C1 & C2 Commercial Districts

Summary of Zoning Regulations | July 2026



The Burnaby Zoning Bylaw 2026 contains two commercial zoning districts—the C1 Neighbourhood Commercial District and C2 General Commercial District—intended to support different forms and scales of commercial activity within the City's height-based development framework.

Background

As part of the Zoning Bylaw Rewrite project, the City introduced new height-based residential and commercial zoning districts in June 2025 to support implementation of the Burnaby 2050 Official Community Plan (OCP). The commercial districts were introduced as the interim CM1 and CM2 Districts and were carried forward as the C1 and C2 Districts with adoption of the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw 2026.

Together, the new C1 and C2 Districts replace the nine former or "legacy" C1 through C9 commercial districts and numerous sub-districts contained in Zoning Bylaw 1965. The new framework consolidates commercial uses into two broader districts based primarily on the scale, intensity, and role of commercial development, while providing greater flexibility for mixed-use development.

Key changes

The new C1 and C2 Districts include:

- **Simplified commercial zoning:** nine former C Districts consolidated into two more flexible districts supporting a broader range of contemporary uses.
- **Height-based development:** building height, setbacks, separation, and floorplate requirements replace former floor area ratio (FAR) standards.
- **More pedestrian-oriented:** updated setbacks support wider sidewalks and continuous storefronts.
- **Simplified lot requirements:** no lot area, lot width, or lot coverage requirements.
- **Greener sites:** new 20% permeable surface requirement supports trees, landscaping, and stormwater management.
- **Support for mixed-use development:** C Districts can be combined with residential overlay districts to permit a mix of uses and additional building height.

New commercial districts

The following height-based commercial zoning districts were first added (in an interim state) to the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw in June 2025:

C1 Neighbourhood Commercial

C2 General Commercial

Despite using similar designations, the new districts are not direct continuations of the former C1 and C2 Districts. Together, the two new districts replace the former C1 to C9 District commercial zoning framework.

C1 Neighbourhood Commercial



The C1 District supports pedestrian-oriented, local-serving commercial uses to meet the daily needs of the surrounding neighbourhood. Typical uses may include retail, restaurants, and personal services. Buildings range from 1 to 4 storeys.

C2 General Commercial



The C2 District accommodates a broader range and greater intensity of city-serving commercial activity, including larger-format uses, major offices, entertainment, hospitality, and limited vehicle-oriented uses. Buildings range from 2 to 8 storeys.

What can be built?

The C1 District supports pedestrian-oriented low-rise buildings up to 4 storeys, while the C2 District supports larger 8-storey buildings and some vehicle-oriented commercial forms. Where a C District is combined with a residential overlay zoning district, the permitted height is established by the residential district. This supports a mix of uses as well as taller standalone commercial uses.

C1 District examples

Artist studio or workshop



Restaurant and retail



Assembly and entertainment



Personal and business services



C2 District examples

Service station



Parkade with ground-level retail



Office with ground-level retail



Major office building (w/ R overlay)





Voluntary commercial: On sites with a commercial base and an R5–R8 residential overlay, additional height may be supported where commercial storeys are voluntarily provided beyond the minimum requirement.

What uses are permitted?

The C1 and C2 Districts permit a broad range of commercial, service, institutional, and complementary uses. C2 permits all C1 uses and adds uses intended for a larger service area or greater commercial intensity. Supported uses include, but are not limited to:

Principal uses (C1 & C2)

- Active mobility hub (e.g. bike share kiosk)
- Animal care (e.g. pet grooming, veterinarian)
- Artist studio or workshop
- Assembly & entertainment
- Child care facility
- Educational services
- Health care facility (e.g. medical clinic, dentist)
- Live-work units
- Office
- Personal and business services (e.g. hair salon)
- Restaurant
- Retail
- Recreation & fitness (e.g. yoga studio)
- Visitor accommodation (e.g. hotel)

Principal uses (C2)

- Gaming establishments (e.g. casino)
- Hospitals
- Parking facilities
- Research & development
- Service stations (e.g. gas station, carwash, auto repair)

Secondary uses

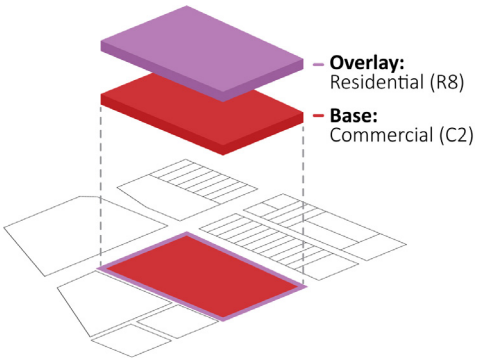
- Commercial kitchen (e.g. caterer, commissary kitchen)
- Community garden
- Energy generation (e.g. district energy system)
- Mobile retail & restaurant (e.g. food truck)
- Storage facility (C2 only)

Conditions of use

The C1 District includes conditions of use intended to maintain a neighbourhood-oriented character and limit impacts on residential areas. For example, nightclubs and overnight animal boarding are not permitted and ground-level units at street corners are reserved for retail, restaurants, and personal and business services.

The C2 District has fewer conditions to provide greater flexibility, but uses like offices, hotels, parkades, and storage facilities are only permitted above the ground level to support more active frontages, similar to C1.

Base and overlay zoning districts



Supported by the Burnaby 2050 OCP, the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw 2026 introduces a base and overlay zoning framework to provide greater flexibility for mixed-use development. The base district establishes the primary land use for a property, while an overlay district can expand the range of permitted uses. Uses from one or both districts may generally be developed on the same site. A property with a C District base and R District overlay may contain both commercial and residential uses, with the R District determining maximum building height. This combination also has minimum commercial area requirements but no minimum residential requirement, supporting opportunities for tall office towers in Town Centres (see Zoning Bylaw Part 6-2.0 for more details on base and overlay zoning conditions).

For more information, visit Burnaby.ca/ZoningBylaw