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

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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RM-12 GUIDELINES

Adopted by City Council on September 18, 2018
Amended on September 10, 2019, September 15, 2020, July 20, 2022, April 26, 2023, and April 1, 2025

Contents

1 Application and Intent

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the RM-12 District Schedule of the Zoning and Development By-law.

Under the District Schedule, Multiple Dwelling (apartment, townhouse and triplex) is a conditional approval use. Multiple Dwelling in this District will generally take the form townhouses which may be arranged in stacked or courtyard configurations. For larger sites, there is also the opportunity for Multiple Dwelling in the form of a 4-storey apartment building. On certain larger sites, mixed-use residential buildings containing retail, service, artist studio or live-work uses are permitted (see RM-12 District Schedule for permitted sites and specific uses). Multiple Dwelling development will require consolidation of existing lots to meet the minimum site frontage requirement.

The District also provides opportunities for new development on single lots of duplex (with or without Secondary Suite or Lock-off Units) and triplex. As well, for single lot development, Multiple Conversion Dwelling and Infill in combination with retention of a Character House may be permitted.

1.1 Intent

The intent of these guidelines is to:

(a) Encourage development of ground-oriented, medium-density development in the form of townhouses, which may be side-by-side, stacked, or in a courtyard configuration, the majority of units which are suitably sized for families (i.e. two- and three-bedroom units);
(b) Ensure a high standard of liveability for all new dwelling units, including Lock-off Units, with emphasis on ground-oriented access, natural light and ventilation, and usable private outdoor space for each unit;
(c) Ensure the design of common outdoor space in courtyards that accommodates social interaction and children's play; and,
(d) Ensure durable and sustainable design, while allowing architectural diversity.

1.2 Application

These guidelines apply to conditional approval Mixed-use residential buildings and townhouses, which may be arranged side-by-side, stacked or in a courtyard configuration, as well as triplexes.

For apartment, refer to the RM-11 Guidelines.

For duplex (with or without secondary suite or lock-off units), refer to the RT-5 District Schedule.

For multiple conversion dwelling and infill in combination with retention of a character house, refer to the RT-5 District Schedule and RT-4, RT-4A, RT-5, and RT-6 Guidelines.

New Single Detached Houses, Single Detached Houses with Secondary Suite, and Laneway Houses are **not** permitted in this district.

For renovations to existing buildings including single detached houses, single detached houses with secondary suite, and laneway houses, refer to the RT-5 District Schedule and Section 11 of the Zoning and Development By-Law.

2 General Design Considerations

2.1 Neighbourhood/Streetscape Character

The existing neighbourhood consists primarily of single detached houses with characteristics such as regular spacing, individual front entrances and landscaped yards. New development should reflect desirable characteristics of the existing area as practical for a townhouse development such as:

(a) A clear architectural identity for individual dwelling units as viewed from the street or courtyard/rear yard through elements such as individual entrance porches and patios;
(b) Visually open courtyard spaces with a neighbourly relationship to adjacent sites;
(c) Rich landscape character by providing varied plants of substantial size throughout the site; and,
(d) Vehicular access at the rear of the site.

As new development occurs, there will be a change in the character of the street. New buildings are encouraged to have varied architectural character to provide visual interest, and will maintain a consistent primary building face and front yard to create a consistency to the streetscape.

2.2 Development Scenarios and Building Typologies

2.2.1 Development Scenarios

The RM-12 District provide development options depending on site frontage and site area. See Table 1.

Development of mixed-use residential building or townhouse in a side-by-side, stacked or courtyard configuration will require lot consolidation to meet a minimum site frontage of 27.4 m (90 ft.) and site area of 900 m^2 (9 688 sf.). This will generally require consolidation of a minimum of 3 lots, but may require 4 lots depending on the lot width and depth.

Development of an apartment building will require lot consolidation to meet a minimum site frontage of 36.6 m (120 ft.) and site area of 1 000 m^2 (10 764.3 sf). This will generally require consolidation of a minimum of 4 lots depending on the lot width and depth. Refer to the RM-11 Districts Schedule and RM-11 Guidelines.

The RM-12 District provides a triplex option on single lots with a minimum site frontage of 12.8 m (42 ft.) and site area of 306 m^2.

Other dwelling options may be considered on single lots including duplex (with or without Secondary Suite or Lock-off Units) and Multiple Conversion Dwelling and Infill in combination with retention of a Character House in accordance with the RT-5 Districts Schedule and RT-4, RT-4A, RT-5, and RT-6 Guidelines.

Table 1: Development Scenarios

	Site Frontage	Site Area	Building Typology	FSR	Reference Document
With Lot Consolidation	Min. 90' Max. 165'	910 m^2	Townhouse	1.45	Continue with RM-12 Guidelines
	Min. 90'	910 m^2	Hybrid Townhouse	1.7	Continue with RM-12 Guidelines
	Min. 120'	1,000 m^2	Mixed-Use Residential Building	1.7	Continue with RM-12 Guidelines
	Min. 120' Max. 165'	1,000 m^2	Apartment	1.7	Refer to RM-11 Guidelines
Without Lot Consolidation	Min. 42'	306 m^2	Triplex	0.9	Continue with RM-12 Guidelines
	N/A	306 m^2	Duplex	0.75	Refer to RT-5 District Schedule

2.2.2 Building Typologies

The RM-12 District Schedule is designed to accommodate townhouses in side-by-side, stacked or courtyard configuration, as follows.

(a) Townhouses Side-by-Side, Stacked or in a Courtyard Configuration

Characteristics:

(i) A partial fourth storey building height at the front row and a partial third storey building height at the rear row. See Section 4.2 Building Height of these guidelines.

(ii) Midblock sites will have two rows of units with one row located at the front of the site parallel to the street and one row located at the rear parallel to the lane, separated by a central courtyard 24 to 30 feet wide. See Section 2.5.3 of these guidelines for courtyard width requirements. See Figure 1.

(iii) Corner sites should provide a row of units parallel to each street with a separation at the corner of a minimum of 4.6 m (15 ft.). See Figure 2.

(iv) Units may be side-by-side or stacked.

(v) Individual unit entrances have direct access to grade (not through a common corridor).

(vi) Each unit has private outdoor space.

(vii) Building frontages at the street or lane should not exceed 26 m (85 ft.). Rows of units may be broken up into more than one building with a minimum spacing of 3.1 m (10 ft.) between buildings.

(viii) Individual units should be no less than 3.6 m (12 ft.) in width and the minimum width of major living spaces (e.g. living rooms) should not be less than 4.2 m (14 ft.). The width is a clear interior dimension and does not include walls.

(ix) Stacked townhouses typically include three-level units stacked on top of one-level units ("flats"), or two-level units stacked on top of two-level units. Other configurations may be possible.

(x) The Vancouver Building By-Law should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with maximum travel distance from the uppermost storey to an exit. The lowest storey of a stacked townhouse may be located partly below grade to provide compliance with exiting from the uppermost storey, but careful attention should be paid to liveability of below grade storeys. See Section 2.4.1 of these guidelines.

Figure 1: Midblock Site - Example Side-by-Side, Stacked or Townhouse in a Courtyard Configuration

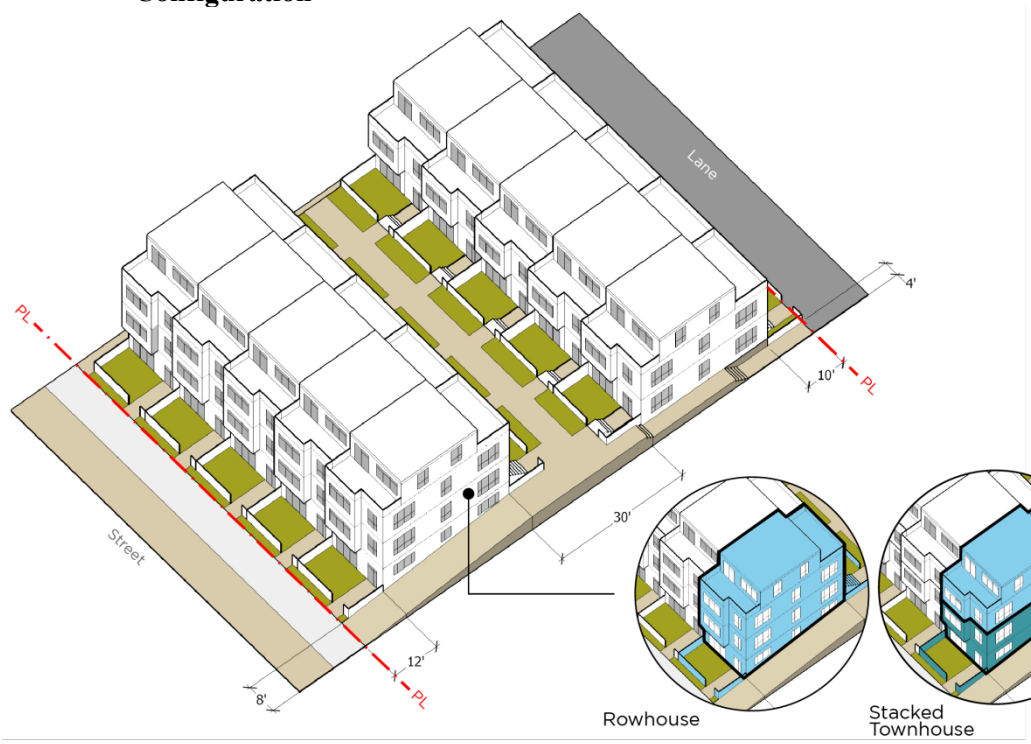
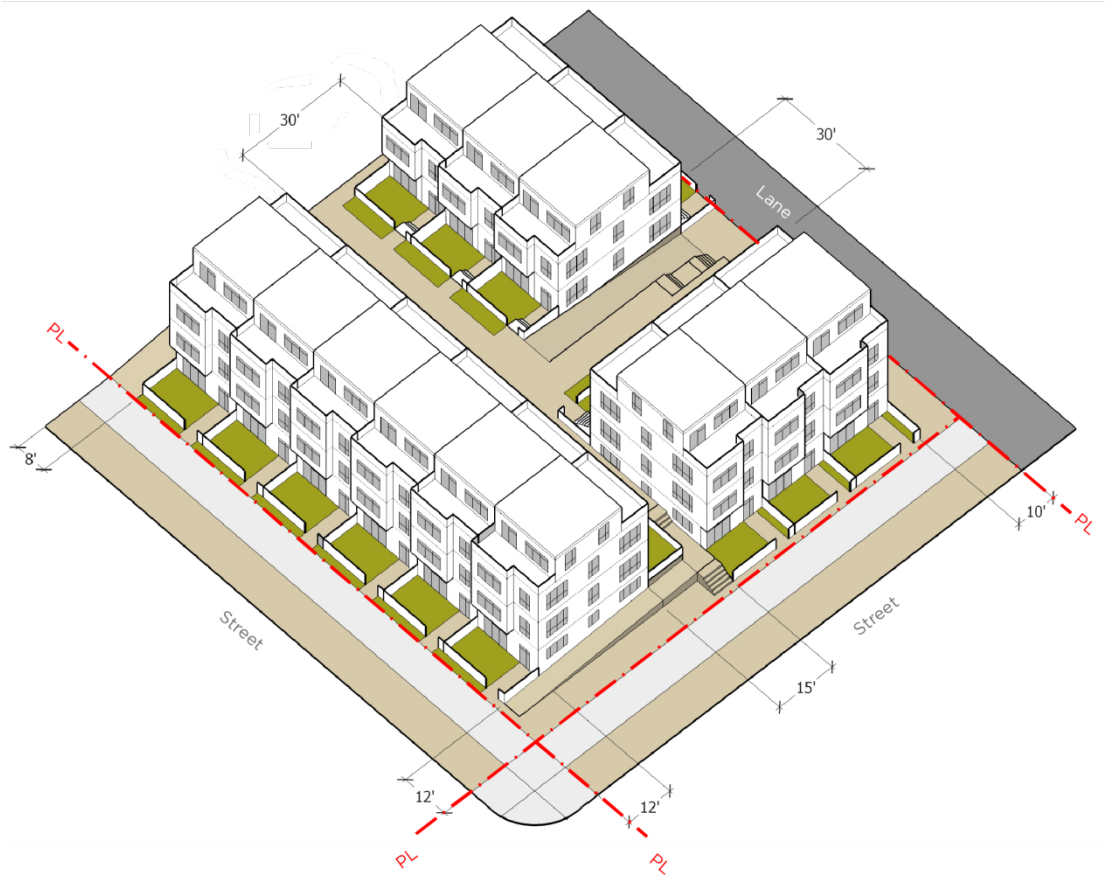


Figure 2: Corner site – Example Side-By-Side Or Stacked Townhouse in a Courtyard Configuration

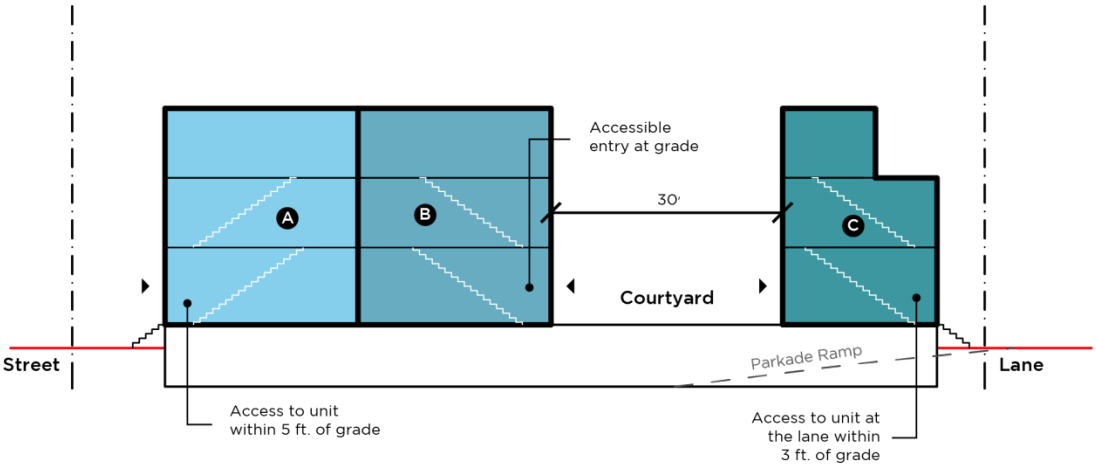


(b) Back-to-Back Townhouses

Additional Characteristics:

(i) Back-to-back townhouses share side and back walls with neighbouring units and have individual unit entrances facing the street or the courtyard/rear yard. See Figure 3.
(ii) Back-to-back townhouses may be located in a single building on the site or within the front or rear building of a courtyard configuration.
(iii) Back-to-back townhouses may also be stacked.
(iv) It is understood that (with the exception of corner units) units in the front row of a back-to-back townhouse building will not have direct access to the rear of the site. These developments may provide a semi-private path on-site along the front property line running parallel to the side walk to link to the path in the side yard or the break between the buildings which leads to the rear of the site. A 0.91 m (3 ft.) setback may be provided for this path and the surface should be permeable and provide a "green" appearance (such as structural grass grid or "grass-crete").

Figure 3: Section – Example Back to Back Townhouse

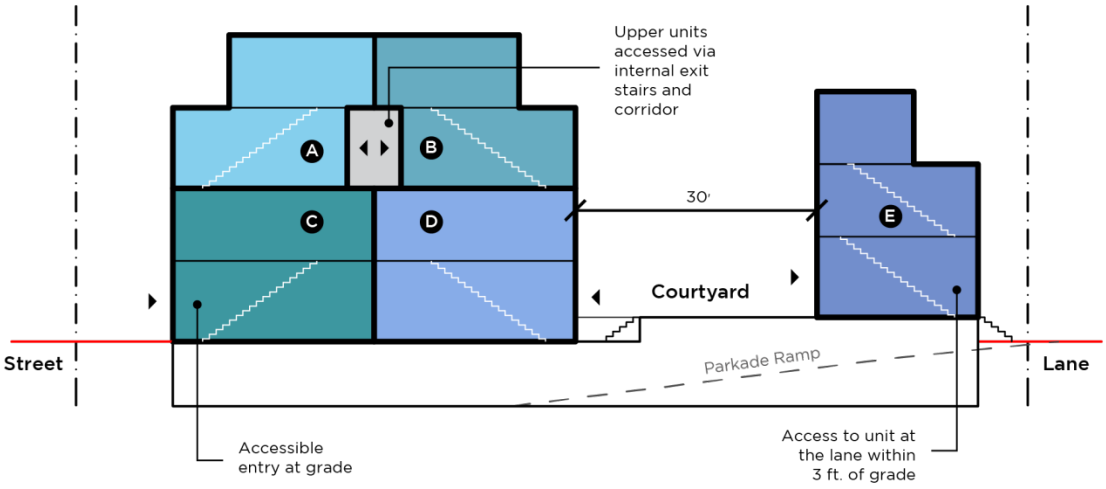


(c) Hybrid Townhouse

Additional Characteristics:

(i) Hybrid townhouse buildings combine features of townhouses and apartment buildings:
   a. The lower units have direct access to grade like townhouses; and,
   b. The upper units are accessed via a common main entrance and corridor like an apartment building. See Figure 4.
(ii) A hybrid configuration may assist in resolving exiting from the uppermost storey while maintaining the lowest storey at grade (i.e. not necessitate recessing of the lowest storey below grade). However, it is noted that any proposal should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with the Vancouver Building By-Law with regards to the maximum travel distance from the uppermost storey to an exit.

Figure 4: Section – Example Hybrid Townhouse



(d) Triplex

Characteristics:

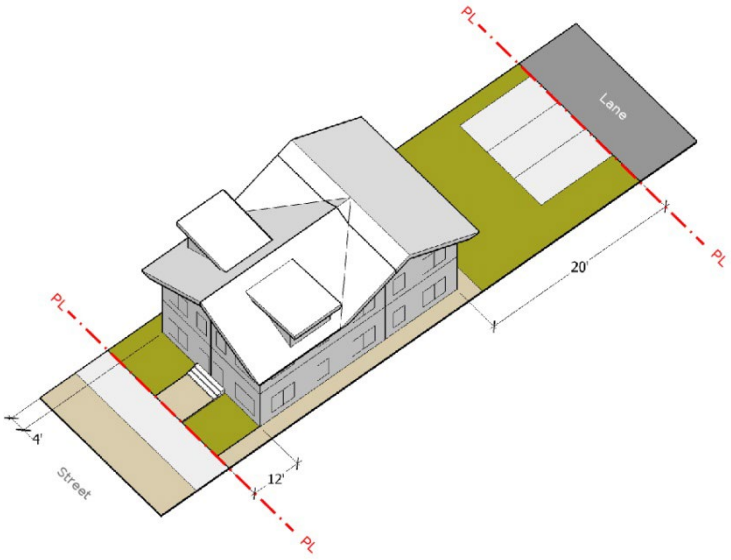
(i) Triplexes may have side-by-side units, back-to-back units and/or units that are stacked on top of each other. See Figure 5.

(ii) Individual unit entrances have direct access to grade.

(iii) Each unit has private outdoor space.

(iv) Parking is located within the rear 6.1 m (20 ft.) of the site. Parking may be provided as surface spaces located at grade or in a garage limited in size to a two-car garage of 42 m^2 (400 sf.).

Figure 5: Example Triplex



2.3 Orientation

(a) Unit entrances should be clearly identified architecturally and oriented to the street or courtyard/rear yard.

(b) For the front building of a courtyard configuration, upper level units of stacked townhouses may have balconies oriented to the street to further activate the street and articulate the form.

(c) For the rear building of a courtyard configuration, a secondary entrance oriented to the lane is encouraged to activate the lane interface, noting the primary entrance will be from the courtyard.
(d) On corners sites, unit entrances should be located facing both streets and both street-facing elevations should be fully designed and detailed.

2.4 Access and Circulation

(a) Pedestrian access to unit entrances should be from the street or via a clearly marked path on site to the courtyard/rear yard.
(b) The path should provide a sense of entrance to the courtyard and the rear of the site, and also meet Vancouver Building By-Law requirements for fire-fighter access to dwelling unit entrances, as follows:
    (i) A continuous path of 2.0 m (6.56 ft.) from the street to the unit entrance(s) is required to provide fire-fighter access to more than 2 dwelling units.
    (ii) The fire-fighter access path will serve as the main entrance path to the courtyard/rear yard and may be located:
        i. in a side yard with a minimum 2.4 m (8 ft.) width. The other side yard may be 1.2 m (4 ft.).
        ii. in a separation between the front buildings with a minimum dimension of 3.1 m (10 ft.).
(c) Side yards not providing fire-fighter access may be designed with paths to allow access to garbage and recycling areas and parking located at the rear of the site. These convenience paths are not required to be continuous surface, and may be pavers or gravel to increase site permeability.
(d) Vehicular access should be from the lane, where one exists. Sites for townhouses should be assembled in such a way that vehicular access from a lane is provided.

2.4.1 Access and Daylighting of Below Grade Storeys

Townhouses that exceed 3 storeys should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance with the Vancouver Building By-Law, in particular the maximum travel distance from the uppermost storey to an exit. The travel distance should not typically exceed 2-storeys or 25 m to an exit within 1.5 m (5 ft.) of grade. Hence, for a townhouse with a partial fourth storey, the lowest storey may need to be located below grade to comply with the maximum travel distance. The main unit entrance typically serves as the required exit under the code. The establishment of the "main" floor elevation should be considered carefully to respond to site topography and to ensure liveability and daylighting of the storey below while meeting exiting requirements. The lowest storey may be located below grade in order to comply with the maximum travel distance as outlined above, provided the following conditions are met (see Figure 6 and Figure 7):

(i) The lowest storey of a unit with two exposures (i.e. exterior walls) wherein at least one exposure is at or above grade for its full width may be located below grade at the second exposure provided it is no more than 1.5 m (5 ft.) below grade.
(ii) The lowest storey of a unit with two exposures wherein both exposures are located below grade should not be located more than 0.6 m (2 ft.) below grade on either side.
(iii) When a storey is located below grade on both exposures, combine with an above-grade storey with primary living space (i.e. living and dining areas) located at the above-grade storey and secondary spaces which require less daylight (i.e. bedrooms) below.
(iv) For the lowest storey, units may be wider in order to maximize the extent of the exterior wall that is at or above grade to provide more opportunities for windows and daylighting. I.e. the lower units may extend below two of the upper units.
(v) Primary unit entrances should be located at or above grade.
(vi) A primary unit entrance at a sunken patio may be considered if the patio is within 0.6 m (2 ft.) of grade and is without guardrails.
(vii) Sunken patios more than 0.6 m (2 ft.) below grade in the front yard facing an arterial street are to be avoided due to noise and traffic impacts.

(viii) Sunken patios more than 0.6 m (2 ft.) below the courtyard/rear yard may be considered to provide outdoor space and daylighting, but should be designed to minimize impact on usable courtyard/rear yard space.

Figure 6: This below-grade unit is not supported due to compromised liveability.

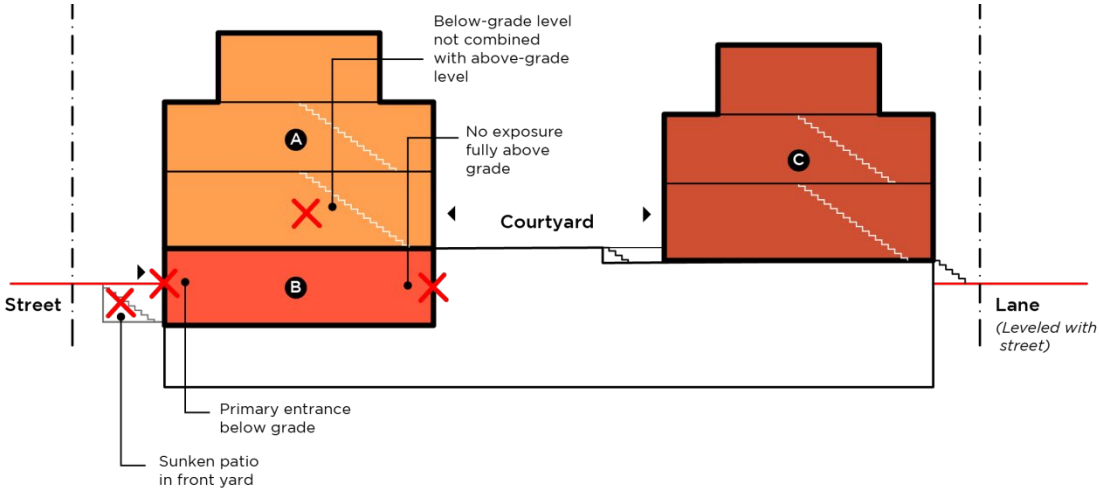
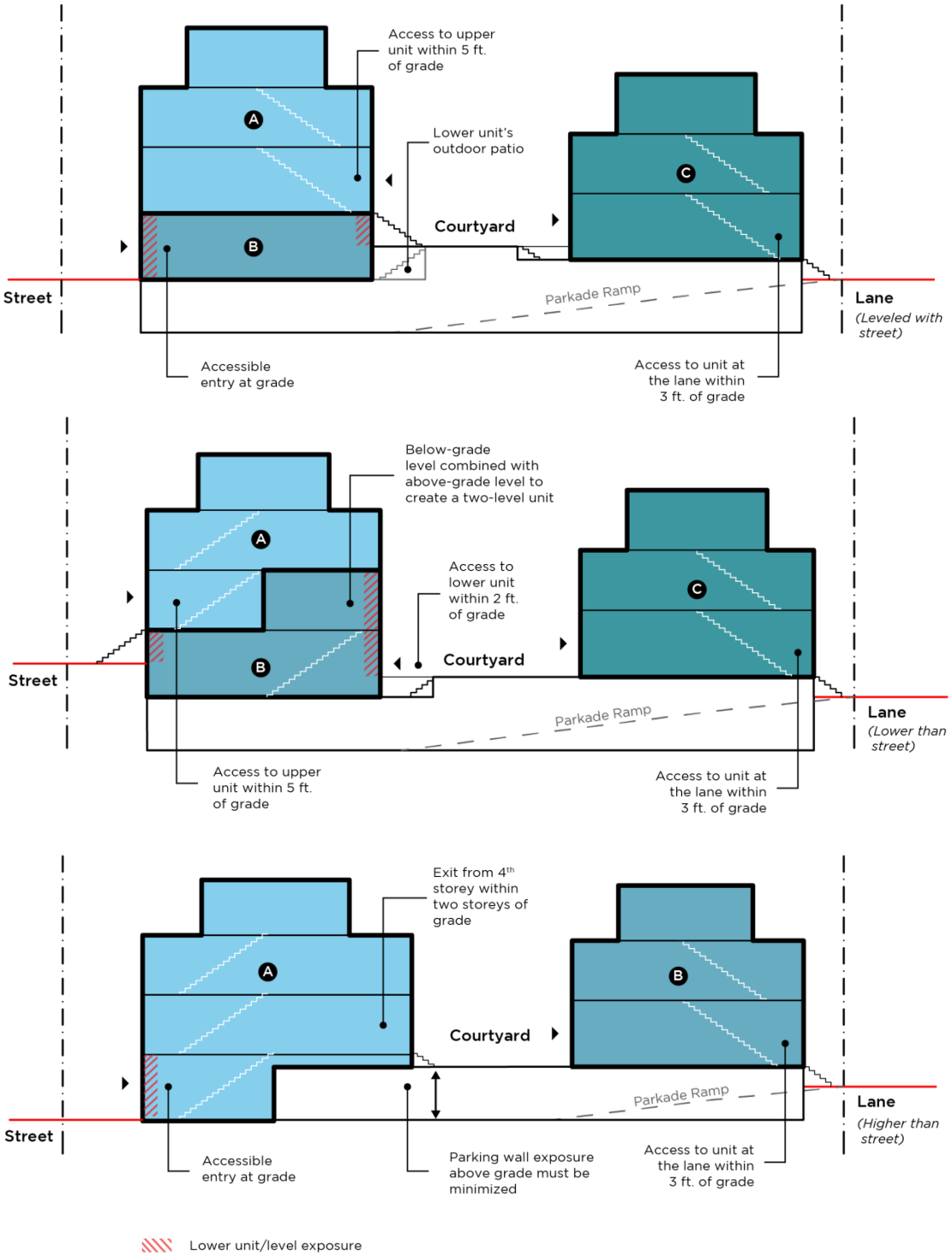


Figure 7: The following stacked townhouse configurations respond to site topography to provide improved liveability for the lower unit.



2.5 Light and Ventilation

(a) Access to natural light and ventilation affects the liveability of dwelling units. Townhouses are required to meet the Access to Natural Light requirements of the RM-12 District Schedule which require that all habitable spaces are provided with windows in an exterior wall. Internal rooms with no windows (except storage rooms, bathrooms and small

kitchens) are not permitted. The provision of natural ventilation should work in conjunction with Access to Natural Light regulations so that each habitable room is equipped with an openable window.

(b) Units within side-by-side and stacked townhouses will generally have two exposures (i.e. exterior walls at the front and rear) with units extending for the full depth of the building to maximise access to daylight and natural ventilation for the unit. Corner units will have three exposures and therefore more opportunities for windows.

(c) Back-to-back units will be shallower units and may have a single exposure (i.e. exterior wall). These units will be wider to maximise the extent of exterior wall and provide opportunities for windows and habitable rooms. Corner units will have two exposures and therefore more opportunities for windows.

2.5.1 Access to Natural Light

Dwelling units (or portions thereof) that do not have two exterior walls should not be deeper than 7.62 m (25 ft.) to ensure adequate natural light to the primary dwelling spaces.

2.5.2 Natural Ventilation

Natural ventilation allows the exchange of stale indoor air with fresh outdoor air and has an impact on the heating and cooling of spaces that is not energy intensive. Natural ventilation is affected by several factors, such as the size, type and placement of windows, ceiling heights, and prevailing winds.

(a) Where a dwelling unit is located directly beneath the roof of a building, the stack effect of internalized air may be exploited by placing openable skylights in the roof;

(b) Employing window types that facilitate air exchange are encouraged. Double-hung windows with openers at both a high and low level can help create air flow. Casement windows, when oriented with prevailing winds, can facilitate air flow from outside into interior spaces (scoop effect).

2.5.3 Light and Ventilation at Courtyards

The central courtyard plays an important role in providing light and ventilation to both rows of units and should be adequately sized to ensure performance.

(a) The courtyard should have a minimum clear width of 7.3 m (24 ft.).

(b) Allowable projections into the courtyard are generally the same as the allowable projections into yards in Section 10.8 of the Zoning and Development By-law, except that entrance porches may project 1.2 m (4 ft.) into the minimum courtyard width and upper level balconies should not project into the minimum courtyard width.

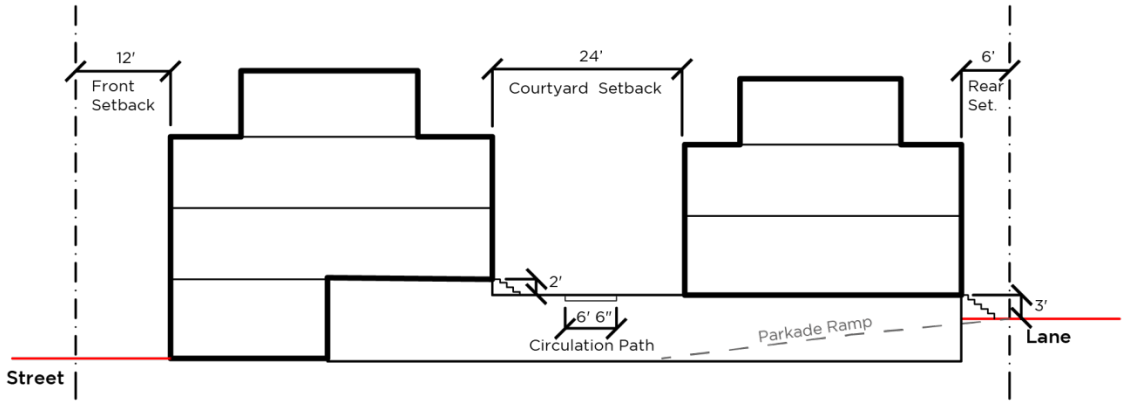
(c) When building elements such as entrance porches, landings/steps or sunken patios greater than 0.6 m (2 ft.) below the courtyard level and equipped with guardrails, project within the courtyard space, the minimum clear width should be increased to 9.1 m (30 ft.).

(d) There are no set restrictions on what rooms can face the courtyard, but privacy should be considered.

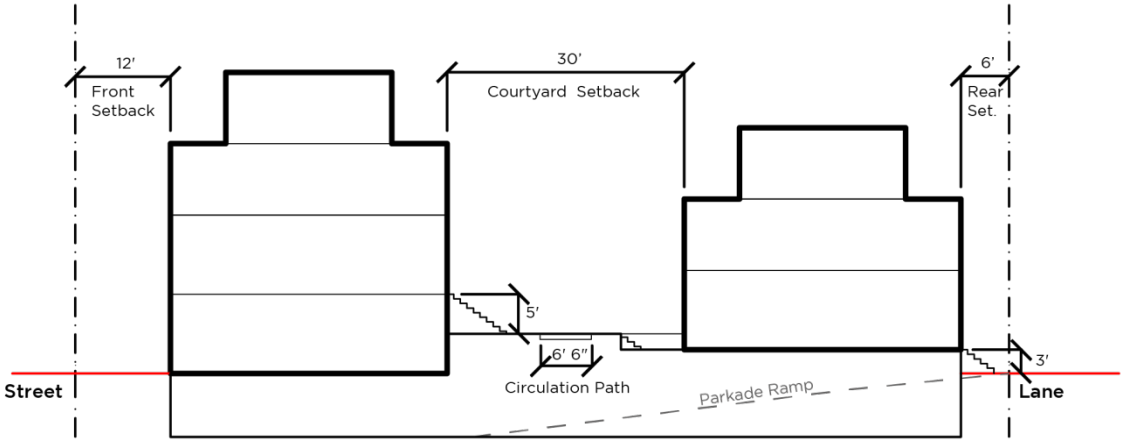
(e) The partial 3rd storey at the lane may be centered with setbacks on either side as illustrated in Figure 8 or flush with the courtyard elevation. The partial third storey may be shifted to be flush with the lane elevation to allow for greater solar access in the courtyard, or if a larger rear yard setback is provided. Also see Section 4.2 (Building Height) and Section 5.1 (Roof and Massing) of these guidelines.

Figure 8: Courtyard configurations – Typical Sections

8.1: 24 ft. Courtyard



8.2: 30 ft. Courtyard



2.6 Privacy

While some overlook of private open space and direct lines of sight into windows may be unavoidable, the intent of these guidelines is to minimize these impacts.

(a) The location and orientation of windows, decks and balconies in new development should be carefully considered to reduce looking into close-by windows of existing adjacent development.

(b) Visual privacy for units, balconies and private open space should be enhanced as much as possible through unit planning, landscape screening, and other elements, such as solid railings.

(c) External shared landings and stairs should not serve more than two side-by-side units so that residents do not need to pass the front doors and windows of other units in order to access their own units.

(d) Buildings at the lane are encouraged to raise the ground floor 0.9 m (3 ft.) above the adjacent grade of lane to enhance residents' privacy, noting that an accessible entry may be provided from the courtyard.

2.7 Internal Storage in Stacked Townhouses

The design of stacked townhouses should consider the storage needs of families. In-suite storage areas should be provided within individual dwelling units (preferred) or within storage areas located in underground parking structures. Refer to the administration bulletin Bulk Storage and In-Suite Storage – Multiple Family Residential Developments.

3 Uses

3.1 Conditions of Use

In order to ensure a good supply of housing suitable for families, as an alternative to single detached houses, apartment, townhouse and mixed-use buildings are required to include a minimum number of family units as per the use-specific regulations in Section 2.2 of the District Schedule.

(i) Townhouses are required to include a minimum of 25% 3-bedroom units.

(ii) Apartments are required to include a minimum number of 2- and 3-bedroom units as follows:
   (a) a minimum of 25% of the total dwelling units must be two-bedroom units;
   (b) a minimum of 10% of the total dwelling units must be three-bedroom units.

   The required distribution of 35% reflects the historic percentage of family households in the city. The requirement for 10% 3-bedroom units will help augment the supply of 3-bedroom units typically provided in apartment buildings.

   In addition, to further support the functionality and liveability of family units, it is recommended that:
   (a) a minimum of 50% of the two- and three-bedroom units are located within the first three floors of the building;
   (b) private open space is directly accessible from each unit; and,
   (c) common outdoor space is provided in an appropriate location to be developed as a children's play area.

3.2 Lock-off Units

The District Schedule permits a "Principal Dwelling with a Lock-off Unit" in townhouses. A Lock-off Unit is a portion of the main dwelling unit that can be locked off to be used separately or rented out. The intent of allowing Lock-off Units is primarily to increase the rental stock in the neighbourhood, and, secondly, to provide the option of having a mortgage helper for the owner of a townhouse (similar to the option of having a secondary suite in single detached houses and duplexes).

(a) A lock-off unit cannot be strata-titled (secured by covenant);
(b) A lock-off unit is an optional and flexible use, and therefore the lock-off unit must be equipped with an internal access to the main unit;
(c) While lock-off units do not require additional vehicle parking, they do need separate bicycle parking;
(d) In order to ensure safety and acceptable standards of liveability, lock-off units must comply with the Lock-off Unit Guidelines;
(e) The maximum number of lock-off units in a townhouse development is one lock-off for every three units.
(f) The bedroom in a lock-off unit does not count toward the required percentage of 2- and 3-bedroom units under the use-specific regulations in Section 2.2 of the District Schedule. I.e. a 2-bedroom unit with a lock-off unit is a 2-bedroom unit, not a 3-bedroom unit.

3.3 Choice of Use: Mixed-Use Residential Building

A number of retail, service, cultural, and live-work uses may be permitted at grade for in mixed-use residential buildings where they are located on sites fronting on Nanaimo Street or at the corner of East 1st Avenue and Lakewood Drive (see Map 1: Sites where mixed-use residential building is permitted, in the RM-12 District Schedule). The sites along Nanaimo Street were identified as suitable for choice of use at grade in the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan, to provide opportunities for commercial uses as the neighbourhood develops. The site at the corner of East 1st Avenue and Lakewood Drive was identified as Local-Serving Retail in the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan.

A mixed-use residential building, up to 4 storeys, may be considered. See Section 4.2 Building Height of these guidelines. The development should otherwise comply with the regulations of the district schedule to ensure compatibility with adjacent multiple dwellings in the streetscape. Due to the mixed commercial and residential use, requirements of the Vancouver Building By-law should be reviewed carefully to ensure compliance, particularly with regards to fire separations between commercial and residential uses, and exiting from the uppermost storey. Further,

(a) Uses that serve the surrounding residential neighbourhoods are encouraged, such as a small grocery store or café (retail use);
(b) Retail and service uses, which could expect an increased number of visitors, should be accessed from the street and not internal courtyards;
(c) Artist studio and live-work units may have access to the residential portion of the unit from an internal courtyard; and,
(d) Parking and loading for non-residential uses should meet the requirements of the Parking By-law, and should be separated from residential spaces (where possible).

For further direction on live-work uses, see Live-Work Use Guidelines.

4 Guidelines Pertaining to Regulations of the Zoning and Development or Parking By-laws

4.1 Site Frontage

The minimum site frontage for a townhouse is 27.4 m (90 ft.). The minimum site frontage for an apartment will require lot consolidation to meet a minimum site frontage of 36.6 m (120 ft.). This is a practical minimum intended to encourage efficient multiple dwelling development.

4.2 Building Height

For triplex, the building height is 10.7 m including a partial storey.

For townhouses, the Director of Planning may permit:

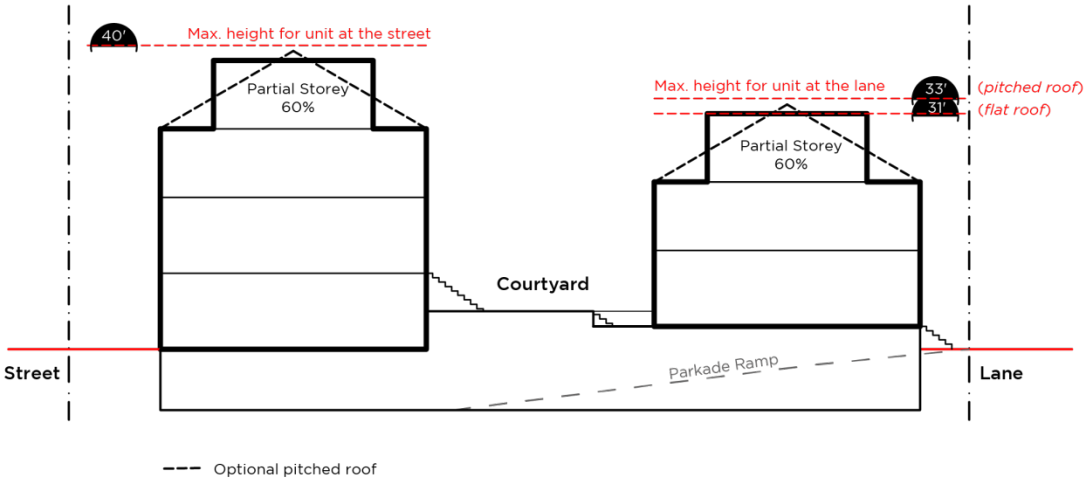
(a) For the front building: building height to 12.2 m (40 ft.) and a partial fourth storey provided the partial fourth storey does not exceed 60% of the storey immediately below; and,

(b) For the rear building:
  (i) For a minimum 7:12 pitch roof, building height to 10.1 m (33 ft.) and a partial third storey; and,
  (ii) For a flat or less than 7:12 pitch roof, building height to 9.5 m (31 ft.) and a partial third storey.
  (iii) In special cases where due to site topography the building cannot reasonably be accommodated in the building height envelope, the Director of Planning may permit an increase in building height to 10.7 m (35 ft.).

The partial 3rd storey at the lane may be centered with setbacks on either side as illustrated in Figure 9, or may in some cases be flush with the courtyard or lane elevation as described in Section 2.5.3 (Light and Ventilation at Courtyards) of these guidelines.

For townhouses, floor-to-floor height should not exceed 3.1 m (10 ft.) for primary living space, and floor-to floor height for secondary living space (bedrooms) may be lower [approximately 2.7 m (9 ft.)].

Figure 9: Maximum allowable building heights – Typical Section



For developments providing retail, service, cultural (including artist studio) and live-work uses in mixed-use residential buildings, a building height up to 13.7 m (45 ft.) and 4 storeys may be considered to accommodate functional commercial ceiling heights which are typically a minimum 4.3 m (14 ft. floor-to-floor).

4.3 Front Yard

The front yard of existing development varies and may be 7.3 m (24 ft.). New development will have a shallower front yard to a minimum 3.7 m (12 ft.). To assist with this transition the sidewalls of new buildings should be well composed and treated with materials and fenestration to avoid the appearance of a blank 'end wall' condition.

Yards are measured from the ultimate property line, i.e. after any dedication. See also Section 4.10 of these guidelines.

4.4 Side Yard

For Townhouses:

The minimum side yard is 1.2 m (4 ft.). A 2.4 m (8 ft.) side yard may be required at one side of the front building to provide space for a 2.0 m (6.56 ft.) fire-fighter access path from the street to the units at the courtyard and the rear of the site. See Section 2.4 of these guidelines.

Generally, exterior side yards on corner sites should be treated as front yards, and should have a setback of 3.7 m (12 ft.) (see Figure 2).

For Apartments and Mixed-Use Residential Buildings:

The minimum side yard is 2.1 m (7 ft.).

Generally, exterior side yards on corner sites should be treated as front yards, and should have a setback of 3.7 m (12 ft.).

Yards are measured from the ultimate property line, i.e. after any dedication. See also Section 4.10 of these guidelines).

4.5 Rear Yard

For Townhouses:

A minimum rear yard of 1.8 m (6 ft.) is required to the rear building of a courtyard configuration from the lane to provide space for secondary entrance porches and patios, as well as planting along the lane.

Secondary entrances from the lane are encouraged to provide a residential scale and character. However the lane entry is not considered to be the primary unit entrance for fire-fighter access as required by the Vancouver Building By-Law. The primary unit entrance must be accessed from the street via a 2 m (6.56 ft.) clear continuous path and, as such, will be located facing the courtyard and the front of the site.

For Apartments and Mixed-Use Residential Buildings:

The minimum rear yard is 6.1 m (20 ft.).

Yards are measured from the ultimate property line, i.e. after any dedication. See also Section 4.10 of these guidelines).

4.6 Floor Space Ratio (FSR)

The discretionary increase in the floor space ratio for multiple dwellings and mixed-use residential buildings may be considered up to the maximums below:

(i) Townhouse, except for hybrid townhouse	1.45 FSR
(ii) Hybrid townhouse	1.7 FSR
(iii) Apartment	1.7 FSR
(iv) Mixed-use residential building	1.7 FSR
(v) Triplex	0.9 FSR

Depending on site features such as existing trees, topography, and site dimensions particularly depth, as well as the requirements of redevelopment, such as parking requirements, it may not be possible to achieve the highest floor space ratio on all sites.

4.7 Site Coverage and Impermeability

The Director of Planning can permit an increase in the area of impermeable materials.

4.8 Off-Street Parking and Bicycle Storage

4.8.1 Parking

Underground parking structures should be absolutely minimized, and held back from site edges to allow for tree planting and rain water infiltration. See Section 10 Rainwater Management of these guidelines).

(a) For multiple dwelling and mixed-use residential buildings, parking may be located underground with access from the lane.
(b) Underground parkades should not project into the front, side or rear yards and should align with the exterior walls of the buildings above.
(c) Where elevated courtyards are proposed, exposed portions of underground parking should be clad with high-quality, durable materials and screened with plantings at-grade.
(d) For planting over structures, provide substantial growing medium volumes within irrigated planters (to meet BCSLA latest Standard).
(e) For triplex, parking is located within the rear 6.1 m (20 ft.) of the site. Parking may be provided as surface spaces located at grade or in a garage. The garage is limited in size to a two-car garage of 42 m^2 (400 sf.).
(f) Open parking spaces should be paved with permeable pavers to facilitate rainwater infiltration and reduce storm water sewer loads. However, since most permeable pavers lose their permeability over time, parking areas with permeable pavers are counted as impermeable surface.
(g) Open exit stairs from the underground parkade are discouraged due to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design concerns.
(h) Covered parkade exit stairs are encouraged and may be located within the building massing or within the courtyard provided they do not compromise the functionality of the courtyard or liveability of adjacent units. Covered parkade exit stairs are not permitted in the side yards.

4.8.2 Bicycle Storage

(a) Bicycle parking may be located in the underground parkade.
(b) Creative options for above grade bike storage will be considered provided they do not compromise the functionality of courtyards or private outdoor amenity space.

4.9 Access to Natural Light

The Access to Natural Light regulation helps to ensure access to day light and liveability within a dwelling unit by requiring a window for each room (except bulk storage rooms, bathrooms and kitchens). Priority is placed on the major living spaces in which longer periods of time are spent, such as living rooms.

4.10 Dedication of Land for the Purpose of Road Widening

Dedications are required with conditional approval redevelopment to facilitate increased street right-of-way width to provide improvements.
In consideration of the additional dedication required for sites along East 1st Avenue (Garden Drive to Nanaimo Street), a variance of the front yard to 2.44 m (8 ft.) may be supported, or a reduced courtyard separation.

4.11 Building Depth and Building Width

4.11.1 Building Depth

The maximum building depth of 40% of the depth of the site is applicable to triplex.

4.11.2 **Building Width**

The housing types permitted in the RM-12 District are larger than the existing single detached houses in the neighbourhood. To ensure that new forms of development are compatible in massing with the existing streetscapes, building width is limited. Limiting the building width also allows more windows on the sides and better cross-ventilation and access to natural light.

The maximum building width for a multiple dwelling should be 26 m (85 ft.).

The Director of Planning may vary the building width provided particular care is taken to avoid monotony in building massing and design. Articulation of the massing may be used to reduce the apparent width of the building and to avoid a sense of relentlessness in the repetition of identical units.

4.12 External Design

4.12.1 Separation between adjacent multiple dwelling buildings

(a) Where a development includes two or more buildings adjacent to the street or lane, the minimum distance between the exterior side walls of the adjacent buildings should be 3.1 m (10 ft.).
(b) This minimum separation distance but does not apply to the internal courtyard between the front and rear buildings which must meet the separation requirements in Section 2.5.3 of these guidelines.

4.13 Number of Buildings on Site

For sites over 40.2 m (132 ft.) in frontage, more than one building should be provided at the street to break up the massing and to create a streetscape that is more consistent with the existing streetscape on the block.

5 Architectural Components

Developments are not required to emulate any particular architectural style. Regardless of style, a high level of design excellence is expected to participate in the enrichment of the streetscape. All facades should provide a cohesive and well-designed composition of cladding materials, trim, fenestration and relief elements such as bays, recesses, porches, balconies which provide shadow play, texture, rain protection and human scale.

5.1 Roof and Massing

5.1.1 Roofs

(a) Massing of the partial upper storey should be minimized by:
  (i) For pitched roofs, substantially containing the top floor in the roof form; or,
  (ii) For a flat or shallow pitch roof roofs, by significantly setting back any building mass at the upper most storey. This setback should arrive at an overall visual effect from the street or the lane that is comparable to that of a pitched roof building. A minimum of 1.8 m (6 ft.) should be provided.
(b) For pitched roofs, the roof should spring from the upper floor level. It is expected that some of the allowable floor space will be under sloped ceilings between 1.2 m (4 ft.) and 2.4 m (8 ft.) in height in most developments.
(c) For pitched roofs, secondary roof forms and dormers should be clearly subordinate to the main form in size and number.
(d) Roof decks should be set back from the roof edge to minimize the view into adjacent yards.
(e) Roof top stairwell ‘penthouses’ should be located to minimise the visual prominence of these elements.

5.1.2 Massing of Townhouses on the Street

(a) Townhouses should visually emphasize individual units. The boundaries of each unit should be obvious and clearly expressed on the street façade. While many successful developments rely on simple repetition of identical or near identical side-by-side units, more variety in massing and expression may be brought to a design, particularly in the case of wider buildings (See Section 4.11.2 of these guidelines).
(b) The apparent scale may be reduced by other aspects, such as floor-to-floor heights, horizontal elements, hierarchical elements, changes in material, and the proportion and

placement of openings. Floor-to-floor height should not exceed 3.1 m (10 ft.) for primary living space, and floor-to-floor height for secondary living space (bedrooms) may be 2.7 m (9 ft.).

(c) The upper floor facing the street or lane should be stepped back or contained in a roof form. See Section 5.1.1(a) of these guidelines).

5.1.3 Massing of side-by-side townhouses on the Lane

(a) Rear buildings in townhouses in a courtyard configuration should be designed to reduce apparent massing adjacent to the lane and neighbouring properties.

(b) The upper floor facing the lane should be stepped back or contained in a roof form. See Section 5.1.1(a) of these guidelines).

5.2 Entrances, Stairs and Porches

The intent of these guidelines is to maximize active street life by enlivening the streetscape with residents' use of front entry porches and front facing yards.

5.2.1 Entrances

(a) For stacked townhouses, each stacked unit should have one unit entrance facing the street and the other unit in the 'stack' may have their entrance facing the courtyard/rear yard. The location of unit entrances should generally align with adjacent units in the 'row'.

(b) For courtyard configurations, units in the rear building should have main entrances facing to the internal courtyard and secondary entrances facing the lane.

(c) Pedestrian pathways to units facing the courtyard should be clearly visible for wayfinding purposes (such as through lighting, addressing and arbours/trellises).

5.2.2 Porches

(a) For stacked townhouses, each stacked unit should be designed with a major private outdoor space on the principal street-facing facade in the form of a front porch, a front patio, a balcony or a roof deck.

(b) Entrance porches can range from a small stoop area to a large, more usable porch.

5.2.3 Stairs

(a) Exterior porch landings and stairs ("stoops") may access the first storey above grade and play a role as places for informal social interaction. Due to building code requirements with regards to exiting, landings are generally no more than 1.5 m (5 ft.) above grade or a courtyard.

(b) Stairs to upper levels above the main floor either within a unit or to provide access to an upper level stacked unit must be accommodated within the internal space of the house or unit.

(c) Steps are allowed in required side yards where they are designed to facilitate grade changes from the front to the rear of the site.

5.3 Windows and Skylights

Window placement and design play important roles in the overall visual composition of a building. Windows are also significant for the liveability of a unit because they let in natural light and air.

(a) When a window or skylight is the source for natural light for a room, it should also be possible to open it to guarantee natural ventilation throughout the dwelling.

5.4 Balconies and Decks

(a) Balconies and decks should be designed as integral parts of the building massing and façade composition.
(b) In order to minimize overlook within courtyards, projections of balconies located above the main floor are discouraged.
(c) Privacy screens on roof decks should be set back from the roof edge and not exceed 1.8 m (6 ft.) so that their visibility from the street and adjacent properties is minimized.

5.5 Exterior Walls and Finishing

The finishing materials of new development should be durable. High-quality materials that last longer are more sustainable and create less waste. Materials that perform well over a long period of time also increase the affordability of the dwelling.

In addition to durability, the following guidelines should be considered when choosing exterior materials:

(a) Materials should be used in a way that is true to their nature. For example, stone facing should be used as a foundation element, and as the base of columns, but should not be used as a facing on upper levels with no clear means of support below.
(b) In general, the same materials should be used in consistent proportions on all facades and not just on the street face. Materials should carry around corners and terminate at logical points to avoid appearing as a thin veneer or 'false front'.
(c) All building elevations including courtyard, side and lane elevations warrant appropriate design.
(d) For corner buildings, the side façade should be articulated and have sufficient windows and detailing, comparable to the front façade.
(e) Large blank walls should be avoided whenever possible. Window openings, detailing, materials, colour, wall articulation and landscaping should be used to enliven them and reduce their scale.
(f) Exposed foundations should be limited to 30 cm (12 in.).

5.6 Relationship to Finished Grade and Public Realm

The establishment of floor elevations should be considered carefully to respond to existing site topography. Conspicuous retaining walls should be avoided. Wherever possible, protrusions of the underground parking garage should not be evident above the natural grade, particularly in front and side yards.

6 Lane Frontage

For courtyard developments, the lane will become a focus of development, and in effect, an exposure that is as important the streetscape. The "lanescape" should be a visually interesting experience for passersby and a pleasant outlook for residences near the lane, while at the same time accommodating necessary services.

(a) Entry porches, insets, projections and overhangs should be used to lend interest to the lane façade, and to emphasize the presence of living space;
(b) Trellises should be provided to screen parkade entries and create places for planting.
(c) Garbage and recycling storage is provided in the underground parkade, or within a screened enclosure.

7 Open Space

The provision of open space should be part of an overall site development and landscape plan and should take into consideration general site circulation patterns, including parking, existing

landscape features, sun access, privacy and usability. Individual private outdoor spaces provide amenity and unit identification, and lend scale to the form.

(a) For courtyard configurations, the center of the site should be designed:
  (i) as a focus of development and an organizing element, not as 'leftover' space, or solely as circulation space. Children's play space, as well as seating nodes, may be incorporated along the central path to provide opportunities for social interaction.
  (ii) as a primary outlook and entrance for units in the middle and rear sections of a site.
  (iii) to provide sufficient distance, screening, landscape, and outlook considerations for the mutual comfort of dwellings overlooking the space.

(b) For stacked townhouses:
  (i) Ground level units should have a front yard or patio associated with the front entry.
  (ii) Upper level units should have a spacious balcony or deck with a minimum depth of 1.8 m (6 ft.), or access to a roof deck.
  (iii) Units that accommodate families with children (2 bedrooms or larger) should provide open space that is suitable for children's play.

(c) For each Lock-off Unit, a minimum area of 1.8 m² (19 sq. ft.) should be provided immediately adjacent to and accessible from the unit.

(d) Roof decks add considerably to the amenity of any unit. Care should be taken to avoid direct sightlines to neighbouring windows, balconies and yards. Roof decks should be well-integrated into the overall form, such as cut into sloped roofs in a way that does not upset roof geometry or set back from the edges of flat roofs.

8 Landscaping

(a) Existing trees should be kept and new trees introduced wherever possible.

(b) Patio areas in the front yard should be screened with planting. Each front patio should be provided with a new tree to demarcate the individual dwelling unit, where possible.

(c) Visually undesirable building features, such as exposed foundation or utilities, should be screened with landscaping.

(d) The front and back boulevard should be landscaped as green space. At a minimum, they should be retained as grassed areas, but more intense planting is encouraged (please refer to Boulevard Gardening Guidelines). The space between the sidewalk and the front property line should receive similar treatment.

(e) In general, the Zoning & Development By-law fencing height limit of 1.2 m (4 ft.) in front yards, and 1.8 m (6 ft.) in rear and side yards should be respected. However, exceptions may be made for entry arbours, and trellises or screening elements immediately adjacent to patio or deck areas. Over height elements in the front yard may assist with the definition of outdoor space but should not prevent all views or glimpses of the outdoor space from the street. Any over height element should be largely transparent and limited in extent.

(f) Where walls or fences are provided, they should be combined with soft landscape to provide visual depth, screening and layering.

(g) Landscaping in semi-private and private spaces in courtyard developments should be used to provide screening and filtering of views, and solid fencing should be avoided as it creates visual clutter and compartmentalises the courtyard space which should read as open. Planting trees is particularly encouraged in these locations.

(h) For the rear building of a courtyard configuration, every opportunity to enhance the "lanescape" with landscaping should be taken. This includes:
  (i) Entry gates and arbors to support planting over pedestrian entrances.
  (ii) Trellises over driveway entrances to parkades.
  (iii) "Vertical greening" with vines.
  (iv) Planters on balconies and outside the windows of dwellings on upper levels.
  (iv) Planting of trees near the lane where possible.

9 Garbage and Recycling

For multiple dwelling developments, garbage and recycling will be collected by private contractors. Measures should be taken to ensure that waste bins are not left in the lane. Appropriate areas for garbage and recycling bins should be provided to ensure convenient pick up – either in the underground parkade or directly off the lane. The document, ***Garbage and Recycling Storage Facility Supplement***, provides detailed information on the number of containers required and dimensions and specifications of commonly used storage containers.

10 Rain Water Management

Underground parking structures should be minimized, and held back from site edges to allow for tree planting and rain water infiltration. The parking structure should not project into front or side yards as possible. See Figure 10.

Figure 10: Parkade Structure - Plan and Typical Section