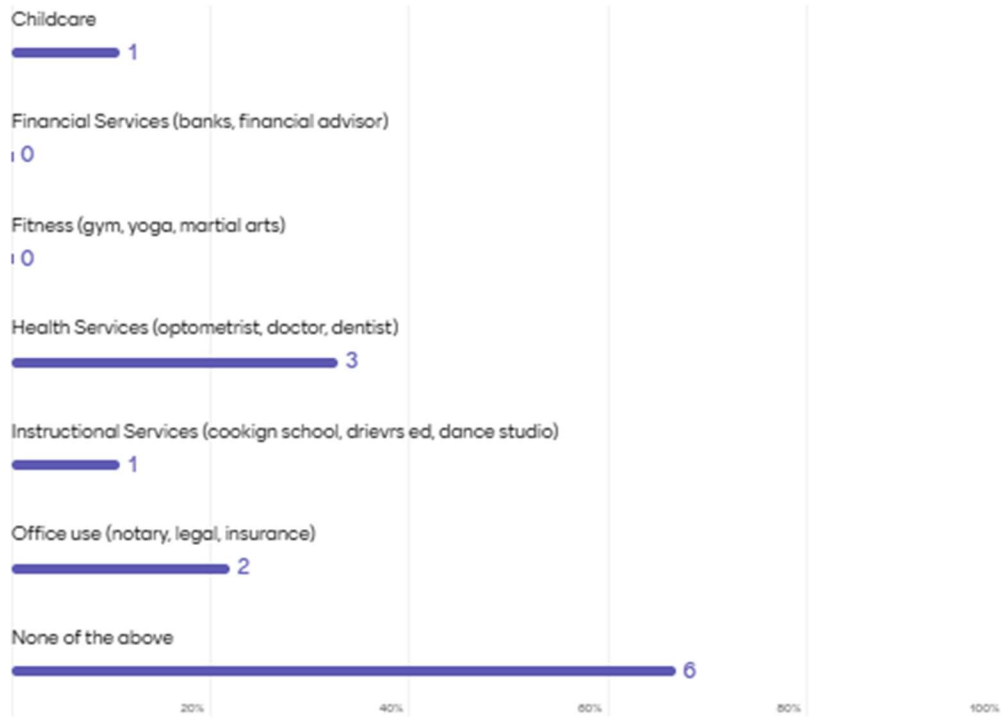
8/10



Let the free market decide	Depends on the use We don't need 6 money exchanges on one block
Optionality controls rent and market forces will dictate co-tenancies better than municipalities.	Will be a nightmare to watch over.
You should not be allowed to dictate who operates and where and how frequent that use shows up. Owners already have enough trouble leasing buildings. MYOB	Say out of planning the structure of business in an area. Maintain flex for future changes in needs etc. DO not create local monopoly.
Warranted exceptional circumstances, but prefer not	Less desirable for developers to build projects with limitations...

■ If restrictions are to be made, which uses should be limited?

9/10



Show less

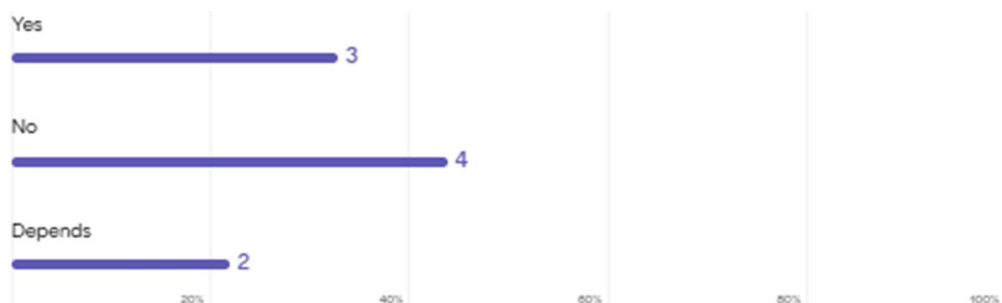
■ If use restrictions are to be made, when should they be implemented?

9/10



Do you support using Design Guidelines instead of Zoning, such as % glazing & layout, to add vibrancy to commercial areas?

9/10



Please elaborate on your choice to use Design Guidelines to add vibrancy

8/10

8



No. Will create too much bureaucracy. Ad hoc choices made by people in positions who shouldn't be making these decisions.

Can use storefront variation to create visual interest

Said depends for "don't know enough to have an informed opinion"

Closed windows in busy area doesn't add to community.

Limit the areas of the facade this applies to and leave room for flexibility to a certain degree.

Higher levels of frontage is generally desirable for tenants anyway.

Unsure at this point how this manifests itself. (Not all good commercial is retail)

Depends on who is building it Unless if you have tenant in tow, it's hard to design a space for all types of uses.

Is there anything else on Commercial Zones we should ask/discuss?

5/10

9



I resonate with Arashia fitness concerns. We should really discuss the fact that these business can't afford rents in those areas and rely on light industrial areas

Fitness

Has the DNV done a study on how many people fitness use employs versus light industrial? If the point is to promote employment, why limit the higher employing use?

Reconsider the relationship with light industrial and heavy industrial

Should we be considering "supported commercial" for key community services in high cost areas? Need to discuss floor space sizes in new dev to encourage small business owners and make more affordable?

Agree with Ross' comments. Sound judgement and backed up by fact

Not convinced the different industrial uses are fully understood by staff

DNV should really understand some of these businesses and how they operate. Let's not limit business but to expand our zoning and footprints Let's limit parking requirements

Not thrilled

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