



# Memo to Council

Date: February 10, 2026  
Subject: Request for Podium Heights Policy and Criteria in TOA Areas, and the St. Johns Street Corridor – Motion Served by Councillor Callan Morrison

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## Motion Served

Notice of the following motion was provided at the January 27, 2026, Regular Council meeting:

THAT staff report back on a policy and criteria surrounding podium heights (including low rise buildings connected to towers) in TOA areas and along the St. Johns Street corridor.

## Background

Port Moody currently does not have a general policy regarding podium heights when considering development applications. While certain areas of the city include criteria to ensure that commercial, retail, office, and other employment uses occupy podium and lower levels of new developments, these guidelines do not address how tall a podium should be or why. For instance, in the Moody Centre Station TOA – Core Land Use Concept of the Draft OCP (draft as of Feb 1, 2026), all development is required to be mixed-use, including both residential and employment-generating uses, with purpose-built office strongly encouraged above street level. “Strongly encouraged” is not a requirement, leaving discretion in how tall podiums are and in which way the uses in them are allocated.

The draft OCP is more descriptive in some neighbourhoods and podium guidance is more specific. Coronation Park and the Spring Street side of the TOD call for maximum podium heights, or suggest step-backs to account for narrower streets such as Spring Street. Within the TOD area along the north side of St. Johns Street (between Moody Street and Buller Street), the supporting TOD Development Area Guidance Framework recommends podiums of three to six storeys. However, the framework and our draft OCP does not articulate why a podium should be three storeys versus six, or what design, amenities, view corridors, or employment objectives a taller podium is meant to achieve. Additional considerations such as the potential “walling” effect along the St. John’s Street corridor should also be analyzed, especially with the potential effect of multiple developments in close proximity all being encouraged to incorporate podiums into their designs.

It is not unreasonable to suggest that when a range for podium heights is provided without a guiding framework that applications will, if possible, maximize the podium heights to the allowable limit. This is why establishing a framework or policy for podium heights would provide clear criteria for decision-making, outlining when and why a podium should be at a specific height, and what design objectives, employment space, or community benefit it should achieve. Such guidance would give clarity to not only our community, but also our community building partners to ensure consistency across developments in the TOA areas and along the St. Johns Street corridor.

This memo is requesting staff to report back with a potential podium heights policy and criteria on best practices so that further discussion amongst Council and the community can take place.

### Requested Timeline

<u>Level</u>	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Staff Turnaround Time</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulatory or interjurisdictional requirements</li> <li>• Major and immediate risk and/or financial impact</li> </ul>	< 3 months
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time-sensitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant impact to the community</li> <li>• Significant financial impact</li> </ul>	3-6 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-urgent	All other work	< 12 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

### Council Strategic Plan Alignment

This motion aligns with the following Council Strategic Plan Goal(s):

- Strategic Goal 3.1 – Create complete and connected communities through balanced growth.

### Council Options

The following responses are available for Council consideration:

1. Receive for information;
2. Refer to staff for a response (staff will determine if the nature of the work warrants a project proposal or a staff report and will include considerations with respect to feasibility, resources, funding source, timeline, strategic plan alignment, and legislative analysis) [Note: A proposed Notice of Motion may have a referral to staff built into the recommendation]; or
3. Refer to the City Manager for consideration and, if required, inclusion in the Strategic Priorities Intake process.