

AGENDA ITEM NO: 7.6

MEETING DATE: February 21, 2023

**STAFF REPORT – COVER SHEET**

SUBJECT: Building Protection Design Guidelines -  
Development Permit Areas 4, 5, & 6  
Amendments (OCP00041) DATE: February 13, 2023

DEPARTMENT: Planning PREPARED BY: Madelaine Peters / tr *RK*

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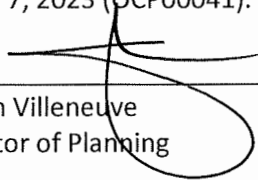
**1. SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

After discussions with the Downtown Business Improvement Association, Design Review, Affordable Housing & Development, and Public Safety Advisory Committees, staff propose to amend the text of the City's 2040 Official Community Plan (OCP) and Schedules to update the building protection guidelines (entry/exitway and windows) for Development Permit Area 4 (Downtown Form and Character), Development Permit Area 5 (Urban Corridor Form and Character), and Development Permit Area 6 (Commercial, Intensive/Multi-Family Residential, and Mixed Commercial-Residential Development). Amendments include allowing fixed or retractable awnings and canopies, establishing exterior entry/exitway protection guidelines for fixed-in-place gates, grills, and bars, permitting exterior shutters on windows, and encouraging the use of interior window bars. These proposed amendments will enable business owners to secure their commercial property, while meeting the objectives of the OCP and Downtown Land Use and Development Plan.

Once the Bylaw has been to Public Hearing, staff recommend that Council give third reading and adoption to the Bylaw.

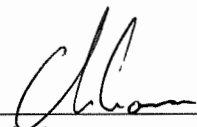
**2. RECOMMENDATION:**

Recommendation that "Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw 2023, No. 5283", a proposed text amendment to update the building protection guidelines (entry/exitway and windows) for Development Permit Area No. 4 (Downtown Form and Character), Development Permit Area 5 (Urban Corridor Form and Character), and Development Permit Area 6 (Commercial, Intensive/Multi-Family Residential, & Mixed Commercial-Residential Development Form & Character) be given first and second reading; and further, that a Public Hearing be called for March 7, 2023 (OCP00041).

  
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Gillian Villeneuve  
Director of Planning

**3. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S  
RECOMMENDATION/COMMENTS:**

Supports recommendation.

  
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Chris Crosman  
Chief Administrative Officer

## STAFF REPORT ON OCP00041 / BUILDING PROTECTION DESIGN GUIDELINES

PREPARED BY: Madelaine Peters DATE: February 13, 2023

POSITION: Senior Planner, Long Range DEPARTMENT: Planning

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### 1. DEFINITION OF ISSUE:

After discussions with the Downtown Business Improvement Association, Design Review, Affordable Housing & Development, and Public Safety Advisory Committees, staff propose to amend the text of the City's 2040 Official Community Plan (OCP) and Schedules to update the building protection guidelines (entry/exitway and windows) for Development Permit Area 4 (Downtown Form and Character), Development Permit Area 5 (Urban Corridor Form and Character), and Development Permit Area 6 (Commercial, Intensive/Multi-Family Residential, and Mixed Commercial-Residential Development). Amendments include allowing fixed or retractable awnings and canopies, establishing exterior entry/exitway protection guidelines for fixed-in-place gates, grills, and bars, permitting exterior shutters on windows, and encouraging the use of interior window bars. These proposed amendments will enable business owners to secure their commercial property, while meeting the objectives of the OCP and Downtown Land Use and Development Plan.

Once the Bylaw has been to Public Hearing, staff recommend that Council give third reading and adoption to the Bylaw.

### 2. BACKGROUND:

1. Building security in the Downtown has been discussed over the past few years (2019-20), with touchpoints at the Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC), the Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA), and Council. Initially, DRAC and the DBIA supported prohibiting exterior security shutters on windows, and Council endorsed the recommendation and directed staff to prepare necessary bylaw amendments.
2. As a significant amount of time had passed since Council's direction, staff restarted this work during spring 2022 and provided updates to three Council Committees to seek further dialogue and feedback. From these discussions, staff heard concerns about both permitting and not permitting security shutters, illustrating the complexity and unresolved nature of the issue.

### 3. STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION:

1. Through these resumed discussions, it became clear that building security is valued as an important component for protecting businesses, and careful consideration is needed to ensure such measures do not negatively impact the external appearance of the building or detract from the pedestrian-friendly objectives of the OCP. Interior works, such as black interior bars and open-grills, continue to be a preferred choice in building protection, as it

allows for a cleaner storefront, nighttime security, and greater visibility into the ground floor use (i.e., allows customers to window shop after hours).

2. The Committees also expressed concern over outright prohibiting window shutters; rather, it was suggested that window shutters be permitted in instances where businesses have had their windows broken repeatedly and business owners wish to undertake specific target hardening measures. Transparent windows and active street frontages can still be achieved through the installation of shutters over windows as they can be closed overnight (after hours) and opened during the day (business hours).
3. On December 6, 2022, Council directed staff to pre-consult with the DBIA, in accordance with Section 475 of the *Local Government Act*. Subsequently, staff presented the proposed building protection design guideline changes to the DBIA, including permitting exterior shutters on windows. In response, the DBIA submitted a letter supporting the proposed Development Permit changes, while also stating a preference that merchants pursue shatter proof glass as a first choice. They also reiterated their role in supporting merchants with grants to support exterior renovations (Schedule A).

#### 4. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS:

The proposed amendments include amending the OCP and Downtown Design Guidelines, as summarized below. For more detail on the changes, please refer to the attached amendment bylaw.

1. 2040 Official Community Plan
  - a. Parameters for determining when a permit is required for exterior entry/exitway and window security protection. Design guidelines for building protection for properties in DPA 5 and DPA 6 are to refer to the Downtown Design Guidelines.
  - b. Parameters for when a permit exemption applies. For example, a permit would not be required for interior building protection works that is transparent.
2. Downtown Design Guidelines
  - a. Active Frontages – Transparency  
Updating language to state that glazing must be transparent, and that pedestrians must have a clear view into the ground floor use.
  - b. Architectural Character – Windows and Doors  
Updating language to state that windows must incorporate clear glazing that encourages clear views from the street into the active uses.
  - c. Architectural Character – Awnings and Canopies  
Amendments include allowing fixed or retractable awnings and canopies, breaks in coverage, and no minimum projection.
  - d. Architectural Character – Gates  
Renaming section 4.9 “Gates” to “Building Security” and replacing the text in its entirety to include design guidelines for entry/exitway and windows, including

permitting security shutters on windows that meet specific design criteria. This section also includes new photos of supported entry/exitway and window protection examples.

The proposed changes are based on supporting pedestrian activity in the Downtown and in other commercial areas of the City, while establishing flexibility in the design guidelines to enable business owners to secure their commercial property, where needed, while also recognizing Building Code and Fire Code safety standards.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION

1. These proposed design guideline changes aim to retain the Downtown’s walkable main street character, and support pedestrian activity in other retail centres of the City. Should the amendments be adopted, all new building protection proposals will be subject to a development permit application (unless exempt). Such permit applications will likely have a construction value of \$150,000 or less, and benefit from a reduced application fee, streamlined processing timeline, and Director approval, without the need to be considered by Council.
2. Where businesses have already externally secured their buildings without a development permit before this bylaw amendment takes effect, the City will not be seeking retroactive permit applications. The City will encourage all businesses to become familiar with these design guidelines and their intent to support pedestrian activity and help ensure Building Code and Fire Code safety standards are met. Staff will also prepare updated information about building protection in the Downtown and share online the City’s website.
3. The DBIA will continue its role to promote the Downtown on behalf of businesses and offer support to their members in various ways, such as sharing information, providing grants, and directing enquiries to City staff.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION & SUBSTANTIATION:

Recommendation:

Recommendation that “Official Community Plan Bylaw Amendment Bylaw 2023, No. 5283”, a proposed text amendment to update the building protection guidelines (entry/exitway and windows) for Development Permit Area No. 4 (Downtown Form and Character), Development Permit Area 5 (Urban Corridor Form and Character), and Development Permit Area 6 (Commercial, Intensive/Multi-Family Residential, & Mixed Commercial-Residential Development Form & Character) be given first and second reading; and further, that a Public Hearing be called for March 7, 2023 (OCP00041).

**Substantiation:**

The proposed text amendments promote visual character and safety of streets through prioritizing transparency while allowing flexibility for business owners to secure their property. The proposed amendments support City initiatives and the OCP vision that focusses on public life and pedestrian experience, and promote an active and vibrant commercial streetscapes.

**7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:**

- Downtown Business Improvement Area board meeting – January 5, 2023
- Development Application Review Team (DART) minutes – December 8, 2022
- Public Safety Advisory Committee minutes – September 21, 2022
- Design Review Advisory Committee minutes – January 14, 2020, July 26, 2022
- Affordable Housing & Development Advisory Committee minutes – June 29, 2022

**Attachment:**

- Schedule A – Downtown Business Improvement Association letter – February 6, 2023

## Schedule A

Downtown Business Improvement Association letter  
February 6, 2023



Business Improvement Association

### Security Shutters Within Downtown BIA

February 06, 2023

To the attention of: Reuben Koole, City of Chilliwack  
Re: Rolling Shutters

Hello Reuben,

On behalf of the Downtown Chilliwack Business Improvement Association, I would like to thank you for reaching out for the DCBIA's input into the matter of permitting full frontage rolling shutters on buildings in our development area.

After many discussions about this matter, the DCBIA board would offer the following;

Although we are not against the idea of full frontage shutters if they meet all city requirements, the DCBIA would suggest merchants and building owners consider in its place, a ROCKGLASS installation as an affordable and visually appealing option to rolling shutters of any kind. This clear, shatterproof product has a proven track record in the commercial sector and is approximately 1/2 the price of a rolling shutter installation.

If a building owner or a merchant with owner approval, was set on the rolling shutter option above others, they would then have to adhere to the strict guidelines developed by the city staff, who may approve the installations as part of a development application.

Like any other structural façade changes to the exterior of a building in our development area, it is the merchant's responsibility to apply for the required permits and meet all the criteria the city has put in place before any renovations of this type should take place, and after the city's approval, proceed with the installation.

The DCBIA's role would be the same as it is now with any exterior building renovations, to work with the building owner / merchant and offer façade grant funding. Grant funding for a project of this nature would be \$1000.00 per building following completion. Funding would only be available if the owner / merchant met all city guidelines.

Once again, thank you for including the DCBIA in this important discussion. For more information about the Rock Glass product mentioned above, please have a look at this link. [www.RockGlass.ca](http://www.RockGlass.ca)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Schulstad".

John Schulstad, President, DCBIA