



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

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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## **PASSIVE DESIGN: BAY WINDOWS AND FLOOR SPACE**

*Authority - Director of Planning*

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### **1 Introduction**

On May 7, 2009 Vancouver City Council endorsed the Passive Design Toolkits. On May 31, 2011, Council amended the Zoning and Development By-law to define what is to be included in floor space calculation for bay windows or boxed out windows.

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide clarification to staff and applicants on the change related to bay windows and floor space.

### **2 Passive Design and Bay Windows**

Passive design aims to maximize occupant health and comfort while minimizing energy use by relying less on mechanical and electrical systems. Vancouver's two Passive Design Toolkits (one looks at homes and the other at larger buildings) detail ways to reduce energy use - and associated greenhouse gases - in new buildings. The Toolkits are a Vancouver-specific resource for passive design techniques.

A key element of passive design is to avoid heat loss. Bay windows increase surface/wall area and thermal bridging and therefore contribute to heat loss.

### **3 Bay Windows and Floor Space**

Because of the way bay windows had been treated in development applications (the space in the bay had not been counted as floor space), some applications included multiple bay windows to try and increase effective floor space. This issue has been addressed by adopting the same limitations set out in RS-6 zoning, section 4.1.1 or section 4.2.1 as the case may be in all relevant residential district schedules: any floor space in excess of one per cent of the total floor area permitted above the basement will be included in the computation of floor space. Thus while the effective incentive has been limited, a bay window can still be employed as part of a design.

### **4 Submission Requirements**

Regular submission requirements apply, and the floor space in bay windows will be calculated as noted above.