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What is a Development Variance Permit?

All development within the City of White Rock is regulated by a number of bylaws. While most projects can be designed to comply with these regulations, there are some circumstances where a property owner would like to modify certain provisions to accommodate their proposal.

These variances are generally contemplated when site characteristics or other unique circumstances do not permit a proposal to be fully compliant with the City’s development-related bylaws.

Development variance permits are a mechanism that allows property owners to vary certain regulations contained within specific land use bylaws, such as zoning bylaws, sign bylaws, or subdivision servicing bylaws. These applications are considered and approved by City Council. A development variance permit cannot be used to vary land use, density, flood plain specifications, or conditions set out in a Phased Development Agreement.

In the City of White Rock, the following variances are typically requested:

White Rock Zoning Bylaw, 2012, No. 2000	White Rock Sign Bylaw, 2010, No. 1923
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lot width and/or depth • Building setbacks, lot coverage, and height • Off-street parking and loading spaces requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign dimensions (e.g. height, width, allowable area) • Other characteristics (number, type, etc.)

Questions?

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Quick Tips for Development Variance Permits

- All development proposals submitted to the City are required to comprehensively and credibly identify how the proposal facilitates or inhibits the realization of the vision, principles, and goals of the OCP in report form.
- Check if [Council Policy 511: Bonus Density and Amenity Contribution](#) or [Council Policy 514: Tenant Relocation](#) applies to your proposal.

Alternative Variance Process: Board of Variance

The Board of Variance is an avenue for appeal on the interpretation and the strict application of certain local government provisions and regulations in specific circumstances defined in the Local Government Act, typically regarding the siting, size, and physical dimensions of buildings and structures (such as lot coverage or setbacks).

A person may appeal to the Board for a variance only if the application of the regulations to their particular site would impose undue hardship upon them.

To learn more, please see the City’s Guide to the Board of Variance or contact staff for more information.

What is the Development Variance Permit process?

The Development Variance Permit process is generally summarized below. For more specific information, please see the White Rock Planning Procedures Bylaw, 2017, No. 2234:

Step 1: Pre-Application Meeting	Step 2: Application Submission
<p>It is strongly recommended that you arrange a meeting with Planning staff at City Hall to discuss your proposal prior to application submission.</p> <p>A summary of the proposal, including any applicable plans and proposed site statistics, should be provided to staff prior to the scheduled pre-application meeting.</p> <p>You will also be able to confirm your submission requirements with staff after this meeting.</p>	<p>The Land Use Development Application Form, along with the accompanying Submission Requirement Form(s), can be located on the Planning Resources & Documents section of the website. Application fees are summarized in the City's Summary of Development Application Fees.</p> <p>Prior to making application with the City of White Rock, please confirm with staff as to whether there will be any further additional requirements are required prior to formal submission. Staff will only accept a full and complete application at time of submission.</p>
<p>Note: If your proposal requires multiple application types, they may be submitted and processed concurrently. Please contact staff for more information.</p>	

Step 3: Internal Review and Circulation
<p>Once your application has been received by the Planning Department, it will be assigned to a File Manager who will guide you through the application process.</p> <p>Once the File Manager has reviewed your application for completeness, the application will then be circulated for comment by other City departments and external agencies as required. Planning staff will also provide their own review of the proposal.</p> <p>During this time, staff may request plan revisions, clarification, or additional information for the proposal.</p>

Step 4: Development Proposal Sign	Step 5: Public Information Meeting (PIM)
<p>Shortly after application submission, your file manager will prepare a Development Proposal Sign for installation on the subject property.</p> <p>This sign must be prepared and installed in accordance with Section 36 and Schedule F of the White Rock Planning Procedures Bylaw.</p> <p>This signage must be posted no later than 14 days following application submission, and must be removed within 10 days following either Public Meeting completion, or withdrawal/rejection of the application.</p> <p><i>Note: This step may be waived if the application consists solely of variances to the Sign Bylaw.</i></p>	<p>As part of the process, applicants are required to present their proposals to the public in an open house format in order to discuss and respond to any issues, concerns, or questions related to the proposal.</p> <p>The purpose of the PIM is to obtain input from local residents and business owners regarding potential issues or concerns to be addressed early in the approval process.</p> <p>Please check out our Public Information Meeting Guide to learn more.</p> <p><i>Note: This step may be waived if the application consists solely of variances to the Sign Bylaw.</i></p>

Step 7: Land Use and Planning Committee	Step 8: Council Consideration
<p>The Land Use and Planning Committee (LUPC) reviews matters related to land use policy and development. Development proposals are typically presented in report form to the LUPC under two circumstances:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide the LUPC with a preliminary information report on the proposal; or 2. To provide the LUPC with recommendations and options on a proposal for consideration by Council once all other steps are complete. <p>An applicant may speak or present on their application at an LUPC meeting. In the second case, the decisions of the LUPC are presented to Council for consideration.</p>	<p>Following discussion of the proposal, Council will typically move forward with one of the following three options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct staff to schedule a Public Meeting (see: steps 9 and 10); 2. To defer the application back to staff for further revision and modification; or 3. Reject the issuance of the development variance permit

Step 9: Public Meeting	Step 10: Second Council Consideration
<p>A public meeting is a hearing conducted City Council where the applicant and the public are given an opportunity to comment on the proposal prior to second consideration.</p> <p>Comments may be provided to Council either in writing prior to or during the meeting, or verbally during the hearing when the permit is presented.</p> <p>No further information can be received from the applicant or the public once the Public Meeting is concluded.</p> <p>Notice will be mailed to all neighbours within 100 metres of the site at least ten days before the Public Meeting.</p>	<p>After the Public Meeting, Council will consider the application for a second time.</p> <p>If the application receives sufficient support from Council, the development variance permit will be issued. The applicant will need to address all outstanding applicable City requirements (including servicing, outstanding payments, and registration of legal documentation) prior to issuance.</p> <p>Any other required development approvals, including concurrent applications, will need to be prepared and be ready for consideration at this time.</p> <p>If approved, staff will register a Notice of Permit on title with the Land Title Office.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

Will my development variance permit application be approved if I apply?

Staff cannot comment on or guarantee the future approval or refusal of any particular project as every development application is subject to professional review.

How long will my development variance permit application take?

Processing times for development permit applications vary depending on the complexity of the development, especially when the processing of other applications types (such as zoning amendments) are required.

Can my development permit application be processed concurrently with other types of development applications?

Yes.

Where more than one type of development approval is needed for one project, other application types (such as zoning amendments or development variance permits) may be submitted jointly and may go through the application process concurrently. Please contact Planning for more information.

Will my development variance permit expire?

The development variance permit will lapse if construction related to the relevant permit is not substantially started within 2 years after the issuance date.

