

An aerial photograph of downtown Vancouver, Washington, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings, green spaces, and streets. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Downtown Building Footprint Limits Vancouver Planning Commission Workshop April 11, 2023



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Presentation Overview

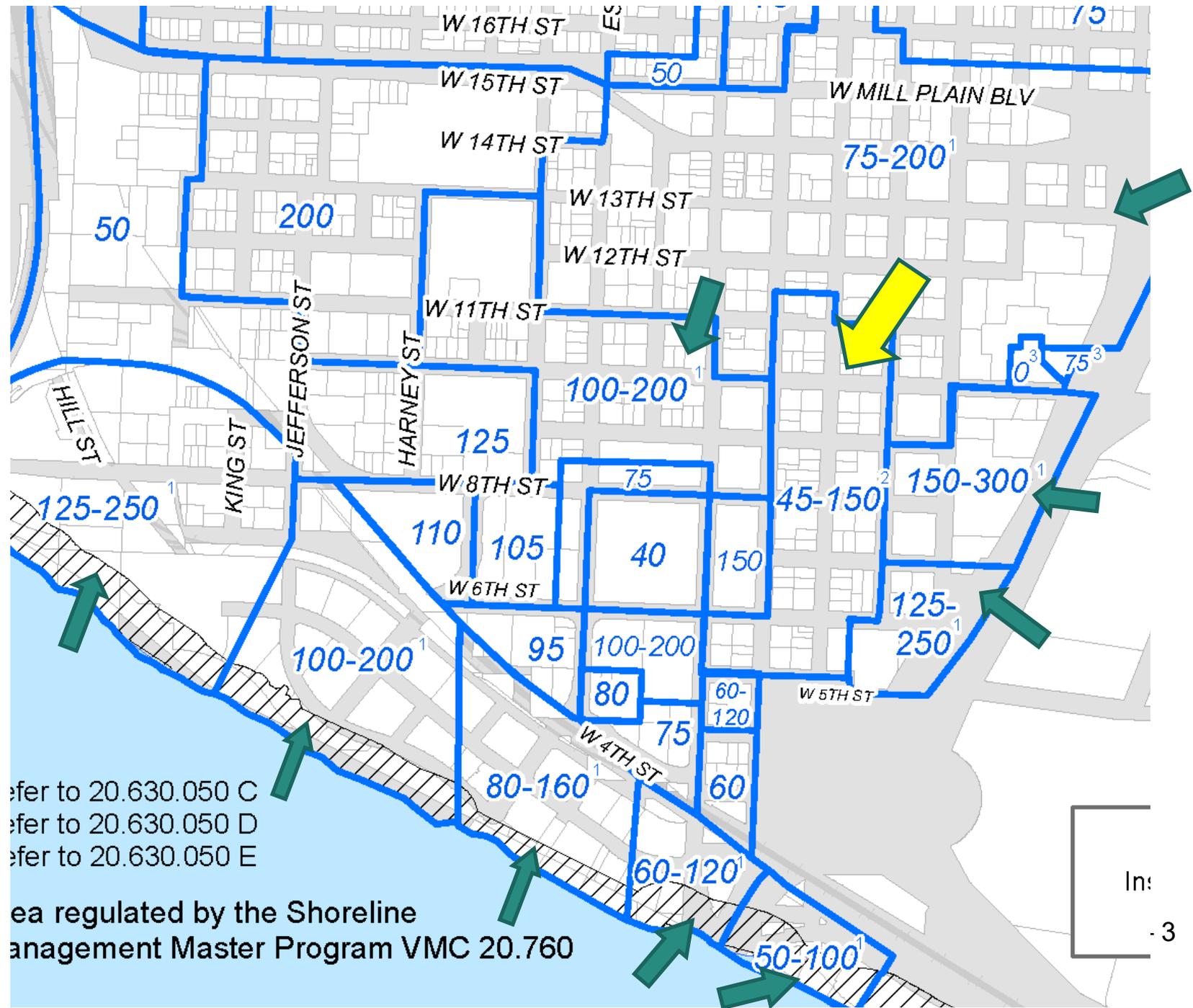
- Review proposal to eliminate existing VMC 20.630 standards limiting downtown buildings to 12,000 square foot footprints in certain situations
- Identify issues or information needed for May 9 Planning Commission public hearing



Downtown Building Footprint Limits - - Current Requirements

- VMC 20.630 contains additional standards for downtown beyond the CX zoning code. These include height limits, which for some areas include a lower height that can be achieved outright, and a higher limit that is only allowed conditionally.
- Alongside lower Main Street, any buildings over 100 feet in height must limit building footprints on all floors to 12,000 square feet, about $\frac{1}{4}$ of most blocks, in order to ensure street level sunlight.
- In other downtown areas with a maximum height range, portions of the upper floors must also limit footprints to 12,000 feet. Applies to lower end plus 50%.

Downtown Building Footprint Limits - Current Requirements (cont.)



refer to 20.630.050 C
 refer to 20.630.050 D
 refer to 20.630.050 E

Area regulated by the Shoreline Management Master Program VMC 20.760



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Downtown Building Footprint Limits - Concerns

- Buildings constructed to meet these limitations cannot be realistically added to in the future unless the building is torn down.
- Limits could restrict upper floor housing or office uses, which could serve to activate downtown, support more commercial activities, and add housing units to meet demand and help address the lack of housing supply, an important contributor to the affordability crisis.
- Goal of street level natural light is sound, but in staff's view does not require the existing standards to be achieved.

Downtown Building Footprint Limits - Outreach

- Vancouver Downtown Association contacted
- May 9 public hearing



Questions and Discussion

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