



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

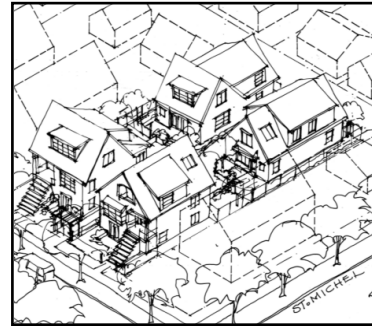
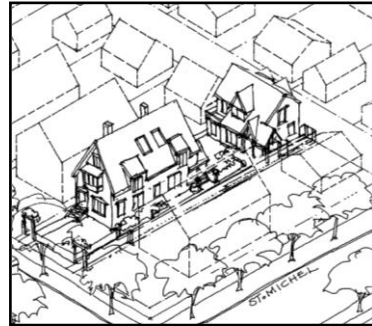
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# RT-10 SMALL HOUSE/DUPLEX GUIDELINES

*Adopted by City Council on November 29, 2005*

*Amended September 15, 2020, July 20, 2022, November 26, 2024, and April 1, 2025*



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# 1 Application and Intent

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the RT-10 District Schedule of the Zoning and Development By-law throughout the City.

The intent of these guidelines is to:

- (a) Encourage the development, on sites of sufficient size, of multiple small houses and duplexes in order to introduce a wider variety of housing choice into previously single detached house areas;
- (b) Ensure neighbourliness while recognizing that the new development's siting is not intended to be the same as earlier development under RS zoning;
- (c) Ensure high quality design, but allowing architectural diversity rather than prescribing any particular architectural character; and
- (d) Require or encourage the retention and renovation of character buildings (refer to Section 2.1.2 for definition of character buildings) (Heritage restoration or rehabilitation to more stringent standards is a voluntary option for any older building, but is not required under these guidelines.)

## 1.1 Minor Applications

Under RT-10, almost all development permit applications will involve a conditional approval use, or a discretionary variation in the regulations. This means a discretionary review process, which can be quite time-consuming.

There will be situations where an applicant wishes to make only a minor change to an existing development, and the application of a full set of guidelines would be onerous. Where an application fulfills one or more of the following criteria, the application will be evaluated against the guidelines in Sections 2, 3 and 4 but not against those in 5, 6, and 7:

- (a) the number of units is not increasing (other than for the provision of a secondary suite);
- (b) additions are not proposed, or if proposed are less than 9.3 m<sup>2</sup> (100 sq. ft.) and are not visible from the street(s); and
- (c) an application to strata-title the development is not being made.

# 2 General Design Considerations

## 2.1 Neighbourhood/Streetscape Character

### 2.1.1 Development Scenarios

- (a) Sites with a minimum area of 511 m<sup>2</sup> (5500 sq. ft.) and minimum frontage of 15.0 m (49.2 ft.) qualify for more than one principal building with a combination of dwelling uses. This type of development will be referred to as Small House/Duplex (SH/D) development. Figures 1 to 5 illustrate a variety of development scenarios on larger sites and assemblies: others may be possible.
- (b) SH/D developments on sites less than 604 m<sup>2</sup> and 18.3 m (60 ft.) will generally be limited to two principal buildings, one at the street, the other at the lane. On corner lots, or where it may assist in the retention of an existing character house, 3 principal buildings may be considered.
- (c) SH/D developments on sites more than 604 m<sup>2</sup> and 18.3 m (60 ft.) are eligible for multiple principal buildings corresponding to site size and allowable unit density.

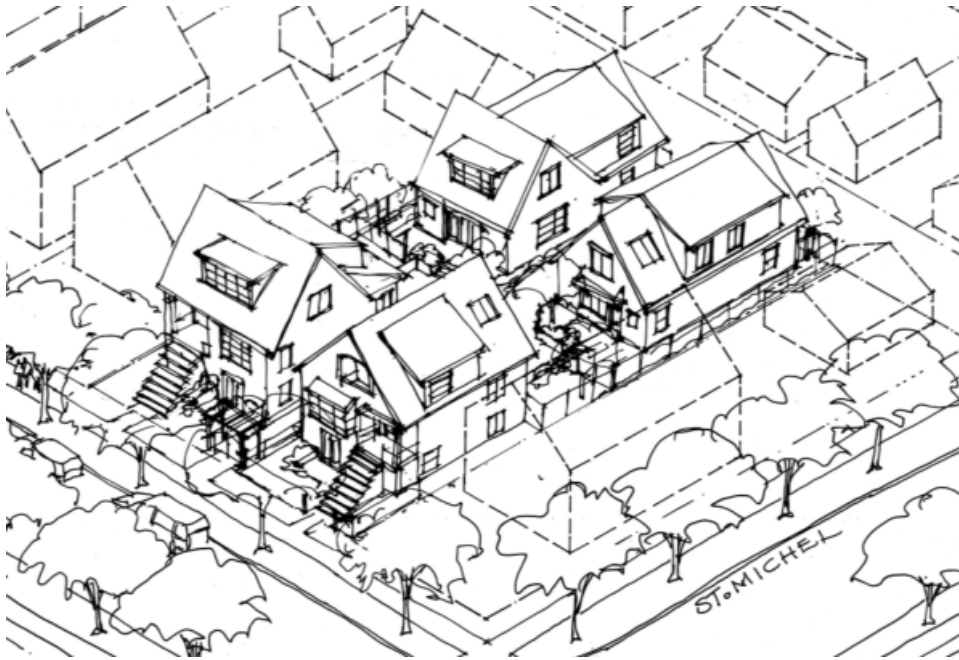
- (d) On sites that do not qualify for SH/D development or that choose not to do SH/D development, the intent is to continue to allow approximately the same development potential that existed under RS zoning. These sites will be limited to one principal building, except that developments that choose to retain a character building may have an infill single detached house or duplex, as well as the principal building (subject to being able to meet fire access requirements).
- (e) No building should contain more than 2 dwelling units, unless it is a character building being retained as a multiple conversion dwelling with 3 or more units. (See S. 3).
- (f) Separations between buildings on the same site should be at least 2.4 m (8 ft.).
- (g) Provided Building By-law equivalencies can be achieved, lesser building separations may be considered:
  - (i) to assist the retention of character buildings; and
  - (ii) for other buildings, provided that the appearance of them as separate smaller buildings is maintained.
- (h) Existing buildings, including character buildings, may be moved to achieve better siting and conform better to the regulations and guidelines.
- (i) Existing buildings may be raised to achieve adequate headroom for basement useability. In the case of character buildings the resulting main floor elevation should not be more than 2.0 m (6.5 ft.) above the grade at the front of the building.

**Illustrative Examples of Small House / Duplex Development  
[Sites over 604 m<sup>2</sup> (6,500 sq. ft.) and 18.3 m (60 ft.) frontage]**

**Figure 1: Duplex Court Development on Two 10 m (33 ft.) Lots**



**Figure 2: Four Small Houses on Two 10 m (33 ft.) Lots**



**Figure 3: Four Small Houses on Two 10 m (33 ft.) Lots at a Corner**



**Figure 4: Cottage Development on Three 10 m (33 ft.) Lots or Two 15.24 m (50 ft.) Lots**



**Figure 5: Small House / Duplex Development Scenario Examples: Sites over 604 m<sup>2</sup> (6,500 sq. ft.) and 18.3 m (60 ft.) frontage**

**Assembly of Two 10 m (33 foot) Lots**



**Assembly of Three 10 m (33 foot) Lots**

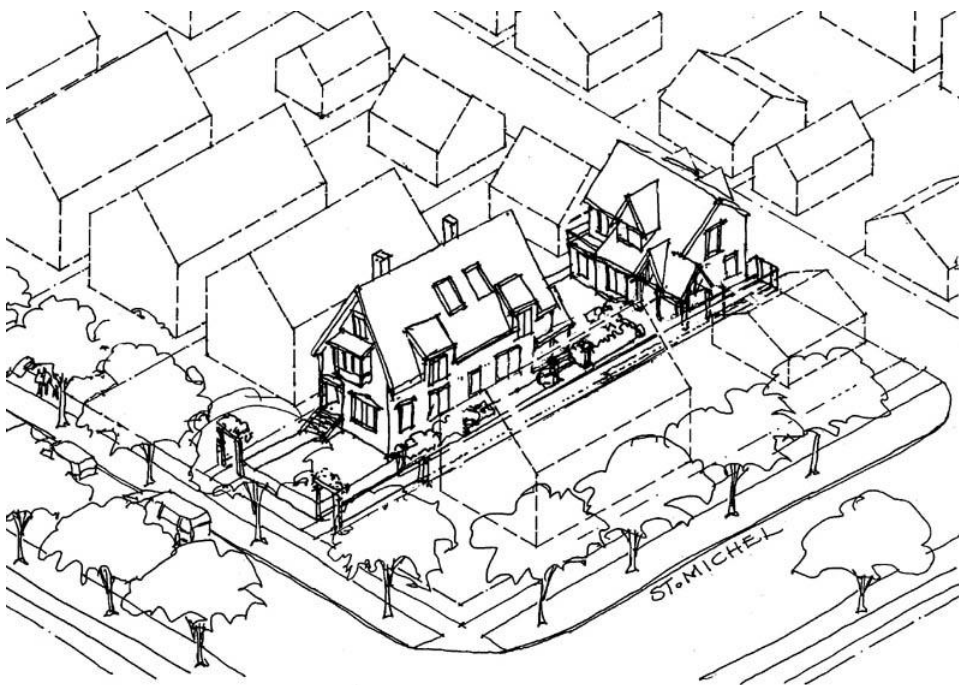


**Illustrative Examples of Non-Small House / Duplex Development  
[Sites less than 511 m<sup>2</sup> (5,500 sq. ft.) and 15.2 m (50 ft.) frontage]**

**Figure 6: Duplex Option**

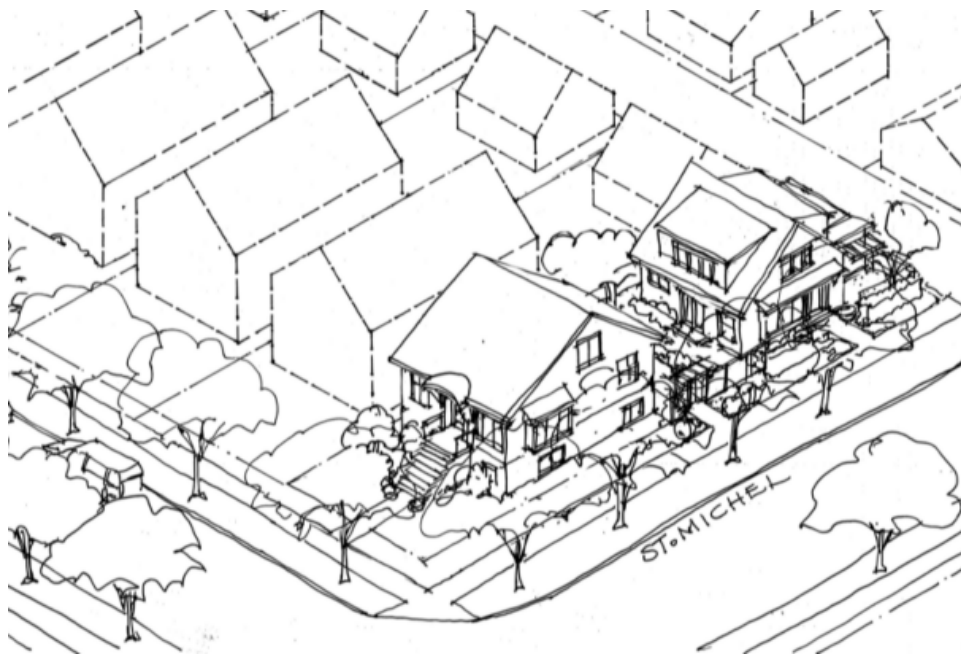


**Figure 7: Single-Lot Character House with Infill (Mid-block Location)**





**Figure 8: Single-Lot Character House with Infill (Corner Lot Location)**



### 2.1.2 Character Building Retention

Character buildings are those built before 1940 and maintaining significant elements of their original character. (See below for details on the determination of whether a building qualifies as a character building.) Various incentives and relaxations for retaining character buildings are outlined in later sections of these Guidelines.

- (a) If a site for SH/D development contains a character building, it must be retained and renovated;
- (b) If more than one character building exists on an SH/D development site, only one need be retained, with the choice of which building at the discretion of the Director of Planning. On assemblies with frontages larger than 30.4 m (100 ft.), the Director of Planning may require more than one character building to be retained, taking into consideration the architectural quality of the character buildings;
- (c) In non-SH/D developments, retention of a character building is at the applicant's discretion;
- (d) Pre-1940 buildings which have been too altered to qualify as character buildings may, if character elements are fully restored as part of the development proposal, allow the development to be considered for the incentives and relaxations available to developments with character buildings; and

#### Definition of a Character Building

For the purposes of these guidelines, a character building is defined as a building built before January 1, 1940\* which in the opinion of staff meets at least four of the following seven criteria with respect to the street facing facades (See Appendix A for more detailed information about character buildings in Vancouver).

A character house has retained at least 4 of the following features on the street-facing façade(s):

1. Retains original massing and roof form

2. Has original front porch or veranda or only partially filled in
3. Has original cladding or replaced with materials typical of the pre-1940's
4. Has 50% or more of typical period window openings (original location, size and shape)
5. Has 50% or more original casings or trim such as wood treatment around windows and doors
6. Retains a minimum of 2 period detailing or decorative elements (fascias, eave brackets, soffits, exposed beam or joist ends, half timbering, decorative shingling, porch columns, original wood doors, entry transom/sidelights, decorative or feature windows of round, diamond, octagonal or palladian shapes or crafted glass)
7. Exhibits other period features (secondary porch, secondary roof with gable ends and dormers, brick or stone foundations etc.)

\*as determined by building permit or water connection records.

### EXAMPLES OF CHARACTER BUILDING ASSESSMENT OF PRE-1940'S HOUSES



- Y original massing and roof form
- Y original front porch (or only partially filled in)
- Y cladding is original
- contains 50% or more typical period window openings
- Y retained 50% or more original casings or trims
- Y retained pre-1940's detailing (eave fascias, brackets, etc)
- other features (intact secondary porch, turrets, etc.)
- 5 TOTAL (character elements)



- Y original massing and roof form
- Y original front porch (or only partially filled in)
- cladding is original
- contains 50% or more typical period window openings
- retained 50% or more original casings or trim
- retained pre-1940's detailing (eave fascias, brackets, etc.)
- other features such as intact secondary porch, etc.
- 2 TOTAL (character elements)



- original massing and roof form
- original front porch (or only partially filled in)
- cladding is original
- contains 50% or more typical period period window openings
- retained 50% or more original casings or trim
- retained pre-1940's detailing (eave fascias, brackets, etc.)
- other features such as intact secondary porch, etc.

**4** TOTAL (character elements)



- original massing and roof form
- original front porch (or only partially filled in)
- cladding is original
- contains 50% or more typical period period window coverings
- retained 50% or more original casings or trim
- retained pre-1940's detailing (eave fascias, brackets, etc.)
- other features such as intact secondary porch, etc.

**5** TOTAL (character elements)

## 2.2 Orientation

- (a) Developments should orient main entrances of buildings to the street, following the existing pattern. On corner sites, entries may be located facing both streets.
- (b) On a corner or double-fronting site, all elevations which face a street should be fully designed and detailed.

## 2.3 Privacy

Given the intent of having multiple buildings on one site, some overlook of private open space and direct lines of sight into windows is to be expected within a development. However, effort should be made to minimize these impacts on existing adjacent development.

- (a) The location and orientation of windows, decks and balconies in new development should be considered carefully to reduce looking into close-by windows of existing adjacent development;
- (b) Within the development, efforts should be made to orient major rooms and patios of the units in such a way that they are offset, separated by a significant distance, and/or screened by landscape elements; and
- (c) Privacy for patios, balconies, porches and decks should be provided by careful location, inseting, or screening with lattice or landscaping. This is a particularly important consideration when they are located above grade.

## 2.4 Security

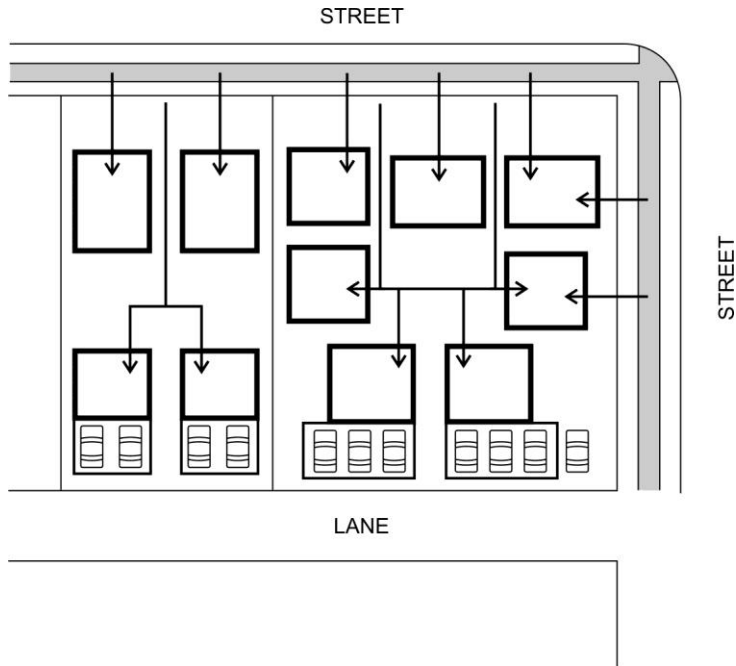
Security is improved when casual surveillance by neighbours and passersby is possible.

- (a) Visibility of unit entrances from the sidewalk is desirable, noting that given development siting intended in this District, it is not expected that the entries to all rear units will be visible; and
- (b) Discreet lighting of paths and entries should be provided.

## 2.5 Access and Circulation

- (a) Pedestrian access to the front doors of units should be from the street where the units abut a street.

**Figure 9: Pedestrian Access**



- (b) In order to provide fire access to buildings at the rear of sites:
  - (i) Pedestrian access routes to buildings at the rear should maintain a minimum building separation of 2.4 m (8 ft.) and clear path of 2.0 m (6.5 ft).
  - (ii) In cases where a character building is being retained, and there is only one unit infill building at the rear of the site:
    - the separation between the building and the property line, and the clear path width may be 1.2 m (4 ft.); or
    - on a corner site, access may be provided to the rear unit directly from the flanking street; or
    - on a site with a flanking lane, access may be provided directly from the lane. Where access to an infill unit is proposed from a flanking lane, approval and posting of a restricted area of no parking along the flanking lane must be sought from the Director of Engineering Services. Marking of the presence of the infill unit at the street, including addressing and signage is to be to the satisfaction of the City's Fire Prevention Services.
    - Where a clear 1.2 m path from the street to the rear infill unit cannot be provided on site, it may be possible to covenant with an adjacent neighbour to provide access to the rear of the site from the street. A combined and covenanted access should provide a minimum clear building separation of 1.6 m (5.5 ft.), with a clear unobstructed path of 1.2 m. The path may serve no more than a total of two units, one per site. A covenant must provide access in perpetuity, and cannot be terminated without the explicit approval of the City's fire prevention services.
  - (iii) Pedestrian access should be provided between the lane and outdoor space between principal buildings, or between principal buildings and infill.
  - (iv) On lots without lanes, additional requirements for firefighter access, or upgrades to fire protection standards may affect the placement, separation, or construction of buildings. Applicants should review the specific siting conditions of lots without

lanes with City fire prevention staff at the outset of a proposed project involving infill or small houses at the rear of a laneless site.

- (c) Vehicular access should be from the lane, where one exists. Where a site is wide enough to allow the driveway to be internal to the site (i.e., well separated from the neighbouring site), parking may be provided internally to the site, subject to the related guidelines.

Where there is no developed lane:

- (d) On sites with SH/D development:
  - (i) Access to corner sites should be along the alignment of the future lane or from the flanking street.
  - (ii) Access to mid-block sites may be from the street, provided that there is only one driveway access per site. The driveway should be located internally to the site when the frontage size makes this possible. When there is no choice but to run a drive along the side of neighbouring properties, it should be separated from the adjacent property line by a 1 m (3 ft.) landscaped setback.
  - (iii) The width of the curb cut and drive should be minimized.
  - (iv) Garages should generally not face the street.
- (e) On sites with non-SHD development, access may be from the street to a garage that faces the street:
  - (i) Curb cut width should be minimized. The manoeuvring area in front of the garage door should be limited to what is necessary to get the vehicles into the garage. An offset, rather than centred, curb cut should be considered in order to consolidate space left for landscape and entries;
- (f) Flexibility in guidelines (c),(d) and (e) should be allowed:
  - (i) for a character building being retained
  - (ii) whenever the retention of a street tree or significant on-site tree will be achieved.
  - (iii) where hydro pole locations limit driveway placement.
  - (iv) where site topography better suits alternate parking access location.

### 3 Uses

- (a) Uses may be considered as per the following table and subsequent guidelines.

Uses	Small House/Duplex Development (all new buildings)	Small House/duplex Development retaining a Character Building	Non-SH/D Development (all new buildings) *	Non-SH/D Development retaining a character building**
Single Detached House	✓	✓ (existing building)	✓	✓
Single Detached House with Secondary Suite	✓	✓ (existing building)	✓	✓
Duplex	✓	n/a	✓	✓
MCD 2 units, no additions	n/a	✓ (existing building)	n/a	✓
MCD 2 units, with additions	n/a	✓ (existing building)	n/a	✓ (existing building)
MCD 3 units or more, with or without additions	n/a	✓ (existing building)	n/a	✓ (existing building)

Infill Single Detached House	n/a	✓ (new building)	n/a	✓
Infill Duplex	n/a	✓ (new building)	n/a	✓

\* one building with a maximum of two units (duplex or a single detached house with a suite)

\*\* maximum of 3 units

- (b) In considering MCDs, quality and liveability of the resulting units will be taken into consideration.
- (c) In SH/D development, the intent is to achieve housing variety in multiple small buildings. Developments which provide only duplexes are discouraged. Placing an inordinate amount of the floor space in one building, creating an overly large house or duplex, should also be discouraged.
- (d) While Infill may be considered for non-SH/D developments that are retaining a character building, achieving adequate fire access may preclude this option on some mid block sites (see Section 2.5 (b)).
- (e) Seniors Supportive or Independent Living Housing may be considered on any site, subject to all the regulations and guidelines that would apply to other dwelling uses on the site.

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

### 4.1 Frontage

#### 4.1.1 Determination of Frontage

For sites with boundaries on more than one street, Section 10.26 of the Zoning and Development By-law allows the Director of Planning to determine which side of the site will be deemed the front.

- (a) Generally, in deeming frontage, the established pattern in the immediate vicinity of the site should be followed, noting however that because SH/D development allows multiple buildings on a site, building fronts and entries may be located facing both streets (see Section 2.2).

#### 4.1.2 Frontage Size

There is no maximum frontage size. However:

- (a) For developments with frontages of 32 m (105 ft) or more, particular care should be taken to avoid monotony in building massing and design so that the development fits with the variety inherent in an existing streetscape.

### 4.2 Building Height

The District Schedule sets out a two part building height envelope. The intent of the lower 7.7 m (25 ft.) rear building height is to ensure that buildings that will abut the rear yards and garages of neighbouring single detached houses will be lower.

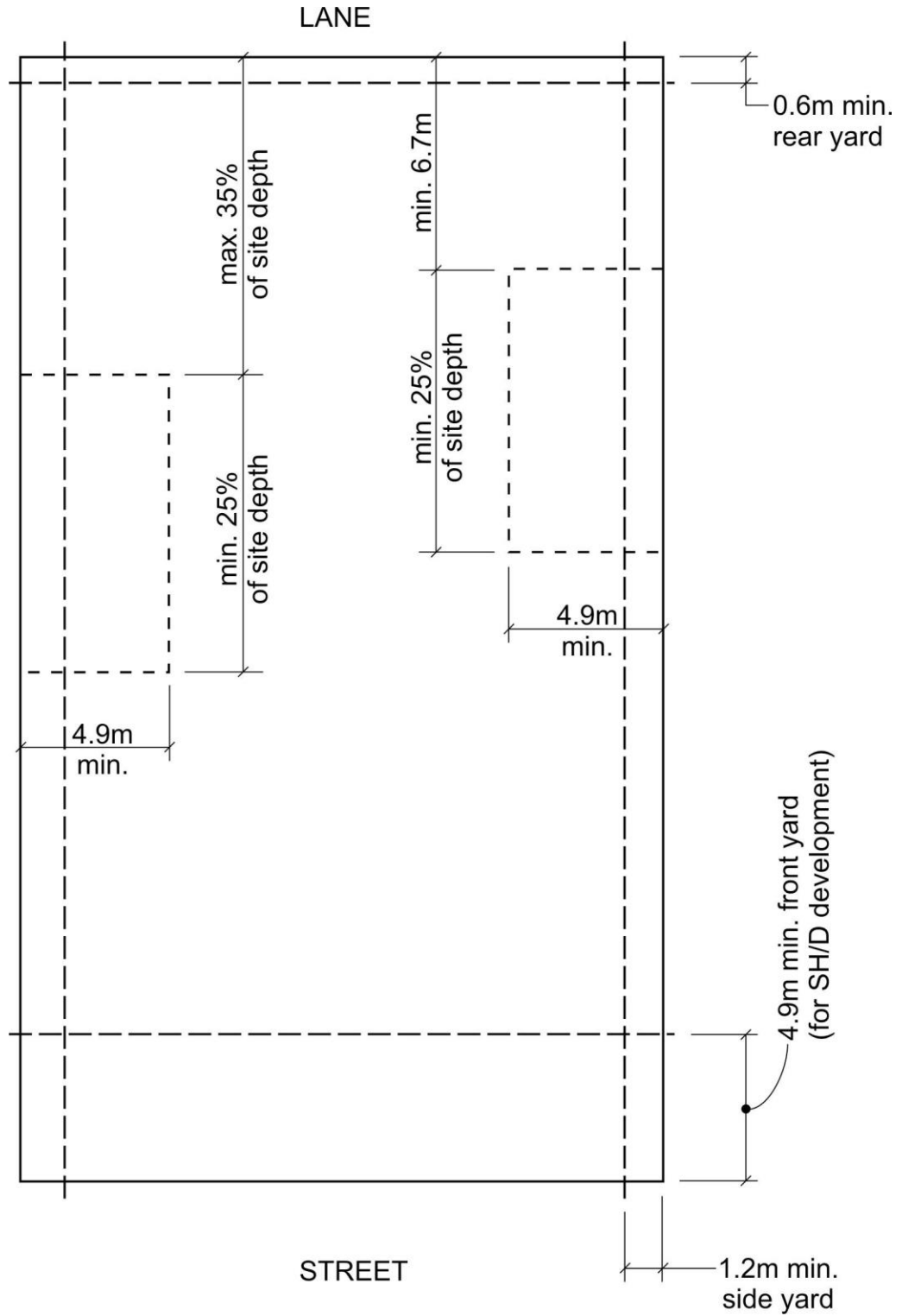
The maximum permitted building height on the front 60% of the site depth is 10.7 m (35 ft.). However, because the minimum 4.9 m (16 ft.) front yard for some developments is less than many existing neighbouring houses (usually about 7.3 m (24 ft.)), the front portion of new buildings should be lower than 10.7 m (35 ft.). Buildings in this area should be one and a partial 2<sup>nd</sup> storey with or without a basement.

- (a) In the portion of the site between 4.9 m (16 ft.) and 7.3 m (24 ft.) from the front property line, the height of new buildings should not exceed 9.2 m (30 ft.) in height. The 9.2 m (30

ft.) can be measured from the front property line, horizontally, rather than having to conform to the normal measurement from “base surface”. (See Section 5 for related guidelines about roof forms.)

- (b) Rear yard infill or principal buildings located in the rear should be one-storey plus partial second storey, or one storey plus partial second storey with basement. In considering the partial second storey, the guidelines in Section 5.1 should be followed.
- (c) The Director of Planning may relax the 7.7 m (25 ft.) building height limit on corner sites and on sloping sites to 9.1 m (30 ft.) where the infill or principal building is more than 4.9 m (16 ft.) from the adjacent property. However, a maximum building height of 7.7 m (25 ft.) shall be maintained within 4.9 m (16 ft.) of adjacent properties.
- (d) The Director of Planning may vary the building height in the rear 40% of the site to allow projecting eaves and secondary roof forms on buildings in the front 60% of the site.

Figure 10: Yards Illustration

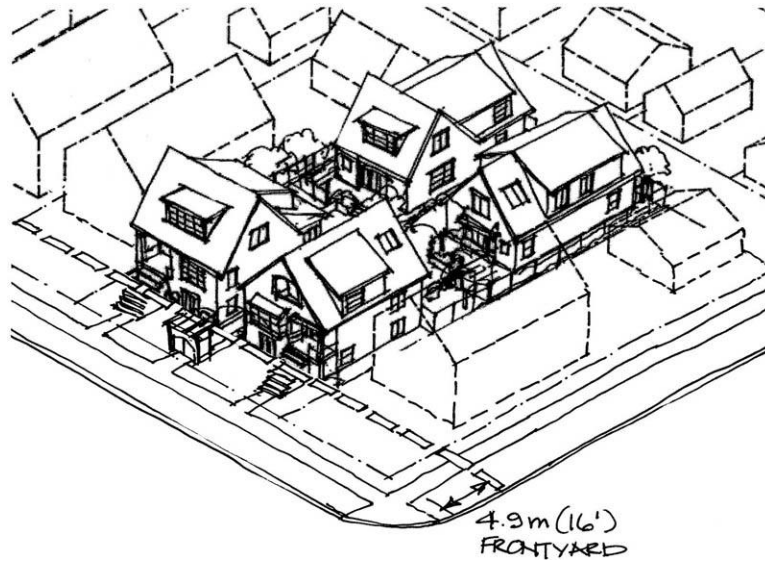




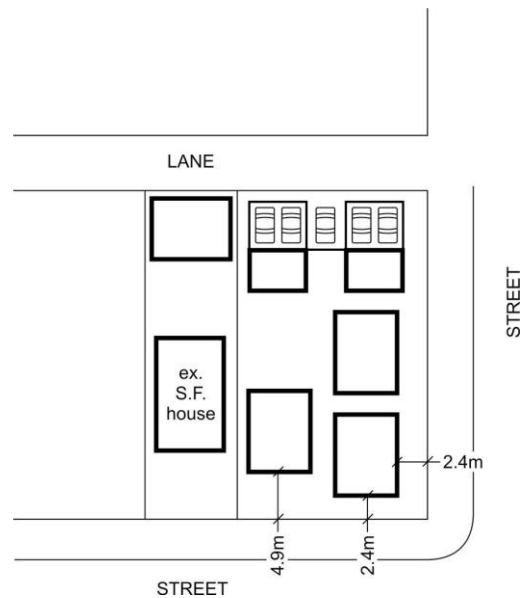
### 4.3 Front Yard

- (a) As provided for in the District Schedule, variations in the front yard requirement may occur as follows:
  - (i) Where the site is less than 36.5 m. (119.7 ft.) in depth, the front yard may be reduced.
  - (ii) Where the site is more than 41 m (135 ft.) deep, the front yard may need to be increased, to be more compatible with adjacent development.
  - (iii) On corner sites with SH/D development, the front yard of the new building adjacent to a neighbouring house should maintain the required 4.9 m (16 ft.) front yard. However, the front yard of new buildings closer to the corner may be reduced to 2.4 m (8 ft.).
  - (iv) To assist the retention of character buildings.
- (b) The District Schedule permits entries, porches and verandahs to project up to 1.8 m (6 ft.) into the required front yard. In SH/D developments, the location of projecting entries, porches and verandahs should consider the impact on neighbouring sites. A full 1.8 m (6 ft.) projection should be a minimum of 4.9 m (16 ft.) from the adjacent property line, while smaller projections may be closer.

**Figure 11: Front Yard on SH/D development with over 18.3 m (60 ft.) frontage**



**Figure 12: Front Yard Variation on Corner Site**



#### 4.4 Side Yards

On all sites a basic sideyard is required along the full depth. However, a wider enhanced side yard is also required. This is in order to allow a neighbourly relationship to the rear yards of adjacent development. The location of the enhanced side yard is flexible, within certain limits, in order to allow a variety of development scenarios. As illustrated in Figure 10, the enhanced sideyard need not be located in the same position on both sides.

As provided for in the District Schedule, the required sideyards may be varied as follows:

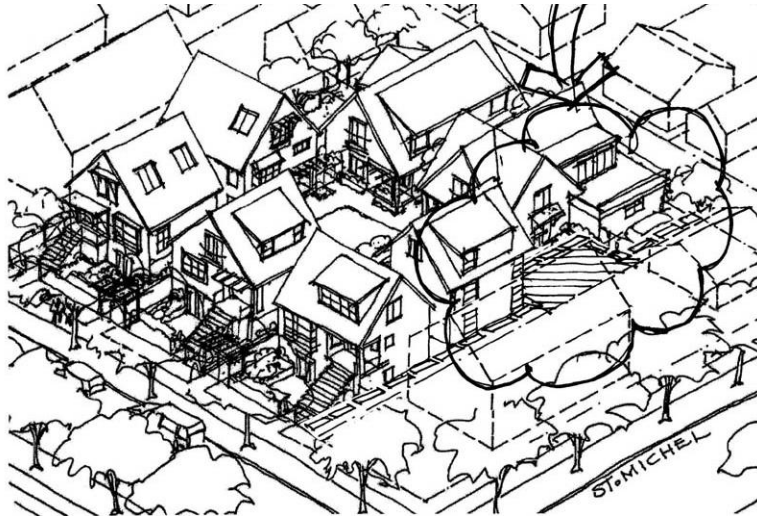
- (a) On the flanking side of corner sites, the enhanced side yard need not be provided. However, on a corner site, if the development proposes reducing the front yard at the corner to less than 4.8 m (16 ft.) for the buildings at the corner, then the flanking side of a corner site must be increased from 1.2 m (4 ft.) to 2.4 m (8 ft.).
- (b) The size of the enhanced sideyard may be reduced to assist in the retention of character houses, and for infill on a smaller site that is retaining a character house. The reduction of the enhanced sideyard should retain a minimum separation between the infill building and the character house of 4.9 m (16 ft.).
- (c) Where a site is more than 41 m (135 ft.) deep, the enhanced sideyard location may need to be varied (pulled forward) in order to be more compatible with the siting of adjacent development.
- (d) Section 4.4 of the District Schedule allows consideration of unspecified projections into the sideyards. This is intended to allow only:

Steps accessing main levels or basements to be located in the larger, enhanced side yard provided they are not closer than 2.4 m (8 ft.) to the side property line;

Steps to accommodate grade changes in pathways to be located in any side yard, provided they stay more or less even with grade.

**Figure 13: Side Yard Variations**

**Enhanced Sideyard placement closer to lane**



**Forward Placement of Enhanced Sideyard**



**4.5 Rear Yard**

The minimum rear yard of 0.6 m (2 ft.) is intended to provide space for vehicle access as well as space for planting at the lane. (Note that the enhanced sideyard effectively replaces the normal rear yard requirement.)

**4.6 Floor Space Ratio**

- (a) The discretionary increases in floor space ratio, provided for in the District Schedule, may be considered up to the maximums listed below.
  - (i) Small House/Duplex Developments
    - Without character building(s) retention 0.75 FSR
    - With the required character building (s) retention 0.80 FSR
  - (ii) Non-SH/D Developments
    - Without character building retention 0.60 FSR
    - With the optional character building retention 0.65 FSR

The additional floor space for development retaining character buildings is intended to provide an incentive, and to accommodate the existing basement space most of these buildings will have. (Refer to Section 2.1.1(g) regarding raising character houses.)

To achieve the maximums with an acceptable form and siting, it is likely that some floor space will need to be on a third level: either in the basement or the level under the roof. In most cases, some floor space will be under a sloping roof and will not be full height space.

- (b) A floor space exclusion for unconditioned space under entries, porches or verandahs has been included in the District Schedule in order to make providing entries, porches and verandahs easier.
- (c) For Seniors Supportive or Independent Living Housing, on sites that would qualify in size and frontage for SH/D development, the maximum FSR to be considered should be as in (a)(i) above, and for other sites, as in (a)(ii) above.
- (d) The District Schedule limits the discretionary increase in floor space ratio for non-dwelling uses to a maximum of 0.60. This is the same density potential these mainly conditional approval uses (e.g. schools, community centres, libraries) have historically been able to achieve in RS zones. While there are no further guidelines in this document for these uses because of their diversity in size, scale, age and style, their design should strive for neighbourliness and compatibility with their immediate surroundings.

#### **4.7 Off-Street Parking and Loading**

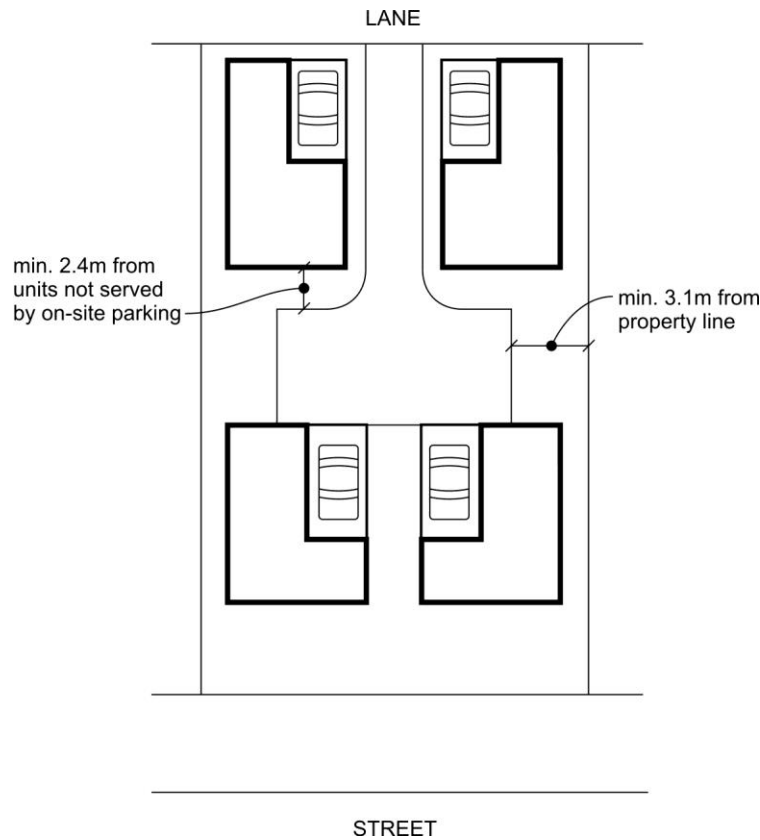
It is intended that parking be provided at grade in order to assist with affordability.

Parking spaces will normally be located in garages accessed directly off the lane. See 5.1.1(f) Scale and Form for guidelines related to rear yards and the lane.

##### **4.7.1 Parking Internal to Site**

- (a) Parking may be considered on the interior of an SH/D development to enable single detached houses to have internal parking. The following conditions should be met:
  - (i) Parking spaces should be enclosed within the unit, and there should only be one enclosed parking space per unit.
  - (ii) Parking spaces accessed from the interior of the site should generally be located a couple of feet below grade in a ‘basement’, with the main floor of the unit located above.
  - (iii) Maneuvring areas for more than one car should be at least 3.1 m (10 ft.) from neighbouring properties; and should be at least 2.4 m (8 ft.) from units not served by the parking
  - (iv) Access drives and maneuvring areas should be permeable, and conform to guidelines regarding treatment and landscaping (see Section. 7)

**Figure 14: Parking Internal to the Site**



#### 4.7.2 Front Garages

- (a) As outlined in 2.5(f), in general, only non-SH/D developments without developed lane access may have garages facing the street. Such garages should be well-designed, appearing to be set into the building massing, rather than being expressed as a base with the house sitting on top:
  - (i) the garage door area should be as small as possible, so that the wall reads strongly as a base for the whole building;
  - (ii) the garage doors should tone in to the wall through avoiding high contrast in colour or tone (i.e. between light and dark);
  - (iii) generally the garage face should be kept in the same plane as the upper building massing (i.e. with the same walls carrying down to grade); and
  - (iv) use of contrasting horizontal trim, skirt roofs, decks etc. at the top of the garage, which act to emphasize it as separate from the building, should be avoided.
- (b) Some older houses have existing front garages which may be kept. Inserting new front garages in older houses should be avoided whenever possible.

#### Unit Density

Sites where Small House/Duplex development is not occurring are generally limited to 2 units. However, the District Schedule allows the Director of Planning to increase this to 3 units.

- (a) An increase to 3 units may be considered when a character building is being retained and renovated. This may be a Single Detached House plus Infill Duplex, a 2 unit MCD plus Infill Single Detached House or a 3 unit MCD.
- (b) Requirements for firefighting access may limit the number of units that can be achieved on certain sites.
- (c) Sites with unusual depths may not be able to achieve the maximum number of units.

## **5 Architectural Components**

The following guidelines are organized into two broad categories:

Section 5.1 applies to all new buildings whether a single detached house, a duplex, an infill building, or a small house/duplex development on a larger lot or lot assembly. It also applies to renovations and additions to existing ‘non-character’ buildings. The guidelines allow for a choice of traditional and contemporary architectural styles in new and non-character buildings.

Section 5.2 applies to renovations and additions to existing pre-1940’s character buildings as defined in Section 2.1.2. These guidelines are aimed at ensuring that changes to ‘character’ buildings are done in a manner consistent with the original character.

(To determine whether an existing building is considered a ‘character’ building refer to Section 2.1.2)

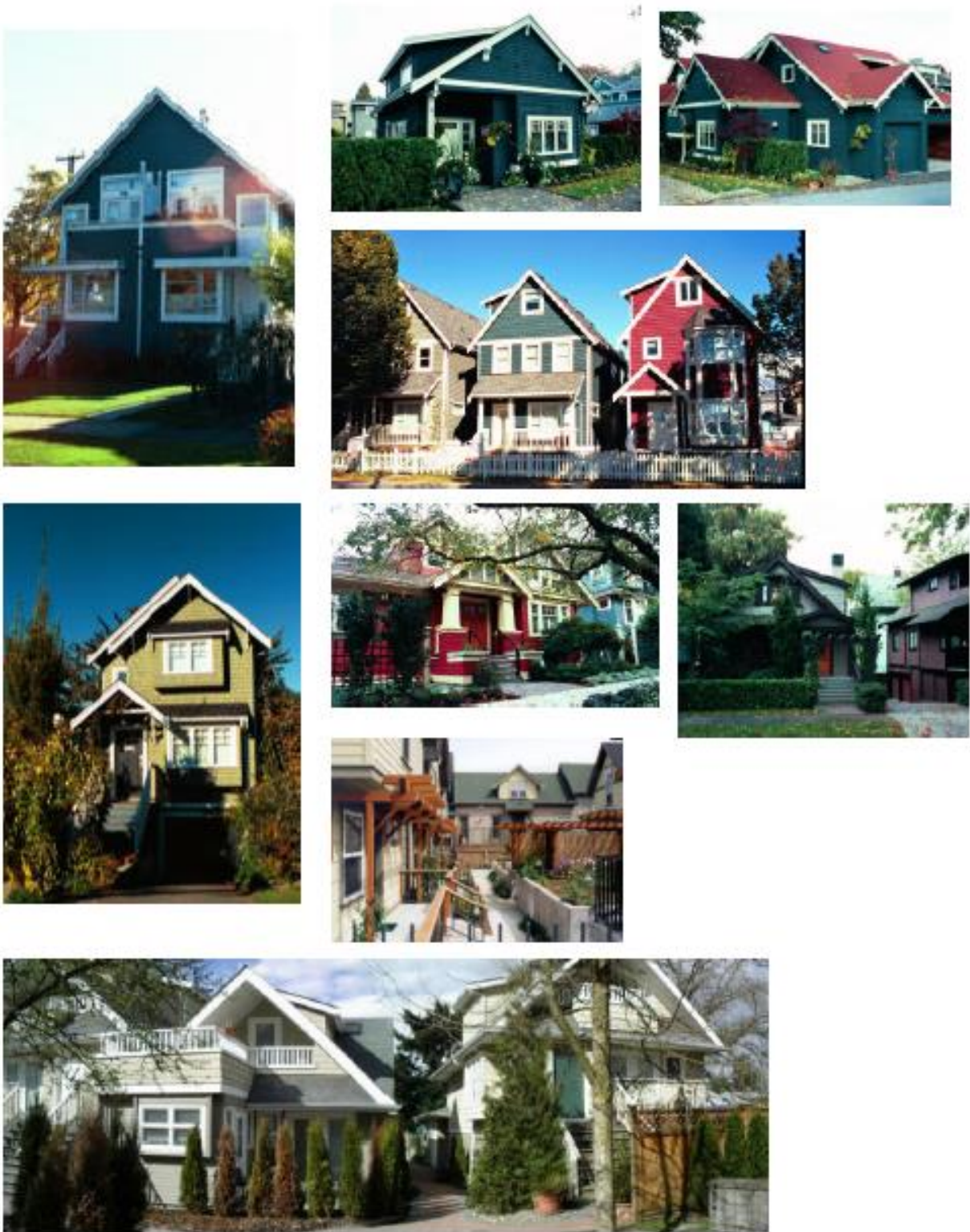


**Figure 15: Traditional Style and Contemporary Style Examples**





Figure 16: Duplex, Infill and Small House Examples





## 5.1 New Development, Infill, and Addition to 'Non-Character' Buildings

The intent of these guidelines is to allow a variety of architectural styles, so that neighbourhoods may continue to evolve, but in a way that respects the character of existing buildings and streetscapes. The guidelines are intended to ensure that all new development, of any architectural style, demonstrates high quality design and neighbourhood fit.

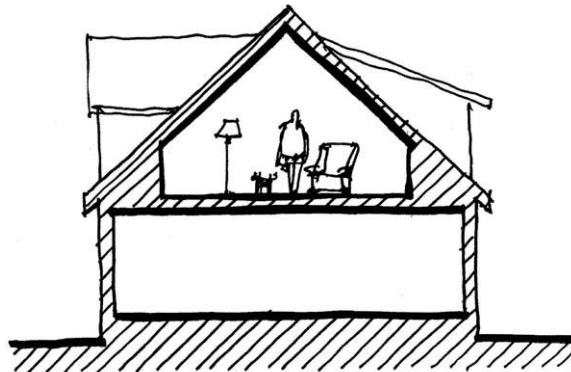
The guidelines can be interpreted in a contemporary style, or in a traditional style, with the choice of direction being the proponent's.

While choice of style is up to the proponent, it should be noted that a successful contemporary style building is both more difficult to design, and harder to judge because precedents are not as clear as with traditional designs. Staff will need to bring more judgement to the assessment of contemporary designs.

Section 5.1.1 outlines General Design Considerations that address fundamental aspects of building form, massing and design. Sections 5.1.2 through 5.1.6 address more detailed aspects of the design of building elements. Finally depending on the style chosen, Section 5.1.7, Additional Guidelines for Traditional Style Buildings, or Section 5.1.8, Additional Guidelines for Contemporary Style Buildings will apply.

### 5.1.1 General Design Considerations

- (a) A simple mass with a simple sheltering roof.
- Most of the original housing forms in Vancouver had substantially pitched roofs with eave lines that descended far enough to fully or partially envelop the top floor. Bringing the eaves closer to grade and expressing the form of the roof within the upper level inhabited space emphasizes the main level of the house and reduces the apparent mass of the building as viewed from the street.
- (i) The main roof should be pitched.
  - (ii) Building forms should begin as a simple mass, with a clear, simple, visible and dominant roof. The integrity and simplicity of the main building forms should be readable from the street and from the lane. Roof forms should generally not be 'busy' composite roof forms.
  - (iii) Main roof forms can be, but are not limited to, the following:
    - end-gable (gable facing the street, ridge running lengthwise on the lot) or
    - cross-gable (slope facing the street, ridge running across the lot), hipped, or
    - double or transverse-gable
  - (iv) Secondary roof forms and dormers should be clearly subordinate to the main form in size and number. Dormers should generally be setback from the buildings edge to assist in maintaining the integrity and dominance of the main roof.
  - (v) When older 'non-character' buildings are being renovated, changes to the main roof line or to the basic building form will not be expected.
  - (vi) The upper floor of new development should be substantially contained within a steeply pitched roof. For further information and exceptions, see Section 5.1.2.



- (b) Scale and form in relation to the streetscape
- The scale and form of new buildings is an important part of compatibility with an existing streetscape. For some forms of development the guidelines allow a smaller front

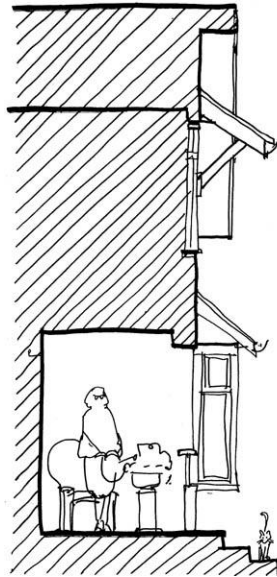
yard than typically required in single detached house districts. This will result in some new buildings being located closer to the street than existing adjacent buildings. It is particularly important in these circumstances that the buildings be designed to reduce apparent massing as they approach the street and adjacent properties.

- (i) In addition to roof design, other massing and design aspects including floor to floor heights, horizontal elements, changes in material, and the proportion and placement of openings, should seek to reduce the apparent scale of new development, and ensure that upper floor massing does not visually overwhelm the scale of lower floors.
  - (ii) Any portion of building that is located forward of its neighbours should suggest the massing of a one and a 'half' storey structure, with or without a 'basement', and the ridgelines of roofs in this area should not exceed 30'. (Upper storey massing is not limited to a literal 'half storey' as defined in the Zoning and Development By-Law, but will be a reduced 'partial' storey as necessary to achieve the desired massing).
- (c) **Entry transition**  
Site and building design should work together to create a transition from the public space of the street to the private space of the home. New street-fronting buildings should be designed with a progression of elements that emphasize the principal entrance.



- (i) An entry transition should be made through elements such as:
    - a defined garden edge with landscaping and/or fencing
    - an entry gate or other entry marker such as an arbor or feature landscape marking the transition from the street to the semi-private space of the front garden
    - steps or a change in level
    - a well defined porch
- (d) **Building Façade Depth**
- (i) Street-facing and lane-facing building facades should be enriched through a limited number of simple voids and projections that create visual interest and a strong play of light and shadow on the façade. These may include inset porches on main and upper floors, projecting or recessed entry porches, bay windows and box window bays, overhangs, brackets, canopies, etc.

These features should enliven the basic form, but should not overwhelm it, and in all cases a large portion of the main wall plane should be present to ensure the visual strength and unity of the whole.



- (e) Scale and form in relation to rear yards and the lane.
- The zoning allows for several different options for small house, duplex, and infill forms at the rear of the site, next to neighbouring yards and to the lane. The enhanced sideyard requirement that applies to the middle of the site is intended to assist in accomplishing good relationships to neighbouring rear yards. In addition:
- (i) Buildings in the rear section of the site should be designed to reduce apparent massing adjacent to the lane and neighbouring properties by adopting massing of a one and a 'half' storey structure, with or without a basement.
  - (ii) Principal buildings along the lane that are over approximately 12 m (40') in width should be designed with a massing that suggests two buildings as viewed from the lane. This may be accomplished through setback portions of building at grade and distinct main roof lines.
  - (iii) The lane will become a focus of development, and in effect, an exposure that is as important as 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 garage doors, parking spaces, and garbage and recycling areas.
  - (v) Insets, projections and overhangs should be used to lend interest to the lane fronting façade, and to give greater emphasis to the presence of living space over car places.
  - (vi) Garage doors should be high quality, preferably single width. Projections and overhangs such as arbours over the garage would add depth to the façade, create a shadow line, and potentially create places for planting to enrich the lanescape.
  - (vii) Garbage areas should be purpose-designed as integral part of the development either in the building or the lanescape.



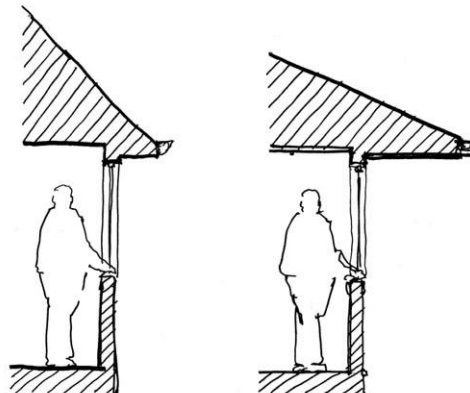
- (f) Consistency and Variety
- (i) A variety of architectural styles is acceptable in different buildings. However, within a single building, materials and elements such as windows, doors, architectural detailing and trim should be consistent with the style chosen for a new

building, or with the style of an existing building being renovated. While consistency is sought within the chosen style, a greater variety of expression may be considered on less visible facades.

- (ii) On sites where there is more than one building, the buildings may express different architectural styles, including in the case of infill behind an existing character building. On larger sites, it may be desirable to express a variety of architectural styles to avoid a monotonous or 'project-like' appearance.
  - (iii) In the case of an older house with little remaining 'character' as defined in Section 2.1.2, it may be possible to restore more traditional elements, or to redirect the architectural expression to a contemporary style. However, the architectural style chosen should be compatible with the basic massing and roof form of the existing building, unless the renovation is extensive enough that even these elements may change.
- (g) Composition
- (i) Regardless of the architectural style of the building, a clear sense of order should be apparent in the alignment, proportion and placement of building elements and features.
  - (ii) The incorporation of projections and recesses, the play of solid and void, and the proportion, design, and placement of windows should contribute to a balanced, not necessarily symmetrical, visual expression. It should be recognized that buildings of contemporary expression may have a sense of order and composition that relies more on asymmetry and a dynamic relationship and juxtaposition of building elements.
  - (iii) Building elements should be designed and placed in a way that considers the building as a whole, and how it is viewed from the street or lane, not simply as an outwards expression of interior program.
  - (iv) A sense of hierarchy should be brought to bear upon architectural elements to avoid competing focal points and rampant 'featurism' (e.g. repetitive arched window forms, bay windows for every room of the house, or multiple purposeless roof forms).

### 5.1.2 Roof and Chimneys

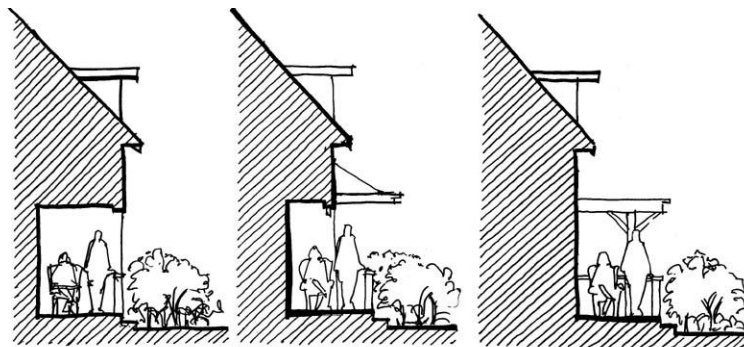
- (a) The main roof should spring from somewhere between the upper floor level and approximately 4' above it (Note: it is anticipated that some of the allowable floor space will be between 4' and 8' in height in most developments). Buildings with three storeys above grade, or with two storeys above a basement should have the main roof spring from the top floor level or lower.
- (b) Exceptions may be made to (a) above for two storey buildings which do not project beyond the front yard of existing adjacent houses, provided that the eaveline is not more than about 6 m above grade as viewed from the street.
- (c) The main roof pitch may be steep or shallow. Shallow pitched roofs should have strong and visible horizontal eavelines, and large overhangs. In general, the shallower the roof pitch, the broader the overhang should be. Roof pitches of less than 7:12 should have overhangs of 0.6 m or more.



- (d) Smaller secondary roof elements and dormers may vary from the pitch of the main roof and may include flat roofs and shallow pitches. A larger area of flat roof may be considered provided it is a green roof and contributes to the sustainability of the project.
- (e) If a secondary roof or gable interrupts the eave line of the main roof, it should mark or cover a significant element such as an entry, a porch, a recessed area, or a substantial projection.
- (f) Secondary roofs that project from the building façade should also clearly relate to an architectural element such as a box bay or porch. Roof ‘skirting’ on the building facade is discouraged.

### 5.1.3 Entrances, Stairs and Porches

- (a) Entries, Porches and Verandahs
  - (i) Street fronting units should generally have entries, porches or verandahs that are big enough to allow access to the front door and to provide a place for seating:
    - generally a minimum of 3.75 m<sup>2</sup> (40 sq ft.). However, flexibility will be applied in considering the design and size of entries, porches and verandahs. Units in buildings with access from within the site should also be designed with entries, porches or verandahs but the size is less important.
  - (ii) Front entries, porches and verandahs should be one-storey, have sufficient cover and be integrated into the overall building design. The entrance cover may be provided by recessing the entry, porch or verandah area and front door, by adding to the main façade of the building, or a combination of both. Entry, porch or verandah roofs on traditional designs should have a clear means of support – columns, brackets, ties, etc. Entrances expressed with double height columns and elements such as second storey arches and large fan lights are discouraged.



- (iii) The zoning allows for a raised main level of up to 2.0 m (6.5 ft.) to enable houses to reflect the entry step and porch sequence seen in Vancouver’s older neighbourhoods, and allow liveable basements with good access to light and outdoor space. Alternatively, the main floor may be close to grade, but in these cases the main floor should still be raised one or two feet to provide a comfortable relationship between the inside space of the dwelling and the public space of the street.
- (b) Stairs
  - (i) Exterior entry stairs should be generous in width and substantial in design.
  - (ii) Stairs to levels above the main or ground floor must be accommodated within the internal space of the house or unit. Exterior stairs and landings that directly access levels above the main or ground floor are not supportable.
- (c) Doors and Entrances
  - (i) Except as described below, each building should have one clearly expressed main entrance facing the street. Other doors may be located on the front façade as long as clarity is maintained with respect to which is the main entrance. These secondary doors may include french doors and sliding glass doors.
  - (ii) When doors to side by side units are located together, the entry area should be developed and expressed as a single porch which may have both doors visible. Side

by side units may have separately expressed entries and porches when they are located at the outside edge of the building form, or where the unit width separates the entries.

- (iii) Where entries to units are not clearly visible from a street (e.g. rear units), the presence and location should be announced through architectural or landscape gateway elements.

#### 5.1.4 Windows and Skylights

- (a) Projecting bay windows should be limited in number – generally only one per façade, or per unit. They should be treated as a focal element on the building facade, not a means to excessively expand indoor space at the expense of streetscape.



- (b) Window placement and design should be well-ordered, and competing ‘feature’ windows should be avoided.
- (c) Windows on upper levels should generally tuck closely under the eaves to help emphasize the roof.
- (d) Skylights may be used to access light on upper levels as long as a strong and simple roof line is maintained.
- (e) Proportion
  - (i) Traditional style new buildings may use larger openings than existing character houses, but should maintain their feeling of solidness, proportion, and geometric order.
  - (ii) Contemporary style new buildings may use larger areas of glazing with different proportions than character houses
- (f) Articulation
  - (i) Except where brick or stone is the main surface material, windows on traditional style buildings should be installed with surrounding trim to emphasize their presence.
  - (ii) Window openings should generally have depth, with substantial frames and mullions, except that contemporary designs may consider alternative approaches such as windows that are flush with the main wall surface, and expressed as an integral part of surface articulation elements or banding.
  - (iii) Where a more contemporary window expression doesn’t utilize trim, windows, doors and other openings should be articulated and emphasized through other means: a deep reveal to the window face, a broad overhang or canopy accenting the window, or strong and repetitive horizontal articulation of window divisions.

### 5.1.5 Balconies and Decks

- (a) Balconies and decks should be designed as integral parts of the building massing and façade composition
- (b) Projecting balconies and decks including over projecting porches should generally not be located on the front façade. Small balconies projecting up to 0.6 m may be acceptable.

### 5.1.6 Exterior Walls and Finishing

- (a) Quality and Durability of Materials
  - (i) Materials should be used in a rational and robust way. They should be designed and detailed to express quality and ensure durability. A list of materials can be found under Additional Guidelines for Traditional Style Buildings and Additional Guidelines for Contemporary Style Buildings.
  - (ii) Materials used should be appropriate to the scale and design of building elements. For example, large and heavy roof tiles should not be used on a roof with angles and elements that are too complicated and small in scale for the large size of the tiles.
  - (iii) 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.
  - (iv) Exterior wall cladding materials should be limited in number. Changes in cladding should relate to the building design, such as to express the base or foundation of the building.
  - (v) 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’.
  - (vi) All sides of a building that extend forward of an adjacent building must be designed and detailed in a manner appropriate to a visible location.
  - (vii) Large blank walls, including interior sidewalls, should be avoided whenever possible. Window openings, detailing, materials, colour, wall articulation and landscaping should be used to enliven them and reduce their scale.

### 5.1.7 Additional Guidelines for Traditional Style Buildings

- (a) Materials:
  - (i) Acceptable wall materials are wood siding, wood shingles, stucco, true dimension brick (solid colour), unpolished true-cut stone. Wood should be narrow horizontal wood clapboard, wood shingle, or board and batten. Stucco should be pebble-dashed or untrowelled cement dashed.
  - (ii) The material finish or colour may be varied on the basement level, or first floor level if there is no basement, following the traditional pattern;
  - (iii) Foundations, basement walls, and/or porch column bases may be of (or faced in) brick, or stone. Brick and stone should be designed to turn and complete building corners.
  - (iv) Roofs should be either wood shingle or asphalt shingle, slate, or low profile concrete tile
  - (v) “Imitative” materials such as vinyl siding are generally not acceptable, although some materials that have advanced to a point where they convincingly replicate original materials may be acceptable and will be evaluated at time of application (e.g. some types of cementitious board, and cultured stone may be appropriate).
  - (vi) High quality vinyl windows are acceptable provided they match the proportions of traditional wood frame windows. Thin-framed aluminum windows are not acceptable.
- (b) Detailing:

New traditional style development should incorporate contrasting details of a substantial scale and depth, to enliven the facades.

#### Minimum detailing:

- bargeboards and fascias
- window frames and trim

- porch beams, columns, and balustrades; and
- sloped soffits under overhangs (rather than flat soffits)

Optional Detailing:

- window mullions (real) Use of ‘stick-on’ muntins, or leading is not acceptable
- roof brackets or extended joist ends;
- string courses at top of basement, as an extension of porch beam line, and (more rarely) at second floor and attic floor levels;
- contrasting corner trim on wood clad buildings;
- decorative patterned shingling in limited amounts
- small areas of ‘plaster and beam’

- (c) Where a material or detail is proposed that is not covered by (a) or (b), its acceptability will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Consideration will be given to materials and detailing that vary from the above when it can be demonstrated that they are consistent with the traditional style of architecture chosen.

### 5.1.8 Additional Guidelines for Contemporary Style Buildings

(a) Materials:

- Acceptable materials are wood siding or wood shingle, stucco (except for heavily textured trowelled finishes), ceramic or metal panels and seamed siding, corrugated metal siding, architecturally finished concrete, concrete block, true dimension brick (solid colour), unpolished true-cut stone.
- Changes in cladding should relate to the building design, such as to express the base or foundation of the building, or to emphasize the main level and minimize the scale of the upper level.
- Roofs can be wood shingle, asphalt shingle, slate, cement tile, clay tile, or metal
- Brick and stone should be designed to turn and complete building corners.
- Materials used in detailing may be either metal and glass, or wood.
- High quality vinyl windows are acceptable provided they meet the guidelines regarding design and divisioning. Thin-framed aluminum windows are not acceptable.

(b) Detailing:

New contemporary style development should incorporate contrasting details of a substantial scale and depth, to enliven the facades.

Minimum detailing

- strong divisioning of window areas and/or deeply recessed window surfaces, and/or window frames and trim
- strong horizontal expression of either main eave line, or other projecting element(s) on the main building façade
- articulation of support structure and detailing around entry porch – for example, metal hangers, brackets or struts, metal and glass railings, cantilevered roofing systems
- high quality soffit material and detailing

Optional Detailing:

- canopies, metal and glass, wood, or canvas
- window mullions (real). Use of ‘stick-on’ muntins, or leading is not acceptable
- roof brackets or extended joist ends;
- major chimney expressions as an anchoring element

- (c) Where a material or detail is proposed that is not covered by (a) or (b), its acceptability will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

### 5.2 Renovation and Addition to retained ‘Character’ Building

The intent of the following guidelines is to ensure that changes to an existing ‘character’ building maintain its original form and character, and that additions are compatible. To



determine whether an existing building is considered a ‘character’ building refer to Section 2.1.2.

### 5.2.1 Principles

#### (a) Retention of Original Character

Where a renovation is occurring to a ‘character’ building as defined in these guidelines, the new architectural components should maintain the original character of the building. Renovation to current standards may require the replacement of a good deal of material. The amount of original exterior building fabric that is to be replaced is not limited as long as it is replaced in a manner closely similar to the original, as set out in the following guidelines. Provision of drawings documenting the extent of material to be replaced may be required at time of application.

#### (b) Infill Character

Where an infill building is being added behind a retained ‘character’ house, it may be designed either to reflect the traditional character and style of the main house, or to express itself clearly as a later building by choosing a contemporary architectural style. Infill buildings should follow the guidelines in Section 5.1.

#### (c) Additions

In general, additions will not be supported on the front of character buildings, as this would significantly alter the character of the building as viewed from the street. Additions to existing character buildings should always appear secondary in visual prominence to the main house as seen from the street.

### 5.2.2 Roofs and Chimneys

#### (a) The original roof forms should be maintained.

#### (b) Consideration will be given to changing the main roof form to reflect those of other neighbourhood ‘character’ buildings, in those cases where the height under the main ridge line is not sufficient to enable a reasonable configuration of inhabited space according to the City’s by-laws.

#### (c) Where dormers are being added or extended, they should remain subordinate to, and not detract from the integrity of the main roof.

#### (d) Roofs on additions should be compatible with the existing building’s roof form, or similar ones of the period.

#### (e) Secondary roof elements may vary from the pitch of the main roof and may include flat roofs and shallow pitches.

#### (f) If roofing material is to be replaced, either wood shingle or asphalt shingle should be used. Other materials may be considered where it can be shown they were characteristic of the original house style. If roofing is to be repaired, material should match existing.

#### (g) Original chimneys should be retained and repaired where possible. While matching new chimneys to existing ones is desirable, boxed-in chimneys clad with a material that matches the building wall is also acceptable.

### 5.2.3 Windows and Skylights

#### (a) In general, original window openings on the front façade of existing buildings should be maintained. If it is not practical to keep original frames and exterior wood trim, new windows should match the original design as closely as possible. Window replacements from previous renovations that are not in character with the original building should be returned to a design in keeping with the original building. It is desirable to maintain existing window pane shapes and mullions as well, however, if reproduction is too costly, plain glass can be used. Use of ‘stick-on’ mullions or leading is not acceptable.

#### (b) On facades not visible from the street, more substantial alterations to existing window shape and size may be considered. Materials and detailing of frames should be compatible with the existing style.

#### (c) When an addition will be seen from the street, the addition’s windows should follow the same general practices as in the original building regarding shape, placement, materials and trim.

#### (d) Skylights should be modest in size when visible from the street.

#### 5.2.4 Entrances Stairs and Porches

##### (a) Entrances and Stairs

- (i) Original front entrance frames, trim, and stairs should be maintained where these exist. If replacement is necessary, the design should match the original design and material as closely as possible
- (ii) Maintaining the original front door and any sidelights is desirable. Where doors must be replaced, or where earlier renovations resulted in inappropriate doors, doors of similar quality to the original should be used.
- (iii) When an original door and sidelights have been compromised, and an additional entrance is needed to a unit on the same level as the main entrance, a number of solutions are acceptable:
  - Placing the door inside the original entry in a lobby arrangement;
  - Placing two doors side-by-side.
  - Placing one entry at the side of the building.
- (iv) When an additional entrance is desired to a basement unit, or to other living space on the basement level, it may be located on the front façade, but it should not detract from the visual dominance of the original entry.

##### (b) Entries, Porches and Verandahs

- (i) The District Schedule provides a floor space exclusion for entries, porches, and verandahs to both encourage new entries, porches and verandahs, and facilitate the opening up of old ones which may have been filled in for extra living space. Original porches on existing buildings should be kept and restored
- (ii) If possible, porch infill should be removed. If the enclosed space must remain for liveability, the detailing of the enclosure should be made consistent with the original style of the building

#### 5.2.5 Balconies and Decks

- (a) Projecting balconies and decks should not be located on the front façade of older houses. Decks located on, or partially within a roof may be acceptable on the front of the building provided they appear integrated and are modeled on traditional examples
- (b) Projecting balconies or decks may be located at the rear, subject to guidelines regarding privacy and setbacks.

#### 5.2.6 Exterior Walls and Finishing

##### (a) Materials:

Original materials should be retained and repaired where practical. If replacement is necessary, the same material should be used, although it may be manufactured in a different way. (For example, narrow wood clapboard is available in sheets). For further direction regarding alternatives, see (iv) below.

- (i) Materials on additions should match those of the existing building
- (ii) The same materials should be used consistently on all facades, including the interior of inset porches. The use of a material only as a ‘paste-on’ on one or two facades is not acceptable.
- (iii) “Imitative” materials such as vinyl siding are generally not acceptable, although some materials that have advanced to a point where they convincingly replicate original materials may be acceptable and will be evaluated at time of application (e.g. some types of cementitious board will be appropriate).

##### (b) Detailing:

- (i) Existing detailing on buildings should be kept and restored. If it has been removed, it should be replaced in the original style and material;
- (ii) Uncharacteristic detailing (gingerbread to ‘Victorianize’ buildings) should not be added; and
- (iii) Detailing on additions should be compatible with that on the original building, but the degree of detailing may vary considerably, depending on the overall design intent of the addition and its visibility from the streets.

- (c) Where a material is proposed that is not covered by (a) or (b), its acceptability will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

## 6 Open Space

Open space on private sites in single detached house areas has traditionally been of two kinds. The semi-private space of the front yard provided a green streetscape – a public face for the visual enjoyment of both the residents and neighbours. The backyard was normally private open space for active use, while also mainly ‘green’ in appearance.

The front yard will play an expanded role as it will become the primary outdoor space of some dwellings. As such it must often accommodate the useable patio of a unit, as well as be the public face on the streetscape.

The flexible siting options for different housing types will result in a different patterning of rear yard space, with portions of the traditional rear yard being occupied by infill buildings and/or other small house forms. In some cases on larger assemblies, some open space will be brought into the centre of the space as a garden courtyard. In all cases, however, some portion of rear yard open space will be located adjacent to neighbouring rear yards.

- (a) Private open space  
Ground-orientation is an important aspect of the housing types contemplated under this zoning.
- (i) A minimum area of 10 m<sup>2</sup> with a minimum dimension of 2.4 m of ground level (or near ground level) private outdoor space should be provided immediately adjacent to and accessible from each unit.
  - (ii) Balconies, decks and porches may augment, or substitute where semi-private open space is provided on site.
  - (iii) Small units (approx. 65 m<sup>2</sup> sq. ft. or less) need not be provided with private open space if access is available to a shared open space.
- (b) Semi-private or shared open space  
Some siting options will create shared semi-private space, or garden/entry courtyards in the centre of the site. A minimum size or dimension has not been set for this to enable flexibility in design and siting of buildings.
- (i) Semi-private open space should be designed:
    - as a focus of development and an organizing element, not as ‘leftover’ space
    - as a primary outlook and entrance for units in the middle and rear sections of a site
    - to provide sufficient distance, screening, landscape, and outlook considerations for the mutual comfort of dwellings overlooking the space.

## 7 Landscaping

The variety of housing types allowed may result in some increased coverage of the ground plane by building. It is therefore very important to ensure that outdoor space and landscaping is well designed to enhance the street and lanescape, and the enjoyment of private outdoor space. Larger scale planting with a vertical element enhances the definition and screening of private outdoor space, as well as contributing to improving the local micro-climate and reducing the rate and amount of stormwater released to the system.

- (a) Landscaping should be varied, with use of shrubs, larger perennials, and trees, not just grassed areas.
- (b) Existing trees and landscape features (such as stone walls) should be kept wherever possible
- (c) At least part of the front yard should be grassed and/or planted as a visual amenity for the street. Patio areas in the front yard should be screened with planting. The presence of units at the rear of the site should be announced with entry gates, addressing, and other entry markers such as arbors or feature landscape.
- (d) The front and back boulevard should be landscaped as a green space. At a minimum, they should be retained as grassed areas, but more intense planting is encouraged on most development particularly development that has the 4.9 m (16 ft.) front yard.

- (e) In general, the By-law fence height limit of 1.2 m in front yards, and 1.8 m 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. Overheight elements in the front yard should assist with the definition of outdoor space but should not prevent all views or glimpses of the outdoor space from the street. Any overheight 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 common spaces in multi-unit developments should be designed to provide screening and filtering of views. Planting larger caliper trees is particularly necessary in this location.
- (h) Where small houses or infill are located at the lane, every opportunity to enhance the lanescape with landscaping should be taken. This includes:
  - (i) Entry gates and arbors over pedestrian entrances
  - (ii) Arbors over driveway entrances
  - (iii) Planted areas or planter boxes between garage doors
  - (iv) Trellised areas along the lane façade, between and above garage entries, to enable ‘vertical greening’ with vines.
  - (v) Planters overhanging the lane on balconies and outside the windows of dwellings on upper levels.
  - (vi) Planting of trees near the lane where possible
- (i) Landscape treatment of driveways, outdoor parking spaces, and maneuvering areas is critical. As much soft landscaping as possible should be provided to soften the appearance of the paved area. Special decorative paving (interlocking pavers, brick, exposed aggregate etc.) and permeable paving should be used in maneuvering areas. Driveways should be paved wheel strips with planting in the mid section. Uncovered parking spaces should be well designed spaces with landscaped edges, decorative paving, permeable paving, or gravel surfaces. Where a driveway is located adjacent to a neighbouring property there should be a well landscaped setback of about 1 m. Landscaping along this edge should include fencing, hedging, and closely spaced tree planting.

Where a semi-private common space is also utilized for vehicle access and maneuvering, it should be designed to function first as a space for pedestrians, and an outlook for dwellings. It should be treated as a court that happens to allow cars, and should be primarily paved with high quality, permeable or porous paving material. It will be of particular importance to design the courtyard and access in a way maximizes opportunities to introduce soft landscaping and vertical greening elements, and that will allow larger caliper trees to be planted and to thrive in the area. Materials and detailing adjacent to areas accessible to cars should be designed with resilience and durability to stand up well over time. It should be anticipated that trees in close proximity to maneuvering areas may need tree guards, and the design of these should be an integral part of the landscape and building design.

## **8 Additional Guidelines for Arterial Locations**

### **8.1 Noise**

Noise impacts to habitable areas in new development should be minimized through measures which may include:

- (a) Building construction (eg. masonry construction, triple glazing)
- (b) Site planning and unit design (in particular, locating living rooms and bedrooms away from the noise source where possible).

**Character Buildings**

Much of the early residential development in many of Vancouver's neighbourhoods took place between 1910 and 1940. Homes built in this period were of various architectural styles and have been well documented. The most popular styles are described in Appendix A and range from the bungalow, cottage, and classic frame homes built in the craftsman style to the more elaborate homes such as the Queen Anne and Tudor styles seen in the City's older neighbourhoods of Shaughnessy and Mount Pleasant. Vancouver's neighbourhoods still contain a large proportion of the "pre-1940's houses, and these are often referred to as "character houses". Many "pre-1940's houses were modest structures with little ornament, and many have been modified over the years. Vancouver's neighbourhoods still contain a large proportion of the "pre-1940's houses, and these are often referred to as "character houses".

**Pre-1940's Character Buildings**

The principal elements which are generally common to the traditional pre-1940's houses are the following:

- (a) Simple mass with a dominant main pitched roof  
Pre-1940's houses were simple with a basement projecting 1.2 to 1.8 metres above ground, a main floor, and optional full or partial second floor. On this basic box structure was a simple pitched primary main roof over the first storey eave. Roofs were most commonly end-gable (gable facing the street, ridge running lengthwise on the lot) or cross-gable (slope facing the street, ridge running across the lot). Roof pitch was usually substantial although bungalow styles feature low pitched gables roofs with broad overhangs. Other roof forms such as hip, gambrel or mansard were less common. Some houses also featured secondary roof elements over porches and verandahs and projecting rooms.
- (b) Emphasis on front entries and porches  
Covered porches on the main (entry) level were a universal feature, and were of several types.
  - (i) projecting from the facade under a separate roof structure, but with a solid base;
  - (ii) projecting, but under an extension of the main roof; and
  - (iii) inset from the façade

The front entrances were on the main level, about 1.2 metres (4 ft.) to 1.8 m (6 ft.) above grade. Upper level porches were also common on some styles. They were inset into the second storey wall, or partially inset into the wall and the porch roof below.

All porches have substantial depth, single storey height, robust wood supporting beams and columns, and robust picket type wood railing, or solid balustrade formed by an extension of the wall below. Any columns or posts were limited to the first storey. They were single storey front entry covered porches, or recessed balconies.

- (c) Windows and Doors  
Pre-1940's buildings were characterized by limited amounts of window area (relative to the wall) and simple rectangular shapes. Windows tended to be symmetrical often rectangular window openings with trim. Decorative window shapes were relatively rare. Doors were generally single, not double, but were usually panelled, some with windows.
- (d) Materials and Detailing  
Wood was the most prevalent wall material. This was usually in the form of horizontal 3 to 4 inch clapboard, board and batten or shingles. Stucco was used on some "English Builder" and "Germanic cottage" style houses. Stucco was stone-dash, pebble-dash or medium textured stucco. Brick was used much more rarely.

Though not an exhaustive list, decorative detailing tended to be the expression of the wood trim such as around doors and windows, heavy beam and columns in porch structures, window casing frames and mullions, bargeboards and eaves brackets and braces, fascias, or exposed ends of "roof joists" under the roof overhangs. Detailing in

wall materials included decorative shingling (fish-scale, scalloped, staggered or diamond-shaped), usually small amounts in the upper parts of gables and half timbering.

### **Popular “Pre-1940’s” Architectural Styles**

The following architectural styles are representative of the less complex pre-1940’s buildings prevalent in many of Vancouver’s neighbourhoods.

#### **Bungalow or Craftsman**

The Bungalow and its variants dominated Vancouver domestic building in the years after 1910, supplanting the Classic Frame as the most popular house type. The features common to the many variations of Bungalows are low-pitched gabled roofs with broad eaves or overhangs, and the profuse use of wood detail (exposed rafters and beams, eaves brackets and braces, and textured wood clapboard or shingles). The most prevalent Bungalow type in Vancouver is an expansive house 1 or 1 ½ storeys high with the gable facing the street and often having a smaller, secondary gable over the projecting entrance porch. Entry stairs were solid substantial staircases, not flimsy open stairs. The porch columns/supports are usually short with sloping sides and their bases may be made of rough “clinker” bricks. The principal window beneath the main gable is often composed of three sashes.

#### **Bungaloid**

The term Bungaloid describes buildings in which features characteristic of Bungalows are seen in houses too large or different in form from that style. The most common Bungaloid type in Vancouver is a 2 ½ storey house with a front-facing gable, too tall to be a Bungalow, but sharing its profuse use of brackets, beam ends, stubby porch columns and other decorative wood features. Another version has side-facing gables, with dormers or other vertical features piercing the eaves.

#### **Classic Box**

The Classic Box is a foursquare 2 or 2 ½ storey house with a hipped roof, often one of low pitch. The second storey is a full floor high, and if there is an attic floor, the roof has a dormer. Earlier versions are undecorated, like the Pioneer house. Later examples (after 1900) may have the ornamentation associated with the Decorated Pioneer, including bay windows and decorative window openings. Classical detail may also be found. Porches are common, and the bay windows may interrupt the simple lines of the hipped roof. The front door is usually on one side of the façade.

#### **Classic Frame**

This is the most common Vancouver dwelling house for the middle class in the early 1900’s. It is a timber-frame building between 1 ½ and 2 ½ storeys high, with the gable end of the roof presented to the street. Façade features usually include a porch and one or more bay windows. The door is located to one side. Ornamental variety in the wood and shingle siding is common. The house is similar to the Pioneer and Decorated Pioneer, but if has broader proportions and more interior space. A number of Classic Frames often appear side by side along the street, usually with minor variants in window shape, porches and decorative detailing.

#### **Edwardian Builder**

This style was popular between 1900-1910, and used a variety of building forms. It’s characterized by a steep roof and large porch, narrow bevelled wood siding or cedar shingle cladding, plain classical-inspired details such as small eaves brackets or dentils mouldings, porch column capitals, pediment roof forms, multi-paned or diamond-patterned windows; and stone/brick or porch supports or foundations not commonly used.

#### **Pioneer**

These are modest houses usually 1 ½ (but sometimes 2 or 2 ½) storeys high with a front gabled roof facing the street containing the entrance door and perhaps a simple porch or verandah. Windows are usually plain, but a bay window may be situated beside the door or on the second floor. Proportions are tall and narrow. The houses are shiplap or narrow clapboard siding, the latter becoming prevalent around 1900. Corner boards and window trim are usually plain 25 mm x 150 mm (1 x 6 inch) boards, and windows are double-hung with two or four panes in each sash. A shed-roof kitchen is common at the rear. Basements are rare.

#### **Decorated Pioneer**

Similar to Pioneer houses, but are more elaborate because of the addition of wood ornamentation at the gable ends, on porches, and for door and window detail. The fretwork – often called “gingerbread” – was

created with the fret saw or the jig saw. Porch posts were turned with the lathe and chamfered. These dwellings often use contrasting patterns of wood siding and shingles, and scalloped and lozenge-shaped shingles appear frequently.

### **English Builder**

The English Builder style began to be built in the late 20's. It was an economical version of the more elaborate English Arts and Crafts or Tudor revival styles popular for estates. Characteristics are steep cross-gable main roof, with one or more large, steep, front-facing gables, usually asymmetrical placed; very small front porch; stucco cladding; and limited detailing (plain fascias and window frames, leaded windows; sometimes small pointed arches above windows, doors etc.

### **Pioneer Cottage**

The Pioneer Cottage is a small dwelling, usually one storey high on a raised roof, and sometimes having a dormer window illuminating a bedroom in the attic space. They were frequently built in groups, and intact clusters have a row of them closely sited along the street. More elaborate versions may have a porch with classical columns and eaves brackets, but simpler ones have little ornament.

### **Germanic Cottage (also called Eastern Cottage)**

This style began to be used in the late 20's. Characteristics include small, 1 ½ storey form, with shallow-pitched end-gable roof, usually chamfered, stucco cladding, very small front porch, and detailing was limited: plain fascias and window frames, small window panes.

**Figure 17: Photos of Character Buildings**

**Pre-1940's Character Houses: 1 to 1 ½ Storey Bungalow, Cottage and Pioneer Styles and their variants**





**Pre-1940's Character Houses: 1 to 2 storey Classic frame houses and variations**

