



Robert Street Heritage Conservation Area Guidelines

ATTACHMENT C



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All over the city new homes are springing into being . . . built by those who have long thought the house of their dreams far out of reach. Through the D.H.A. they are building their own homes for less than 20 per cent of the completed cost, with the balance to be paid monthly at a rate that is less than rent. Here is YOUR opportunity to own your own home, in the location you wish, built to your own specifications.

PUT YOURSELF IN YOUR OWN HOME . . .

DESIGNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE MAN OF MODERATE MEANS

With Payments Equivalent to Rent

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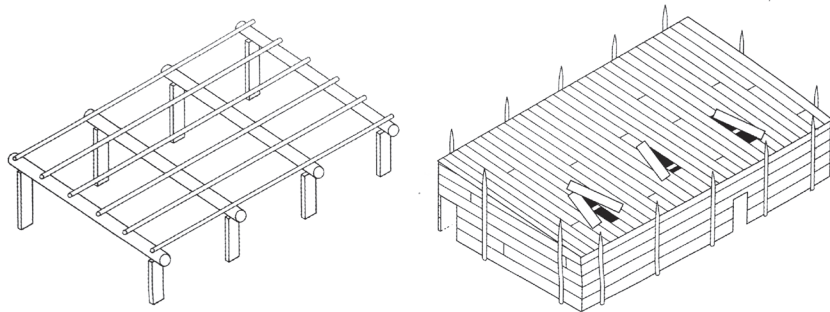
1 The History of Robert Street

1.1 First Nations Presence

The Robert Street heritage conservation area is located on the homelands of the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Lekwungen) peoples, today represented by the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, who inhabited southern Vancouver Island for thousands of years prior to European contact. There are many sites along Victoria's shoreline that are culturally significant to the Lekwungen people.

After the founding of Fort Victoria in 1843, many Lekwungen families gathered in a village on shore of Victoria West, which was officially designated a reserve in 1853. It was around this time that the families came to be referred to as "Songhees", an anglicized pronunciation of one of the family groups.¹

In 1911, the Songhees came under pressure from the City, provincial and federal governments and negotiated a financial settlement to relocate to a new reserve in Esquimalt.



Lekwungen style shed houses. Illustration by Karen B. Achoff²



"A Woman Weaving a Blanket", Paul Kane, oil on canvas, Southeastern Vancouver Island, BC, 1849-1856, 18"x29", Gift of Sir Edmund Osler.



First bay east of Lime Bay, Songhees Reserve, Catalogue No. 1684, PN6824, RBCM, Indigenous Collections. Robert Street is located beyond the far shore. This bay (now Cooperage Place in Vic West) was infilled for development). Note: Image has been cropped from original.



This is a painting of the Old Songhees Village located east of Robert Street, created by artist Paul Kane, 1847, Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas Bequest of H.J. Lutcher Stark, 1965

1.2 Early Development and Subdivision

Robert Street is named after the original developer of Victoria West, Robert “John” Russell (b. Edinburgh, 1832-1903), a former Hudson’s Bay Company employee. Robert sailed to Victoria in 1853 where he spent 10 years operating a mill. In 1864, he bought Section 31 (103.5 acres) from the HBC. Section 31 was a vertically oriented country lands parcel created in Joseph Pemberton’s 1852 plan for Victoria. The lands extended from the shoreline at the foot of Robert and Russell Streets, north to Craigflower Road. The Songhees reserve was located east of Russell’s lands. In 1879, Russell subdivided the lands into lots called Springfield Estates, named after his family home, Springfield. Springfield included a barn, carriage house and outdoor dance pavilion.²



Close-up of map at right showing Section 31 of the Esquimalt District



1860 Map of the South Eastern Districts of Vancouver island, Rudolph D’heureuse, University of British Columbia. Library. Rare Books and Special Collections. G3512 .V357 1860 D4

1.3 Victorian and Edwardian Era Homes

The Robert Street heritage conservation area includes three Victorian and Edwardian era houses on Robert Street and one on Seaforth Street. They were constructed for upper class families between 1888 and 1911. Three are associated with the Muirhead family and the Muirhead and Mann Company, which made architectural components (223 and 230 Robert Street and 614 Seaforth Street). 223 and 230 Robert Street have outstanding architectural value and were designed by provincially renowned architects Thomas Hooper and Charles Elwood Watkins.

Development of Robert Street began with James Muirhead Sr.'s purchase of lots 3, 8, 12, 17, 20 and 23 of Robert Russell's subdivision, comprising almost the entire east half of Robert Street. In 1883, James built an Italianate style house at the southeast corner of Robert Street and Esquimalt Road for his wife Rebecca and their four children. They planted gardens and Tomkins King Apple Trees on their lands to the south. King Apple Trees are rare in Victoria. Muirhead Sr.'s son, James Muirhead Jr. constructed his own house on Robert Street in 1903 on the most southerly of the six lots the family owned.³

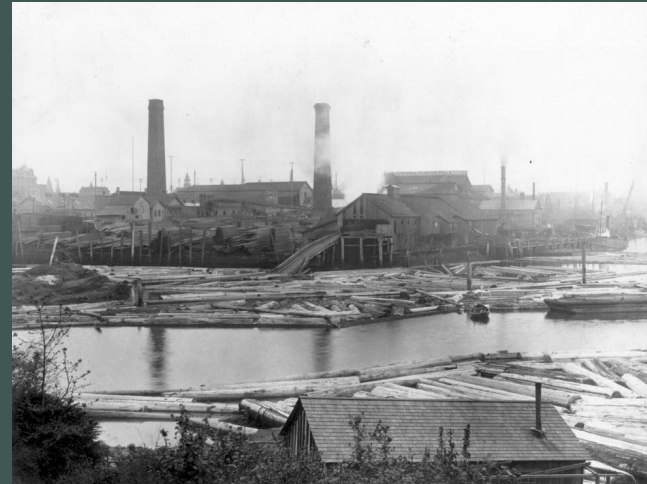
James Muirhead Sr. is an historically significant figure for his entrepreneurial contributions to the City's early construction industry. Born in Scotland, he immigrated to Victoria in 1862 from Peru after travelling across the Americas. In 1870, he partnered with fellow Scottish immigrant, James Mann, forming the Muirhead and Mann company. They constructed a lumber mill called the Victoria Planing Mills, in Victoria Harbour near the foot of Pembroke Street.



527 Esquimalt Road, 1897, Muirhead family standing in front of house, L to R: Mrs. Rebecca (nee Fleming), James Sr., Mary A., James McL., John T. and Bertha. Item M09856, City of Victoria Archives.

Apart from 223 Robert Street, two other houses are connected to the Muirhead and Mann Company and the Victoria Planing Mills. Duncan Mcbeath, a foreman at the Victoria Planing Mills, commissioned the one-storey Queen Ann-style cottage at 230 Robert Street in 1899. In 1911, the Mcbeath and his wife commissioned 614 Seaforth Street from architect Hoult Horton. This 1.5-storey house was built in the Colonial Bungalow style and features an expansive wrap-around verandah. The final Victorian and Edwardian era house on Robert Street is 242 Robert Street, a Queen Anne style house built by William Ernest Losee, who purchased his lot directly from Robert Russell. Like the Muirheads, William Losee was involved in the building trades, having founded a sawmill in Shawnigan Lake in 1899. The house at 242 Robert Street was originally located at 621 Seaforth Street and was moved in 1978 to free up land for an apartment building.

The Muirheads were just one of many prominent families who moved to Victoria West during the 1880's and 1890's. The Dunsmuir (coal and E&N Railway), Gray (Albion Iron Works), Troup (shipping), Barnard (BC Coast Steamship Company), Brackman (Brackman-Kerr Milling Co) and Fairall (brewers), all lived in Victoria West.



*Victoria Planing Mills
BC Archives Photo # C09035*



*223 Robert Street, 1904, Muirhead, Richard Hamilton, d.
1979 Victoria Archives Photo #C-09027*



614 Seaforth Street, c. 1911, Architect: Hoult Horton



230 Robert Street, c. 1899-1900, Architect: Thomas Hooper



242 Robert Street "Huntingdon Cottage", c. 1888-1889, Builder: William Ernest Losee. The house was relocated from 621 Seaforth Street in 1978

1.4 Wartime Homes

The transition away from large properties and landholdings began in the 1900's and may have several causes. According to the Victoria Heritage Foundation, new income taxes introduced during World War 1 (WW1) made large estates far more expensive to maintain. Victoria West's picturesque character was transformed through industrialization, beginning in the 1880's, when sealing, whaling and lumber operations were established on the Songhees Reserve. The process continued with the construction of the Silver Spring Brewery in 1895, Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway in 1888, Excelsior Biscuit Bakery in 1901, Fairall Bottling Works in 1901 as well as the Sidney Roofing & Paper Company, and Union Oil facilities. In 1913, the E & N roundhouse and carshop facilities were constructed four blocks east of Robert Street.⁵ A third factor in Victoria West's evolution was economic stagnation between the end of WW1 and WW2.

James Muirhead Jr. had inherited his father's land holdings on Robert Street, but the cost of maintaining the holdings became unsustainable in the 1930's. By 1935, City tax records show that taxes on lots 12, 17 and 20 (233-311 Robert Street) were in arrears. The City of Victoria took possession of the lots by 1936.⁶ The lots were divided into halves measuring 51' x 180' and new owners purchased them for between \$495-\$510.

There are 8 homes on Robert Street built between 1939 and 1945, and two others constructed in 1955. The houses built during WW2 were constructed for working class households. Multiple owners worked in the local transportation industry. Sam Waddington (224 Robert Street) and Frederick Richmond (311 Robert Street) both worked for the E & N Railway. Edward Beaney (241 Robert Street) worked for the BC Electric Railway Company. Erwood Honeybourne (301 Robert Street) worked as a labourer at the HMC dockyard. Other owners include George Goy (206 Robert Street) and Charles Fea (233 Robert Street), who was a clerk for

the Liquor Control Board. Construction values for these homes averaged \$3,175 (\$55,928 adjusted for inflation).

Unlike the Victorian and Edwardian era homes, owners of wartime houses worked with building contractors to design their own houses and did not retain the services of professional architects.



In 1898, Victoria West was a lush, agricultural area, however this picturesque setting was heavily altered by industrial development starting in the 1880's.

Johnson Street Bridge and Victoria waterfront. (ca. 1898) From "Pictures of Victoria and Vicinity", [ca. 1900] - L0507. City of Victoria Archives Part M06589.

The houses built during WW2 have detailing consistent with the Minimal Traditional Style. This was an economical, simplified architectural style that represented a transition between the elaborate historical revival styles of the 1920's and 1930's and modern postwar housing. The economic hardships of the great depression and a growing appetite for modern architectural styles like art deco, art moderne and the international style contributed to the simplicity of the Minimal Traditional style.⁷

Minimal Traditional homes resemble streamlined versions of styles like the English cottage, tudor revival or spanish revival. 206, 224,



224 Robert Street, Original Drawing by James Fairall, June 15, 1940

233, 241 and 255 Robert Street all display features that reference the English cottage style popular in the 1920's. With superfluous detailing stripped away, their small size and compact, square floor plans enabled many lower and middle income families to afford a detached house for the first time. Home decoration magazines promoted minimalism over the outgoing "feather-duster" era as a means to more efficient housekeeping⁸.

The wartime houses on Robert Street are all 1-1.5-storey, two-bedroom houses. Most feature below-grade garages, originally with carriage-style wooden garage doors, a nostalgic reference



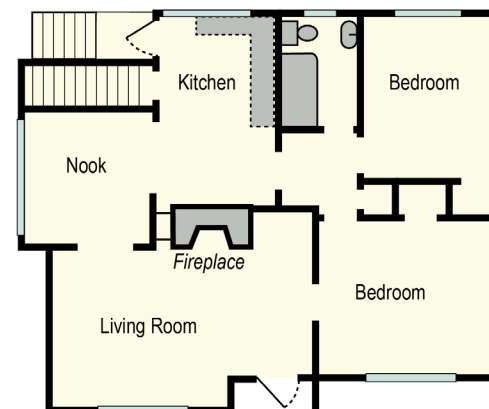
224 Robert Street in 2020. Some details were altered during construction and the entrance and windows do not match the plans.

to horse-drawn carriages. They have concrete foundations, 2x4" wood framed upper storeys and stucco exterior cladding. The interior rooms are organized on a square floor plan, with a living room to one side of the main entry and a bedroom on the other. A central fireplace and chimney face the living room. The square floor plan was the most space efficient design with the least amount of lineal feet to construct and may explain the choice to incorporate garages into the basement level.

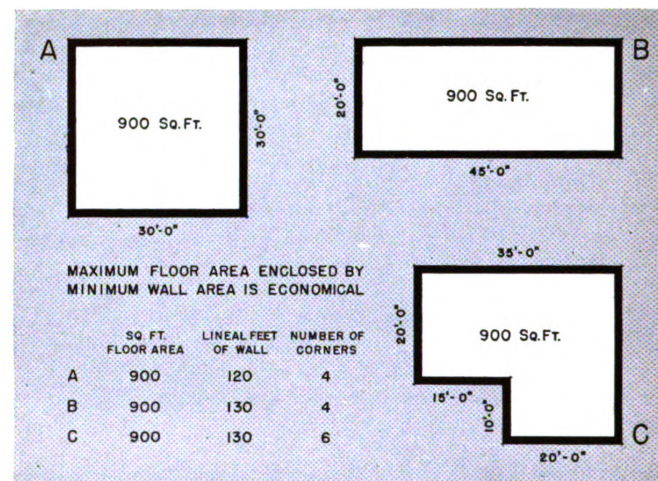
Houses on Robert Street were likely financed under the federal *National Housing Act* of 1938, the successor to the *Dominion Housing Act* in 1935. The *Dominion Housing Act* (DHA) was the first national housing legislation in the nation's history. It was championed by Prime Minister R. B. Bennett during the Great Depression as part of a Canadian New Deal, inspired by President Roosevelt's New Deal in the United States. The DHA improved housing affordability by partnering the federal government and private mortgage lenders



206 Robert Street, c. 1945, Constructed by A. Petek for Mr. George Goy. Rolled eaves and bricks embedded in plaster are references to the English Cottage Style



206 Robert Street- Compact, square floor plan typical of a wartime house with a middle entrance flanked by a living room and bedroom. The chimney is centred in the floor plan.

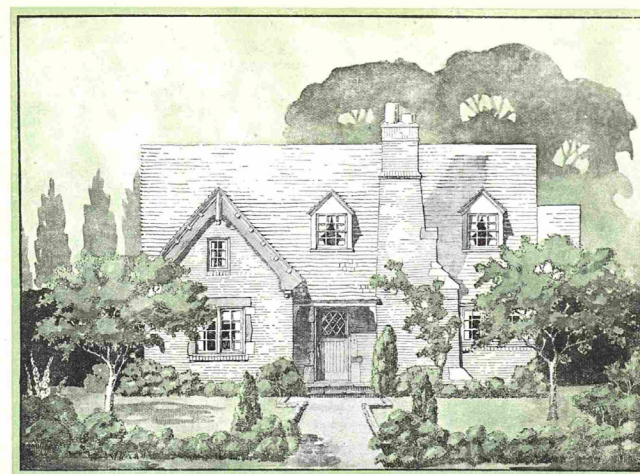


THE THREE HOUSES ABOVE have the same floor area. House B would be more costly to build than house A due to its additional ten lineal feet of wall. If this were a one-story and basement house, it would have about 165 more square feet of foundation and exterior wall area than house A. The cost of house C, which has the same exterior wall area as house B, would be increased by the added cost of two exterior corners, and would cost much more than house A.

From: *Principles of planning small houses*. Washington, D.C. : National Housing Agency, [1946]



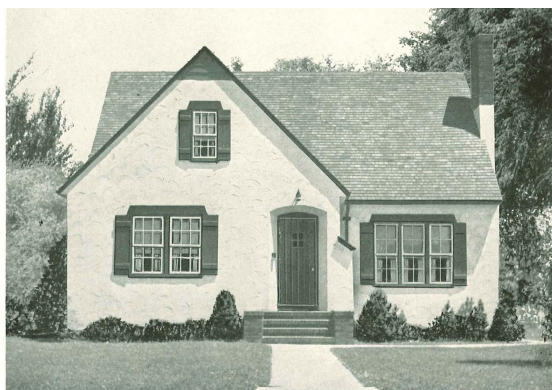
255 Robert Street, c. 1940, Constructed by N.A. Thomas for Howard Horner, who was a trainman for the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railroad



Tinsley & Melbrom, Architects

The small house can be made as beautiful and satisfying and lasting as the great house if as much thought is given to the planning of it

From: "Beauty and Convenience Built-In", Better Homes and Gardens, September 1928. An example of the more elaborate english cottage revival style of the 1920's



Seven Rooms and Alcove

22,150 Cubic Feet

The Newbury

ONE of the finest of its kind, here is presented a handsome stucco bungalow of the English type. There is a remarkable amount of space in the house. If so wished, the upstairs may be

left unfinished until later, although the plans include two large bedrooms, lavatory and an alcove suitable as a nursery or dressing room. A home of this style meets wide approval, and should be excellent for resale.

English bungalow design from the Home Plan Book, 1939 Peter Vredenburg Lumber Company



233 Robert Street, c. 1939, Constructed by E.H. Pope for Charles Fea, who worked as a clerk at the Liquor Control Board


to improve mortgage terms. A DHA joint mortgage increased the maximum loan amount above the statutory limit of 60% to 80% of the total property cost. Interest rates were limited to 5%, which was lower than a conventional mortgage of the time. The DHA also introduced long term, 20-year amortization periods, and monthly payments, at a time when 3-5 year terms and quarterly or bi-annual payments were typical. These measures combined to make home ownership more affordable and competitive with renting⁹.

Applicants for a *Dominion Housing Act* mortgage needed 20% of the total project value in cash or land, then a lender would provide a loan equal to 80% of the total value of a new detached house. The maximum loan amount was \$4000 (for a \$5000 project). The *National Housing Act* improved on these terms further, lowering the equity requirement from 20% to 10%, provided that the house cost no more than \$2500. The Daily Colonist ran multiple articles on the effects of the legislation during the late 1930's, citing it as the dominant factor fueling construction of 6,000 new single family homes throughout BC in 1938¹⁰. In May of 1939, the Daily Colonist reported that the City of Victoria Building Department had issued the largest number of building permits for detached dwellings in any four month period since 1931¹¹.

The minimal traditional houses of Robert Street are symbols of the nation's first federal housing strategy, which prioritized new construction, suburban development and single-family home ownership over alternatives. Homes like those built on Robert Street established the template for middle class housing in the postwar period.

BUILD THE HOME YOU HAVE DREAMED OF NOW!

There is nothing to compare with the thrill of home ownership . . . it is the long looked for goal of every family. Money paid out in rent is lost . . . a mere tax on the passing years. Money paid out in home ownership is an investment in a valuable asset with value received for the outlay.



YOU PAY OUT OF INCOME

With a

DOMINION HOUSING LOAN

EXAMPLE!

Brown has a lot worth \$800 and wishes to build a house **\$2700**

Giving him a total property value of **\$3000**

The Dominion Housing Loan provides 80% of this **\$2400**

Brown puts up \$600 (less the value of the lot), in cash **\$300**

The total monthly charges he must meet for interest and retirement of the loan is only **\$15.69**

Over a Period of Twenty Years

Now there is no need to wait for years while the necessary capital is amassed. For less than 20% of the completed cost you may build your own house under the Dominion Housing Act. Repayment and interest charges are carried at a cost that is as little or less than renting, and you have the satisfaction of watching your equity grow, month by month.

**Simple . . . Convenient . . .
Planned to Meet Your Needs**

You choose the type of home you wish, in a location that suits you. You only put up a small cash payment, plus the value of the lot. The balance is spread over a period of twenty years with no finance charges or extras. Payments are arranged like rent, on a monthly basis, with the option of repayment in full at any time you wish. In every way the Dominion Housing Act is designed to aid the man of moderate income, giving him the opportunity to enjoy the advantages of home ownership now.

These Firms Endorse the Dominion Housing Act and Are Ready to Serve You

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Contractors and Builders—No Job Too Small or Too Large
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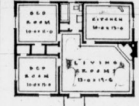
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BUILDERS' SUPPLIES
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Weather Strips
 For Draughty Windows and Doors - Stop Rattles
 Save Fuel
 Also ROLLSHUTTERS, new Modern Fly Screen and VENETIAN BLINDS
B. T. LEIGH
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Character Found in Low Cost Home



THIS house is especially designed for a fifty-foot lot and the "back foot" is placed forward, using the main entrance door and front window as points of interest, no additional money being spent to achieve the result. Its design is such a nature that any accepted material, such as brick, frame, or stucco may be used for the walls and acquiring from asphalt shingles to slate or tile may be used on the roof. Solid steel casement sash, warm air heat, tile bath, etc. are some of the items included in the specifications.



Stained batten shutters are used on the front windows. Standard-size materials of stock design have

been used throughout in an endeavor to keep the cost as low as possible. This, of course, includes pipes, rafters, doors, windows and even the design of the baseboards. The plan shows that sufficient furniture space is allowed in each room. Nothing has been left out that could possibly add more to its attractiveness or cheapen the cost of its construction without considerably affecting either its appearance, its comfort or future upkeep cost. Ample space for a driveway would be left on a fifty-foot lot.

Rules to Follow In Applying for Housing Act Loan

CONSIDER EACH SEPARATE ROOM
 Rooms Should Receive Consideration as Separate Unit

Everywhere Homes Are Rising Under the **NATIONAL HOUSING ACT**

The plan that makes the long wait for capital unnecessary.

MONTHLY PAYMENTS THAT ARE LESS THAN RENT

LET US SHOW YOU HOW YOU CAN BUILD NOW

\$6.54 PER THOUSAND
 Borrowed, paid monthly, secures interest and principal on a twenty-year basis.

All you need is 20% of the completed value in the form of a building lot, cash or both. You choose your own plans and builder and with the minimum of red tape and delay construction is started on a home of your own.

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A Really Picturesque Colonial Cottage



COULD one hope to find a more perfect example of a small Colonial cottage than this. No trim or furnishings to grow old and become uninteresting, just honest, good-time house from start to finish, with only standard materials of stock sizes and shapes used to accomplish the effect, with a minimum cost.

The exterior walls may be of most any of the following materials and will be "architecturally correct": Brick, plain struck joints or white-washed, stucco, creek or random ashlar limestone or a combination of brick and stone trim; using clapboards to finish out the gables as illustrated.

The roof should be of weather-

board, effect such as weathered grey or brown, laid in none too mechanical fashion, painting the sash a pearly color and staining the outside woodwork a very weathered grey-green or walnut brown.

The sketch of the floor plan reveals the unusual arrangement which is rather distinctive and at the same time not at all expensive to build. All walls are of sand-finish plaster, floors of wide plank, plaster jambs at all windows, beams in the living-room ceiling and a very attractive and simple old Colonial fireplace.

A few "broken lights" are used in the bath at certain points in order to relieve the feeling that the house is too new, and rust-colored hand-wrought hardware is used on the front door for the same reason.

Top: Sunday, April 21, 1940 edition of the Daily Colonist. This 2-bedroom house has a similar floor plan to many houses on Robert Street

Left: Article from Sunday, April 21, 1940 with plans for an affordable cottage-style house and attached garage

Right: A mortgage broker advertises *National Housing Act* housing loans

Threshold of Happiness



A Home of Their Own

WITHIN THE REACH OF THE NEWLY-WEDS THROUGH THE **National Housing Act**

Now the young couple can start married life in their own home, built to their own requirements to their own plans. All they need is 20% of the completed value, in the form of a building site, cash or both. The balance may be paid from income on a monthly basis over a twenty-year period. They get a new home, a home of their own, for monthly payments that are less than rent.

LOANS OF \$2,500 AND LESS
 May Be Secured With Only 10% Down in Cash or Building Lot

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2 Statement of Significance

Description of Historic Place

Located south of Esquimalt Road and the E&N Rail Trail, the Robert Street heritage conservation area is an enclave of fourteen 1.5-storey single-detached and converted houses adjacent to Rainbow Park, the Songhees Walkway and the shoreline of Victoria West. The area includes one house on Seaforth Street.

Heritage Value

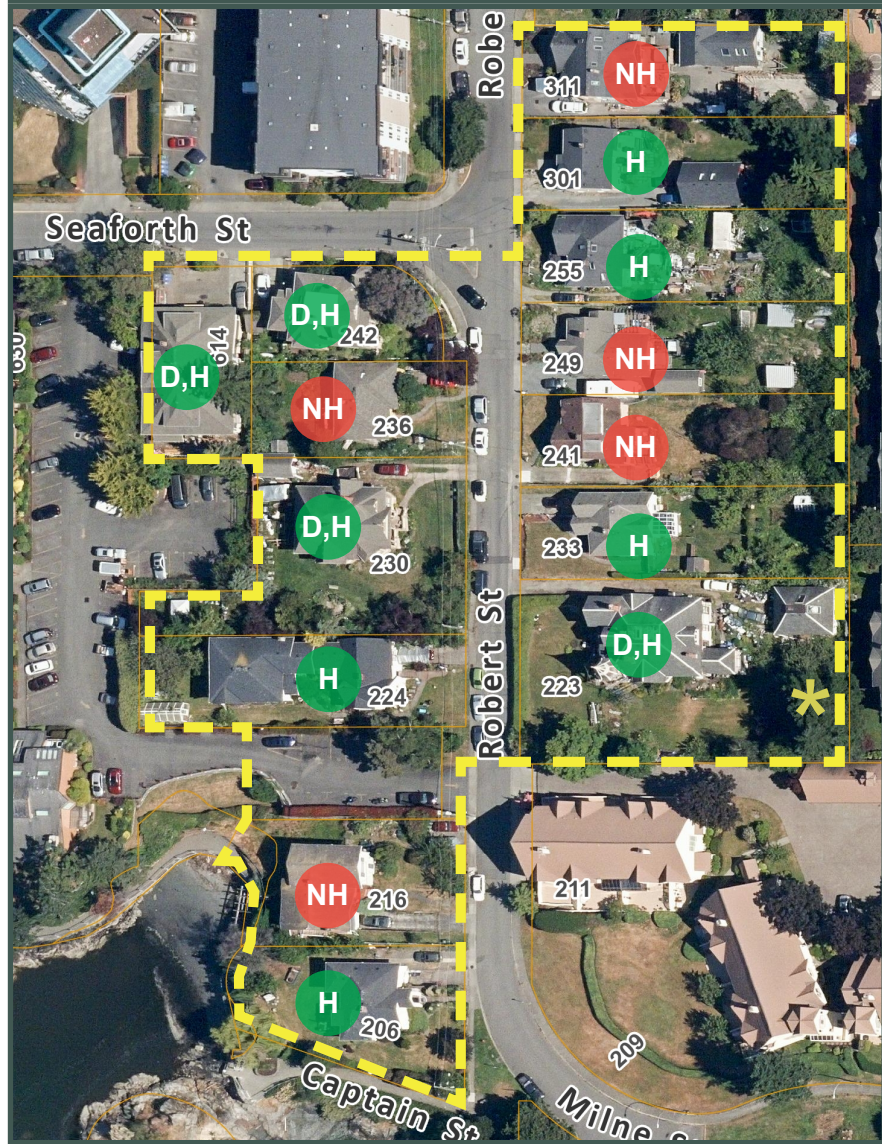
the Robert Street heritage conservation area has historical and aesthetic value for its unique juxtaposition of Victorian and Edwardian era homes built by wealthy entrepreneurs between 1888-1903, and the economical minimal-traditional homes built by middle class families between 1939-1945 under federal housing legislation of the late depression era. The minimal traditional-style houses have two-tone colour schemes, smooth stucco walls, fluid entrance details and simple fenestration in contrast to the polychromatic, textured Victorian houses with their turrets, finials, broad porches with classical columns, carved brackets and other eccentric decorations. The area is a tangible expression of Victoria West's urban development from a collection of large homes on expansive landscaped properties to an industrial employment centre edged with suburbs for working class families. The area displays the evolution of the single detached home from an exclusive high end commodity in the early 1900's, to the template for middle class housing in the postwar era. This shift was enabled when the federal government intervened in the housing market through the *Dominion Housing Act* of 1935 and subsequent *National Housing Act* of 1938.

The area embodies theme 1.3 of the Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework- Pioneer Farms to First Suburbs. 223 and 230 Robert Street and 614 Seaforth Street are associated with the Muirhead and Mann Company, a significant manufacturing business contributing to early Victoria's gateway economy (Theme 2).

Character Defining Elements

- regular pattern of rectangular lots with frontages of approximately 15 metres (50 feet)
- spacious front yards and generous front yard setbacks
- residential development reflecting a range of income levels, including large Late Victorian and Edwardian era homes and modest wartime homes in the minimal traditional style, which together reflect the social evolution of Victoria West from a wealthy, exclusive neighbourhood to one with a diverse mix working-class skilled and unskilled industrial and railroad employees
- consistent pattern of pitched roofs including cross-gabled, hipped and pitched roofs, typically with at least one front-facing gable
- consistent pattern of low-scale, detached dwellings with horizontal massing
- architectural details as illustrated on the diagrams on the following pages
- high degree of livability achieved through generous side yard setbacks and low scale construction

Map of Heritage & Non-Heritage Properties

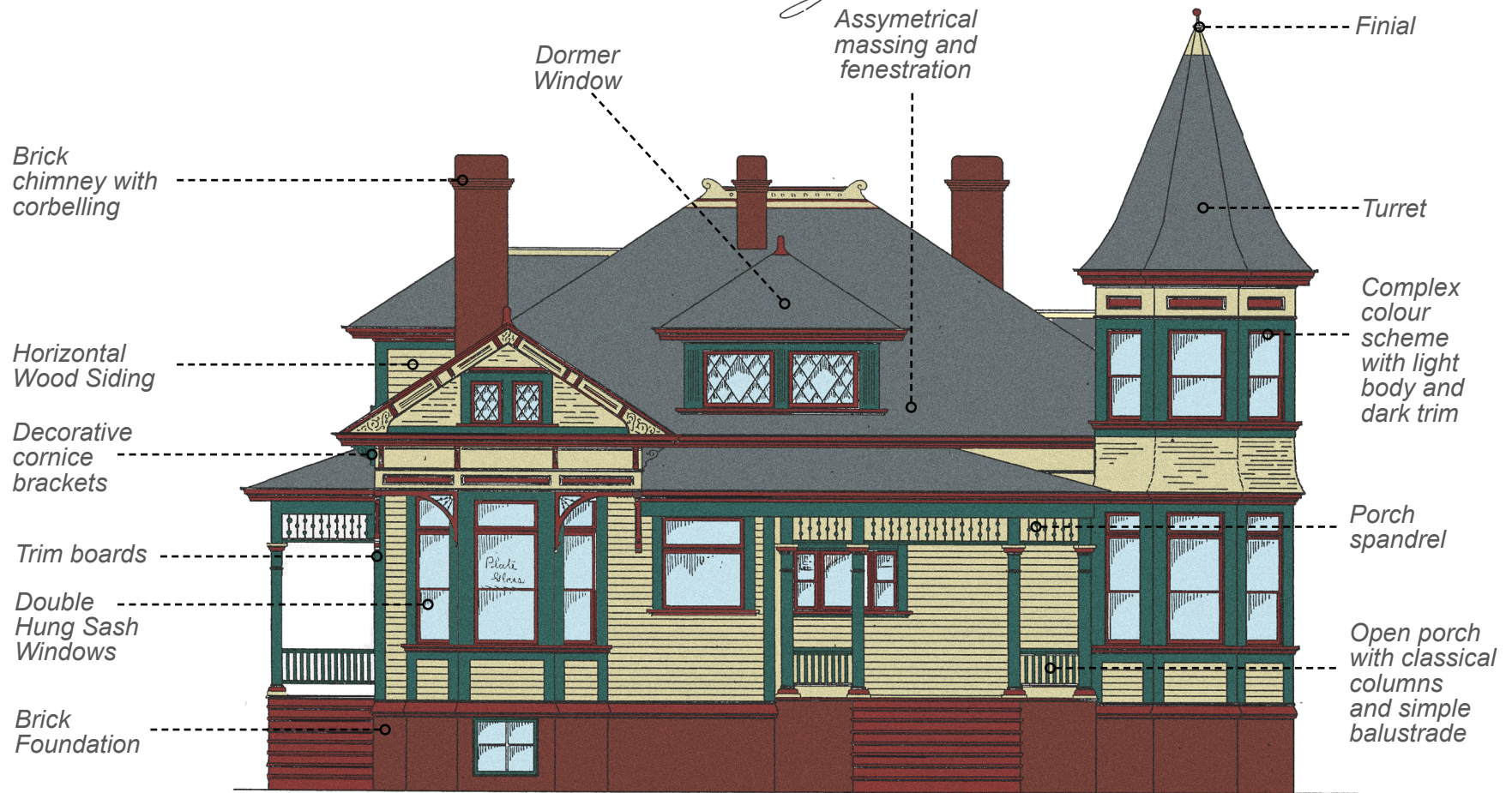


- H Heritage Property
- D,H Designated, Heritage Property
- NH Non-Heritage Property
- ✱ Culturally Significant Tree

Victorian & Edwardian Era Homes Character Defining Elements

223 Robert Street- Colourized version of original
Hooper + Watkins Illustration

*Drawings for frame Residence
to be erected on Robert St
Victoria, B.C.*



Brick chimney with corbelling

Horizontal Wood Siding

Decorative cornice brackets

Trim boards

Double Hung Sash Windows

Brick Foundation

Dormer Window

Assymetrical massing and fenestration

Finial

Turret

Complex colour scheme with light body and dark trim

Porch spandrel

Open porch with classical columns and simple balustrade

Front Elevation

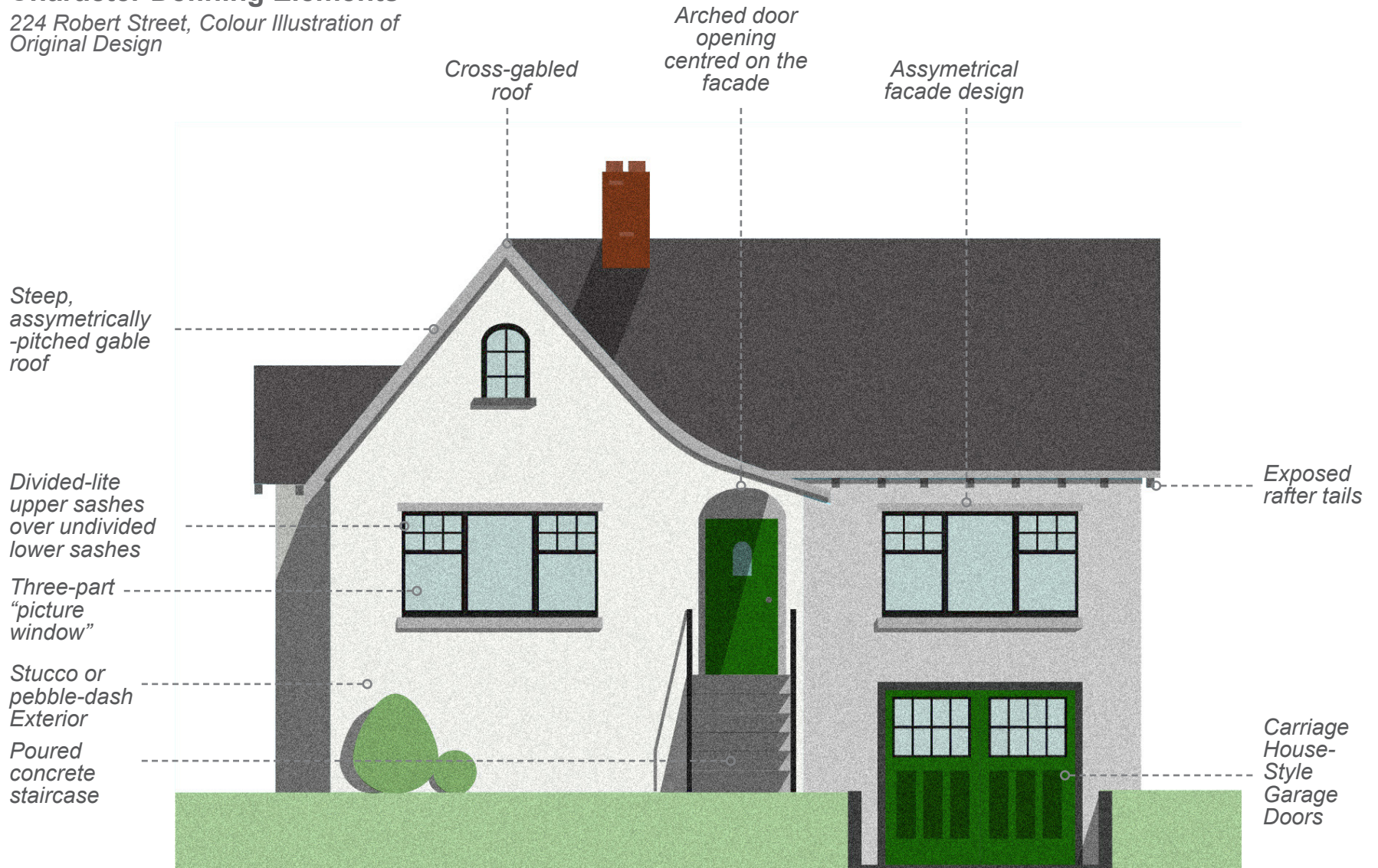
Scale 1/4" = 10' 00" inches

*Hooper + Watkins
Architects*

Opposite Page: Looking
Towards 527 Esquimalt
Road, c. 1903
City of Victoria Archives
Item M10042

Wartime Homes Character Defining Elements

224 Robert Street, Colour Illustration of
Original Design



3 Design Guidelines for New Buildings

Intent: To ensure that new buildings in HCA 1, Traditional Residential - Robert Street, are compatible, distinguishable and generally complementary to existing homes.

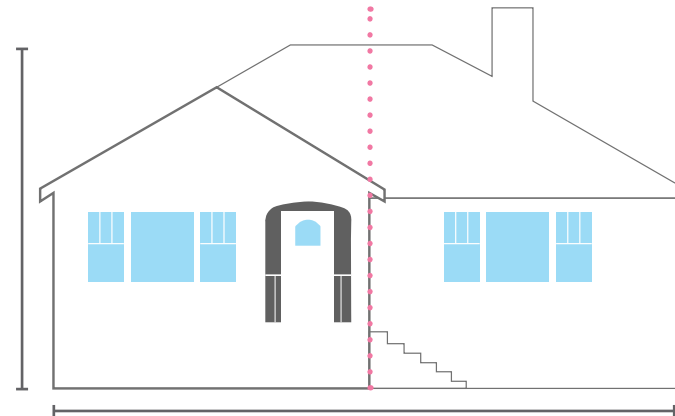
4.1 Massing & Scale

- 4.1.1 Design new buildings with horizontal rather than vertical proportions
- 4.1.2 New building heights should be sensitive to and compatible with the surrounding context

4.2 Windows, Doors and Entrances

- 4.2.1 Doors should be slightly off centred or centred in the facade, recessed into an entryway or an open porch
- 4.2.2 Solid doors or doors with a transom light in the upper portion are encouraged. It is recommended that glazing occupy no more than 3/4s of the surface
- 4.2.4 Doors with a divided light transom and 3-dimensional glazing bars are encouraged, however leaded glass is discouraged
- 4.2.5 Windows arranged in pairs or sets of three are encouraged. Picture windows are encouraged.
- 4.2.6 Divided light windows are encouraged. Glazing bars in new windows should be 3-dimensional to create a sense of texture and depth

Assymetrical facade composition balanced around the centreline



New buildings on Robert Street should have a horizontal scale, with windows arranged in pairs or threes. Entries should be recessed similar to existing houses on Robert Street (ie. 255 Robert Street)



Examples of compatible new doors

- 4.2.7 Dormer windows are encouraged to improve the livability of attic spaces
- 4.2.8 Casement or sash windows are supported. Window surrounds can include casings with a drip cap, sill and apron for aesthetics and waterproofing

4.3 Roof Profile

- 4.3.1 Gable, cross-gabled or hipped roofs are encouraged

4.4 Exterior Cladding

- 4.4.1 Smooth surfaced cladding such as stucco or horizontally oriented cladding, including fibre cement cladding, is encouraged. Board and batten style siding is also supported.

4.5 Garages

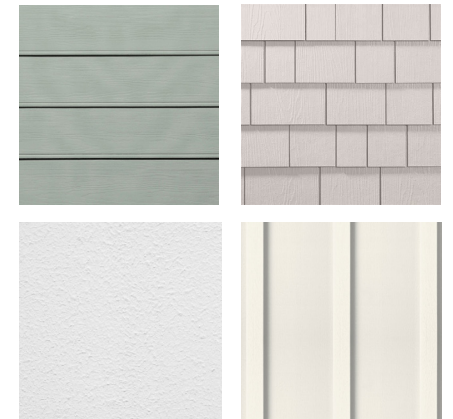
- 4.5.1 Garages should be integral to the facade or separate from the main dwelling and located behind the front wall. Projecting garages are discouraged
- 4.5.2 Garage doors should feature transom lights to visually break up the upper portion.



A modern cottage by McCown Design in Mobile, Alabama presents a smooth textured facade with prominent window and door headers



Modern carriage-style integral garage with a transom



Siding possibilities for new homes



This house in Saanich features a cross gabled roof design with front facing gables, a dormer window in the roof and windows arranged in pairs or threes. The window arrangements here are not "picture windows" since the middle pane should be undivided to create a view that appears like a picture from within the house. Vinyl windows such as those used on this house are discouraged since the simulated muntins produce a flat effect. Despite these minor points, a house like this would fit in well on Robert Street



Christopher Architecture & Interiors



Modern cottage-style residence by Kurt Baum Architects Photo: John Huelskamp



Jean Stoffer Design



Scott Carlisle Architect



Cambie Village Duplex by Avera Developments, Vancouver, BC,

4 Infill Development

Intent: That infill housing constructed to the rear of existing or new homes maintains the general sense of scale, livability and generous open space qualities in HCA 1, Traditional Residential - Robert Street,

5.1 Building Siting and Separation

- 5.1.1 Maintain generous separation distances between buildings, in order to provide for circulation, privacy and outdoor recreation opportunities.
- 5.1.2 Design infill buildings with usable outdoor amenity space for occupants.
- 5.1.3 New infill buildings should provide larger setbacks from adjacent lots to minimize overlook onto neighbouring properties

5.2 Character

- 5.2.1 Infill buildings should be constructed of high quality materials that reference materials and textures found elsewhere in the area (ie. stucco or wood lap siding). Fibre cement lap siding or shingles are also supported.
- 5.2.2 Design new infill buildings with a balanced window-to-wall ratio. A window-wall ratio of 40% or less is recommended.
- 5.2.3 New infill buildings should use diverse forms, colour and designs to avoid a “cookie cutter” appearance
- 5.2.4 Design new access driveways as multi-functional, pedestrian-oriented spaces with permeable surface materials

5.3 Massing

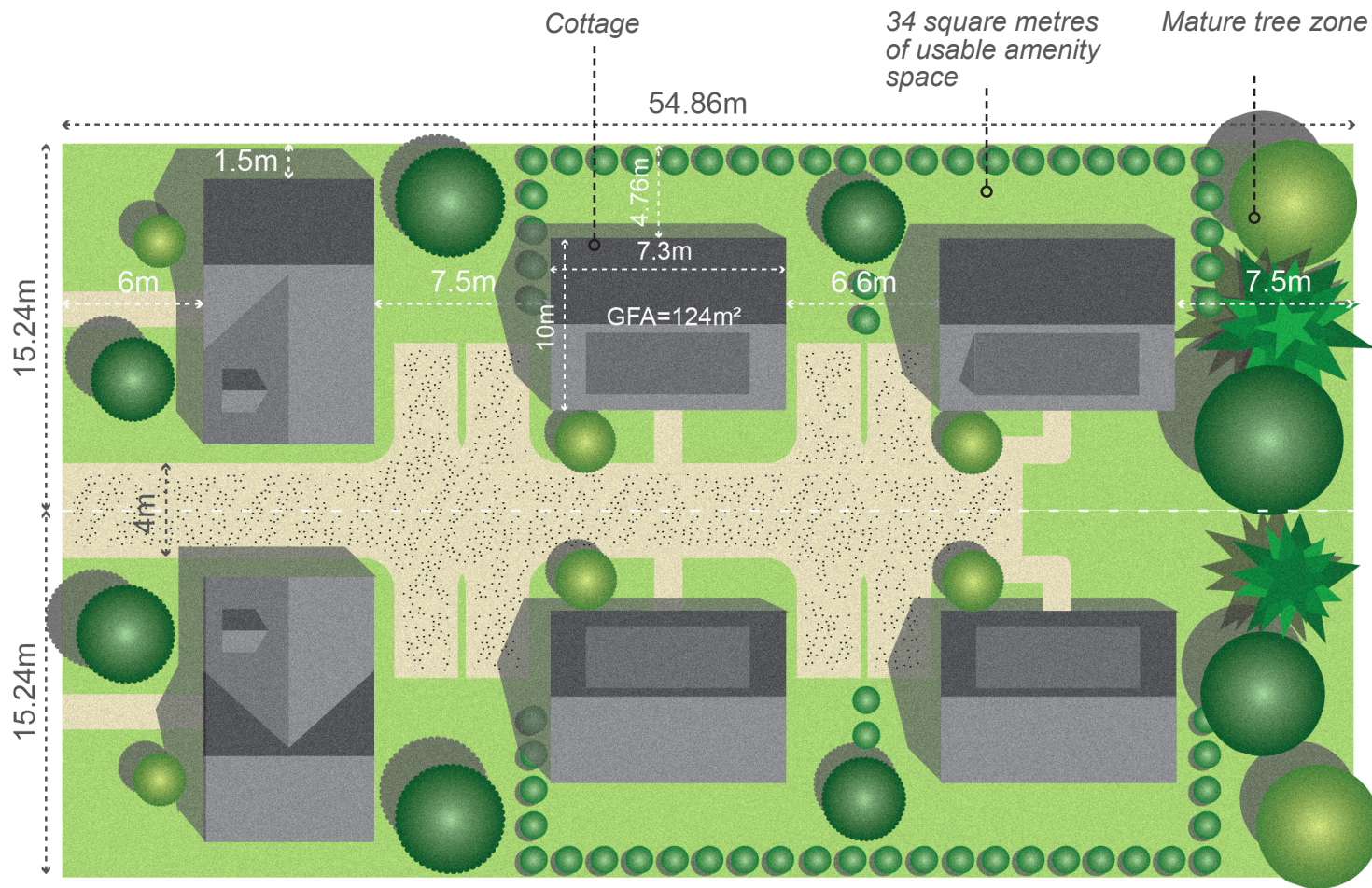
- 5.3.1 New infill buildings should be sensitively massed to minimize shadowing on adjacent properties. Half or partial upper storeys with dormers are encouraged.

5.4 Windows and Privacy

- 5.4.1 Windows should be maximized along those façades oriented to the interior of the site



Example cottage cluster style homes on permanent foundations. Cottage Square, Ocean Springs, Mississippi, Bruce Tolar Architect



Example Cottage Cluster Development

1:200

5 Alterations to Existing Buildings

Intent: To ensure that alterations to heritage properties are sensitive and compatible and follow the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*.

6.1 Windows

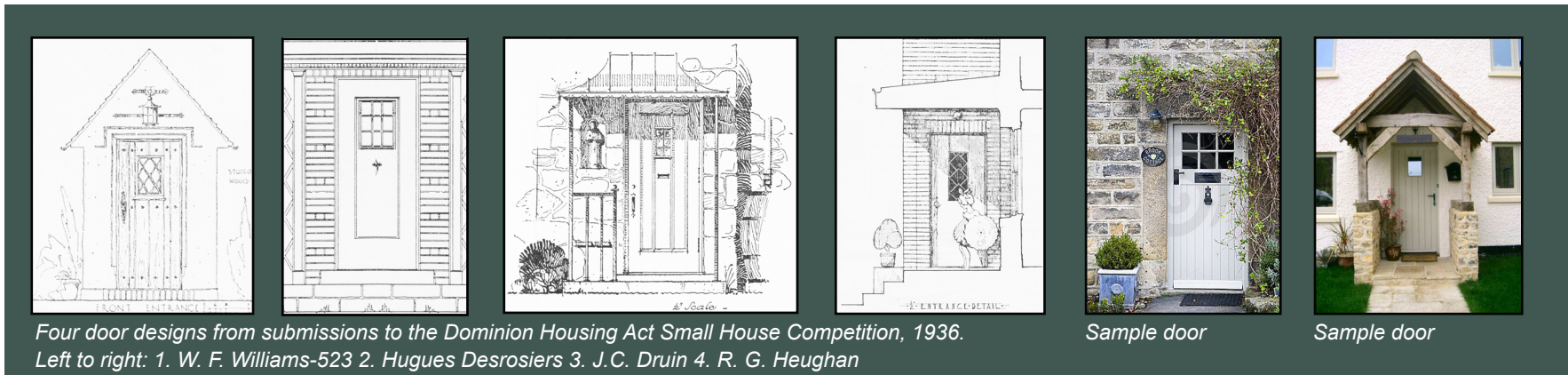
- 6.1.1 Windows of heritage properties not subject to individual heritage designation may be replaced with double glazed units, provided the new units replicate the design, operation, number of window divisions of the original
- 6.1.2 Basement level windows on side or rear elevations are preferred over the front elevation. Align new windows with upper storey windows.

6.2 Doors

- 6.2.1 Where a replacement door is proposed, ensure the design is era-appropriate and consistent with the style of the building.



Align new basement windows with upper storey windows and include the same number of vertical divisions.



Four door designs from submissions to the Dominion Housing Act Small House Competition, 1936.
Left to right: 1. W. F. Williams-523 2. Hugues Desrosiers 3. J.C. Druin 4. R. G. Heughan

Sample door

Sample door

6.3 Roofs

6.3.1 Shingle style roofing is preferred for new roofs.

6.4 Balcony and Stair Railings

6.4.1 When modifying balcony or stair railings of Victorian and Edwardian homes for code compliance, consider affixing a discrete secondary rail above or inset from the existing rail. Complete replacement is discouraged.

6.4.2 For wartime homes, when modifying or replacing a staircase, simple designs are preferred for railings. Wrought iron or black painted aluminum railings are acceptable.

6.5 Solar Panels & Sustainable Technology

6.5.1 Locate solar panel or other technology installations discretely on south facing roof slopes.

6.5.2 Set solar panels back from the front elevation and situate them so that the roof creates a “frame” around the panels

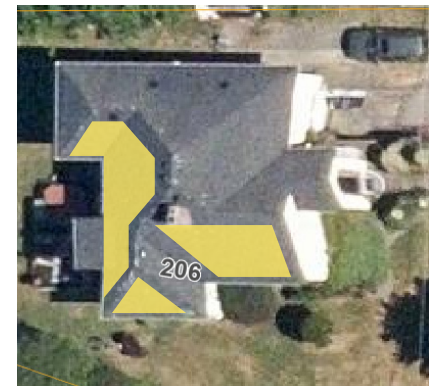
6.6 Chimneys

6.6.1 For wartime houses, chimneys are not prominent features and removal is supported.

6.6.2 For individually designated Victorian and Edwardian homes, chimneys visible from the street are decorative features and retention is encouraged.



Heritage Consultant Stuart Stark's design for a code compliant railing on 1139 Burdett Street. The design uses a simple pipe rail extending from the house to the newel post



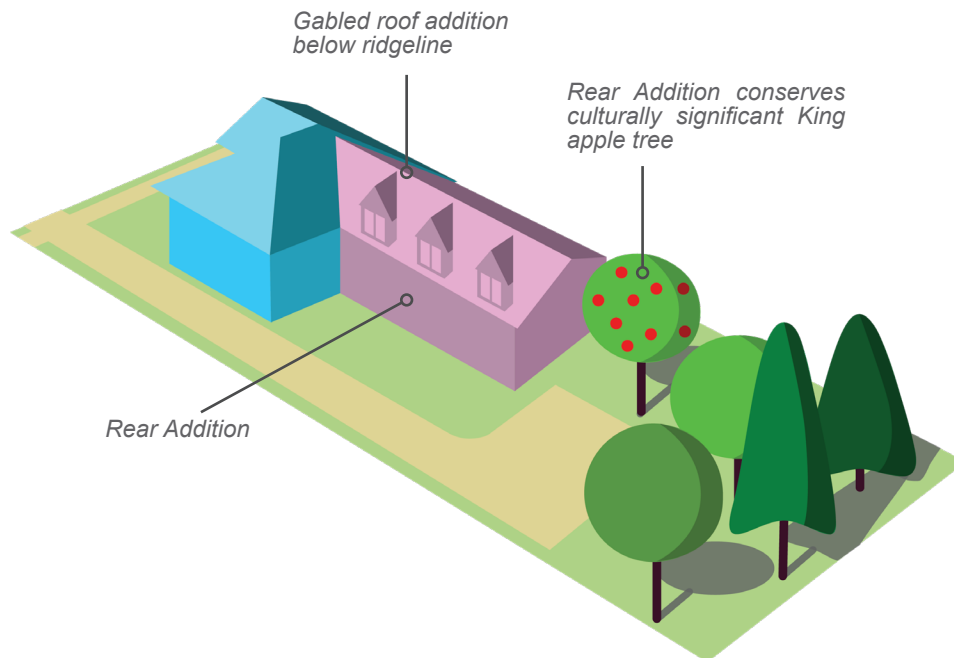
Possible areas for rooftop solar arrays

6.7 Additions

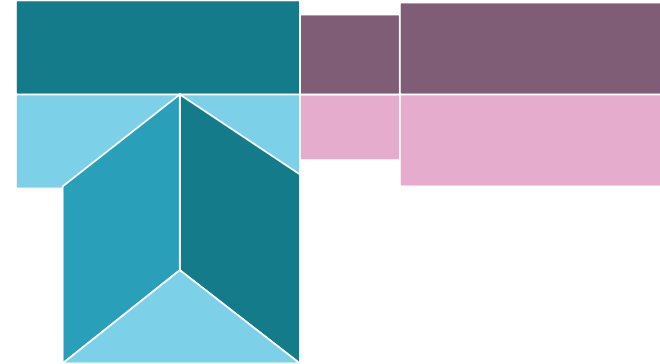
- 6.7.1 New additions should be distinguishable from the original building and should be discretely designed to be minimally visible above the ridgeline of the roof from the adjacent sidewalk.
- 6.7.2 Design rear additions to avoid impacts to culturally significant trees such as King Apple Trees.

6.8 Skylights

- 6.8.1 Skylights should be positioned away from the street in discrete locations



This addition extends the existing cross gabled portion of the roof into the rear yard



An L-shaped addition



A flat roof addition



6.9 Exemptions

The following do not require authorization through a heritage alteration permit. Note that other city permissions, such as a building permit, may be required:

- i. exterior alterations to properties that are not listed on the City of Victoria Heritage Register or subject to a Heritage Designation Bylaw;
- ii. interior renovations;
- iii. exterior painting;
- iv. roof replacement using similar materials;
- v. rear deck construction;
- vi. on lots with a single street frontage, additions to the rear elevation of a building, which are under 100 square metres in size, less than the width of the rear elevation, and equal to or less than the height of the lowest portion of the roof;
- vii. on lots with a single street frontage, a single garden suite located in the rear yard;
- viii. landscaping alterations to features not identified as Character Defining Elements in the Robert Street Heritage Conservation Area Guidelines (2021);
- ix. replacement of eaves troughs, downspouts and exterior lighting;
- x. sustainability upgrades that do not affect the appearance of a building from the street;
- xi. interior insulation;
- xii. envelope air sealing like weather stripping; or
- xiii. mechanical system upgrades, including but not limited to those with exterior equipment such as heat pumps and air conditioning units.



Paint colour is not regulated in the Robert Street HCA



Small Scale Additions are not regulated in the Robert Street HCA.

Design: MJ Architectes, Marseille, France

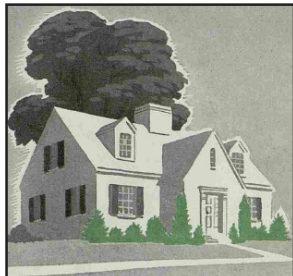
6 Landscape Design

Intent: To provide some optional guidance for front yard landscaping

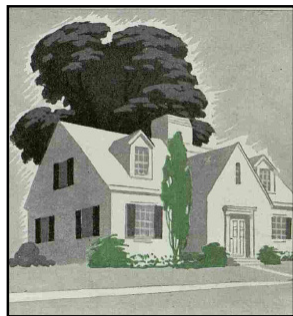
7.1 Front Yard Landscaping

- 7.1.1 For wartime houses, foundation plantings of juniper or rhododendrons are encouraged.
- 7.1.2 For Victorian era houses, naturalistic front yard landscape designs are encouraged, see
- 7.1.3 Select tree, shrub and ground cover species with natural or cultural heritage significance

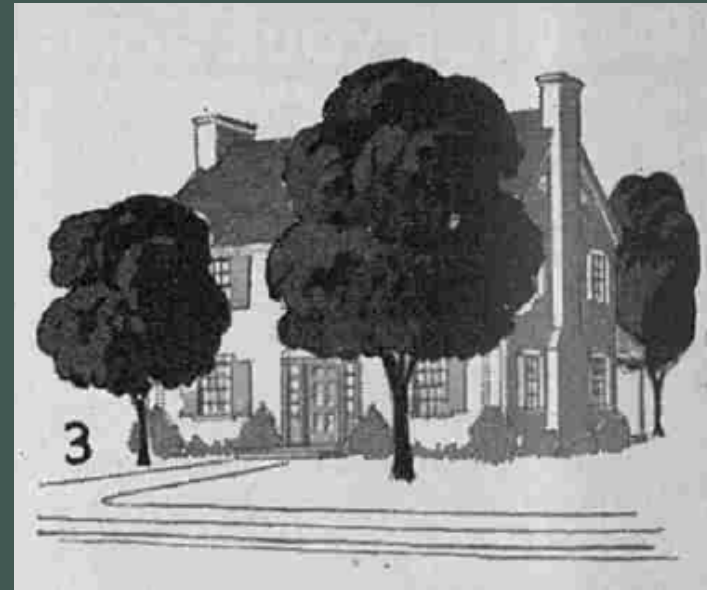
From “Is Your Planting Custom Made or Mill-Run” by Alfred Hottes, Better Homes and Gardens, May 1940



Always Good: *In this planting, emphasis is on the doorway, a detail of the architecture. ...The evergreens or shrubs used here should vary in skyline, with a crescendo of planting which leads definitely to the tall evergreens accenting the door. To fill the space between the principal evergreens or shrubs at the corners, use smaller perennials and low-growing shrubs.*



Very Good: *“...the prominent accent from the poplar at the corner...” “...seems to set the house back into a cozier setting...shrub planting is here used very sparsely, but a small area for flowers is planned...”*

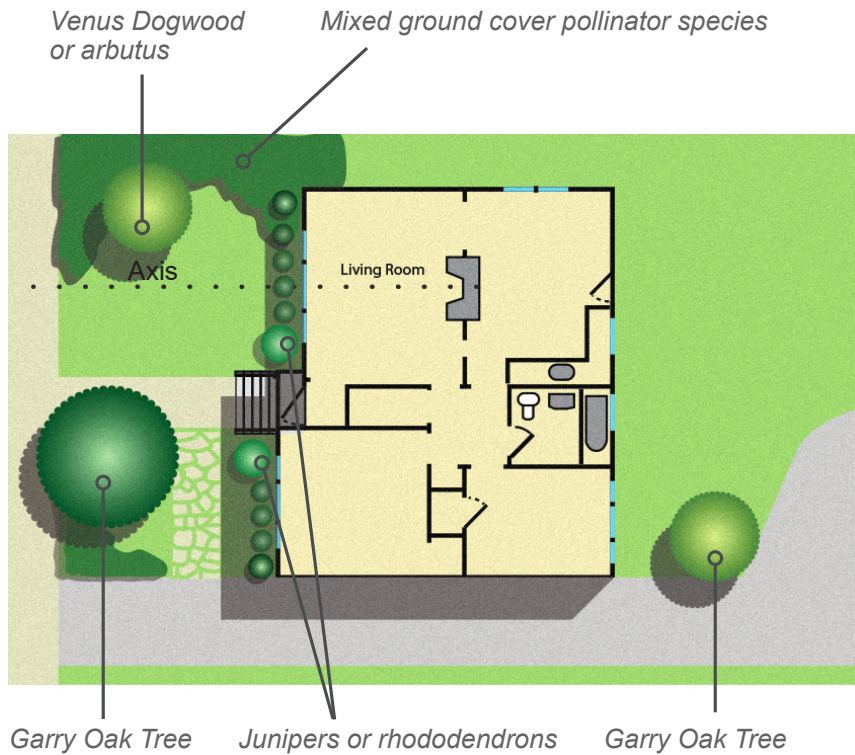


“The large front tree, set well out from the house... arches over the entrance door, obscures some of the windows and breaks the rooflines. The smaller tree on the left, set rather close to the house to offset the size of the big tree and viewed from the street needs background. This can be given by medium or higher trees planted at the rear of the house as part of the garden landscape. These background masses needn't be solid. They may be sprays seen from the front in such a way as to soften the lines of the house roof.”

From “Where Should I Plant that Tree” by Howard Sebald, Better Homes and Gardens, April 1939



Victorian and Edwardian Gardens often featured gravel walks held in with cedar boards. Climbing plants were often found on porches – for food (like scarlet runner beans); or for beauty (like ivy or honeysuckle). Climbing plants were frequently used for shading verandahs during hot summers. Flowerbeds, often containing scented flowers, were dense around porches, where the fragrance could be enjoyed.



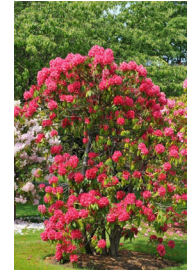
An example front yard landscape plan for 301 Robert Street. Plantings at the edges of the lawn create an oval of open space aligned with the axis of the picture window in the living room. Perimeter plantings block out visual distractions and views of neighbouring properties. Trees are positioned in accordance with the diagram on the previous page.

Example Species



Venus Dogwood

A native flowering tree that grows up to 4 metres tall.



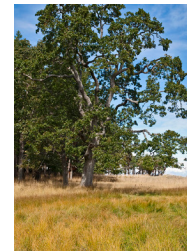
Rhododendrons

Rhododendron is popular for its beautiful, fragrant flowers and ornamental leaves. There are over 1000 different species.



Camas

Yields beautiful blue lilies in April/May. The camas bulb was the main starch food of the Lək̓ʷəŋən people until 150 years ago.



Garry Oak

The only native oak species to British Columbia, Garry Oaks are endangered and protected under the tree bylaw. They can reach 15 metres tall when mature.



Arbutus

6-30m tall. First Nations people used the bark and leaves of the arbutus in traditional medicine. Bark was used to treat cuts and wounds and the inner bark to make dresses. Tannin in bark was used to tan and cure hides.

Endnotes

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- 2 Trachsel, J. (2004). Victoria Heritage Foundation: Vic West History. <https://www.victoriaheritagefoundation.ca/Neighbourhoods/vicwesthistory.html>.
- 3 Wentworth Villa (2019) Muirhead Residence Exhibit- A Changing Neighbourhood. Victoria, B.C.
- 4 Suttles, Wayne, "Introduction" in Handbook of North American Indians Vol. 7: Northwest Coast, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990) fig. 2 pp. 6-7
- 5 Trachsel, J. (2004). Victoria Heritage Foundation: Vic West History. <https://www.victoriaheritagefoundation.ca/Neighbourhoods/vicwesthistory.html>.
- 6 Corporation of the City of Victoria (1935-1941). Assessor's and Collector's Roll- Records for Lots 12, 17 and 20. Victoria, B.C.
- 7 McAlester, V., Matty, S. P., Clicque, S., McAlester, A. L. 1., Jarrett, L., & Rodriguez-Arnaiz, J. (2013). A field guide to American houses: the definitive guide to identifying and understanding America's domestic architecture. Revised and expanded edition/second edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf
- 8 Normile, John (1939, January). Up From the Nineties. *Better Homes and Gardens*, page 36.
- 9 Belec, John (1997, March) The Dominion Housing Act. *Urban History Review*. Volume 25, Issue 2, pages 53-62.
- 10 City Building Inspector's Department (1939, Sunday, May 28) Building Permits Indicate Gain in Construction Here. *The Daily Colonist*. Page 18.
- 11 Many Homes Built Through Dominion Government Loan. (1938, Sunday, April 10). *The Daily Colonist*. Page 3



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