

**DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR:
INTENSIVE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – TOWNHOUSE AND ROWHOUSES**

1. Introduction

Townhouse Building Typologies

These guidelines apply to residential developments of three or more units on a site, consisting of self-contained units, each having direct access to the outside at grade level, at least some of which share common walls. Townhouses can be designed in different configurations, and may involve more than one building complex on a site which may be organized in more than one row where permitted by zoning.

2. Site Planning

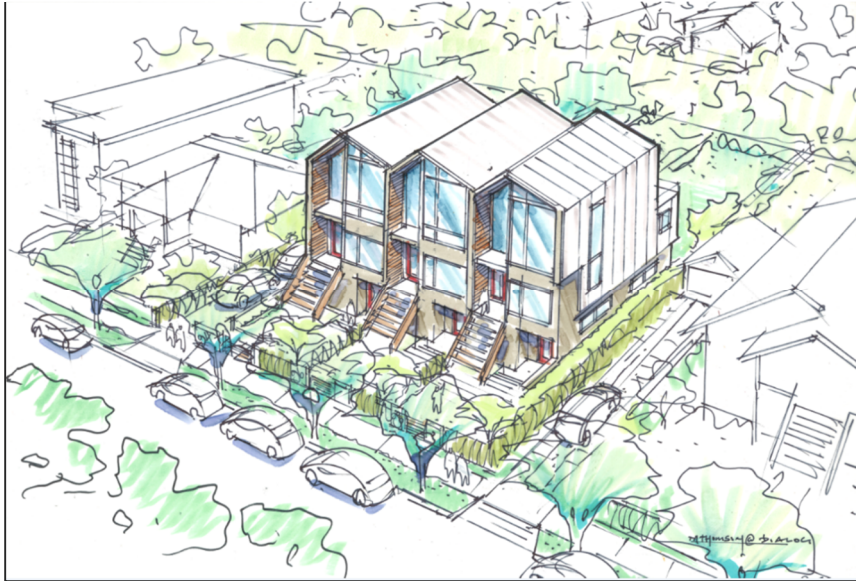
Objectives: *To site buildings in a manner that considers and maintains the pattern of landscaped front and back yards, that makes a positive contribution to the streetscape and achieves a more compact residential building form while maintaining livability.*

a. Building Placement

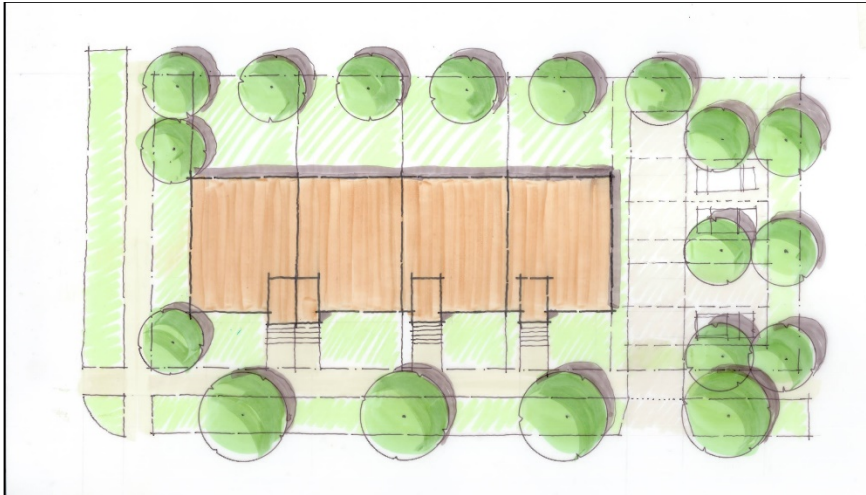
- i. Townhouse buildings should be designed parallel to the street with unit entrances oriented to and directly accessed from the fronting street. Both front and rear yards should be provided:



Illustrative example of how townhouses along a street might be arranged.



Illustrative example of how townhouses along a street might be arranged.



Illustrative example of how townhouses might be organized on a corner lot to minimize curb cuts and provide for on-site open space.

- ii. Some locations and lot sizes may permit townhouse developments sited in more than one building complex on a site (i.e. more than one row). For these developments, the following should be achieved:
 1. Site planning should ensure that townhouse units face the street;
 2. Townhouse units located in the interior of lots should be designed with adequate separation from other buildings and have access to open space;
 3. Vehicle access, parking and circulation should be integrated sensitively so it is not the dominant aspect of the development. See Section 2.c. for further guidance.



Illustrative example of how a townhouse complex might be organized into two parallel rows (where permitted) around a parking court

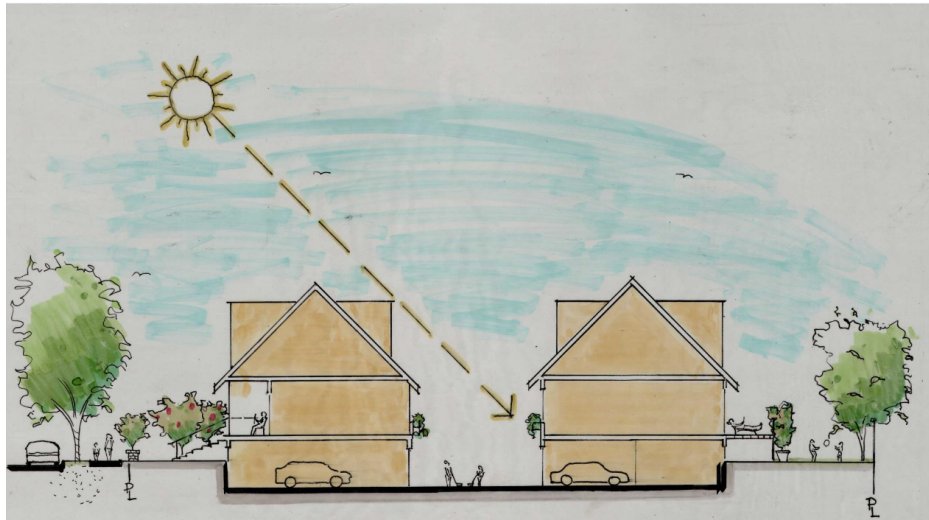


Illustrative example of individual townhome units oriented to landscape and pedestrian spaces, with parking clustered to the side of the lot.

- iii. “Galley-style” townhouses where building complexes are sited perpendicular to streets with residential unit entries oriented internally are strongly discouraged. This layout is discouraged because it does not orient as many residential units towards the street, typically provides less landscaped open space and insufficient separation between buildings.
- iv. For properties that include buildings of heritage value (Heritage Designated or listed on the City’s Heritage Register) that may be integrated into townhouse or rowhouse developments, alternative siting of new buildings or additions may be considered to facilitate heritage conservation.

b. Building Separation for Townhouses sited in more than one row

- i. Where more than one row of townhouses are proposed on one site, a sufficient building separation should be provided between buildings to maximize daylight and minimize shadowing and overlook.
- ii. Where more than one row of townhouses are proposed on a site, buildings which are located in the rear half of the lot should be sited to provide sufficient separation from shared property lines and adjacent development in order to reduce overlook and shading, protect privacy for residents, and provide space for landscaping.



c. Vehicular Access, Parking, and Circulation

- i. Vehicular access, circulation, garage doors and parking should not be the dominant aspect of townhouse and rowhouse developments. Design strategies should be employed to minimize the impact of accommodating vehicles on site, including but not limited to the following:
 - 1. Integrate parking in a manner that provides landscaped areas in rear yards;
 - 2. Consider grouping driveway access points to minimize the number of driveway cuts and maximize space for landscaping and on-street parking;
 - 3. Location of driveway access should strive to preserve existing canopy trees or provide opportunities for new canopy trees within the boulevard by providing enough planting space. See Section 5 Open Space Design for further guidance;
 - 4. Front-accessed parking may be appropriate in some areas in order to avoid excessive pavement in rear yard areas. In these cases, attention to design is required to maintain front yard landscape, tree

planting spaces, and to establish a pedestrian-friendly building façade.

5. Consider ways to minimize the appearance of garage doors through recessing, architectural materials, design which emphasizes residential unit entries, or other design strategies;
6. Use high quality and permeable paving materials for driveways;
7. Use attractive, high quality materials and consider incorporating glazing in garage doors;
8. See Section 5, Open Space Design for additional design guidelines related to landscaping and screening.

3. Building Form and Features

Objective: *To achieve buildings of high architectural quality and interest with human-scale building proportions that are oriented towards and are compatible with the established streetscape character and pattern.*

a. Building Massing and Roof Forms

- i. Modulation in massing or roof forms are encouraged to differentiate individual units within townhouse building complexes and to provide architectural interest.

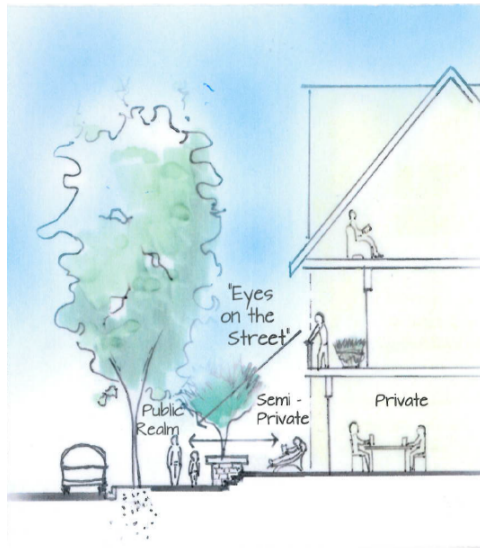
b. Building Materials and Finishes

- i. Exterior building materials are encouraged to contribute to high-quality architecture by achieving the following:
 1. provide interest to facades by incorporating a range of architectural features and details;
 2. articulate different building features;
 3. use substantive, natural materials that are durable and weather gracefully over time;
 4. help mitigate the impact of blank walls, where necessary;
 5. visually reduce the perception of building massing, where necessary; and
 6. wrap around the corner of buildings, where appropriate.
- ii. Consider exterior building materials, finishes and colours that are compatible with other developments along the streetscape so new development integrates with existing architectural character.

4. **Building Entrances and Windows**

Objective: *To enhance livability by locating windows and entrances to encourage sociability and eyes on the street while minimizing privacy impacts on neighbouring homes.*

- a. Townhouse and rowhouse developments should maintain a street-fronting “front-to-back” orientation to the street.
- b. All residential units in townhouse and rowhouse building complexes facing streets should have entries oriented towards, and be clearly accessible and visible, from the street.
- c. For townhouse complexes that have interior-facing units, ensure unit entries are legible and emphasized through design features.
- d. Consider design strategies to delineate private front yard spaces, porches or patios from the public realm, while maintaining visibility of unit entrances. Design strategies may include but are not limited to:



- i. elevating the front entryway or patio slightly above the fronting sidewalk level; or
- ii. where a change in grade is not desired to provide accessibility, delineate the space through other means such as landscaping features, low fencing or planters.

- e. Window placement along shared property lines should consider locations of windows of adjacent properties and be off-set where possible to mitigate privacy impacts.

5. Open Space Design

Objective: *To enhance the quality of open space, provide privacy where needed, delineate unit entrances and pedestrian circulation, reduce storm water runoff, and to ensure that rear yards are not dominated by parking.*

- a. Accessibility should be provided, where possible, in open space design.
- b. Areas within setbacks should consist primarily of landscaped space, but may include paved pedestrian paths.
- c. Landscape areas are encouraged to include a mixture of tree sizes and types, considering exotic and native species.
- d. Consider planting tree species and other landscape plants that will tolerate a degree of drought and will survive the summer water restrictions and dry conditions of southern Vancouver Island.
- e. In considering tree placement adjacent to street rights-of-way or along boulevards, a minimum of one planting space per 15 metres of frontage is recommended.
- f. Landscaped screening along circulation and parking areas which abut lot lines is strongly encouraged, while maintaining site lines and enabling casual surveillance. Where possible, other surface parking areas should be screened with landscaping.
- g. Integration of landscaping to soften hardscape areas associated with vehicle circulation and parking is encouraged.
- h. Site design should integrate features to mitigate surface runoff of stormwater. This may include a variety of treatments (e.g. permeable paving for driveways and parking areas, landscape features designed for rainwater management, cisterns or green roofs, and/or other approaches) which are consistent with approved engineering practices and other city policies.
- i. Non-glare lighting should be provided at residential unit entrances, along pedestrian paths and common areas to contribute to safety. Lighting strategies that mitigate undue spill-over for adjacent residential units are encouraged.