



# City of Vancouver *Planning By-law Administration Bulletins*

## Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4 | tel: 3-1-1, outside Vancouver 604.873.7000 | fax: 604.873.7100  
website: vancouver.ca | email: planning@vancouver.ca | app: VanConnect

# ACCESSORY USES - INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

*Authority - City Council Resolution*

*Effective June 23, 1983*

*Amended December 18, 1989, June 27, 1990, and November 14, 2022*

Accessory uses are permissible in industrial (“M” and “I”) districts as outright and/or conditional approval uses (Section 2.1 of the district schedules). Outright accessory uses are limited to a specified percentage “of the gross floor area of the principal and accessory uses combined” (25% in some cases and 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% in others).

The procedures for identifying accessory uses in floor plans submitted with a development permit application, for calculating floor area in accessory use(s) and for determining the parking requirements of the accessory use(s) are as follows:

## **1 Identifying Accessory Uses**

An accessory use is a use that is customarily ancillary to a use listed in the district schedule, that is, customarily ancillary to a permitted principal use for which application is being made or which already exists on the site. Accessory Use is defined in Section 2 of the By-law as a use which is ancillary to the principal use of the site. By dictionary definition, “customarily” means “by custom or usual practice” and “ancillary” means “subordinate and dependent”.

It is well-established practice in the City of Vancouver that for the principal uses shown below the corresponding accessory uses shown are recognized and accepted as customarily ancillary:

<b>Principal Use</b>	<b>Accessory Use</b>
Manufacturing	Wholesaling (1) Retailing Office Laboratory
Wholesaling	Retailing (2) * Office (3)
Storage Warehouse	Office (4)

**\* NOTE: Some District Schedules do not permit retail as accessory to wholesale.**

## NOTES:

- (1) Accessory wholesaling may be classed as a separate principal use if, with its storage area(s) and administrative office(s), it occupies a clearly separate part of the total floor area or it occupies more of the total floor area than the percentage specified in Section 2.2.10. See also definition of Wholesale Class A and Wholesaling Class B in Section 2 of the Zoning and Development By-law.
- (2) Accessory retailing in conjunction with wholesaling is required to have a demising wall (physical separation) which precludes public access, except by invitation, from the retailing area to the wholesaling area. Any storage area which is inaccessible from a wholesaling area except through a retailing area, is classed as part of the accessory retail use.
- (3) Accessory office use which is customarily ancillary to wholesaling generally includes administrative and sales office, whether there be an enclosed or “open-area” configuration. In the case where sales desk(s), sales counter(s), or open-area sales offices are in the same room as showroom or display area, the room will be classed as accessory office use (otherwise showroom or display area is classed a part of the principal wholesaling use, as further described in 2 below).
- (4) By definition in Section 2 of the By-law, a storage warehouse is strictly for the storage of goods, material, machinery or equipment. Since there is customarily little requirement for administrative office space to accommodate warehouse staff, floor area in accessory office use is usually limited to 10% of total floor area.

There may be cases other than the foregoing in which it is difficult to determine whether some given floor area represents an accessory use, is a part of the floor area of an accessory use, or is part of the floor area of a principal use. In these cases, some assistance is provided in the following section which specifies the procedure for calculating floor area in mixed use developments.

## 2 Calculating Floor Area

Section 2.2.10 and Section 2.2.11, specifies that the total area of all accessory uses shall not be greater than 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% (or 25% as the case may be) of the gross floor area of the principal and accessory uses combined.

Where there is **only one principal use** of a site or building, the application of this provision is straightforward -- the gross floor area of the principal and accessory uses combined will be the total floor area of the building or part of the building in the development permit application and floor plans.

Where there are **two or more principal uses**, some care is needed to ensure that the provision applies separately to each principal use. That is, for each principal use the total area of all accessory uses shall not be greater than 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% (or 25% as the case may be) “of the gross floor area of the principal (use) and (its) accessory uses combined.”

In some cases the calculation of floor area in principal and accessory uses is made difficult by lay-outs in which floor area in various uses is broken up into several rooms or enclosures which are intermixed rather than grouped into separate portions or floors of a building. In these cases floor areas should be assigned to the principal and accessory uses as follows:

- (a) **lunchrooms, washrooms and recreation facilities for employees use** are included with the principal use unless particularly oriented to an accessory use (as would be the case of separate washrooms for office staff);
- (b) **hallways, stairways or entryways** are included with whichever use, principal or accessory, to which they are oriented or of which they form a part;
- (c) **sales office** is classified as Accessory Office in the case of manufacturing or wholesaling. In the case of warehousing, there can be no sales office as, by definition, this use does not involve sales (storage only);
- (d) **waiting rooms and reception areas** are classified as Accessory Office;

- (e) **administrative office and shipper's office** are classified as Accessory Office;
- (f) **showroom or display area where no accessory retailing is involved** is included with the principal use in the case of manufacturing or wholesaling. In the case of warehousing, there can be no such showroom as, by definition, this use does not involve sales (storage only);
- (g) **showroom or display area where accessory retailing is involved** is classified as Accessory Retail (even if it is a separate showroom for business clients only);
- (h) **workshop or repair area** is included with the principal use in the case of manufacturing or wholesaling and is classified as Accessory in the case of warehousing;
- (i) **storage area** is included with the principal use unless particularly oriented to the accessory use (as would be the case of a storage room in the accessory office area).

### **3 Parking Requirements**

- (1) Where the total area of all accessory uses (whether outright or conditional) is equal to or less than 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% (or 25% as the case may be) of the principal use, the required parking is calculated as the same formula as for the principal use.
- (2) Where the development contains an accessory use (whether outright or conditional) that is more than the 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% (or 25%, whichever the case may be) of the principal use, the area of the accessory use will be assessed on the parking requirements for that particular use. (This is intended to deal with situations which have arisen such as in the IC-Districts where uses such as office and retail which are commonly accessory uses are permitted as outright uses and as such would not be restricted to the 25% limitation).
- (3) Where the development contains accessory use(s) (i.e., office) that are less than 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% (or 25%, whichever the case may be) of the principal use and there is also a separate office use in the building, the area of the accessory use will be calculated (as in #1 above) as part of the principal use. The parking for the separate office use will be calculated in accordance with the parking standard for office use.
- (4) Where the development contains accessory use (i.e., office) that is more than 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub>% (or 25%, whichever the case may be) of the principal use and there is also separate office use in the building, then the area of the accessory office area and the separate office area will be added together and calculated at the parking standard for office use.