PORT MOODY
CITY OF THE ARTS

A Guide to Laneway Homes
(Detached Accessory Dwelling Units)

Version 1.0, July 2021

INTRODUCTION

In Port Moody, a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU) is the Zoning Bylaw definition of a laneway home. Laneway homes are located in the backyard of a single family home near the lane or back alley. Laneway homes are smaller and separate from the main home on the lot and provide many benefits such as:

- rental income for homeowners;
- more rental units for young people, seniors and families;
- accommodation for family or caregivers;
- increased housing diversity;
- opportunity for people to age in place and stay on their property;
- improvements to the streetscape and character of existing laneways;
- gentle infill while maintaining the existing character of neighborhoods.

Purpose and intent

Laneway homes have been permitted in the City of Port Moody since July 2018. The purpose of this guide is to provide information to property owners to determine if a laneway home is a suitable option for their personal circumstances and property.

This guide is intended to assist applicants. It is neither an authoritative nor complete statement of the law. Further reference to Port Moody's Zoning Bylaw and related documents is necessary to ensure compliance with its provisions. The City of Port Moody accepts no responsibility to persons relying solely on this guide.

Is my property eligible?

In the City of Port Moody, a laneway home is a conditional use. The following requirements must be met in order to be eligible for a laneway home:

1. The lot must be zoned RS1, RS1-S, RS2, RS3, RS5, RS6, RS7, RS9 or RT;
2. Within the RT zone, a laneway home is a conditional use that can be combined with semi-detached residential units;
3. The lot must have secondary access to the rear of the lot via a street or a lane that is of a grade, quality (weight bearing), surface, width and clearance that allows for accessibility by emergency services apparatus;
4. The lot cannot abut Forest Park Way or North Road;
5. There must be available density under the existing zone, taking into consideration the total amount of floor area and lot coverage available for both the existing home and laneway home combined.

My property is eligible – where do I start?

To apply for a laneway home, property owners should first consult with a qualified professional to ensure that the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw No. 2937 and Development Permit Area 7 design guidelines in the City's Official Community Plan ("OCP") can be met. It is also recommended that the applicant consult with Planning staff to discuss the general feasibility of the project.

How much does it cost?

Property owners should have an understanding of the cost of a laneway home, which can range from $240,000–$300,000 to construct. There are significant costs beyond construction, which include third party utilities (BC Hydro, Fortis) and potentially adjacent municipal road, water, storm water and sewer, as well as consultant fees and any required reports. Table 1 on page 2 details these cost considerations.

What else do I need to consider?

Even though laneway homes are small, there are a lot of components to consider. Careful site planning is needed to ensure that the minimum parking, environmental requirements, building setbacks, lot coverage, and floor area restrictions can be met. There are also design guidelines in place to ensure that a new laneway home is attractive, liveable, and addresses any privacy concerns or impact to neighbours.

What is the City's process for approving a laneway home?

It is recommended that the applicant consult with Planning staff to discuss the general feasibility and tentative site plan of a laneway home before submitting a minor development permit application.

Once a completed application is received, Planning staff will review the application with other departments and provide a preliminary comments letter outlining where revisions or additional information is required. The applicant submits a coordinated set of updated documents and plans as requested. The final application is reviewed and City staff may approve a minor development permit. Applicants will be notified of the outcome by staff.

SAMPLE COSTS

The cost to construct a new laneway home may range from $240,000 to $300,000. This cost is exclusive of site specific servicing costs and professional reports and consulting that may be required. Development and building permit fees, building and site design, site servicing, construction costs, as well as geotechnical permits and environmental permits (if required), are all costs that property owners should ensure they understand prior to submitting a laneway home application. In addition, it is necessary to ensure that site servicing can be achieved for the laneway home by contacting the appropriate utility providers in advance. Table 1 below summarizes cost considerations to construct a new laneway home. Applicants are strongly recommended to confirm costs with all contractors, consultants, and utility providers as necessary. All City fees are subject to change.

Table 1: Estimation of costs for a new laneway home in Port Moody

Application and Permit Fees	
Development Permit Application Fee	$547
Building Permit Fee (based on estimation of $7.50 + $9.00 per $1000 of construction costs)	$4,125 – $4,950
Professional Reports/Consulting	
Building Design Plans, prepared by a Professional Architect or Designer	Please inquire with respective professionals for cost estimates of required studies, reports and plans
Site Servicing Plan, prepared by a Professional Engineer	
Site Grading Plan, prepared by Professional Engineer	
Geotechnical Report, prepared by Professional Engineer*	
Environmental Report, prepared by a Qualified Environmental Professional*	
Construction Costs	
$250 – $300/ft^2 (for maximum of 90.0 m^2 or 968.75 ft^2)	Up to $240,000 – $299,000
Servicing Costs	
Water**	Please inquire with your contractor about costs specific to your property
Sanitary	
Storm***	
On-site Driveways	
Hydro (Please inquire directly with BC Hydro)	$1000 – $1500
Gas	Please inquire directly with Fortis
Landscaping	$1000 – $3000

*Required if development site is located within Development Permit Area 4: Environmentally Sensitive Areas or Development Permit Area 5: Hazardous Lands.

**An upgrade to existing services may be required to support the additional load of the new building.

***New laneway homes may require new storm infrastructure.

ZONING BYLAW REQUIREMENTS

Section 5.5 of the City of Port Moody Zoning Bylaw, 2018, No. 2937 includes regulations for laneway homes and specific requirements for different residential zones regarding density, setbacks and lot coverage, which are summarized in Table 2. Further reference to Port Moody's Zoning Bylaw and related documents is necessary to ensure compliance with its requirements.

Table 2: Zoning Bylaw requirements for laneway houses (DADUs)

Floor Area	Maximum of 90.0 m^2 (or 968.75 ft^2)
Floor Area Ratio*	Maximum of 0.5: RS-1, RS2, RS6, RS7, RS9, RT Maximum of 0.6: RS3, RS5 Maximum of 0.7: RS1-S
Height**	One-storey: maximum of 4.57 m Two-storey: maximum of 6.71 m
Interior Side Yard Setback	Minimum of 1.5 m: RS1, RS2, RT Minimum of 1.2 m: RS1-S, RS-3 Minimum of 10% of the Lot, not to exceed 1.5 m: RS5, RS6, RS7, RS9
Exterior Side Yard Setback	Minimum of 3.0 m: RS1, RS2, RS6, RS7, RS9, RT Minimum of 2.5 m: RS3, RS5 Minimum of 1.8 m: RS1-S
Rear Lot Line Setback	Minimum of 1.5 m
Setback from Principal Building	Minimum of 6.0 m
Parking	One (1) parking space for exclusive use of DADU residents
Lot Coverage for all buildings	Maximum of 40%: RS1, RS2, RS5, RS6, RS7, RS9, RT Maximum of 45%: RS1-S, RS3
Lot Coverage for DADU	Maximum of 65 m^2: RS1, RS1-S, RS2, RS3, RS5, RS6, RS7, RS9 Maximum of 65 m^2 or 80 m^2 if it includes enclosed parking: RT
Location	Sited as an Accessory Building (unless otherwise provided) in the Rear Yard
Lot Coverage for DADU	Maximum of 65 m^2: RS1, RS1-S, RS2, RS3, RS5, RS6, RS7, RS9 Maximum of 65 m^2 or 80 m^2 if it includes enclosed parking: RT
Access requirements suitable for emergency services	Secondary access to the rear of the lot is of a grade, quality (weight bearing), surface, width, and clearance that allows for accessibility by emergency services apparatus

*For all buildings on the lot, including the principal dwelling, the laneway home and any other accessory buildings.
**Measured from grade to the highest point of a roof structure, parapet or guard.

DESIGN GUIDELINES – FORM AND CHARACTER

As a form of intensive residential development, a laneway house requires careful application and design to ensure the new development respects the character of the neighbourhood and adjacent properties while also creating an attractive, livable environment.

The City's OCP has a vision of creating a complete community that includes increasing density and the diversity of housing across the City. Appendix 2 of the OCP includes Development Permit Area (DPA) 7: Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit Intensive Residential Development Design Guidelines, which are used to assess the design of proposed laneway houses during the development permit application process. The objectives of the DPA 7 design guidelines are to:

- respect the scale and form of neighbouring properties;
- ensure that the established neighbourhood character serves as inspiration for new development;
- enhance and animate the lane and adjacent streets to encourage pedestrian orientation;
- respect prominent trees and landscape features;
- incorporate security and privacy into neighbourly development; and
- incorporate sustainable design that is site-sensitive, long-lasting, and efficient.

The following section includes a reference copy of the DPA 7 design guidelines. Planning staff will consider these design guidelines when reviewing development permit applications for laneway houses. Applicants are encouraged to ensure that these guidelines are incorporated into the design of the laneway house where applicable.

Example of #2

Example of #3

Accessibility and Access

1. Laneway homes are encouraged to be adaptable and accessible to the current and future needs of residents and encourage aging in place (refer to the BC Building Code Adaptable Housing Standards). Where possible, a minimum 1.0 m (3.28 ft) emergency and pedestrian access pathway should be provided which connects the sidewalk or roadway at the front of the property and the rear lane to the front entrance of the laneway home.
2. The access pathway should be constructed with permeable materials, adequately lit, and unobstructed from shrubs, trees, fences, or other structures.

Architectural Elements

3. The design of the laneway home should be secondary in character and respectful of and complementary to the principal building.
4. Architectural elements are encouraged in the building façade to enhance residential use facing the lane and minimize the visual impact of garage doors.
5. Designs that enhance existing neighbourhoods are encouraged, including heritage character.
6. Building products should demonstrate sustainability principles with high-quality design and detailing.

Example of #7

7. Incorporating skylights, clerestory windows, and/or obscured glazing into the building design is encouraged to promote natural lighting and maintain privacy. Light fixtures should complement the architecture and landscape design.
8. Roof designs should be respectful and sympathetic to the roof of the principal building on the lot.
9. Entrances are encouraged to be recessed or set back into the building envelope, should be designed to provide weather protection, and include features such as front porches and/or verandas.

Example of #10

Corner Lots

10. On corner lots, design elements and residential features should establish the flanking street as the main entrance/public side of the laneway home by incorporating front doors, porches, and gardens into the design.
11. On corner lots, parking is encouraged off the lane towards the interior side yard.
12. For corner lots with no lane access, parking should be in the rear yard with access via the driveway from the flanking street.
13. On corner lots, transition in the massing is encouraged by increasing the scale from the interior side property line to the flanking street.

Exterior Lighting

14. The address/unit identity should be clearly visible from the street and illuminated at night.
15. Lighting should be neighbour-friendly and avoid glare into the outdoor or indoor space of neighbouring properties or the principal residence.
16. Lighting within eaves should be restricted to the façade facing a lane or exterior side yard.
17. Motion sensor lights are discouraged. Energy efficient LED, non-glare, down cast photocells are encouraged.

Exterior Stairs

18. Stairs to a second storey must be enclosed within the building and not be constructed outside the laneway home. Exterior stairs should only be designed at the main entrance.

Sloping Sites

19. Laneway homes located on sloping sites should adapt the scale, massing, and location to follow the topography and natural features of the site and respect the views and privacy of adjacent properties.
20. Creative solutions for optimizing development on sloping sites are strongly encouraged.

Privacy, Overlook, and Orientation

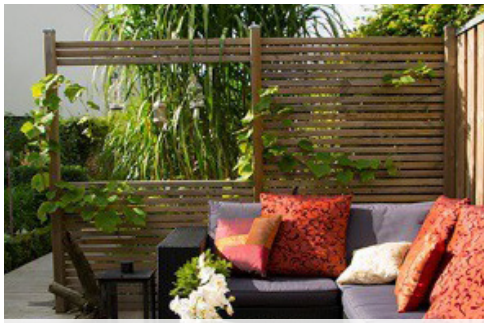
Example of #21

21. The design, siting, and orientation of windows, balconies, patios, and decks should provide for visual privacy between adjoining properties. Upper-level massing and primary outlook should be directed towards the lane.
22. Minimizing the amount of shadow cast on the private outdoor open space of adjacent properties and the principal building is encouraged to maintain solar access. The creation of visual interest by providing variation in height and massing within design is encouraged to promote visual interest and privacy.
23. Habitable space at grade which is oriented towards the lane is encouraged to mitigate potential privacy and overlook concerns onto the principal building and neighbouring properties.
24. To minimize overviewing and to protect the privacy of both neighbours and tenants of laneway homes, the size and placement of windows should be designed and located to be sensitive to adjacent properties, buildings, and topography.

Green Building Initiatives

25. The integration of passive design into the architecture and landscape design is encouraged.

Outdoor Space



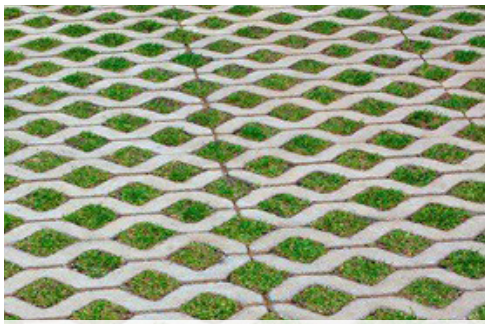
Example of #26–28

26. The outdoor living area should be defined and screened for privacy through the use of hard and soft landscaping, including plantings, architectural elements such as trellises, low fencing, or planters, and changes in grade or elevation where appropriate.
27. Space between a laneway home and the rear property line should be enhanced by incorporating low-maintenance soft landscaping and/or high-quality permeable paving materials.
28. Screening and landscaping between the street and the outdoor space should be incorporated to define the transition between public and private spaces.
29. Side yard spaces should be landscaped using permeable surfaces and drought resistant plant materials.
30. To optimize function and livability of the space between the laneway home and the principal house, a combination of hard and soft landscaping, including trees, is recommended.
31. Laneway homes should be located and designed to preserve and retain existing trees.
32. A minimum of 9.3 m^2 (100 ft^2) of permeable private outdoor space for exclusive use of the laneway home tenants, which is separate and distinct from the principal dwelling, should be provided.

33. The private outdoor space should be directly accessible from the laneway home and be screened and/or landscaped to maximize privacy.

34. Balconies and decks should be appropriately screened and oriented to face the lane in order to provide privacy and minimize overlook onto neighbouring buildings and properties.

Parking



Example of grass-crete

35. Driveways should be constructed with permeable materials and be no more than 4.5 m (14.7 ft) in width. Parking must be provided in the rear yard of the lot with direct access from an open lane.

36. Uncovered parking space should be screened with landscaping or fencing. Permeable pavers, gravel, grass-crete, or impermeable wheel paths surrounded by gravel or ground cover planting are encouraged.

37. Parking for corner sites should be oriented to the interior side yard.

38. An open parking space for a laneway home should be screened with landscaping or fencing.

Rainwater Management

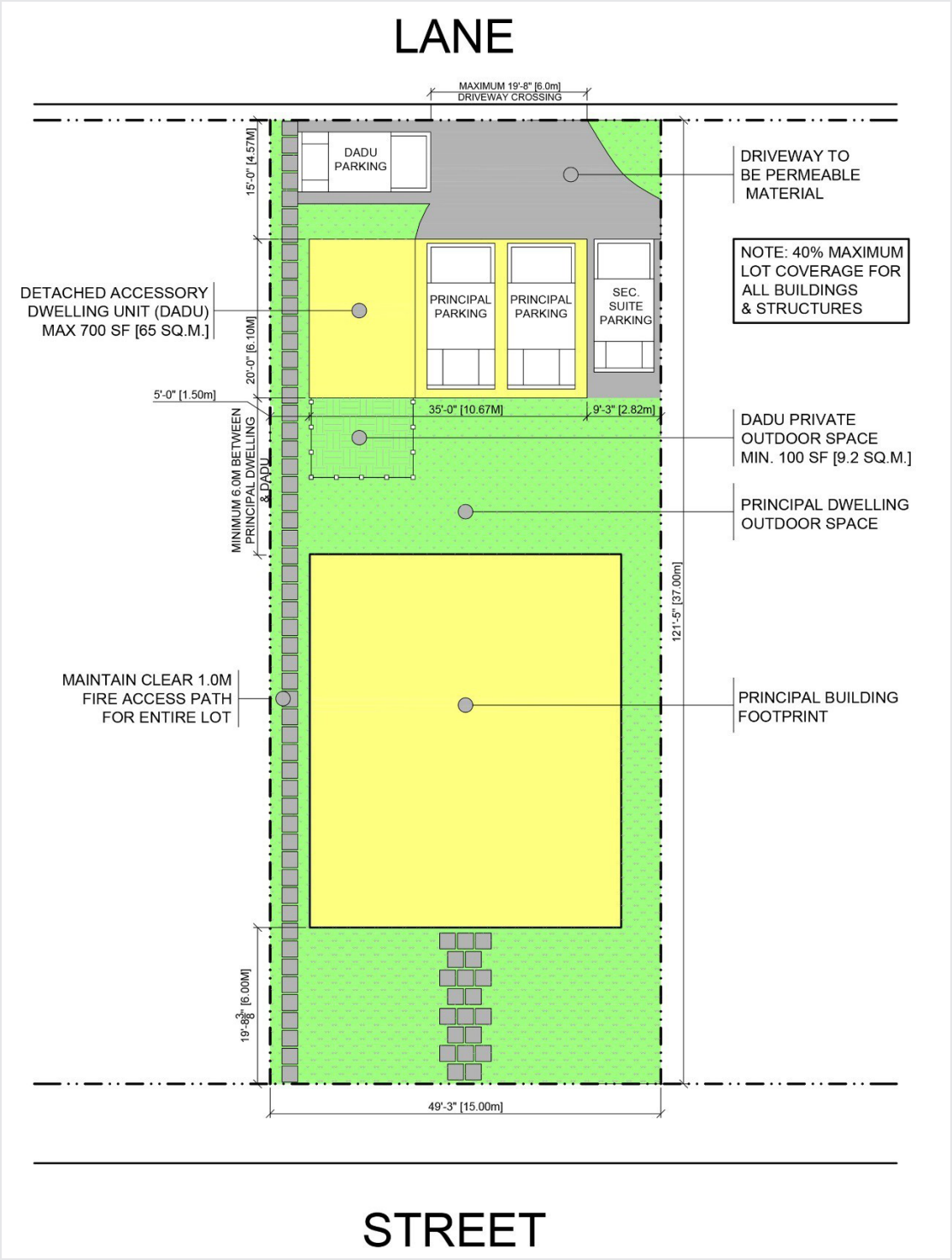
39. Natural rainwater filtration is encouraged through the use of permeable materials on site, including pathways, patios, and parking areas.

POTENTIAL SITING SCENARIOS

The following siting examples highlight the regulations for laneway houses in Section 5.5 of the Zoning Bylaw and include parking requirements for typical lots that will experience demand for laneway house development in Port Moody.

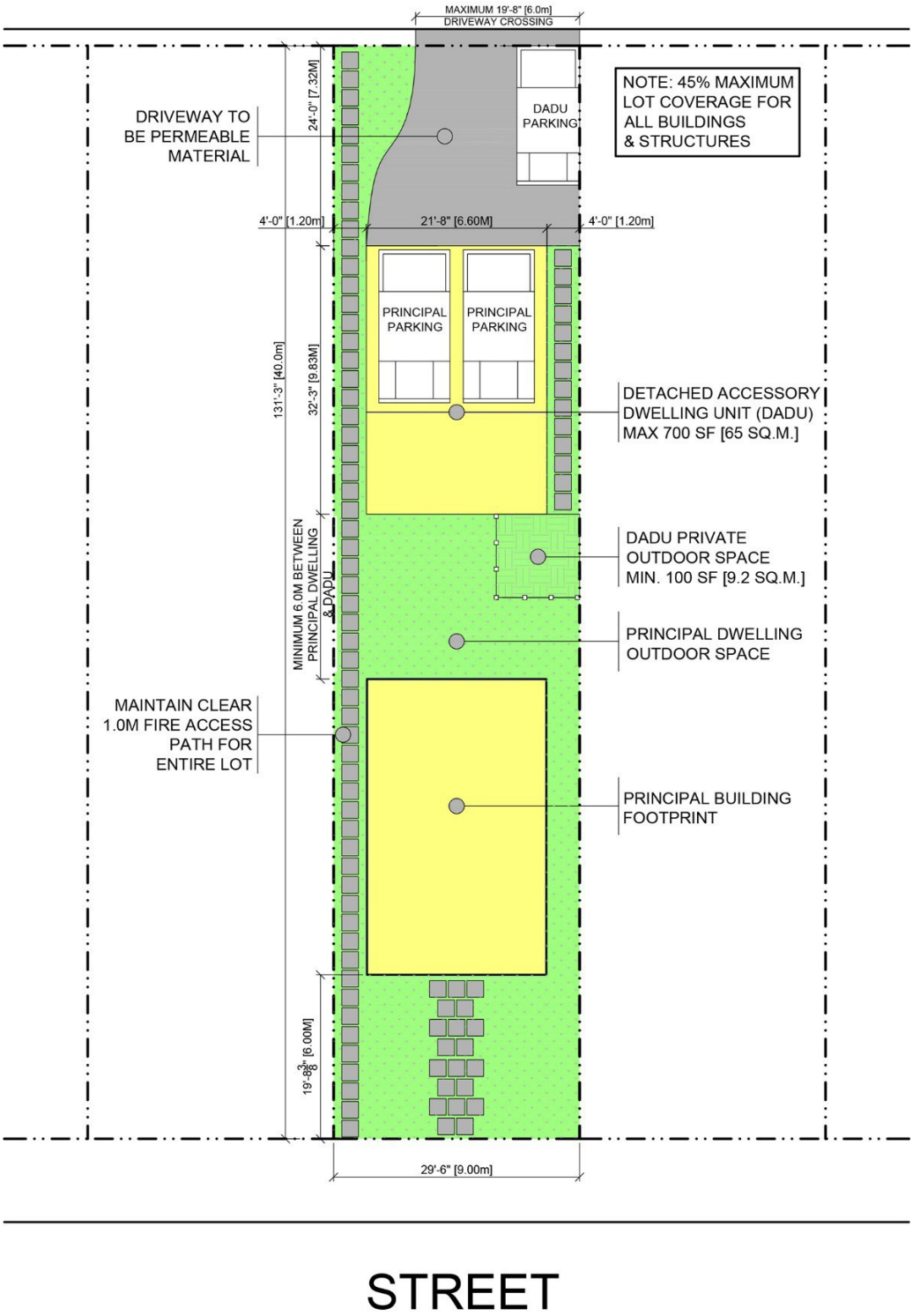
Example 1 – RS1 (Typical Lot) with Secondary Suite

- 20 x 40 m (66 x 131 ft)
- 4 parking spaces (2 for principal building, 1 for laneway house, 1 for secondary suite)



Example 2 – RS1-S (Typical Lot)

- 10 x 40 m (33 x 131 ft)
- 3 parking spaces (2 for principal building, 1 for laneway house)



FAQS

What opportunity will there be for neighbours to provide feedback on a laneway house proposal? Neighbours will be provided an opportunity to submit comment in the City's established neighborhood feedback process at the Building Permit stage.

How will laneway houses fit in with the character of my neighbourhood? The City of Port Moody's guiding principles for laneway houses encourage respect for the scale and form of neighbouring properties and strive to ensure that the established neighbourhood character serves as inspiration for new development. The City's DPA 7 design guidelines will guide laneway house design to maintain or enhance neighbourhood character.

How will laneway houses be designed to respect the privacy of adjacent lots? Respecting privacy is an important design element that an application for a laneway house will need to address. The City's design criteria aim to ensure that all new laneway house proposals fit appropriately into their context and avoid issues of overlook. Careful placement of windows and landscaping is encouraged in the City's DPA 7 design guidelines. Applicants should consult with neighbours on laneway house proposals and neighborhood feedback is considered as part of the City's decision-making.

Can both the principal dwelling and the laneway house be rented? The property owner must live in either the principal dwelling or the laneway house.

Can a secondary suite and a laneway house exist on the same property? In the City of Port Moody subject to the applicable zoning, a property owner may have both a secondary suite and a laneway house on their property.

However, a lot must be able to accommodate the required off-street parking requirements for each unit as outlined in the Zoning Bylaw.

How many parking spaces do I need on my property? Each property owner will be required to provide one (1) on-site parking space for exclusive use of the laneway house tenant. If the main house also has a secondary suite, one (1) parking space is required for the suite. Two (2) spaces are required for the main house. In this scenario, one property may require four (4) parking spaces on the lot to satisfy the parking requirements of the Zoning Bylaw. The site plan included with the Development Permit Application for a laneway house must clearly show the location of the applicable number of required off-street parking spaces on the property. Refer to Zoning Bylaw Section 6.3.

Can I park in the setback from the lane? Yes, however the space between the lane and the laneway house is intended for landscaping and other permeable surface areas that enhance the lane.

Are basements permitted in laneway houses? Basements may be permitted depending on site constraints and ability to connect to City services. The floor area of a basement that is completely below grade is excluded from the total floor area of a laneway house. Refer to Zoning Bylaw Section 5.5.3.

Are garages allowed in laneway houses? Yes, garages are permitted in laneway houses, however, the maximum permitted lot coverage of a laneway house is 65 m^2 and there are building code implications when combining living space with garages.

Can I keep my existing detached garage and build a separate laneway house? This may not be possible on all lots. Both a detached garage and a laneway house are considered accessory buildings. On residential lots, a secondary accessory building is limited to 10 m^2 in floor area. If you construct a laneway house with a maximum floor area of 90 m^2, the existing detached garage must not exceed 10 m^2. Refer to Zoning Bylaw Section 5.2.2.

Can I convert my detached garage into a laneway house? There are building code complications when converting an existing garage to a laneway house. Consideration of this conversion occurs through the development approvals process to ensure that the lot has available density, the proposed parking, and meets setback and other design and building code requirements.

Can I build a laneway house and then subdivide my property later? Property owners applying for a new laneway house on an RS1 lot that is eligible for subdivision should take into account the location of potential future property lines and required side yard setbacks for laneway houses in the RS1-S zone when determining the location of the laneway house.

Does having a laneway house affect my property taxes? The British Columbia Assessment Authority is responsible for determining the value of your property for tax purposes. Property taxes are divided into two parts – the value of the land and the value of the improvements. Laneway houses increase the value of the improvements on the property and therefore may result in an increase in taxes for this part of the assessment. Please contact the British Columbia Assessment Authority for further information on potential property tax implications.

RESOURCES

City of Port Moody Zoning Bylaw, 2018, No. 2937
portmoody.ca/zoningbylaw

City of Port Moody Official Community Plan
portmoody.ca/ocp

Development Permit Area 7: Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit Intensive Residential Development Design Guidelines
portmoody.ca/dpaguidelines

Planning Division Staff
planning@portmoody.ca
604.469.4540

CONTACTS

Architects
- Architectural Institute of British Columbia, aibc.ca

Builders/General Contractors
- Canadian Homebuilders Association BC Chapter, chbabc.org
- Building Officials Association of BC, boabc.org

Developers
- Urban Development Institute, udi.bc.ca

Electricians
- BC Electrical Association, bcea.bc.ca

Engineers
- Association of Professional Engineers of BC, egbc.ca

Heating, Ventilation & Cooling
- Thermal Environmental Comfort Association, teca.ca

Land Surveyors
- The Association of BC Land Surveyors, abcls.ca

Landscape Architects
- BC Society of Landscape Architects, bcsla.org

Lawyers
- The Law Society of BC, lawsociety.bc.ca

Planners
- Planning Institute of BC, pibc.bc.ca

Plumbers
- Plumbing Officials' Association of BC, bcplumbingofficials.com

Property Information
- British Columbia Assessment Authority, bcassessment.ca

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

(from Zoning Bylaw)

Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU): means a Dwelling Unit in the Rear Yard of a Single Detached or Semi-Detached Residential Lot that is separate from and subordinate in scale to the principal Dwelling Unit on the Lot and which may not be stratified. Also referred to as a laneway house, backyard cottage, granny flat, garden suite, coach house, or carriage house.

Floor Area: means the sum of the areas of floors in a Building, calculated from the outside of the exterior walls, subject to the provisions within section 5.3.4 of the Zoning Bylaw.

Floor Area Ratio: means the figure obtained when the Floor Area of all Buildings on a Lot, calculated in accordance with section 5.3.4 of the Zoning Bylaw, is divided by the area of the Lot upon which the Buildings and Structures are situated.

Front Lot Line: means the shortest Lot line common to a Lot and an abutting Highway (excluding Lanes and footpaths), except where a Lot has more than one abutting Highway, the Front Lot Line shall be the Lot line most commonly used as the Front Lot Line by neighbouring properties. For Corner Lots, the Front Lot Line is the shortest Lot line common to a Lot and an abutting Highway (excluding Lanes and footpaths).

Grade: means the average elevation of the point at which the foundation of a Building or Structure intersects with the ground, measured by averaging the existing Grades at the corners of the Building or Structure. Refer to the RS1 and RS1-S zones for zone specific Grade definitions.

Lot Coverage: is the sum of all areas that are within the outside perimeter of all Buildings and Structures on a Lot, including all Decks and projections, but excluding Structures less than 0.6 m in Height, eaves up to 1.2 m in depth, and stairs.

Lot Width: means the distance between the side Lot lines measured at the points where the required Front Yard Setback distance intersects with each of the respective side Lot lines.

Rear Lot Line: means the Lot line or lines opposite to and most distant from the Front Lot Line, or, where the rear portion of the Lot is bounded by intersecting Lot lines, the point of such intersection.

Terms clarified for information only – for permit review the City will rely on the text of the Zoning Bylaw and other relevant bylaws.