



# **City of Vancouver** *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

**Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department**

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## **JOYCE STATION AREA CD-1 GUIDELINES (VANNESS AVENUE NORTH, RAE AVENUE & 5000-5300 BLOCKS BOUNDARY ROAD) (BY-LAW NO. 6528)**

*Adopted by City Council on July 25, 1989  
Amended July 9, 2024*

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**Note:** These guidelines are organized under standard headings. As a consequence, there are gaps in the numbering sequence where no guidelines apply.

# 1 Application and Intent

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with CD-1 By-law No. 6528 for multiple residential developments on the Vanness Avenue North and Boundary Road site, zoned CD-1 (Figure 1). The guidelines will be used by City staff in the evaluation of projects.

The ALRT redevelopment sites are mainly located in established single-family neighbourhoods. Most sites are also adjacent to and physically impacted by the ALRT system or busy arterial streets. The major guideline objectives are:

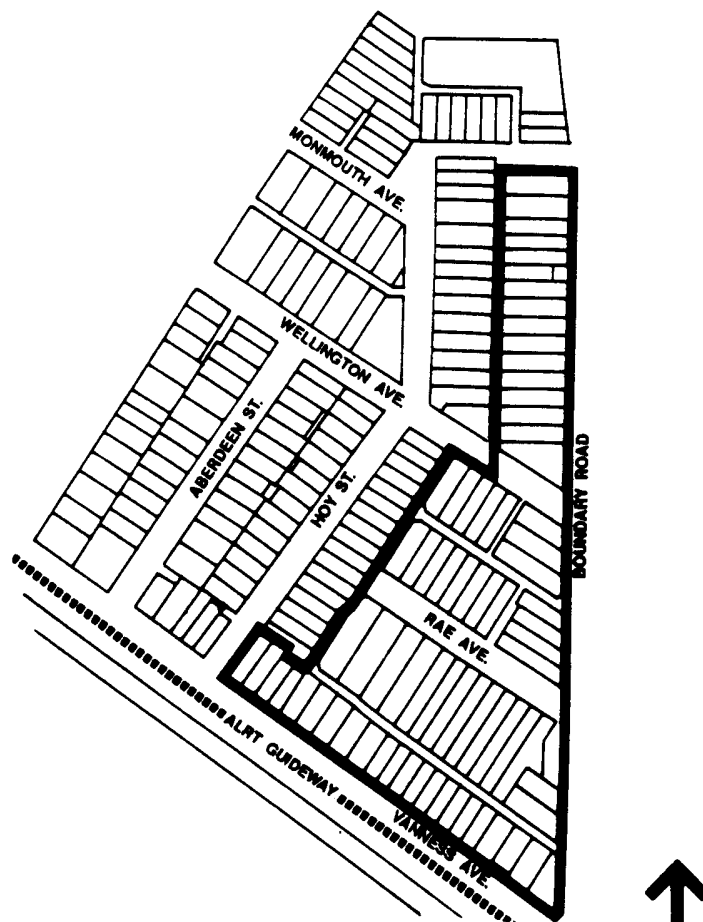
- (a) To ensure that new development is compatible with the physical character of the neighbourhood;
- (b) To achieve residential livability by dealing with the impacts of the ALRT system and arterial streets; and
- (c) To achieve high quality development that assists in establishing a stronger neighbourhood character and image.

It may not always be possible to achieve all the guideline objectives outlined in this document. On each site trade-offs will be considered to achieve the major guideline objectives.

The intent in developing the Vanness Avenue North and Boundary Road site is to provide multiple housing that can deal with the impact of the ALRT system. This housing should also create a noise and visual buffer between the ALRT guideway and nearby single-family and two-family homes. It should be scaled to fit into the area and should create a frontage character for Vanness North and Rae Avenues and Boundary Road.

The Vanness Avenue North and Boundary Road site is one of the larger ALRT Station Area sites. This site's unique location, size and character provide distinct and creative opportunities for achieving the above objective.

Figure 1. Vanness Avenue North and Boundary Road Site



## **2 General Design Considerations**

### **2.1 Neighbourhood Character**

The site is located in a stable residential area with single-family homes presently located to the west. The site is bounded by Boundary Road, Monmouth Ave., the lane to the east of Hoy Street and Vanness Avenue North. It is also bordered on the south by the elevated ALRT guideway. Other CD-1 zoned residential sites are located to the west along Vanness Avenue North and to the south along Boundary Road.

Although there are few prominent design elements in the surrounding neighbourhood, there is potential for emphasizing the positive characteristics to create a more identifiable community. Elements that establish character include topography, view, landscaping, building scale and building features such as roof types, windows, entrances and finishing materials.

#### **Objective:**

New development should respond positively to the site context and the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Being compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- (b) Assisting in limiting ALRT impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood.
- (c) Ensuring that the liveability of any new dwelling units is not compromised by ALRT and traffic noise.
- (d) Helping establish a stronger neighbourhood character and image.

### **2.3 Orientation**

The elevated ALRT and the traffic along Boundary Road create privacy and noise problems which limit the orientation of new developments. The neighbourhood subdivision pattern results in most existing homes, except those fronting onto Boundary Road, being oriented to the northwest or the southeast. The site is oriented east-west along Boundary Road. New development provides the opportunity to help limit ALRT and Boundary Road impacts on the neighbourhood, provide a neighbourly orientation to nearby single family and two-family homes, and reinforce the existing development pattern.

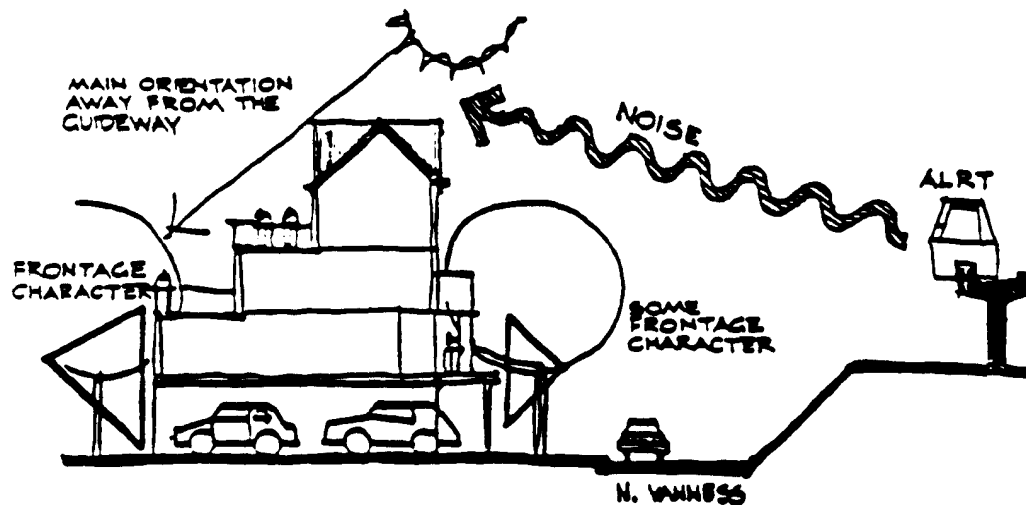
#### **Objective:**

New development should be oriented to limit ALRT and Boundary Road impacts, and reinforce the existing development pattern.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Encouraging new development fronting on Boundary Road to have its main orientation toward internal open spaces and courtyards, and away from impact sources, while ensuring that the Boundary Road frontage maintain a neighbourly character.
- (b) Limiting orientation toward Vanness Avenue North and the ALRT guideway while ensuring that a frontage character is provided.
- (c) Encouraging new development on Boundary Road corner sites to orient units toward the less impacted flanking streets.

Figure 2. Orientation Along N. Vanness



## 2.4 Views

Views are a major amenity in residential development. Good views of the North Shore mountains are possible from some sites. New development which takes advantage of this view opportunity should be designed to mitigate ALRT and traffic impacts. The new development must also respect views from nearby properties.

### Objective:

New development should take advantage of any potential views without unduly compromising existing views enjoyed by nearby properties, or compromising the liveability of new dwelling units. Where distant views are not possible, new development should create attractive near views for its units.

## 2.6 Light and Ventilation

Adequate natural light and ventilation are necessary for residential liveability. However, the need to mitigate traffic impacts could conflict with providing light and ventilation along building walls facing Boundary Road and the ALRT guideway. New development must achieve solutions to this conflict to ensure residential liveability. Below grade units and their private outdoor spaces do not receive adequate light.

### Objective:

New development should provide adequate natural light and ventilation to all dwelling units.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Maximizing the number of exterior walls with windows for each dwelling unit.
- (b) Locating dwelling units above grade. Units that, due to topography, face but are lower than the street grade should have a sufficient flat area outside their unit to maintain liveability. The surrounding sloped area should be terraced to increase the view depth and to allow more light. A flat apron area should be provided around any entrance or patio areas.
- (c) Minimizing the impact of building massing on present light levels enjoyed by adjacent multiple dwelling developments.

## 2.8 Noise

Low noise levels are a major element in residential liveability. This site is impacted by noise from the ALRT guideway and Boundary Road. New development must be noise tolerant.

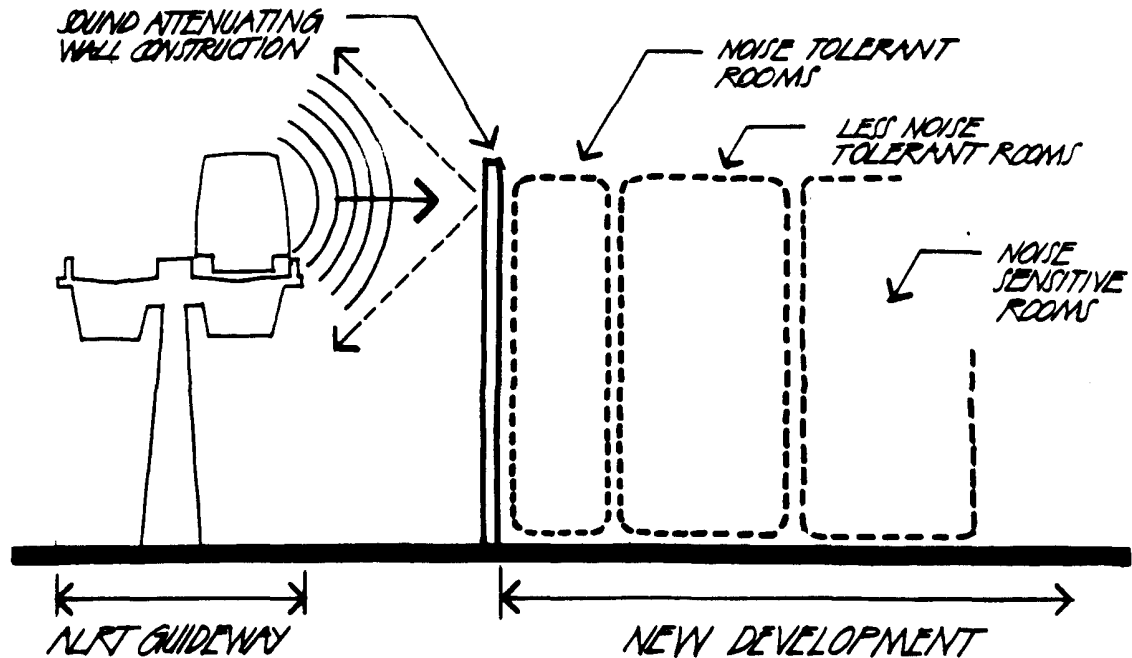
### Objective:

New development should minimize ALRT and traffic noise in new dwelling units and assist in reducing ALRT noise impacts on nearby single-family homes.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Locating rooms most affected by noise such as living rooms and bedrooms away from the noise source (Figure 3).
- (b) Locating areas not affected by noise such as stairwells and single loaded corridors between the noise source and dwelling units.
- (c) Using materials and construction methods that limit noise transmission such as masonry construction, double stud insulated walls, triple glazing and glass block.
- (d) Locating noise buffers such as glazed balconies, walls, fences and berms between the noise source and dwelling units.
- (e) Providing alternate ventilation systems such as baffled wall vents.

Figure 3. Example of New Development Responding to Noise Impacts



## 2.9 Privacy

The ALRT guideway creates privacy problems due to overlooking from trains into the site and the surrounding neighbourhood. As well, the traffic on Boundary Road impacts on privacy. New development that is higher than adjacent buildings could also create privacy problems. However, sensitive site and dwelling unit planning can reduce overlook problems and minimize loss of privacy on adjacent sites.

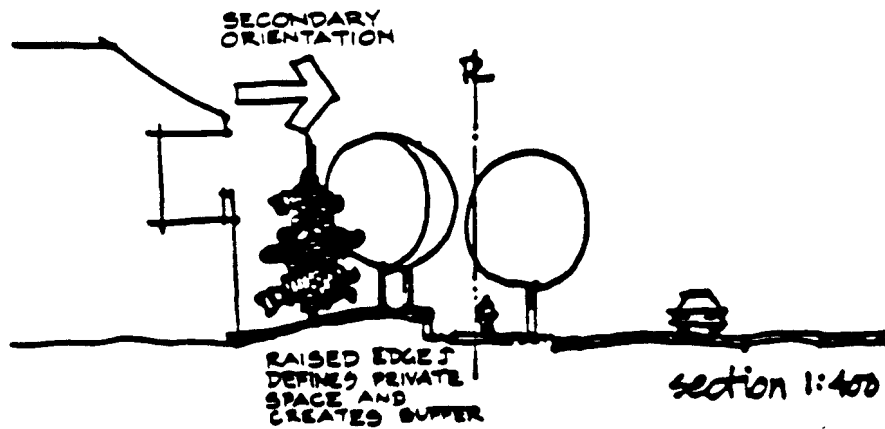
### Objective:

New development should respect and improve existing levels of privacy along Vanness Avenue North. Within site 'A' along Vanness Avenue North (as referred to in Map 1 of the CD-1 By-law), the objective of protecting privacy for existing development should not compromise the development of a continuous building format and consistent height.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Using building massing and landscaping to block views from the ALRT into new development and the surrounding neighbourhood.
- (b) Designing and landscaping new development to ensure that the privacy of adjacent sites is not unduly compromised.
- (c) Ensuring that new development has a high degree of individual unit privacy through careful location and treatment of windows and balconies.

Figure 4. Example of Building Configuration and Landscaping to Ensure Privacy Along Boundary Road



### 3 Uses

#### 3.1 Multiple Dwelling: Locked In Lots

A locked-in lot includes:

- (a) A lot(s) left at the end of the block and beside a proposed multiple dwelling; or
- (b) A lot(s) between an existing and proposed multiple dwelling; and where the site area of the lot would be less than the minimum site area required for multiple dwelling development.

In order to reduce the problem of locked in lots, no development permit would be granted to any development which would leave a lot(s) at the end of the block or between two multiple dwelling developments less than the specified minimum building site area, except as provided for in Section 3.2.

#### 3.2 Evidence of Reasonable Offer

A development permit might also be issued if evidence could be shown that a reasonable offer to purchase had been made to, and refused by, any property owner(s), who might later be left with a locked-in parcel. Before granting approval for a proposed multiple dwelling which would create a locked in lot, the following process is to be followed in trying to avoid the creation of a locked in lot:

- (a) The owner(s) of the lot to be locked in is advised, via letter from the Planning Department, of the proposed development on the adjacent property and the effect it would have on future development of their lot, which would be below the minimum site area required for a multiple dwelling.
- (b) The applicant of the proposed multiple dwelling is requested to submit written confirmation of offers to purchase the lot to be locked in. These offers are then sent by the Planning Department to the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in.
- (c) If the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in accepts an offer to purchase, written confirmation of this is to be submitted to the Planning Department.
- (d) If the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in refuses the offer to purchase, written confirmation of this being supplied by the applicant, but does not object to the proposed development creating their locked in lot, the application may proceed.
- (e) If the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in refuses the offer to purchase, written confirmation of this being supplied by the applicant, and objects to the proposed development creating their locked in lot, Planning Department staff are then to meet with the owner(s) and the applicant of the proposed development to seek resolution.
- (f) If the owner(s) of any secondary lots also to be locked in by the actions of the first locked in owner(s), object to the proposed development, Planning Department staff are to meet with all of the owners involved and the applicant of the proposed development to seek resolution.
- (g) If resolution is not obtained, the Director of Planning is to draw the matter to the attention of Council in presenting the proposed development for approval of the form of development.

## 4 Guidelines Pertaining to Regulations of The Zoning And Development By-law

### 4.2 Frontage

The most common building frontage in the neighbourhood is that of a single-family home on a single lot. This sets up a recognizable rhythm of spacing from house to house. New higher density development will be built on larger sites, possibly disrupting this established pattern.

#### Objective:

New development should provide a frontage character which is compatible with existing single-family development. It should also create visual interest and avoid an anonymous box-like image.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Visually breaking facades on multi-lot development into smaller individual components.
- (b) Articulating building facades to express individual units.

Figure 5. Example of Building Frontage Along Vanness Avenue North



### 4.3 Height

The existing character of the surrounding neighbourhood is in part created by the predominant one to two-storey height of single-family development. New development along Vanness Avenue North will need to be higher in order to deal with the impact of the ALRT guideway and to achieve the site's maximum density.

#### Objective:

New development should screen the ALRT from the surrounding neighbourhood. Without unduly compromising the foregoing, it should also provide a visual transition to the lower height of nearby single-family homes.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Locating the highest building elements adjacent to the ALRT guideway.
- (b) Providing variations in height to create visual interest.
- (c) Scaling development down to the existing neighbourhood height as the distance from the ALRT increases.
- (d) Reducing the height of new multi-lot development when next to a single-family house.
- (e) Providing a 2 1/2 storey neighbourhood street scale for development fronting Rae Avenue.



#### 4.4 Yards

Yards are an important element that create scale and character for an area. Most single-family homes in the neighbourhood have typical front yards of 6.1 to 7.3 metres (20 to 24 feet) and 1.0 metre (3 foot) side yards. Typical rear yards are 7.6 metres (25 feet). Front yards provide a continuous strip to open space on the street edge while rear yards provide private outdoor open space. The issue of providing setbacks from the ALRT guideway is complex and requires consideration of the benefits to site development and impact mitigation.

##### **Objective:**

New development should use building setbacks that respond to ALRT impacts and respect and continue the existing yard rhythm and character of the neighbourhood.

In the case of a multiple dwelling containing four or more units, this can be achieved by:

- (a) Providing a 8.0 metre (26 foot) setback along Boundary Road.
- (b) Providing a minimum 1.5 metre (5 foot) or maximum 4.6 metre (15 foot) setback along Vanness Avenue. This can be done when the walls facing the ALRT guideway have been designed to reduce noise and ensure privacy. This permits more flexible site planning, provides more useable open space and orients more units away from the ALRT.
- (c) Providing a 6.1 metre (20 foot) front yard setback along Rae and Wellington Avenues.
- (d) Providing a 7.7 metre (25 foot) setback from the lane, provided however that the Director of Planning may relax this setback or require no setback where he is satisfied that such relaxation allows for improved building design and does not adversely affect an adjacent single-family home.
- (e) Providing a minimum 2.1 metre (7 foot) setback from all other site boundaries but increased so that the outer walls are contained within a 135 degree angle extended horizontally and measured inwardly from any and all point on the side property line provided, however, that a lesser or no setback may be permitted where it allows for improved building design and does not adversely affect an adjacent single-family home.

#### 4.9 Parking

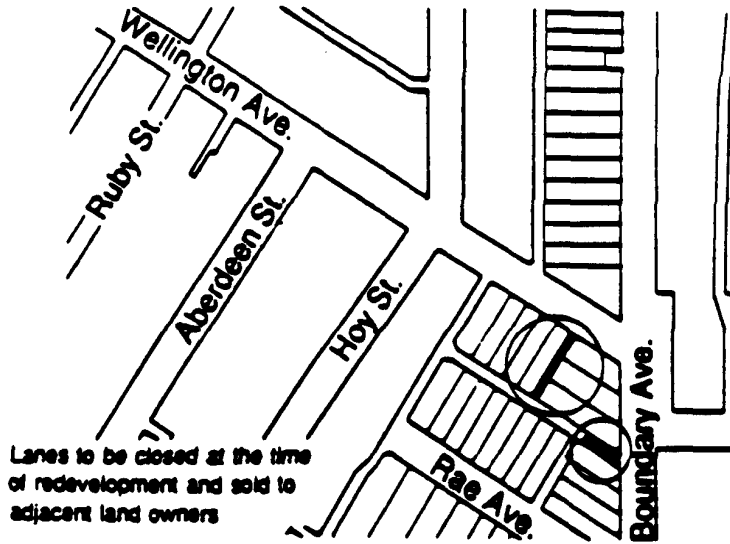
Underground parking should be located far enough below grade to limit any exposed structure, except along Vanness Avenue North. Any exposed structure and surface parking areas should be well screened and suitably treated.

Parking along Vanness Avenue North will be provided by individual at-grade garages. These will be very prominent and should be detailed to create an attractive streetscape that is more than a procession of doors.

**4.12 Dedication of Land for Street and Lane Development**

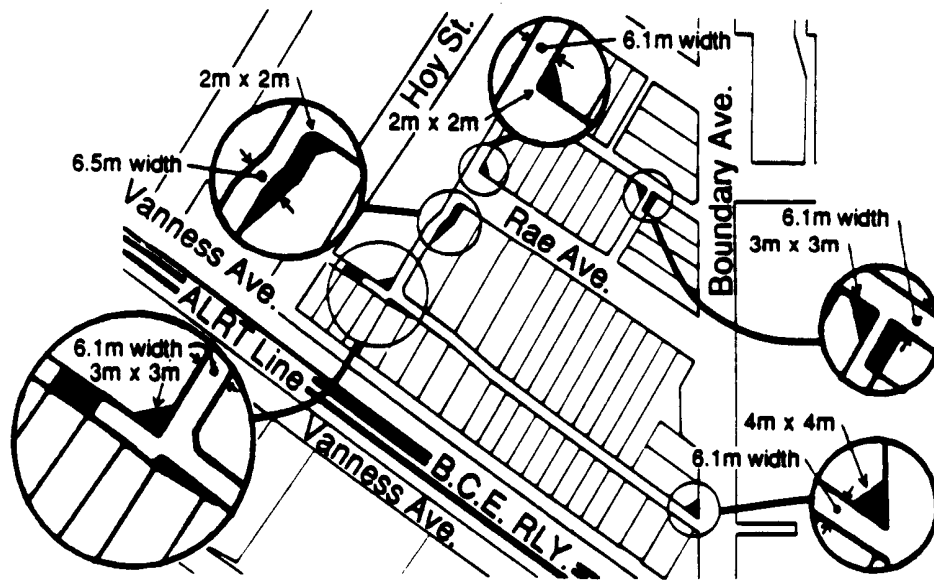
- (a) Those lands shown on Map 1 may be closed at the time of redevelopment and may be available to adjoining owners for purchase from the city.

Map 1. Lanes to be Closed and Sold



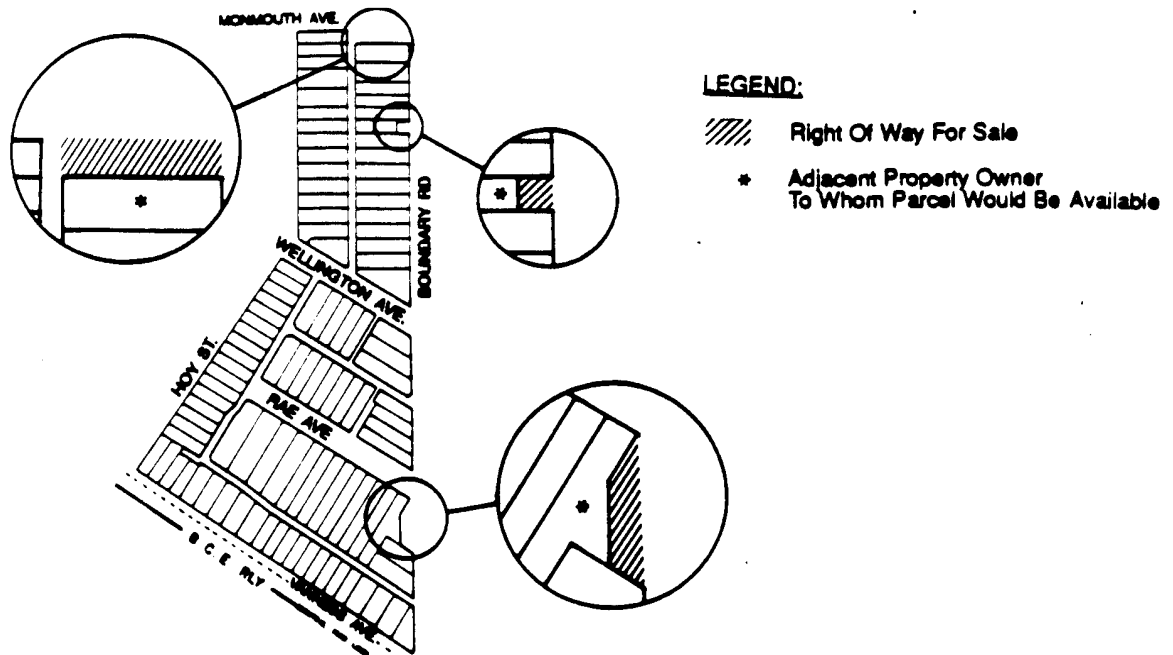
- (b) Those lands shown on Map 2 should be dedicated to the city for street purposes as a condition of redevelopment.

Map 2. Lane Dedication Required



- (c) Those parcels shown on Map 3 should be available to the owner of the adjacent parcel illustrated by an \* (asterisk).

Map 3. Surplus Street Right of Way for Sale



## 5 Architectural Components

### 5.1 Roofs

Roofs can assist in giving an area character and identify and often define the building's use. There are a variety of pitched roof types in the neighbourhood, reflecting a residential character.

#### Objective:

New development should have roofs that are compatible with the existing neighbourhood character and create visual interest.

This can be achieved by:

- Integrating pitched roofs into the overall design to provide residential character. They should strengthen neighbourhood identity, be compatible with adjacent housing and avoid a "tacked-on" look.
- Emphasizing entrances and expressing dwelling unit identity by incorporating secondary roofs.
- Creating an attractive roofscape when adjacent to and lower than the ALRT guideway.
- Fully integrating or clustering and screening any mechanical equipment and venting.

### 5.2 Windows

Windows are an important element in establishing character. Generally windows in the neighbourhood are of the standard residential type. New development provides an opportunity to enhance visual interest and a sense of quality construction through window detailing. However, particular care must be taken in the treatment of any windows affected by ALRT and traffic impacts.

#### Objective:

New development should use windows that create visual interest and reinforce the residential character of the neighbourhood.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Emphasizing residential character using articulated window types such as bay windows and windows with more detailing and emphasized framing that express unit individuality.
- (b) Suitably treating any windows affected by ALRT and traffic impacts to reduce noise and ensure privacy.

### **5.3 Entrances**

Entrances are a key component in a building's design and traditionally are its major focus. Most older houses in the area have highly visible, single street-facing entrances, some at grade and others accessible from a substantial staircase.

#### **Objective:**

New development should emphasize entrances.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Providing individual grade access to as many dwelling units as possible.
- (b) Creating visual interest by the use of porches, staircases, entrance roofs and door detailing.
- (c) Locating and designing lobbies to be clearly visible and directly accessible from the street.

### **5.4 Balconies**

With an increase in density, balconies will provide needed outdoor space. The design of balconies should consider privacy, useability, integration with the overall design, and ALRT and traffic impacts.

#### **Objective:**

New residential development should provide balconies which are useable, private and ALRT and traffic-tolerant.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Providing balconies with a minimum depth of 6 feet.
- (b) Orienting and screening balconies to ensure a high degree of privacy from other units, adjacent balconies and from private areas of nearby single-family homes.
- (c) Suitably screening any balconies affected by ALRT and traffic impacts to reduce noise and ensure privacy.
- (d) Integrating balconies into the overall building design to avoid a "tacked-on" look.

### **5.5 Exterior Walls and Finishes**

Most houses in the neighbourhood are finished in a combination of stucco and wood with some use of brick and stone as trim. The need to mitigate ALRT impacts may result in blank walls facing the guideway. The detailing and finishing of these walls require careful attention to ensure an attractive image when viewed from the nearby homes, Vanness Avenue North or the ALRT.

#### **Objective:**

New development should employ finishing materials that create a strong, attractive and cohesive character and minimize the visual impact of continuous building walls.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Using a limited number of finishing materials common to the area.
- (b) Limiting uninterrupted stucco walls.
- (c) Articulating and texturing building walls adjacent to the ALRT.
- (d) Finishing any fences or walls in materials compatible with the main building to ensure a cohesive image.

## 7 Open Space

Open space is a major element in creating character and liveability in residential areas. Surrounding single-family homes provide open space in their front and rear yards. New development at a higher density will likely provide open space in the form of large communal spaces or patios and balconies.

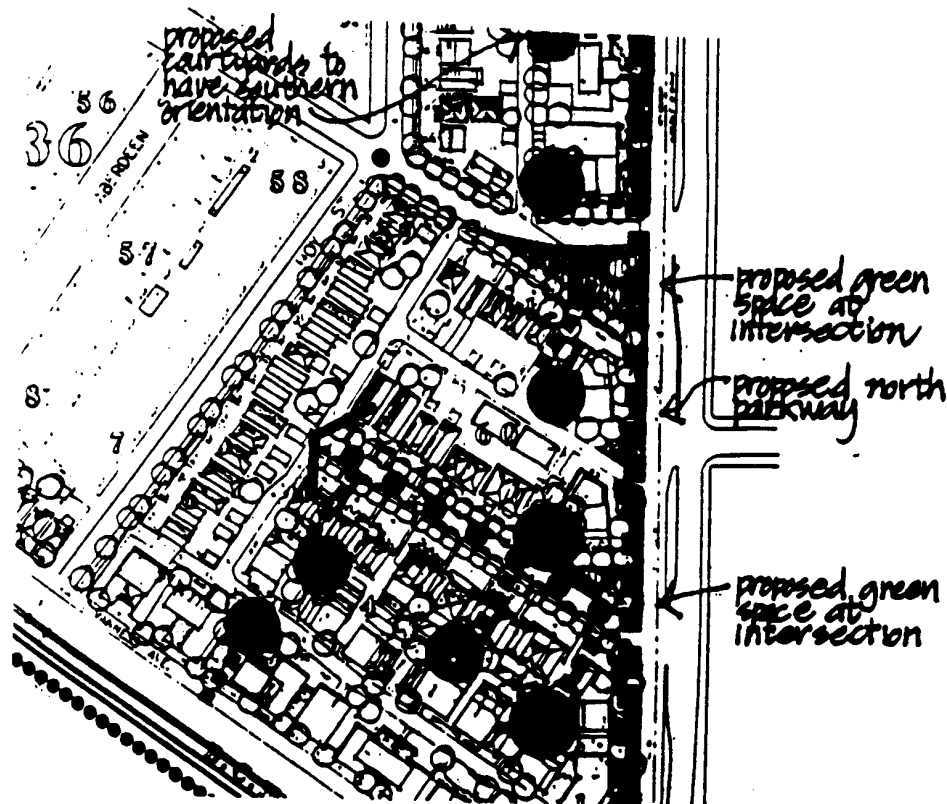
### Objective:

New development should provide a variety of open spaces which are useable, easily supervised, compatible with the characteristic open space of the neighbourhood and buffered from ALRT and traffic impacts.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Defining open space by the careful siting and massing of buildings rather than it being left over areas resulting from the building design.
- (b) Providing alternatives to ground floor open space when site coverage is greater than 50% such as large balconies and roof decks.
- (c) Providing private open space directly accessible from each unit in the form of a yard, roof garden or large balcony. Ground level private open space should be defined by screening or landscaping.
- (d) Suitably screening any open space affected by ALRT and traffic impacts to reduce noise and ensure privacy.
- (e) Setting back any privacy fencing from the property line to ensure the visual continuity of the open space along the street. Any fencing should be designed to promote casual neighbourhood surveillance from the street by permitting some view of the dwelling unit without sacrificing privacy.
- (f) Providing courtyards with southern orientation between multiple dwelling developments.

Figure 6. Suggested Open Space



## 8 Landscaping

Landscaping defines public-private space and creates neighbourhood character. It can also assist in mitigating traffic and ALRT impacts. The predominant form of landscaping in the neighbourhood is simple, formal front yards with ornamental trees and gardens. Some areas have continuous trees which help create a cohesive image for the street. Different open spaces are intended to be used differently, and surface treatment should respond accordingly. Both hard and soft surfaces, including pavers, cobblestones, tile and lawn areas should be provided as needed.

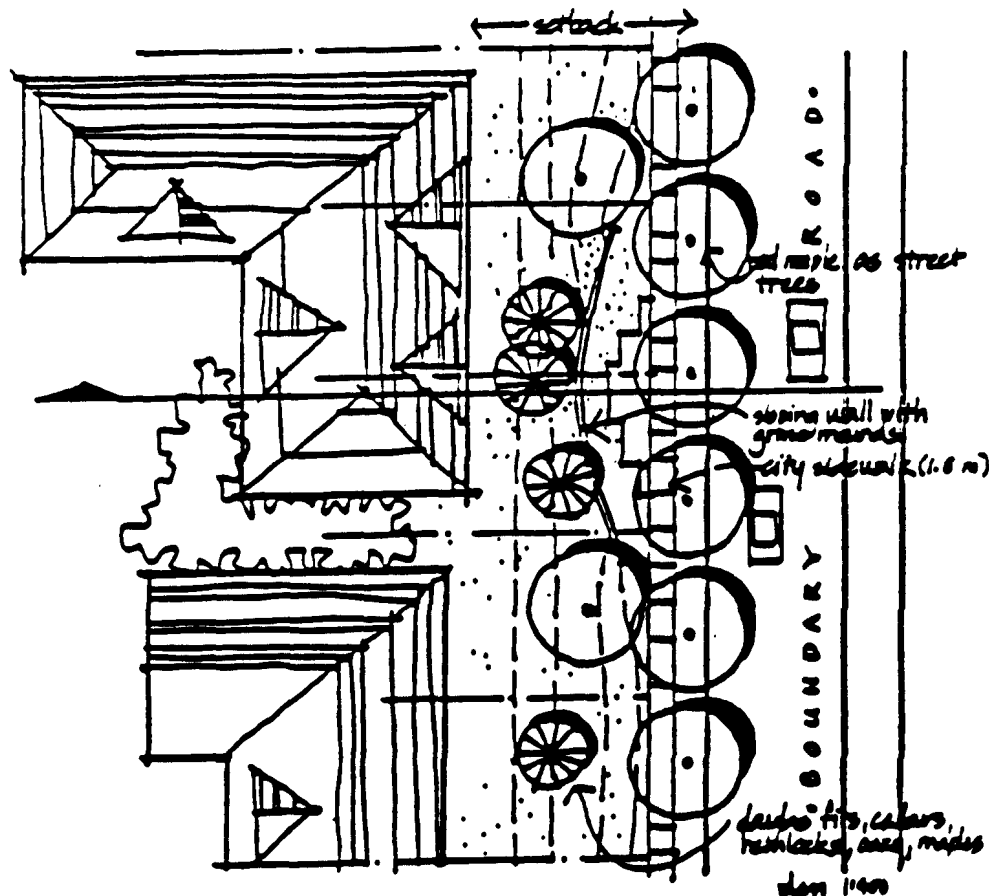
### Objective:

New landscaping should complement and enhance the predominate landscaping character of the neighbourhood.

This can be achieved by:

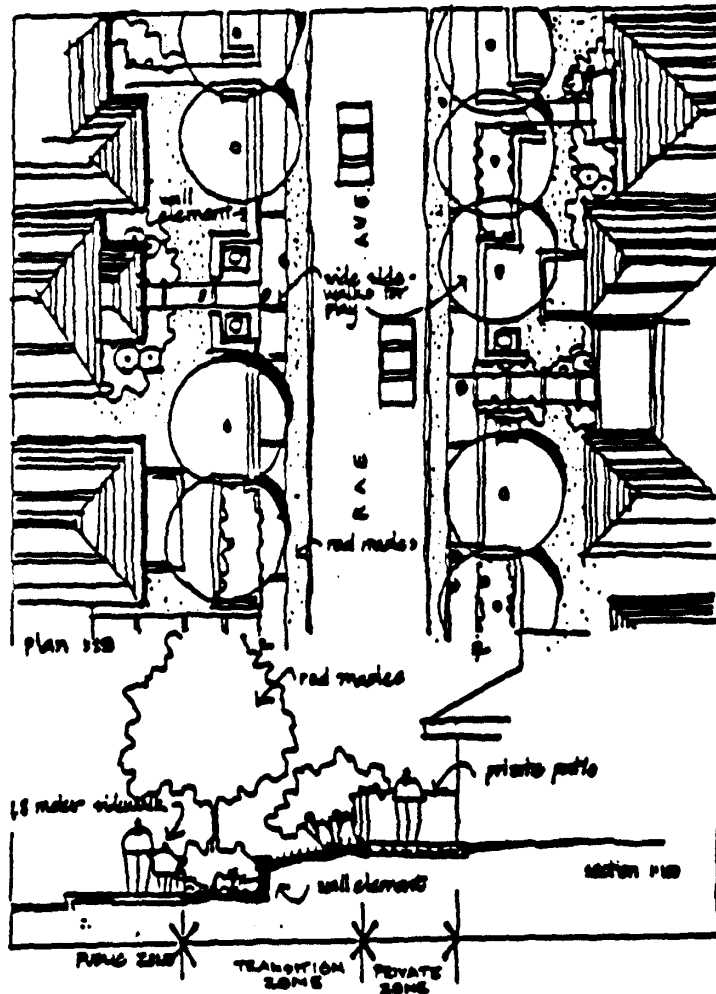
- (a) Layering landscaping materials to achieve an appropriate interface along Boundary Road. (Figure 7).
- (b) Providing a pedestrian parkway along Boundary Road with wide sidewalks (1.8 m), and a grassed and treed buffer. As well, “resting alcoves” - an area with wider walkways supported by low concave walls and sloping landscaped mounds - should be encouraged on private lands as a part of the landscaping requirements. (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Landscaping Along Boundary Road



- (c) Ensuring that new landscaping is compatible with the existing neighbourhood character.
- (d) Providing landscaped balconies, patios and roof decks.
- (e) Using landscape treatments adjacent to the ALRT guideway to visually screen new development and soften the impact of continuous building walls.
- (f) Providing consistent boulevard trees in agreement with the City Engineer to visually tie the neighbourhood together.

Figure 8. Suggested Street Edge Landscape Treatment



## 9 Storm Water Storage

The following table, prepared by the City Engineer, rates the pervious character of various surfaces to guide applicants in the City's administration of the storm water storage provision of the by-law.

### Pervious

Grass  
Gardens

### Additional Items Generally Considered Pervious

Decorative stone driveways and walkways (Gravel size or smaller)

Turfstone pavers for driveways (use % of pervious brick pavers with sand between area in the pavers)

Overhangs such as bay windows with pervious ground beneath

### Impervious

Buildings  
Concrete  
Black Top  
Asphalt  
Wood

### Additional Items Generally Considered Impervious

Wooden decks with spaces between the slats to pervious ground beneath

Swimming pools

Gravel driveways