



The Corporation of the District of North Vancouver

**COUNCIL POLICY**

Title	Public Assembly (PA) Lands Strategy
Section	Development and Social Planning

**POLICY**

It is the policy of Council that public assembly lands and uses are considered as ongoing community assets necessary to support community health and well-being.

Policy approved on: May 27, 2013

**PROCEDURE**

The following procedure is used to implement this policy but does not form part of the policy. This procedure may be amended from time to time at the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer.

The Guiding Principles as included in Section A and B of this Policy shall be considered as part of the review of any application which would require a change of use or repurposing of lands designated 'Institutional' (for Public Assembly use) in the District of North Vancouver's Official Community Plan Bylaw 7900.

**A. Guiding Principles: Community Value and Role of Public Assembly (PA) Lands**

1. Public Assembly lands were created to serve the social needs of the community, and Council supports retention of publicly used lands and buildings (where appropriate) for long-term community purposes to the greatest extent possible;
2. Existing public assembly lands (as well as buildings/spaces, where appropriate), should be retained within or near OCP designated growth centres as these areas will accommodate the majority of new growth in the District, and PA lands/buildings/spaces will be key components of community identity and social and cultural infrastructure;
3. Town and Village Centres are the priority locations for new PA uses, and the District will actively work to acquire additional public use lands and spaces in or near these centres through Community Amenity Contributions (including CACs collected from rezoning in outer areas), through building spaces/lands negotiated during development approvals), partnerships with other agencies or public purchase.
4. All new PA lands/spaces should be accessible by transit and preferably integrated with other community infrastructure.

5. Council supports partnership models for PA lands/spaces/uses that may include revenue sharing and/or longer term leases with non-profit cultural, arts, athletic, recreational, social or other community organizations in order to increase the stability and financial viability of these groups and to create enduring, long-term community benefits.
6. More intensive use of existing PA lands is encouraged; and creative, flexible models of use that may involve co-location (several user groups within facilities) is supported.
7. Council will undertake consultation with user groups and organizations that use or require public assembly lands prior to formalizing policy directions for Public Assembly lands.

## **B. Potential Change of Use or Repurposing of PA Lands**

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1. Given the importance of community lands and facilities to the quality of life in the District, Council will consider the broader community interests as well as the neighbourhood effects of any proposed changes to land use or repurposing of Public Assembly (PA) zoned lands.
2. Where potential change of use or repurposing of PA lands is being considered, lease of properties or reuse for other public purposes is preferred in order to provide for changing community needs in the long term. Where this is not possible or practical, the criteria in item (3) will apply.
3. The following principles and criteria will be used as a framework to evaluate proposed changes to public assembly lands<sup>1</sup>. This framework supplements the evaluation that is already undertaken as part of a rezoning or OCP amendment. The following criteria are not intended to prevent changes to PA lands from taking place, but to ensure that any change is in the public interest and provides an overall benefit to the community.

Any proposed change from the current public assembly use to another type of use, or to a different public assembly use, should:

- a) Fit with the overall land use directions and policies of the OCP and Town/Village Centres plans;
- b) Provide a rationale for potential loss of any public uses, and confirm that the current zoned use is no longer viable or needed within the neighbourhood;
- c) Provide an overall benefit to the community and immediate neighbourhood;
- d) Demonstrate that no public use or deficiency has been identified that requires use of the land in question (for example, public space/lands in or near growth centres);
- e) Demonstrate that no viable alternative public use(r) has expressed interest in acquiring or leasing the property for public purposes, or that repurposing of the building/site for another public use is not feasible;
- f) Identify impacts of the new proposed use on the neighbourhood, including loss of

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1 Include portions of recommendations from March 9, 2004 staff report

community uses and focal point, heritage and environmental impacts, and identify means of mitigating these impacts;

- g) Demonstrate that the long-term social, recreational, educational or worship needs currently provided by the site can be met within the local community through other available facilities or services, or, are no longer needed in the community;
  - h) Demonstrate that any future redevelopment is complimentary to surrounding land uses, except where off-setting community needs are provided as part of the new development (i.e. seniors, rental or affordable housing);
  - i) Assist in providing replacement community services or facilities either on-site or alternative location;
  - j) Complete a traffic impact assessment to determine potential impacts of increased traffic (including short-term parking or drop-off) at the site and adjacent neighbourhood, and identify means of mitigating traffic impacts;
  - k) Undertake consultation and demonstrate support from general community;
  - l) Result in no loss of playing fields, trails and other open space and recreational uses unless supported by the District of North Vancouver and North Vancouver Recreation Commission;
  - m) Provide right of first refusal to DNV lands for properties that have high recreation value to the community (e.g. Playing fields);
  - n) Identify any municipal investment on the site, including playgrounds, trails, field maintenance, sidewalks, roadways and other infrastructure and identify means of compensating for any losses;
  - o) Identify effects on existing joint use agreements.
4. Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) – where rezoning or redevelopment of public assembly land is considered:
- a) Property owners will be required to provide community amenities or financial contribution to the District in accordance with the District's CAC policy;
  - b) CAC contributions will be directed to meeting community needs within designated centres or other areas with identified deficiencies;
  - c) On-site community amenities may be accepted where they fulfill community needs and/or retain some or all of the original public use functions as part of the new use (for example, affordable/non-market housing, daycare or community meeting space as part of a new development will be considered as forms of community benefits);
  - d) Density transfer or other incentives may be considered where there is a net gain in community services or amenities.