



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

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# **BROADWAY STATION AREA RM-4 & RM-4N GUIDELINES**

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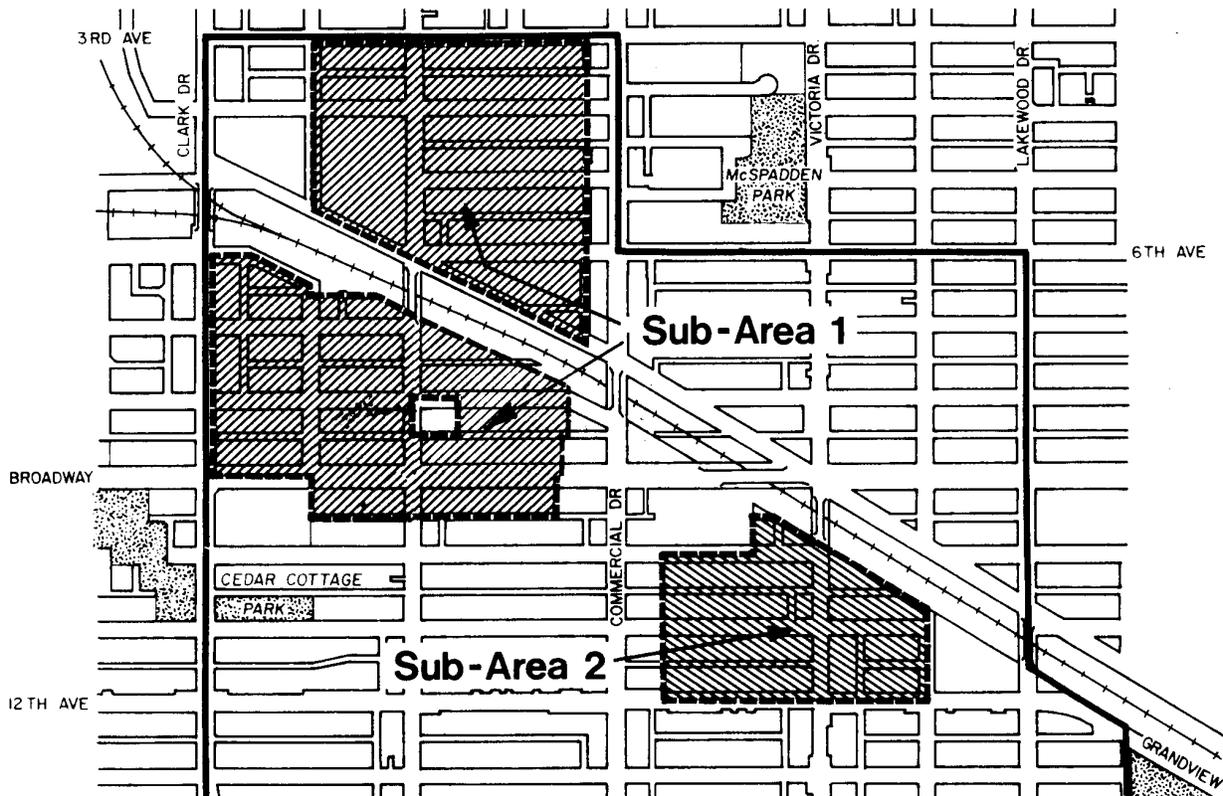
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# 1 Application and Intent

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the RM-4 and RM-4N Districts Schedule of the Zoning and Development By-law for developments in the Broadway Station Area zoned RM-4 and RM-4N (Figure 1). The guidelines should be consulted in seeking approval for conditional approval dwelling uses or for the relaxation of regulations. As well as assisting the applicant, the guidelines will be used by City staff in the evaluation of projects.

The intent of the guidelines is to achieve high quality development and residential liveability, and to ensure compatibility of new development with the existing physical character of the neighbourhood.

Figure 1. Broadway Station Area RM-4 and RM-4N Zoning Districts



## **2 General Design Considerations**

### **2.1 Neighbourhood Character**

The Broadway Station area contains a variety of housing types, sizes and ages which create a complex and varying character. These include owner occupied single detached houses, duplexes, multiple conversion dwellings, three and four-storey walk-up apartments and apartment towers.

About 70% of Sub-Area 1, located northwest of Broadway Station, is developed with low-rise, wood frame apartments. Single detached houses and multiple conversion dwellings occupy the remainder of this Sub-Area, particularly in the area east of Woodland Drive.

Housing stock in Sub-Area 2, southeast of Broadway Station, consists primarily of older houses, many having been converted into suites. Between Commercial Drive and Victoria Drive, the existing building form is mainly large, Victorian style, 2 ½ storey dwellings. East of Victoria Drive, one-storey bungalows predominate.

The elevated ALRT guideway results in some sites being severely impacted by noise, loss of privacy and visual intrusion. The Station Area also lies at the crossroads of some of the City's busiest arterial streets including Grandview Highway, Broadway, 12th Avenue, Clark Drive and Commercial Drive/Victoria Diversion. As well, the Grandview Cut, a large, deep, tree fringed ravine used by the Burlington Northern Railway bisects the Station Area from northwest to southeast.

Although there are few existing elements in the sub-areas that set them apart from other East Vancouver neighbourhoods, there is potential for emphasizing the positive characteristics to create a more identifiable neighbourhood character. Elements that enhance character include topography, view, landscaping, building scale and building features such as roof forms, window types, entrances and finishing materials.

New development should:

- (a) Contribute to creating a stronger visual image for the Broadway Station Area.
- (b) Contribute to the individual character of each Sub-Area, while ensuring that an overall image is maintained for the Station Area.

### **2.2 Orientation**

The elevated ALRT system has created a constraint on new building orientation due to its effect on privacy and its noise generation. Another feature that affects orientation is the Grandview Cut with its openness and heavy landscaping. It is a natural amenity which is

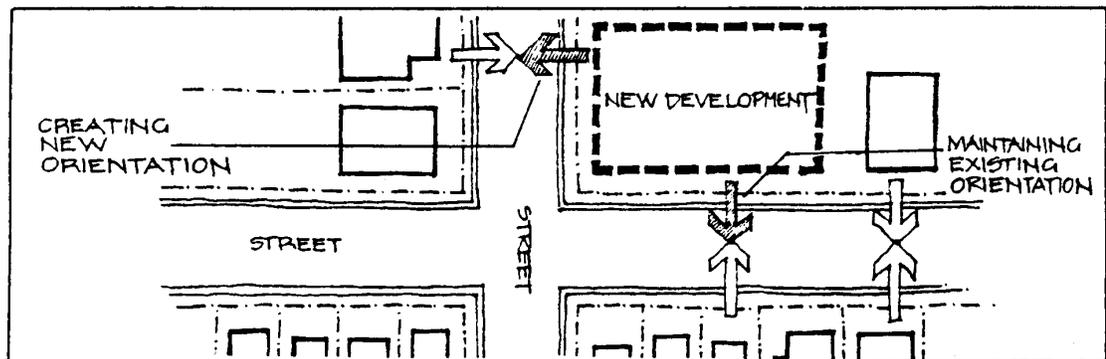
desirable for new building orientation. There is some train traffic along the Cut, but with proper noise attenuation, units facing the Cut could be desirable.

Along most blocks, buildings are oriented in a regular pattern, that is only disrupted in a few areas. In such instances, the front yards of some buildings face the side yards of others. Since the level of side wall finishing is usually poorer than the front, this often results in a poor street image.

New development should:

- (a) When adjacent to the ALRT guideway, be oriented away from the guideway to minimize noise, privacy and visual intrusion problems.
- (b) When adjacent to the Grandview Cut, be oriented towards the Cut to take advantage of its openness, view and privacy. Noise attenuation measures are necessary due to noise from the ALRT and trains.
- (c) Conform to the existing predominant orientation pattern.
- (d) Create a frontage character for all building walls facing the street (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. New Development Establishing Frontage on Two Streets**



### 2.3 Views

Good distant views of the North Shore mountains are possible along most north-south streets. Views to the downtown and the mountains are particularly good at most locations in Sub-Area 1. The Broadway/Commercial Drive intersection becomes a focal point when approaching along Commercial Drive from the south and along Broadway from the west. Views to the Grandview Cut are available from adjacent properties.

New development should:

- (a) Ensure that the existing views enjoyed by adjacent buildings are not unduly compromised by incompatible siting, massing and orientation of any new buildings.
- (b) Ensure that any existing significant public views are not unduly compromised.
- (c) Take advantage of any potential views.

## **2.4 Light and Ventilation**

Each dwelling unit should have two exterior walls to maximize light access and ventilation through windows.

Below grade units do not maximize light access into the units and accompanying private outdoor space and do not reinforce the traditional area relationship between dwelling units and grade. New development should discourage the provision of dwelling units below grade.

## **2.5 Noise**

Sites adjacent to the ALRT guideway are affected by noise. Vehicular traffic along Commercial Drive, Victoria Drive, Clark Drive, 12th Avenue and Broadway is quite heavy and its noise also impacts adjacent sites. Development along the Grandview Cut is also affected by noise from the Burlington Northern Railway.

New development should minimize the noise impacts to their habitable areas through measures which may include:

- (a) Sensitive site planning (e.g. setback, stairwell location, single loaded corridor, locate living rooms and bedrooms away from noise sources).
- (b) Building construction (e.g. masonry construction, triple glazing).
- (c) Noise buffers (e.g. glazed balconies, masonry walls and fences, landscaping berms and landscaping).
- (d) Alternate ventilation system (e.g. baffled wall vents).

## **2.6 Privacy**

The ALRT guideway is elevated through the Broadway Station Area. This creates privacy problems for adjacent sites due to overlooking. New development higher than adjacent buildings could also create privacy problems.

New development should:

- (a) Be designed to ensure that privacy problems created by overlooking from ALRT trains are minimized.
- (b) Ensure that privacy on adjacent sites is not unduly compromised.
- (c) Minimize its impact on the level of privacy within its own site.

## **2.7 Safety**

To promote casual neighbourhood surveillance, fences and walls adjacent to the sidewalk should be designed to ensure some view of the building from the sidewalk, without sacrificing unit privacy. Placing indoor common areas adjacent to outside common spaces overlooking the street will help to improve the degree of mutual security.

## **2.8 Access and Circulation**

As many units as possible should have individual access from ground level.

Corridor lengths should not exceed 22.9 m in any one direction, with any intersecting corridor limited to a maximum of 15.3 m. On larger sites, more entries and vertical circulation will help limit long corridors, as will a variety of widths. Corridors should have natural light and ventilation.

# **3 Guidelines Pertaining to the Regulations of the Zoning and Development By-law**

## **3.1 Frontage**

The prevailing building frontage in Sub-Area 2 is that of a house on a 10.1 m lot. This creates an identifiable scale for buildings in the Sub-Area and sets up a recognizable rhythm of spacing from house to house. In Sub-Area 1, most recent apartment buildings have a much larger frontage, many over 30.5 m. Remaining single detached houses and multiple conversion dwellings are on 10.1 m lots. The difference in frontage between the houses and apartments, especially where many houses remain, is very obvious making the apartments seem out of character. Redevelopment of the Broadway Station Area is likely to occur over a lengthy period. It is important that new development allows this transition to occur in a manner which does not unduly affect existing development.

New development should:

- (a) Create an incremental rhythm by visually breaking the larger massing into smaller individual components to express strong unit identity and to relate to the characteristic frontage of the area.

- (b) Avoid a long continuous facade frontage and respect the rhythm of the existing streetscape.

### 3.2 Building Height

There is a range of building heights in the Broadway Station Area from single storey houses to multi-storey apartments. At present, the varying building heights are not in an ordered arrangement and lack an overall cohesive image. Future development will create an even greater range of building heights. Therefore, it is important that they be assembled to create a cohesive character and image for the neighbourhood.

New development should:

- (a) Provide variations in its building height to create visual interest and provide a visual transition to lower buildings.
- (b) Respect the scale and building height of adjacent buildings through sensitive design.
- (c) When adjacent to the ALRT guideway, be of sufficient building height to buffer other nearby properties.

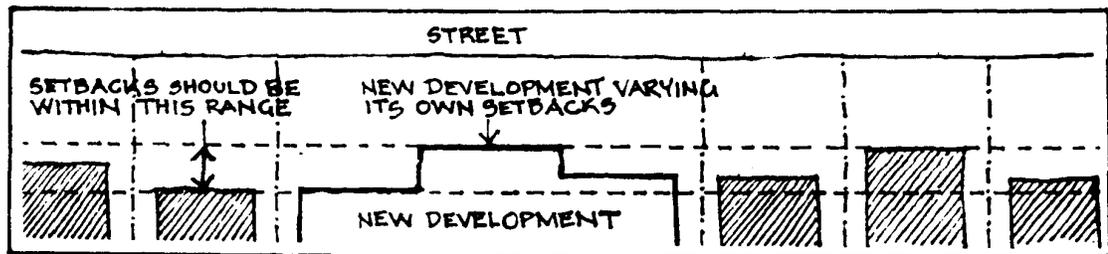
### 3.3 Front Yard

Though there is some variation in residential front yard setbacks, most buildings have a setback of 6.1 m to 7.3 m. The consistency of these setbacks creates a cohesive image for a street. New development of a higher density may require a greater site coverage which could result in a reduction of the front yard.

New development should:

- (a) Respect existing adjacent front yards and the character they create for the street (Figure 3).
- (b) Provide variations in its setback, where appropriate, to create a transition to existing buildings and a unified and consistent character for the street.

Figure 3. Example of Development Respecting an Established Setback Pattern

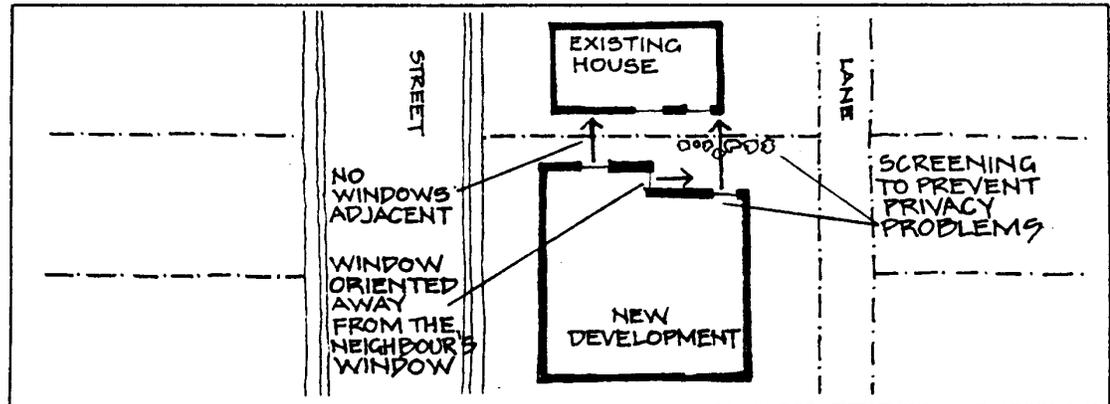


### 3.4 Side Yards

Many of the existing buildings in the Broadway Station Area have windows, doors and open space areas along the side yards. New development should ensure that the privacy and liveability of these and other adjacent buildings are not unduly compromised.

New development should respect the privacy of adjacent properties by locating or screening any windows or openings along the side yard so that they do not directly overlook any adjacent windows, openings, or private areas (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Example of Side Yard Treatment to Respect the Privacy of Adjacent Building**



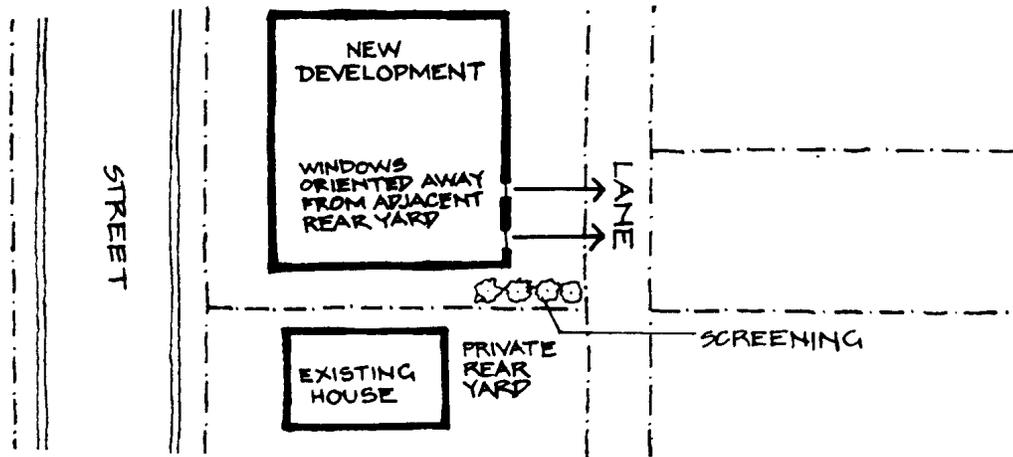
### 3.5 Rear Yard

New development at a density greater than that of existing buildings may require a greater site coverage. This increase may create privacy and shadowing problems for adjacent properties due to more building development extending in the rear yard beyond the line of adjacent buildings. New development could result in privacy problems because of apartment units overlooking rear yards.

New development should:

- (a) Respect the existing privacy, sunlight, views and scale of adjacent buildings and their rear yards by minimizing the impact of any portion of the building protruding beyond the adjacent rear building line.
- (b) Minimize overlooking by screening or orienting windows away from adjacent rear yards when the building or infill development protrudes into the rear yard or beyond the established building line of adjacent lots (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Examples of New Development Respecting Adjacent Rear Yards



## 4 Architectural Components

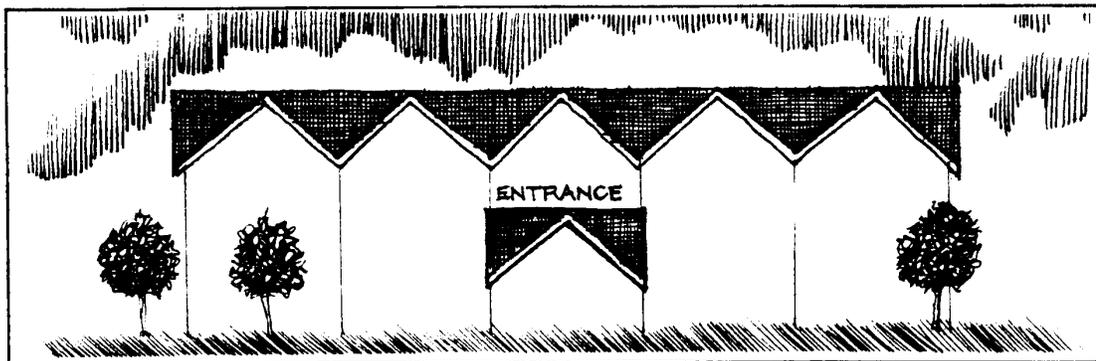
### 4.1 Roofs

Roofs can assist in giving an area character and identity and often define a building use. There are a variety of roof types found in the Broadway Station Area. Most of the older houses have steeply pitched roofs, while more recent roofs are less steeply pitched. The majority of apartments have flat roofs.

New development should:

- (a) Provide pitched roof forms to create a residential character, strengthen neighbourhood identity and establish compatibility with adjacent housing.
- (b) Emphasize entrances and unit identity by incorporating secondary roofs (Figure 6).
- (c) When adjacent to the ALRT guideway, pay particular attention to roof details if they are visible to ALRT passengers.

Figure 6. Example of Secondary Roof Emphasizing an Entrance.



## 4.2 Windows

Windows are a major element in building design and aid in creating character and visual interest. Generally, there are two different window types found in the Broadway Station Area. The first type, visible in most older houses, usually have wide wood frames with the glazed areas divided into smaller panes enclosed by wood mullions and are usually double hung or hinged. Newer houses, apartments and renovations have windows with thinner metal frames and are usually horizontal sliding types.

New development should use windows that create visual interest and incorporate elements from the window designs in older houses in the neighbourhood to create a visual link.

## 4.3 Entrances

Entrances are an important element in a building's design and traditionally are the major focus. Most older houses in the area have highly visible, single street-facing entrances, some at grade, others accessible from a substantial staircase. Newer apartments usually have their entrance at grade and defined by a lobby.

New development should:

- (a) Provide entrances that create visual interest and assist in establishing a strong neighbourhood identity.
- (b) Define a prominent street-oriented main entrance to apartment development.

## 4.4 Balconies

With an increase in density, balconies will provide needed private open space. Balconies should be provided with a usable area that affords some privacy from other units. A minimum depth of 1.8 m is recommended. They should be integrated into the overall design to avoid creating a tacked-on look.

## 5.5 Exterior Walls and Finishing

Most houses in the Broadway Station Area are finished in combinations of stucco and wood, with some use of brick and stone as trim. Most apartment buildings have a predominantly stucco finish with wood as a detailing material.

New development should employ a limited number of finishing materials common to the area to create a cohesive and characteristic image.

## 5 Internal Design

A secure storage area should be provided for each unit, preferably ensuite.

Laundry facilities should be provided. Communal laundry rooms should have natural light and ventilation and some room for waiting adjacent to a recreation room to allow for socializing or child supervision in family accommodation.

## 6 Open Space

A variety of types of open space should be provided. Each dwelling unit should have some private open space.

Open space should be defined by the careful siting and massing of buildings, rather than being left-over areas, in order to maximize their functional and visual benefit.

When site coverage of new development is greater than 50%, alternatives to ground floor open space should be provided, such as large balconies or roof decks. However, consideration must be given to privacy of adjoining sites and, if applicable, impacts from the ALRT guideway.

Open space should provide some degree of privacy and rain protection while permitting adequate sunlight.

Private open space should be directly accessible from each unit in the form of a yard, roof deck or large balcony. Ground level private open space should be defined by screening or landscaping.

On sloped sites, open space should be terraced to complement existing topography and landscape.

## **7 Landscaping**

Landscaping is one of the most important elements in contributing to the character of an area. The predominant form of landscaping in the Station Area is simple, formal front yards with ornamental trees and gardens. Some areas have continuous street trees which help create a cohesive image and character for the street.

New development should:

- (a) Provide landscape treatments which are compatible with and help strengthen the neighbourhood character.
- (b) Reinforce character through planting of street trees along streets that currently lack them in agreement with the City Engineer.
- (c) Provide landscape treatment adjacent to the ALRT guideway. Depending on the location, this landscaping should screen views to the adjacent land and commercial areas, limit overlooking from ALRT trains or create a pleasant near view.
- (d) Retain significant existing trees in any redevelopment.

## **Appendix**

### **Submission Requirements**

Applicants should refer to the information required for significant development permit applications contained in Brochure #3 - How To... Development Permits for Major Applications.