

Design Guidelines for Garden & Garage Suites

NEIGHBOURHOOD INFILL
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



Design Guidelines

REAR YARDS

- ❖ Rear yard decks and porches, attached to a garden or garage suite, should be permitted provided minimum rear yard setbacks, separation distances, and necessary site access and parking areas are provided.

INTERNAL PATHWAYS

- ❖ All publicly accessible areas, including sidewalks and internal pathways, should be barrier-free and constructed of materials chosen for their functionality as well as their maintenance efficiency.
- ❖ The preferred surface treatment is brushed concrete.
- ❖ Internal pathways should have a minimum width of 1.2 metres to facilitate barrier-free access and should integrate seamlessly with the adjacent sidewalk, on-site surface parking areas, main and secondary dwelling entrances, garage entrances, porches, decks, and other access points between primary and accessory dwellings.
- ❖ Garden or garage suites should be connected to adjacent streets and laneways, through the site, via an internal pathway.
- ❖ Access structures such as ramps should be designed as integrated components of infill development.
- ❖ Trees, landscaping and site furnishings should not obstruct the path of travel.

LIGHTING

- ❖ Internal pathways should incorporate pedestrian-scaled lighting at key locations including main and secondary dwelling entrances.
- ❖ Pedestrian-scaled lighting may be free-standing or wall-mounted depending on the desired application.
- ❖ Pedestrian-scaled lighting should be down lit to avoid unnecessary light pollution.
- ❖ Pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided adjacent to rear lanes to enhance the perception of safety.

LANDSCAPING

- ❖ Existing significant trees, tree stands, and vegetation should be protected and incorporated into infill development to the extent possible.
- ❖ New trees should be planted to contribute to the existing tree canopy of the neighbourhood.
- ❖ Where appropriate, retaining walls should be incorporated into the overall landscaping plan for the site. They should be low in profile and should be designed in a manner which is compatible with the streetscape.
- ❖ The design of private outdoor amenity spaces and site landscaping features should incorporate sustainable site design principles.



ORIENTATION, LAYOUT AND PRIVACY

- ❖ Garden or garage suites should be positioned and oriented to maximize overview of adjacent rear lanes or rear yards, and minimize overview of adjacent properties.
- ❖ Garden and garage suites should be directly accessible from the sidewalk or roadway located at the front of the property and also from the rear lane, where rear lanes exist

ENTRANCES

- ❖ Main entrances should be directly accessible and visible from rear lanes however other locations are acceptable given site layout.
- ❖ Main entrances should generally be one storey in height, with sufficient cover and integration into the overall building design.
- ❖ Main entrances should be designed to provide weather protection, and can include features such as recessed entries, front porches and verandas.
- ❖ All entrances should be located at-grade or close to grade, so as to protect the privacy of neighbouring properties and to avoid site overlook.
- ❖ Secondary entrances should not be dominant, but should be easily accessible and convenient to access via adjacent parking areas.
- ❖ The design and location of building entrances should adhere to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

FACADES

- ❖ Buildings should use a variety of materials and architectural details, both vertical and horizontal, to break up the facade. Such articulation should include three-dimensional depth and composition, which can be achieved by varying the massing of the facade through the use of bays, recesses, reveals, substantial trim and secondary building elements including porches, verandahs, balconies and bay windows.
- ❖ Buildings should not have blank facades. Flanking facades should have a design and material standard equal to the primary facade.
- ❖ The design of garden or garage suites should be complementary in character and quality of detail to the principal dwelling.
- ❖ Up to 60% of walls facing rear yards and rear lanes may be glazed.
- ❖ Additions or renovations to heritage properties should reintegrate key aspects of heritage design that have been lost through degradation or previous renovation.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

- ❖ Restrictions on the placement of windows are recommended for Category 1 garden or garage suites as a means of maintaining the privacy of adjacent properties on either side of the suite.
- ❖ Since Category 2 suites are restricted to a single storey and require 3 metre side yard setbacks, the extent of glazing should not be regulated provided that sufficient screening (fencing or landscaping) is present on side property lines to screen the suite from neighbouring rear yards.



- ❖ While overlook is an issue for properties on either side of a 2 storey garden or garage suite the rear lane should be considered a public frontage and the garden or garage suite should be permitted to have a high degree of glazing facing the laneway and shared yard between the primary dwelling and the garden or garage suite.
- ❖ The following recommendations should be used as a general guide recognizing that the specific conditions of a given property may call for an alternative solution. The requirements for passive solar gain may also dictate solutions which call for greater amounts of glazing and should be permitted while maintaining the privacy of flanking lots.
- ❖ In Category 1 Areas, the percentage of glazing on side walls should be limited to 20% of the total side wall surface areas. Generally, the majority of this 20% glazing allocation should be provided on the lower level provided sufficient screening with a fence or landscaping is present on the side property lines. Any side wall glazing on the second storey should be limited and carefully positioned so as not to overlook neighbouring properties.
- ❖ In Category 1 Areas, front and rear walls should generally provide a proportion of glazing that is no more than 60% of the total surface area of those walls.
- ❖ The location of doors and windows within the side yard should not conflict with that of existing adjacent dwellings.
- ❖ Garden or garages suites facing a flanking street or lane should provide a generous amount of window openings to encourage strong visual connections between the suite and the public lane or side street.
- ❖ Windows should be arranged to enhance views, and provide natural ventilation and light, without sacrificing privacy to adjacent dwellings.

ROOFS

- ❖ Roof materials and colours should complement the building materials and the overall building design.
- ❖ In Category 1 areas only, decks should only be permitted on the second storey finished floor level facing a laneway and limited to a zone defined by a 4 metre setback from the rear property line. Any portion of the sides of a terrace overlooking a neighbouring yard shall be visually screened.

DORMERS

- ❖ Dormers and secondary roof components should be positioned and proportioned to remain secondary to the primary roof form.
- ❖ Dormers on upper storeys should remain relatively small in order to maintain appropriate building and roof proportions.

BALCONIES

- ❖ In Category Areas 1, balconies and terraces may be provided on the second floor of a garden or garage suite facing the rear lane and should be screened to avoid overlook onto side properties.



MATERIALS

- ❖ Finish materials should extend to all sides of the building, including building projections.
- ❖ Building materials should be chosen for their functionality and aesthetic quality as well as their energy and maintenance efficiency

UTILITIES AND WASTE STORAGE

- ❖ Water meters and gas meters should be placed in discrete locations and/or screened from public view.
- ❖ The location of mechanical units such as air conditioners and venting should be located in order to not create nuisance to adjacent
- ❖ All garbage and recycling bins should be stored on-site in designated locations, screened from public view.
- ❖ Garbage and recycling storage areas should be integrated into the design of garden or garage suites where feasible.



Sustainable Building Design

WASTE WATER

- ❖ Waste management, water use reduction and wastewater technologies should be explored where possible.
- ❖ Rain barrels or cisterns can be designed into new garden or garage suites to accommodate grey water irrigation.

PASSIVE SOLAR DESIGN

- ❖ Factors including temperature, precipitation, wind conditions, cloud cover, air quality and solar loss and gain should be considered when designing suites and private outdoor amenity spaces.
- ❖ Trees and vegetation, operable windows, treated glass, roof coverings and other building elements should be selected to take advantage of natural means of regulating interior temperature, lighting and other environmental variables.
- ❖ Indirect natural light should be maximized.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

- ❖ Life cycle cost analysis should be used to evaluate mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems as well as to evaluate design options for occupiable spaces.
- ❖ Buildings and windows should be oriented and designed such that natural means of heating, cooling, ventilating and lighting interior spaces are maximized.
- ❖ Outdoor lighting systems should incorporate LED technology to reduce energy and maintenance demand.
- ❖ Garden and garage suite developments are encouraged to explore the potential use of geothermal technology to reduce grid energy dependency.
- ❖ Inventories of all plumbing fixtures and equipment, as well as all heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, should be summarized in building packages as well as a strategy for minimizing water demand.
- ❖ Adaptive re-use is encouraged to reduce dependence on new materials. The energy efficiency of existing buildings should be carefully considered when assessing their potential for re-use.

MATERIAL EFFICIENCY

- ❖ Although locally sourced materials are preferred, foreign products made with quickly replenishing raw materials, such as bamboo, are also desired and encouraged.



ROOF TOPS

- ❖ Unplanted rooftop areas should be finished with cool or light coloured materials that remain cool by reflecting the sun's rays or have a high insulation value.

