FAQ Frequently Asked Questions
Transit-Oriented Areas

Disclaimer: *This is not a legal document and does not outline all applicable regulations. Any contradiction, dispute, or difference between the contents of this document and applicable provincial law or City bylaws, plans, policies, or guidelines will be resolved by reference to the law, bylaws, or other official documents.*

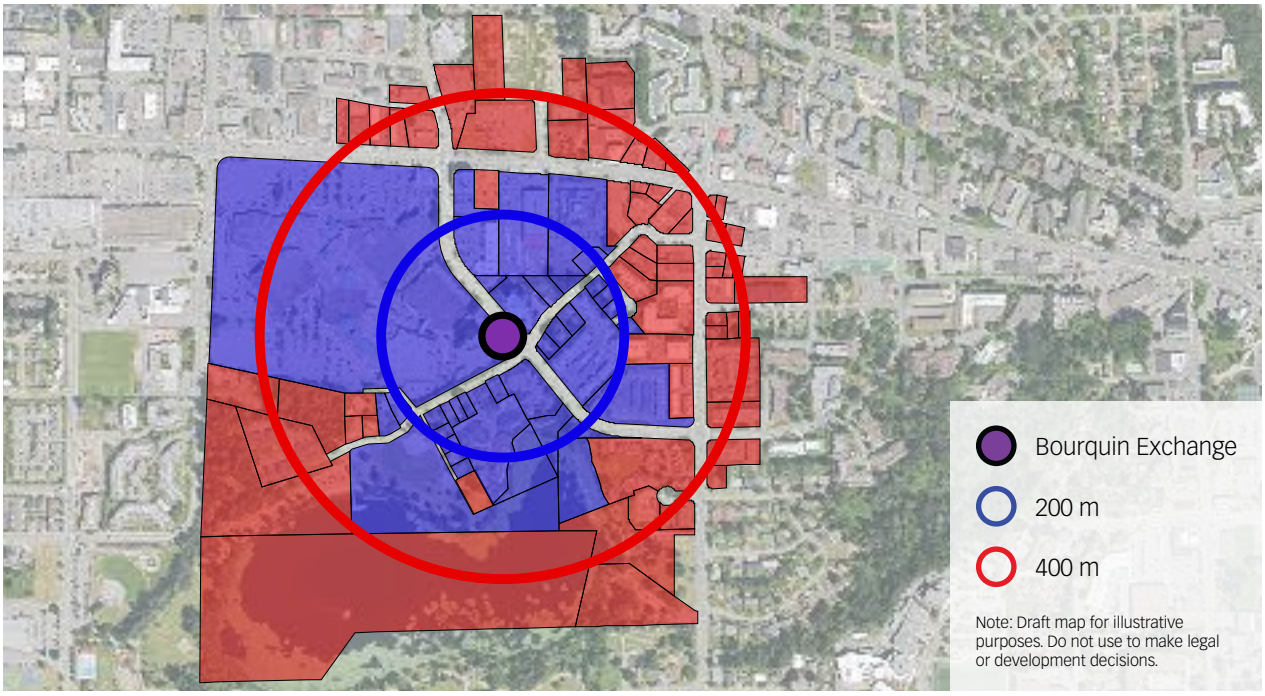
Q: What are Transit-Oriented Areas (TOAs)?

A: Transit-Oriented Areas (TOAs) are places near major public transit stations where the Province has required a minimum density and building height for residential development. The Province has currently identified 104 TOAs in British Columbia, including one in Abbotsford.

Q: What is the TOA in Abbotsford?

A: The TOA in Abbotsford is the area within 400 metres of the Bourquin Bus Exchange (below). On properties zoned for residential use inside the Bourquin Exchange TOA, the City cannot deny a rezoning application on the basis of the density or building height required by the Province.

On properties 200 metres or less from the exchange, the City cannot deny a rezoning application on the basis of density or height, if the density and height are 3.5 FSR or less and 10 storeys or less. On properties within 400 metres of the exchange, the City cannot deny a rezoning application on the basis of density or height, if the density and height are 2.5 FSR or less and 6 storeys or less.



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Q: If my property is inside the Bourquin Exchange TOA, is more density and height allowed on my property?

A: In most cases, a successful rezoning application is required to enable the density and height established by the Province.

On most eligible properties, the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) supports greater density and building height than the Province has required. As such, the Bourquin Exchange TOA may not significantly affect the density and building height that is possible on your property.

Q: Is off-street parking required for residential development inside a TOA?

A: No. Municipalities are not permitted to require off-street parking for residential development inside a TOA, except parking for people with disabilities. Developers will decide how much parking they wish to provide, based on local conditions and market factors. Off-street parking requirements will remain for non-residential development.

Q: Could the Province designate more TOAs in Abbotsford?

A: Yes. The Province is allowed to designate more TOAs across BC. As new transit stations and exchanges are built, the Province is expected to designate more TOAs.

Q: Do TOA requirements apply to all properties within a TOA?

A: No. TOA requirements only apply to properties where the Zoning Bylaw permits residential use.

Q: Does the City's Zoning Bylaw apply inside a TOA?

A: Yes. The development regulations of the City's Zoning Bylaw apply inside a TOA, including permitted uses, setbacks, height, and lot coverage. However, the City is not allowed to require off-street parking for residential development inside the TOA, and the City cannot deny a rezoning application on the basis of the density and height established by the Province.

Q: Are Official Community Plan (OCP) amendments required to develop inside a TOA?

A: No. If a developer wishes to rezone a residential property to permit the density and height required by the Province inside a TOA, but that development is inconsistent with the City's Official Community Plan (OCP), an OCP amendment is not required to complete the rezoning.

Q: Is rezoning required to develop inside a TOA?

A: Yes. If a developer wishes to construct a development that is consistent with the minimum density and height required by the Province, but the zoning of the property does not permit that development, a rezoning application will be required. However, the City cannot reject a rezoning application on the basis of its density or height, if the density and height are consistent with the density and height required by the Province.

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Q: Are development permits required inside a TOA?

A: Yes. Development inside a TOA may be subject to the City's development permit requirements, including for form and character, environmental protection, and protection from natural hazards.

Q: Are building permits required inside a TOA?

A: Yes. Development inside a TOA is subject to all applicable bylaws, regulations, and enactments, including the BC Building Code and the City's Building Bylaw.

Q: Can density bonusing be used inside a TOA?

A: Yes. However, by mid-2025, the Province anticiapates that density bonusing will not be used to reach the minimum density established by the Province. For example, if the minimum density established by the Province is 3.5 FSR, density bonusing can be used to increase the density to 5.0 FSR, but it cannot be used to achieve the 3.5 FSR established by the Province.

Q: Can Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) be used inside a TOA?

A: Yes. Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) are collected during the rezoning process. If a development inside a TOA requires a rezoning application, the City can collect CACs for that development.

Q: Where can I ask further questions about TOAs?

A: If you have further questions about TOAs, you can contact City staff at the following:

32315 South Fraser Way, 2nd Floor
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Helpful Links:

City of Abbotsford Zoning Bylaw

City of Abbotsford Transit-Oriented Area Designation Bylaw

Abbotsforward 2050 | Official Community Plan Update