



TOWN OF
COMOX

SMALL SCALE MULTI FAMILY HOUSING (SSMFH)

A GUIDE TO SSMFH

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INTRODUCTION



In December 2023, the province of BC gave royal assent to Bill 44 – Housing Statutes (Residential Development) Amendment Act, 2023. Bill 44 required municipalities to amend zoning bylaws to permit two to six dwelling units on single-family and duplex parcels by July 2024. As per Bill 44, site characteristics like engineering services, parcel size, and access to frequent public transportation influence the number of permitted units.

On June 19, 2024, the Town of Comox adopted Bylaw 1850.47 – Provincial Small Scale Multi-Family Housing, to amend the Zoning bylaw in compliance with Bill 44. The amendments modified or created zones to permit up to four residential units across most of the residential areas of Comox.



Purpose

This guide outlines the bylaws and regulations that apply to SSMFH development in Comox. It aims to inform property owners that are interested in knowing about what could be possible on their property and the extent of required applications, prior to making decisions.

Limitations

- » This guide does not replace applicable bylaws. If there are conflicts, the bylaws take precedence.
- » Property owners are responsible for verifying interpretation of provincial legislation and the BC Building Code.
- » Property owners are responsible for verifying the requirements of outside agencies such as BC Hydro, Fortis, and Technical Safety BC.
- » Though the guide aims to help property owners understand applicable bylaws, professional services will still be required to prepare the necessary permit applications.





What is SSMFH?

Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing (SSMFH) refers to a variety of housing types built on typical single-family or duplex parcels. In BC, many cities have been developed in a pattern where multi-family housing is permitted on a small proportion of land, with most land reserved for single-family housing. SSMFH changes that by permitting multi-family housing on land previously reserved for single-family housing. SSMFH in Comox includes the following building types:

- » Single-family dwellings
- » Accessory dwelling units, which include secondary suites and coach houses
- » Duplexes
- » Three- and four- unit Townhouses

Pre-approved SSMFH Designs

In September 2024, the Province released [SSMFH building designs](#) that meet the BC Building Code. In most cases, modifications will be required to ensure compliance with the Town’s zoning and development permit area requirements, but the designs have potential to significantly reduce decision-making and building permit application costs.



Figure 1 1: Graphic showing “system opportunities” from [Standardized Housing Designs Catalogue](#).

Extension Areas

Comox sought extensions from compliance with Bill 44 due to infrastructure constraints in the Western Foreshore and Kye Bay (including Cape Lazo and Point Holmes), as identified in Appendix D. Only a single-family house with a secondary suite or coach house are permitted in SSMFH Extension Areas.

There is a sewer upgrade project planned for the Western Foreshore. The extension is valid until the planned sewer upgrade is completed on or before 2030. The Kye Bay extension is to allow time for the Town and BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to further assess geotechnical concerns on the single access road and for the Town to complete infrastructure assessments. Any necessary upgrades will need to be completed by 2030; alternatively, the Town could provide supporting documentation for an exemption from 3- and 4-unit SSMFH in the Kye Bay Extension Area if constraints cannot be addressed.

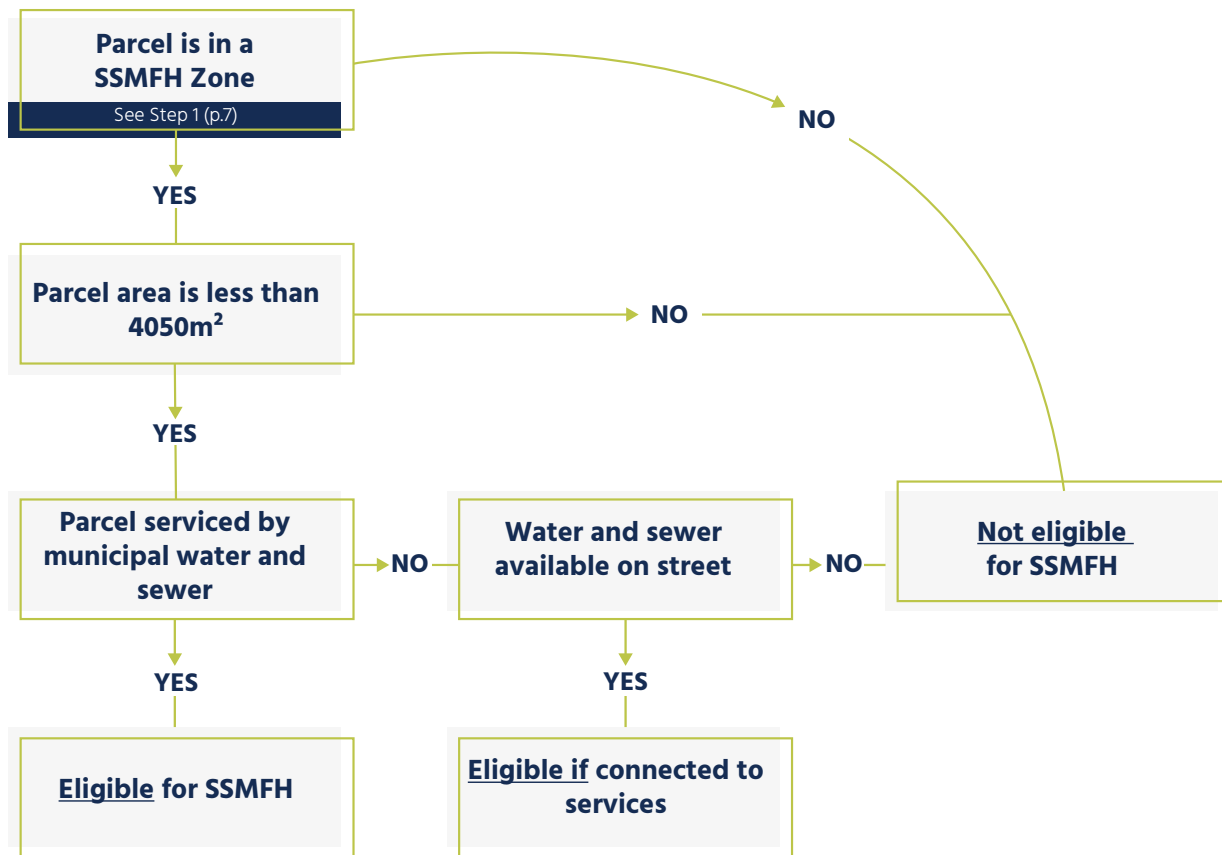
The province does not require more than 2 units outside of urban containment boundaries as designated in municipal OCPs. During the extension period, the Town will continue to discuss a 3 and 4-unit exemption for Kye Bay with the Province as the area has rural infrastructure, environmentally sensitive areas, floodplain and geotechnically hazardous areas and is functionally outside of the Town's urban area. The area is currently not exempt from consideration for 3-4 SSMFH units because the Town OCP does not clearly establish an official urban containment boundary as per the legislation.



SSMFH ELIGIBILITY



Is my project eligible for SSMFH?



SSMFH PROCESS AT A GLANCE



*Property owners interested in SSMFH construction may prefer to hire a professional early in the process.

1



Determine your Zone

The Zoning Bylaw assigns a zone to every parcel in Comox. You can determine the zoning of your parcel by:

- » Locating your property on the Comox Interactive Map; OR
- » Referencing the Town of Comox Zoning Map available on the Town's Zoning webpage

The following zones permit **Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing (SSMFH)** in Comox:

- » R1.0 Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing
- » R1.2 Mobile Home Small-Scale Multi-Family Housing
- » R1.3 Single-Family – 1100 m²
- » R3.3 Single-Family Large Lot (except properties in Kye Bay)
- » CD 5 Comprehensive Development 5: Lazo Marsh – Single Family
- » CD 18 Comprehensive Development 18: Single Family 560 Colby Road

Up to four units are permitted on parcels that are 280 m² to 4050 m² and have both sanitary sewer and municipal water service in SSMFH zones. Up to three units are permitted on parcels under 280 m² that have both sanitary sewer and municipal water service in SSMFH Zones. Two units are permitted on parcels that do not have municipal water or sewer services regardless of parcel size. A single-family dwelling with one of a secondary suite or coach house are permitted on parcels greater than 4050 m² regardless of water or sewer servicing.

Table 1: SSMFH zones and how servicing and lot size impact the maximum permitted units.

SSMFH Zones	Site Servicing	Lot Size	Max Permitted Units
R1.0	Water and sewer	≤ 280 m ²	3
R1.2 R1.3	Water and sewer	>280 m ² ; ≤4050 m ²	4
R3.3 CD 5	One of water or sewer, or neither	Any	2
CD 18	Municipal Water and sewer	>4050 m ²	2

2

Review Zoning Bylaw

There are many development options in SSMFH zones, including

- » Single-family dwellings
- » Accessory dwelling units:
 - Secondary suites
 - Coach houses
- » Two-family dwellings, with or without secondary suites
- » Townhouse dwellings

Each building type has a specific definition in the zoning bylaw. There are also zone-specific requirements for specific building types, so it is important to reference the zone that applies to your parcel.

Only one single-family dwelling and either a secondary suite or coach house are permitted on parcels in SSMFH zones that are 4050 square metres or more and/or not serviced by water or sewer.



Single-family dwellings (with or without accessory dwelling unit(s))



Two-family dwellings (with or without accessory dwelling units)



Coach Houses



3- and 4- unit Townhouse Dwellings

2.1 Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units are secondary suites and coach houses. There are some important considerations based on the BC Building Code, Comox Zoning Bylaw, and Comox OCP.

2.1.1 Secondary Suites

Secondary suites are permitted in single-family and two-family dwelling units. A development permit or development permit exemption is required under Development Permit Area # 18 – Secondary Suites, of the OCP.

The BC Building Code has limits on secondary suites:

- » one per principal dwelling unit, and they cannot be stratified or otherwise legally separated from the principal dwelling unit.
- » Secondary suites are only permitted in vertically separated dwelling units, as shown in Figure 2-1 below, an excerpt from [BC Building Code Bulletin No. B19-04](#).



Figure 2 1: Excerpt from BC Building Code Bulletin No. B19-04.



Note:

The province is investing in secondary suites. There are currently incentives available, with forgivable grants of up to \$40,000 to create a secondary suite in an existing home.

[Secondary Suite Incentive Program | BC Housing](#)

2.1.2 Coach Houses:

The R1.0 and R1.2 zones permit coach houses under the definition of SSMFH Coach House. The R1.3, R3.3, CD5, and CD18 zones permit coach houses under the definition of Coach House. There are differences between the two. Coach Houses are limited to one per parcel, must be in a rear yard, and can only be located on parcels with a single-family dwelling. In contrast, there can be more than one SSMFH Coach House on a parcel, they are not limited to rear yards, and they can be on parcels with housing types other than single-family dwellings.

The maximum height, minimum setback, parcel coverage, and maximum gross floor area are different for SSMFH Coach Houses and Coach Houses than for other building types. Reference the zone that applies to your parcel for more information.

SSMFH Coach Houses and Coach Houses currently require a form and character development permit or development permit exemption under Development Permit Area # 17 – Coach Houses, of the OCP.

2.2 Building Envelope

The building envelope is the three-dimensional space on a parcel in which buildings can be constructed. It is important to determine the building envelope for your property to understand how much space is available for additional dwelling units. Each zone includes specifications that determine the building envelope. Reference the zone that applies to your parcel and review all sections to make sure applicable regulations can be fulfilled.

Figures 100-1 and 100-2 below are within the R1.0 zone in the Zoning Bylaw. They provide a visual representation of how height and setbacks affect the building envelope within that zone specifically. The building envelope is different for each SSMFH zone.

The zoning provisions that affect building envelope include:

- » Minimum setbacks
- » Maximum height
- » Minimum parking spaces
- » Maximum parcel coverage

In addition to the details of each zone, there are general zoning requirements and provisions that apply to all parcels. More details on zoning are included in Appendix E: Zoning Details.

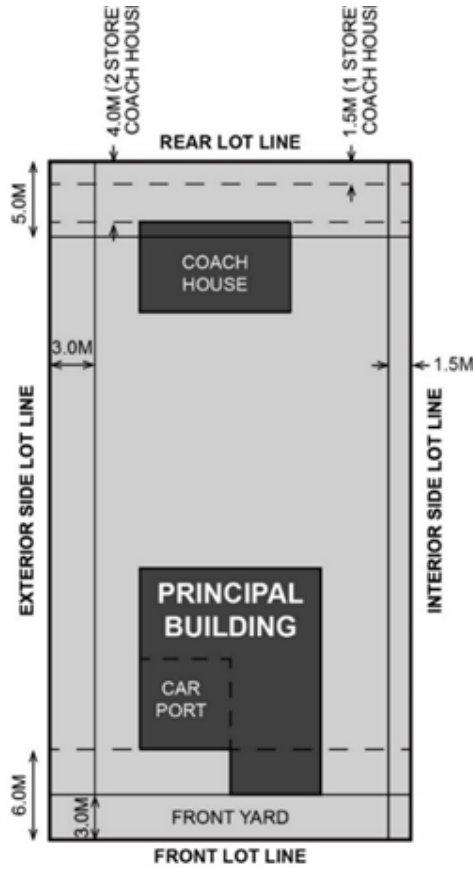


Figure 100-1. R1.0 Principal Building and SSMFH Coach House Setbacks.

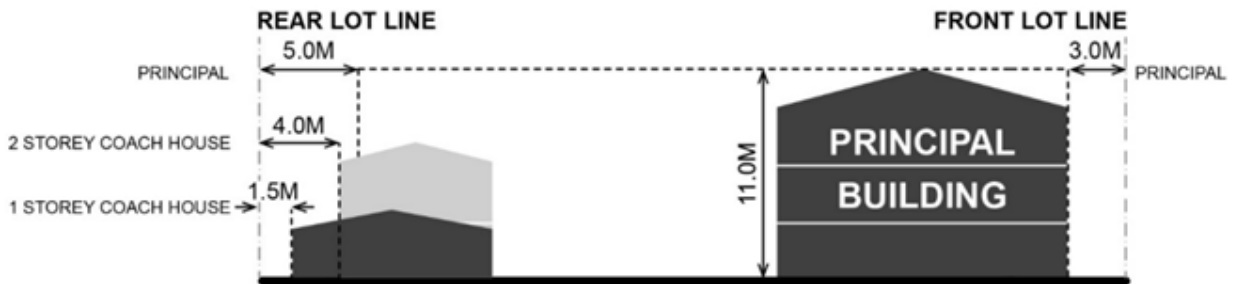


Figure 100-2. R1.0 Principal Building and SSMFH Coach House Setbacks Cross Section

3

Attain Property Information

Depending on the age of your parcel and buildings, the Town may have records such as a site survey and building permit drawings. It is easiest to attend the Town in person to gather this information.

You may have your Property Title on hand from when you purchased your parcel. If not, order it from the [Land Title and Survey Authority of BC](#) to ensure there are no covenants on title that would prevent the addition of dwelling units. There could also be easements and/or statutory rights-of-way on title that limit where buildings could be located.



4

Consider Site Servicing

Connections to Town water and sewer services are required to be eligible for the construction of more than a single-family dwelling and either secondary suite or coach house on a parcel. Even properties that are currently connected to water and sewer services will need to ensure that future services support the number and size of dwelling units on the parcel.

The Town will have information on file for servicing details of parcels in Comox. However, applicants will need to hire an Engineer to determine the servicing requirements of new development based on the BC Building Code, Town Bylaws, and engineering best practices. Servicing plans need to be submitted with a building permit application. Upgrades to engineering services can be costly and are important to consider prior to making a final decision on whether to move forward with development permit and building permit applications.

Town of Comox services include:

- » Transportation
- » Sewer
- » Stormwater
- » Water system, including fire hydrants

Other services include:

- » Hydro
- » Natural gas
- » Telecommunications

On-site Services

The location of underground services will impact where buildings can be located on a parcel and service connections from existing buildings to additional buildings will be required where applicable. Current connections to Town services may not be of sufficient size to accommodate additional dwelling units and may need to be upgraded. Additional impermeable area on a parcel will need to be offset with stormwater management infrastructure like rain gardens, different soils, and/or retention tanks.

One parking space is required for each dwelling unit. Section 6 of the Zoning Bylaw outlines parking standards and requirements. It will be important to determine whether required parking spaces can be accommodated on site prior to making decisions on the number of units to be built. In most cases, only one driveway from a public road will be permitted.

Off-site Services

Depending on condition of the current fronting road (and flanking road for corner lots) and services, upgrades and land dedication to increase road width may be required to construct SSMFH. Where it is not practical to complete upgrades when SSMFH units are being built, cash-in-lieu will be required for the Town to make upgrades later.

Development Cost Charges

[Development Cost Charges \(DCCs\)](#) are used by local governments to assist with the capital costs of installing infrastructure. Comox DCC's assist with the capital cost of installing roads, sanitary sewer, and park land services and are collected at the time land is developed or at building permit issuance. Comox Valley Regional District DCCs are collected for regional sanitary sewer and waterworks. DCCs must be paid prior to issuance of a building permit.

There are different Comox DCC rates for single-family dwellings and other SSMFH housing forms, which fall under the "Multi-Family Low Density" definition: "(a) A part of a building consisting of one (1) dwelling unit; does not include a single family dwelling or (b) a building or part thereof consisting of two (2) to thirty (30) dwellings units, excluding secondary suites." Comox is currently updating the Development Cost Charge Bylaw, which will include different rates.



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Determine Applicable OCP Development Permit Areas

A development permit or Development Permit Area (DPA) exemption must be issued prior to the Town's acceptance of a building permit application. To determine whether one or more DPAs apply to your property, locate it on the [DPA maps](#) that form part of the OCP.

There are different types of DPAs applicable to residential areas: environmental, hazardous, and form and character. DPAs have specific development guidelines and permit exemption criteria that are outlined in [Part 3 of the OCP](#). Some require professionals to prepare assessments prior to submission of DP applications. If in doubt, call the [Planning Department](#) to confirm requirements.

DPA exemptions can be granted where applicants can demonstrate compliance with exemption criteria listed for the applicable DPA in the OCP. Contact the Planning Department to request an exemption if you can comply with the exemption criteria.

The Comox OCP is being updated in 2025, and the update will change development permit areas, with the goals of simplification, and reduction of development permit areas for some building types.

Though building envelope is primarily determined through zoning, some Development Permit Areas affect it as well. For the following DPAs, the Town may require an Impact Assessment by a qualified professional that should include measures to mitigate impacts. Mitigation measures may impact where buildings or structures can be located on a parcel. Ensure that you review the DPA requirements in Part 3 of the OCP if your parcel is in a DPA.

DPAs that affect the building envelope are:

- » DPA #7: Riparian Areas
- » DPA #9: Upland Environment
- » DPA #10: Bald Eagle and Great Blue Heron Nesting Sites/
Perching Trees
- » DPA #11: Wildlife Corridor
- » DPA #13: Hazardous Areas
- » DPA # 16: North East Comox

6

Determine Tenure of New Dwelling

Where there are multiple dwelling units on a property in a SSMFH zone, they may be strata units; however, secondary suites cannot be stratified. Alternatively, all units on the property can be owned by the same person(s). Where units are intended to be strata units, a lawyer's services will be required to register a strata plan on title.

The Province is in charge of the enabling [strata legislation](#). The Strata Property Act specifies different conditions for strata plans for new construction versus the conversion of units in previously occupied buildings to strata units. It should be noted that strata plans that include previously occupied buildings require retrofits to meet the current BC Building Code, and Council approval will be required before the strata plan can be approved by the province.

If any units on a parcel with previously occupied units are intended to be strata units, this will need to be determined prior to the preparation of a building permit application, as different requirements will apply.



7

Consider the Required Application & Fees

There are several permits, fees, and documentation requirements to build new housing units on a parcel. Appendix A provides more detail on where to find application forms, enabling bylaws, and fees.

Development Permit: area-specific permits to ensure that development achieves desired outcomes for form and character, and mitigation of hazards and environmental sensitivities. Additional details provided in Section 4.

Development Variance Permit (DVP): a site-specific variance of one or more aspects of a bylaw, not including a density or permitted use regulation. A DVP is a binding legal document that is registered on the title of a property.

Building Permit: A [building permit](#) is required for SSMFH construction including new buildings and retrofits to add one or more units to an existing building. The Town evaluates building permits based on the [BC Building Code](#), [BC Fire Code](#) and [Comox Building Bylaw 1472](#).

Building Permit - Plumbing: New plumbing installations require a plumbing-specific building permit in addition to the regular Building Permit. The Town evaluates plumbing building permits based on the [BC Plumbing Code](#) and [Comox Building Bylaw 1472](#).

Erosion and Sediment Control Permit: [Comox Drainage Infrastructure Protection Bylaw No. 1824](#) requires an [erosion and sediment control permit](#) application to accompany building permit applications. While some applications require the preparation of an erosion and sediment control plan, others do not.

Highway Use Permit: [Highway Use Bylaw 1920](#) regulates public roads and how parcels access them. A highway permit is required where additional driveways or walkways from a public road are proposed.

Ongoing Service Fees: Residential fees for water, sewer and garbage collection are levied per residential unit. Thus, fees and services will be multiplied by the number of dwelling units on a parcel. For example, the number of garbage cans picked up is matched to the number of residential units. Switching to metered billing from flat fees can reduce the water fee depending on water use.

Technical Safety BC Permits: [Technical Safety BC](#) issues permits for electrical, gas, and refrigeration.

BC Hydro Electrical Connection Permits: An express or design connection request is required for parcels that do not already have an electrical connection. For properties that do have an electrical connection and require minor upgrades, an express connection may be possible. An upgrade may be required depending on level of service, in which case, a design connection request is required. In any case, it is important to contact BC Hydro for more information prior to submitting a building permit application.

8

Request a Pre-Application Meeting

It is advisable to contact the Town prior to preparing applications. Staff can verify your understanding of what can be built on your property and the required permit applications, fees, and documentation.

If your parcel requires a development permit area and/or development variance application, then the Planning Department will manage your application. They can coordinate a pre-application meeting to help you understand the requirements for your application. They can also liaise with other departments to review documents and inform you of requirements.

If your parcel is not within any development permit areas, then you can proceed to the building permit stage, and the Building Department will manage your application. They can coordinate a pre-application meeting to help you understand the requirements for your application. They can also liaise with other Town departments as appropriate to inform your application.



Planning Department:

DPAs, DVPs, zoning
planning@comox.ca
250-339-1118



Building Department:

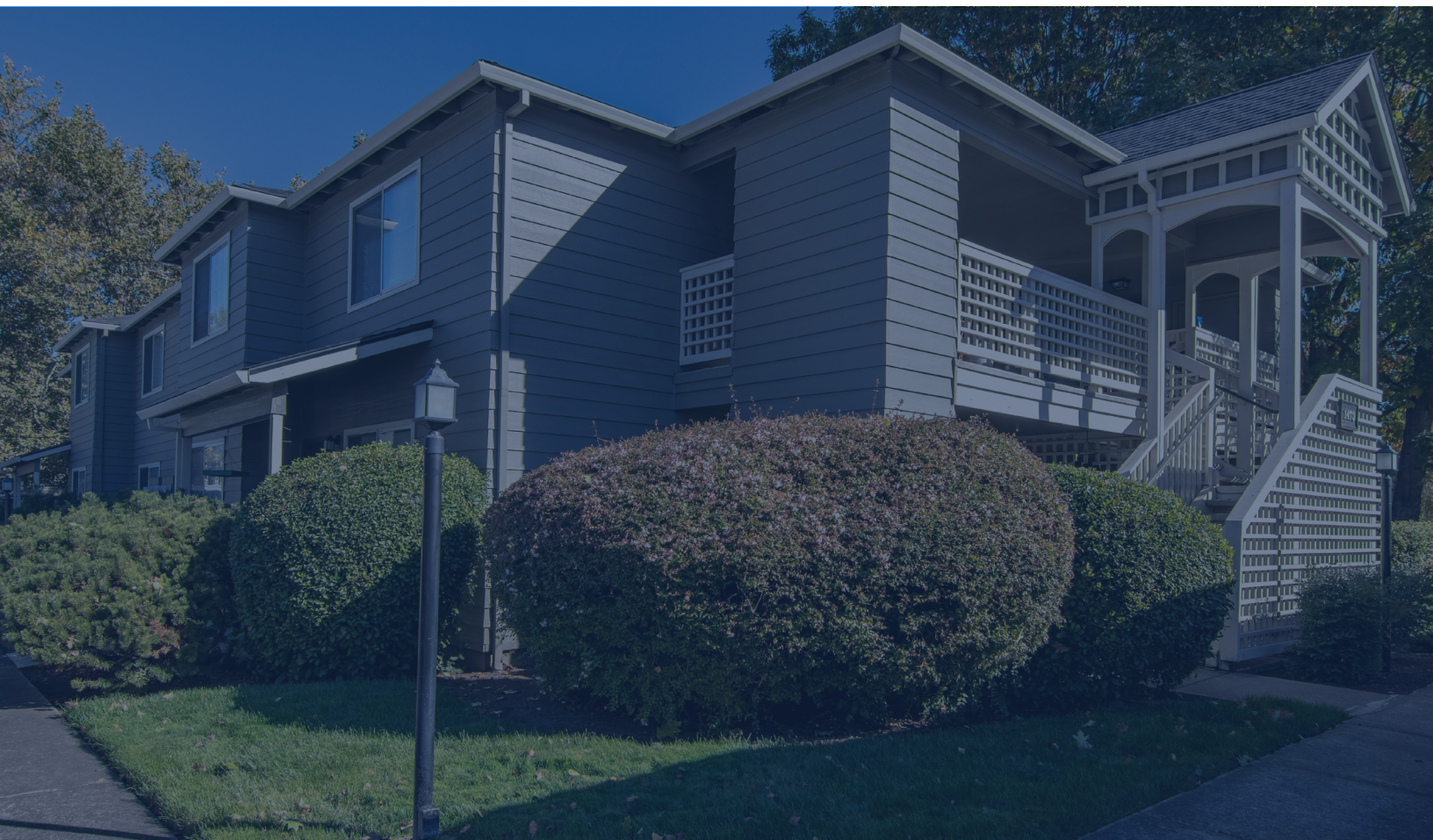
Building permit
(250) 339-2259

9



After gathering information, reviewing bylaws, meeting with the Town, and hiring the appropriate professionals, your application can be prepared and submitted.

Prepare and Submit Application with Fees



BC BUILDING CODE



Though the Town has a Building Bylaw, the [BC Building Code \(BCBC\)](#) is the primary document to regulate building design in BC. It governs how new construction, building alterations, repairs and demolitions are completed. It also establishes minimum requirements for safety, health, accessibility, fire and structural protection of buildings, and energy and water efficiency.

In September 2024, the Province released [SSMFH building designs](#) that meet the BC Building Code. In most cases, modifications will be required to ensure compliance with the Town's zoning and development permit area requirements, but the designs have potential to significantly reduce decision-making, and building permit application costs.

When the Town reviews building permit applications and completes site inspections throughout the construction process, it is determining compliance with Town Bylaws and the BCBC. The BCBC can be referenced by property owners to understand the extent of building requirements for new buildings. However, it is a highly technical document that typically requires some construction expertise to fully understand. Most property owners will require the services of a building designer or architect to complete a building permit application.

Existing buildings do not have to be brought up to the BCBC standard where another new building is being added to a parcel, unless a previously occupied building is being stratified. Where a new secondary suite is added to a building, some upgrades to the existing building will be required to provide adequate fire separation, and occupant comfort and safety.

A property owner that wishes to build or manage construction of a dwelling unit on their property must be authorized as an ["owner builder"](#) by BC Housing. Otherwise, a Licensed Residential Builder will need to be hired for construction.

APPENDIX A: APPLICATIONS AND FEES



Sequence	Application Type	Required Information	Fees	Note
First (if applicable)	Development Permit	Review OCP Part 3 and/or contact Planning Department .	Comox Planning Procedures Bylaw , Schedule "A"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required information differs depending on the applicable DPA. Where parcels are in more than one DPA, permits or exemptions must be granted for all applicable DPAs prior to a building permit application.
	Development Permit Exemption	Differs depending on applicable DPA(s). Review OCP Part 3 and/or contact Planning Department .	Comox Planning Procedures Bylaw , Schedule "A"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Cost Charges must be paid prior to issuance of building permit, but are not building permit fees per se.
	Development Variance Permit	Differs depending on type of variance. Contact Planning Department .	Comox Planning Procedures Bylaw , Schedule "A"	
Second	Building Permits	See Building Permit application, Schedule 'A' Other Building Permit documents	Building Bylaw , Schedule 1 Subdivision and Development Servicing Bylaw No. 1261 Town of Comox Comox Development Cost Charges Bylaw , Schedule "A" Comox Valley Water System Supply Development Cost Charges Bylaw , Schedule 'A' Comox Valley Sewer Service Development Cost Charges Bylaw , Schedule 'A' Comox Valley Parkland Development Cost Charges Bylaw , Schedule 'A' Comox Fees and Charges Bylaw	
	Erosion and Sediment Control Permit	Application form and documents listed therein	\$500.00 plus amounts outlined in Drainage and Infrastructure Protection Bylaw Sections 35-36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on conditions, an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan may be required. See application form for details.
	Plumbing Permit	Application form and documents listed therein	Building Bylaw , Schedule 1, Section B	
	Highway Use Permit	Application form and documents listed therein	Highway Use Bylaw , Schedule C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only required if additional driveway or walkway that encroaches onto boulevard are proposed.
	Electrical Permit	Electrical Installation Permits TSBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per Technical Safety BC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine express connection versus design connection. The Town will require proof that applicants have liaised with BC Hydro as part of the building permit process.
	Gas Permit	Gas Installation Permits TSBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per Technical Safety BC 	
	Refrigeration Permit	Refrigeration Installation Permits TSBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per Technical Safety BC 	
	Electrical Connection	Electrical connection requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per BC Hydro 	

APPENDIX B: ZONING BUILDING ENVELOPE

Comox Zoning Bylaw 1850 shall prevail where there are conflicts with this table.



SSMFH Zone	Permitted Residential Dwelling Types	Minimum Setbacks	Maximum Height	Maximum Parcel Coverage
R1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary suites Single-family dwellings SSMFH coach houses (CH) Two-family dwellings Townhouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front: 3.0 m Front (garage or carport): 6.0 m Interior side: 1.5 m Exterior side: 3.0 m Exterior side (garage or carport): 6.0 m Rear (except SSMFH CH): 5.0 m Rear (1-storey SSMFH CH): 1.5 m Rear: (2-storey SSMFH CH): 4.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal buildings: 11 m and 3 storeys 1-storey SSMFH CH: 5.5 m 2-storey SSMFH CH: 7.5 m Accessory buildings: 4.5 m 	Parcel up to 1300 m ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dwelling: 35% 2 dwellings: 40% 3 dwellings: 45% 4 dwellings: 50%
				Parcel > 1300 m ² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dwelling: 25% 2 dwellings: 30% 3 dwellings: 35% 4 dwellings: 40%
R1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobile homes Secondary suites Single-family dwellings SSMFH coach houses (CH) Two-family dwellings Townhouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front: 3.0 m Front (garage or carport): 6.0 m Interior side: 1.5 m Exterior side: 3.0 m Exterior side (garage or carport): 6.0 m Rear (except SSMFH CH): 5.0 m Rear (1-storey SSMFH CH): 1.5 m Rear: (2-storey SSMFH CH): 4.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal buildings: 11 m and 3 storeys 1-storey SSMFH Coach house: 5.5 m 2-storey SSMFH Coach house: 7.5 m Accessory buildings: 4.5 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 dwelling: 35% 2 dwellings: 40% 3 dwellings: 45% 4 dwellings: 50%
R1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary suites Single-family dwellings Coach houses (CH) Two-family dwellings Townhouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front: 9.0 m Interior side (parcels with one exterior side lot line): 2.0 m Interior side (no exterior side lot line): 2.0 m on one side, 4.0 m on the other side Exterior side: 4.5 m Rear (except CH): 9.0 m Rear (CH): 2.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal buildings: 9.0 m Coach house < 50 m² gross floor area: 4.5 m Coach house = or > 50 m² gross floor area: 5.5 m Accessory buildings: 4.5 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30%
R3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary suites Single-family dwellings Coach houses (CH) Two-family dwellings Townhouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front: 7.5 m Interior side: 2.0 m Exterior side: 3.5 m Rear (except CH): 7.5 m Rear (CH): 2.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal buildings: 9.0 m and 2 storeys 1-storey coach house: 5.5 m 2-storey SSMFH coach house: 7.5 m Accessory buildings: 4.5 m Chicken coop: 2.5 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the lesser of 30% or 500 m²

APPENDIX B: ZONING BUILDING ENVELOPE



SSMFH Zone	Permitted Residential Dwelling Types	Minimum Setbacks	Maximum Height	Maximum Parcel Coverage
CD5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites • Single-family dwellings • Coach houses (CH) • Two-family dwellings • Townhouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front: 7.5 m • Interior side: 2.0 m • Exterior side (not adjacent to Guthrie Rd): 3.5 m • Exterior side (adjacent to Guthrie Rd): 3.5 m • Rear (except CH): 7.5 m • Rear (CH): 2.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal buildings: 9.0 m • Coach house < 50 m2 gross floor area: 4.5 m • Coach house = or > 50 m2 gross floor area: 5.5 m • Accessory buildings: 4.5 m • Chicken coop: 2.5 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20%, including non-permeable driveways and parking areas
CD18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondary suites • Single-family dwellings • Coach houses (CH) • Two-family dwellings • Townhouses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Front: varies (see Zoning Bylaw Appendix "N") • Interior side: 2.0 m • Exterior side: NA • Rear (except CH): varies (see Zoning Bylaw Appendix "N") • Rear (CH): 2.0 m • Between CH and principal building: 4.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal buildings: 9.0 m • Coach house < 50 m2 gross floor area: 4.5 m • Coach house = or > 50 m2 gross floor area: 5.5 m • Accessory buildings: 4.5 m • Chicken coop: 2.5 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20%, including non-permeable driveways and parking areas, patios, canopies, eaves, gutters and steps projecting further than 0.6 metres from a building wall



APPENDIX B: ZONING BUILDING ENVELOPE



In the R1.1 Single-family zone, a single-family dwelling and either a coach house or secondary suite are permitted. The building envelope for the R1.1 zone is as follows:

Zone	Permitted Residential Dwelling Types	Minimum Setbacks	Maximum Height	Maximum Parcel Coverage
R1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary suites Single-family dwellings Coach house (CH) if conditions met (section 101.2 (2)) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front: 7.5 m Interior side: 2.0 m Exterior side: 3.5 m Rear (except CH): 7.5 m Rear (CH): 2.0 m Between Single-family dwelling and coach house: 4.0 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principal buildings: 9.0 m Coach house < 50 m² gross floor area: 4.5 m Coach house = or > 50 m² gross floor area: 5.5 m Accessory buildings: 4.5 m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 35%

R1.1 Single-family Coach House conditions (Zoning Bylaw section 101.2 (2)):

Coach Houses shall:

- (a) not be permitted on a parcel on which a secondary suite exists;
- (b) not be permitted on a parcel where the parcel area is less than 500 m²;
- (c) not be permitted on a parcel where the rear yard is less than 15.0 metres in width;
- (d) have a parcel coverage not exceeding 10%;
- (e) be located in a rear yard;
- (f) in combination with the gross floor area of accessory buildings, not exceed:
 - i. 50 m² in gross floor area, where the parcel area is less than 650 m²;
 - ii. 60 m² in gross floor area, where the parcel area is equal to or greater than 650 m² and less than 1,000 m²; and
 - iii. 70 m² in gross floor area, where the parcel area is equal to or greater than 1,000 m².
- (g) for the purpose of sub-section (f) only, gross floor area shall:
 - i. include garages and carports, excluding carports attached to a coach house to a maximum of 20 m² and garages and carports forming part of a singlefamily dwelling; carport gross floor area shall be calculated as the roofed floor area;
 - ii. exclude one accessory building less than 10 m²; and
 - iii. exclude one room less than 40 m² in gross floor area, completely contained within the principal building and used by residents of a coach house for storage, vehicle parking or workshop purposes;
- (h) not exceed 10.0 m² roofed patio and deck floor area, where the roofed floor area is measured from the exterior of supporting walls or columns to the eave or gutter whichever is greater;
- (i) not exceed in height:
 - i. 4.5 metres, where the coach house gross floor area is less than 50 m²; and
 - ii. 5.5 metres, where the coach house gross floor area is equal to or greater than 50 m²;

APPENDIX C: EXTERNAL LINKS



BC Housing

- » [Secondary Suite Incentive Program](#): information on financial grants available for the creation of secondary suites in existing homes.

BC Hydro

- » [Electrical connection requests](#)

Province of BC

- » [Home Suite Home](#): A guide to secondary suites in BC, including key Building Code requirements
- » [Standardized SSMFH Designs](#): The province has created standardized housing designs that meet the BC Building Code.

Small Housing

- » Small Housing is a non-profit organization promoting the benefits of innovative housing forms, including SSMFH.
- » There is a web portal with resources for Citizen Developers: [Citizen Developers - SHBC Gentle Density Toolbox](#)

Technical Safety BC

- » [Permits | TSBC](#)



APPENDIX D: BUILDING COMBINATION EXAMPLES



Where multiple residential units are permitted, building types can be mixed and matched to total four units on a parcel, or three units for parcels 280 m² or smaller. Consider the examples below, which show some building type combinations on varying lot sizes.

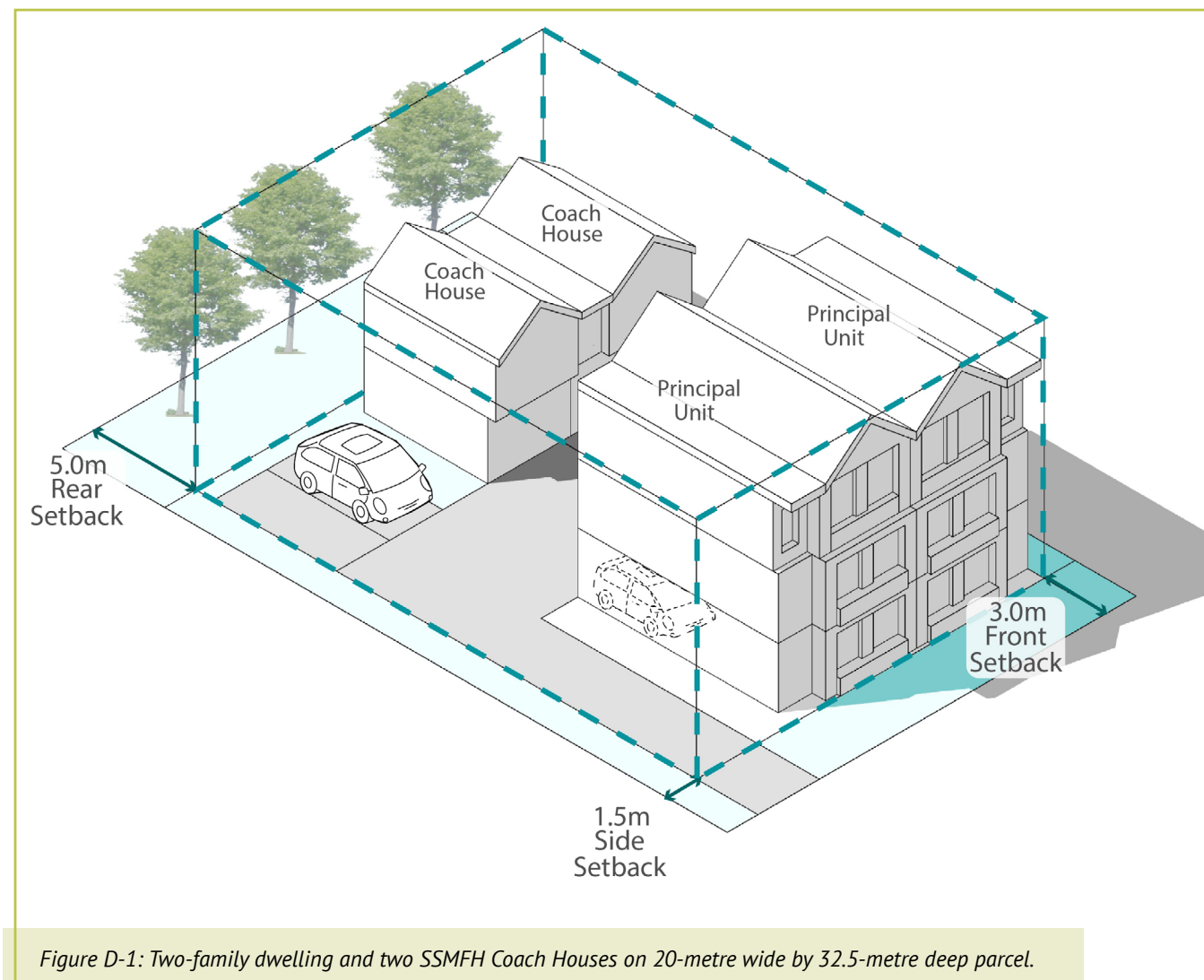


Figure D-1: Two-family dwelling and two SSMFH Coach Houses on 20-metre wide by 32.5-metre deep parcel.

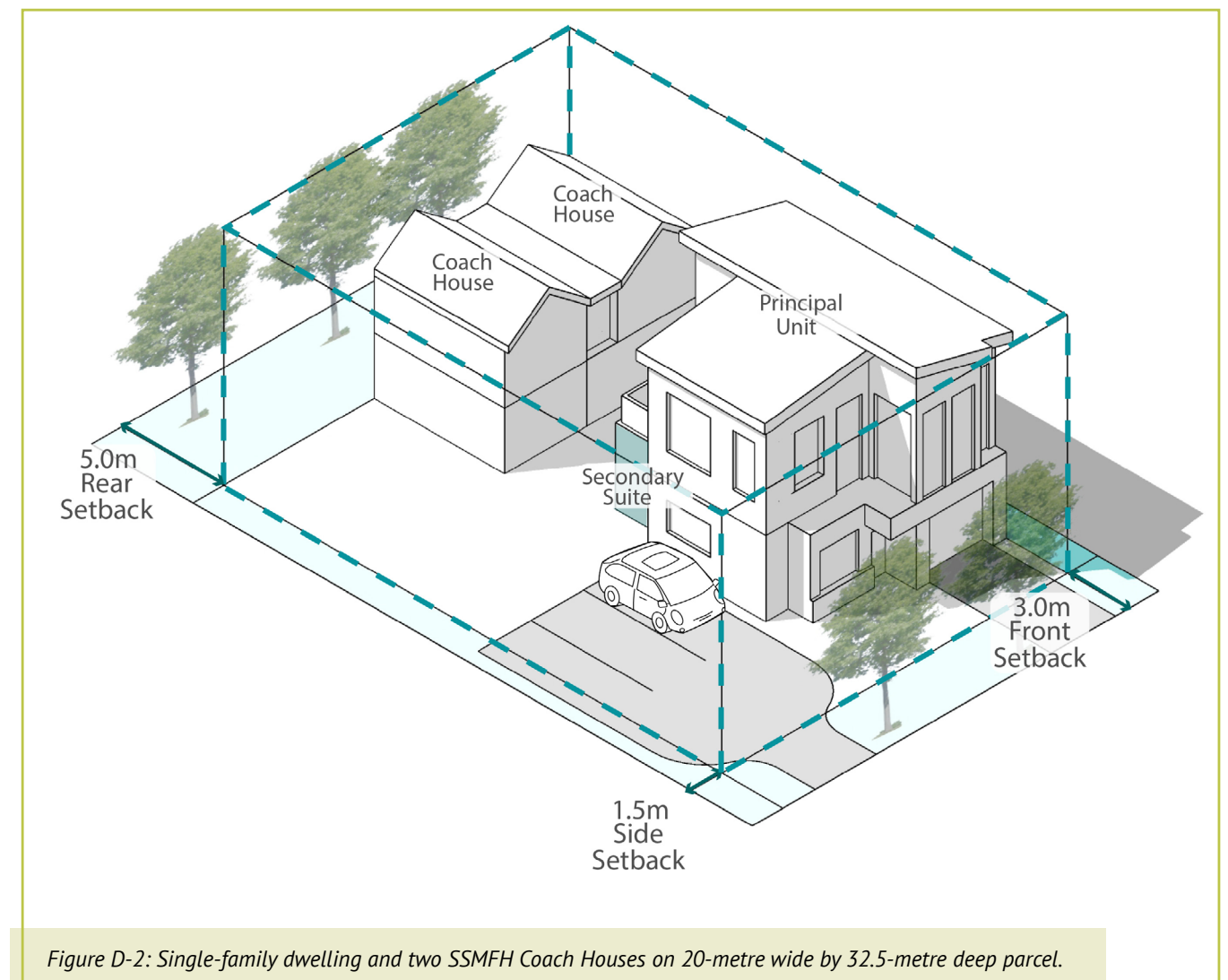
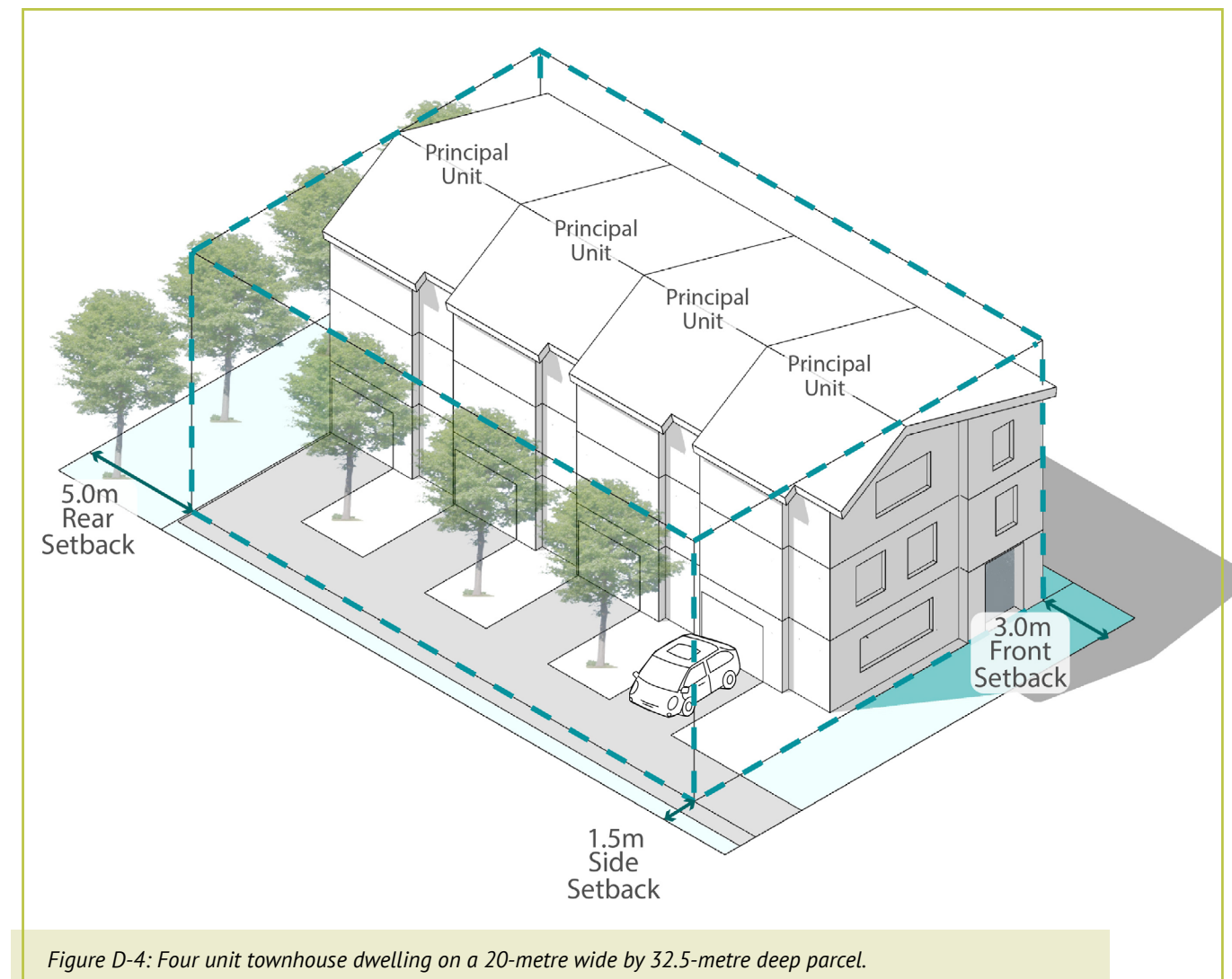
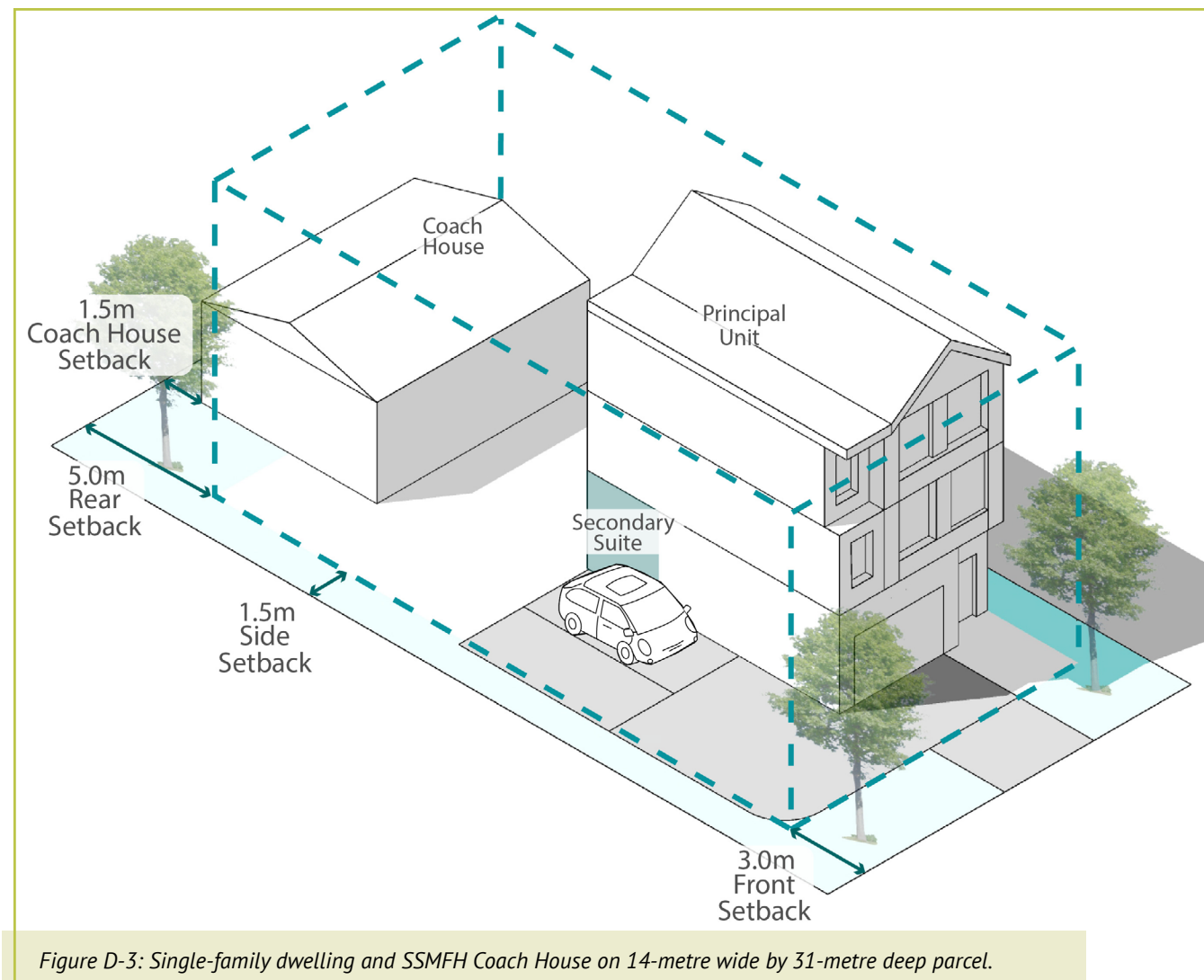
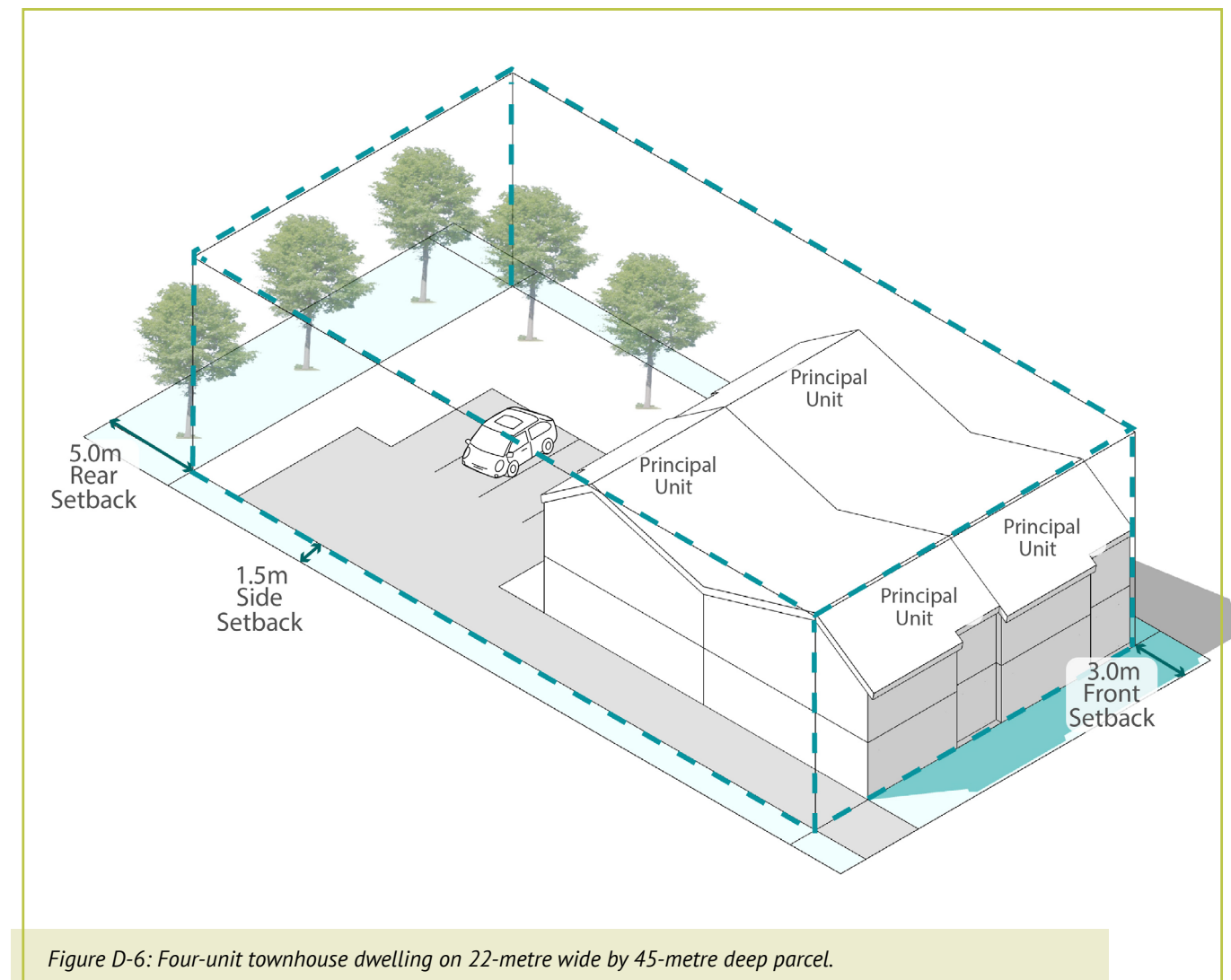
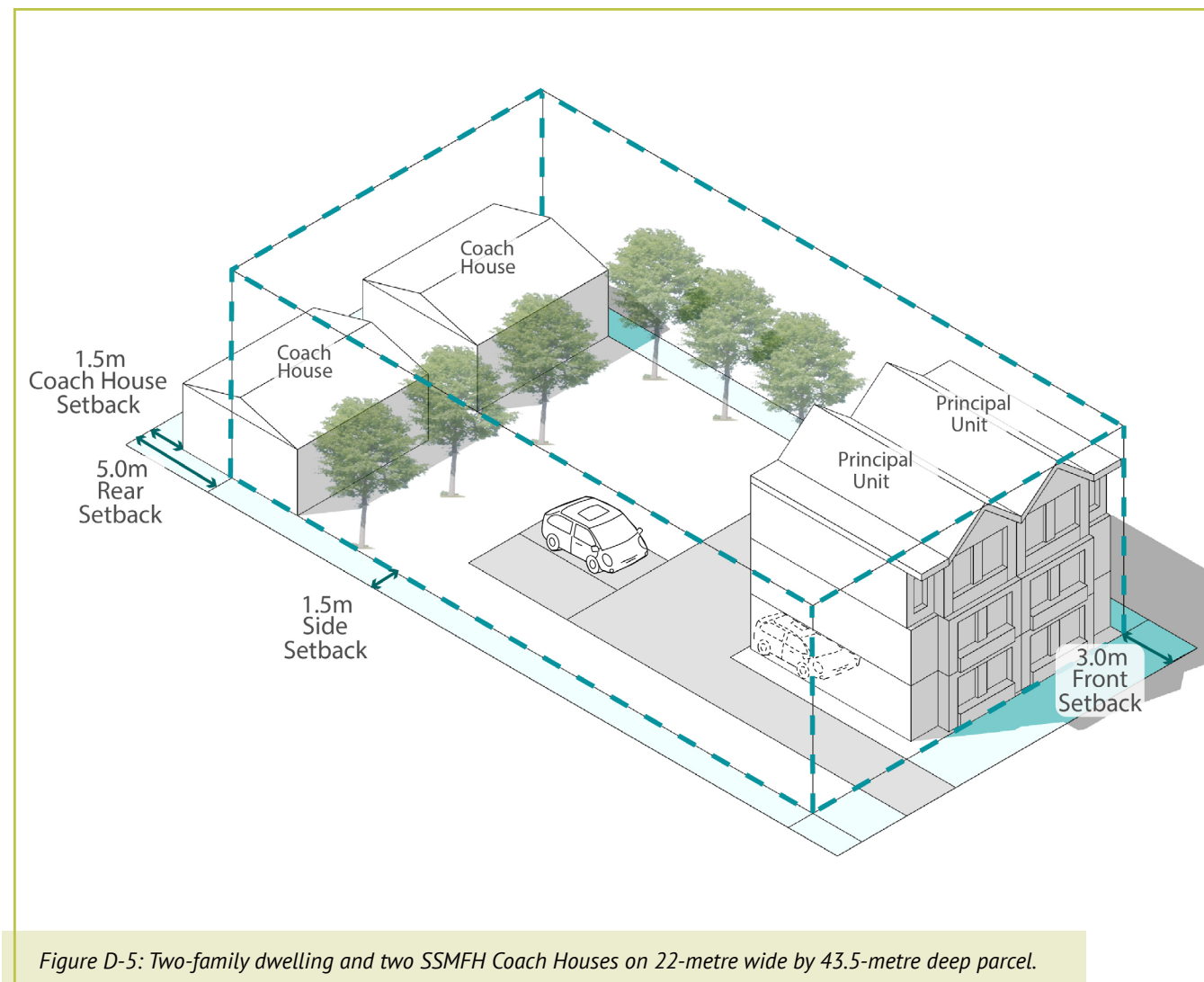


Figure D-2: Single-family dwelling and two SSMFH Coach Houses on 20-metre wide by 32.5-metre deep parcel.

APPENDIX D: BUILDING COMBINATION EXAMPLES



APPENDIX D: BUILDING COMBINATION EXAMPLES



APPENDIX E: SSMFH EXTENSION AREAS

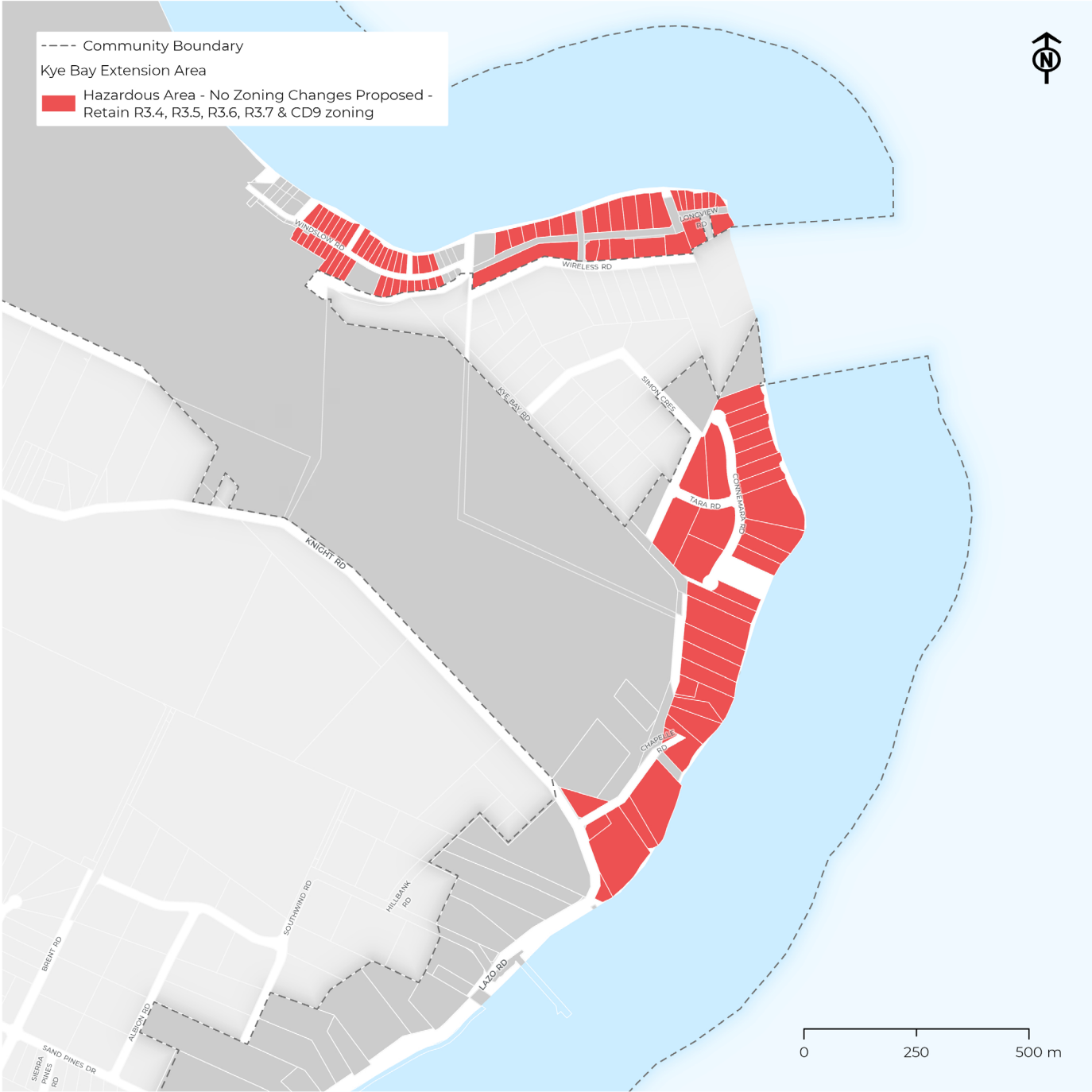


Figure 0-7: SSMFH Extension Area - Kye Bay

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Maximum Height

Maximum height is the height measured from grade to the highest point of a roof. Common protrusions from the roof such as chimneys are excluded.

The R1.0, R1.2, and R3.3 SSMFH zones have maximum heights measured in metres and storeys. For example, even if a building could fit four storeys within 11 metres, it would not be permitted. It should be noted that storeys below grade meeting the Zoning Bylaw definition of “basement” are not considered a storey.

Applicable Zoning Bylaw Definitions

Basement: “That portion of a building situated between the top of any floor and the top of the floor next above it, having no more than 0.6 metres of its height above grade and a height from floor to ceiling of 2.1 metres or more.”

Grade: “The average of the established ground level at the extreme corners of a structure excluding localized variations in the established ground level.”

Height: “The vertical distance measured from grade to the highest point of a structure excluding chimneys, elevators, roof access stairways, water tanks and associated screening, mechanical equipment and associated screening, church spires, belfries, monuments, flag poles, boat masts, ham radio towers, telecommunication modules, television or radio reception aerials, hose towers, and farm silos provided that:

- (1) excluded elements occupy no more than 20 percent of the total horizontal area of a parcel or, if situated on a building, not more than 15 percent of the total horizontal area of the roof;
- (2) excluded elements do not exceed 63.3 metres geodetic elevation or 9.0 metres in height, whichever is greater, within the runway approach surface boundary as shown on Schedule “B”, the Zoning Map; and
- (3) elevators, roof access stairways, water tanks and associated screening, mechanical equipment and associated screening, telecommunication modules and television reception aerials do not exceed the maximum permitted height by more than 2.0 metres.”

Storey: “That portion of a building situated between the top of any floor and the top of the floor next above it, and if there is no floor above it, that portion between the top of the floor and the ceiling above; does not include a cellar or basement.”

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Parcel Coverage

Parcel coverage refers to the proportion of a parcel that is covered by buildings and structures. It is not just the building footprint, but the outermost limits of a building, including eaves and gutters projecting beyond the building footprint.

In the R1.0 and R1.2 zones, the maximum permitted parcel coverage is based on the amount of dwelling units on the parcel, with lower lot coverage where fewer buildings are built. This form of scaled parcel coverage allows for units to be added to a parcel over time. For example, if a new single-family dwelling is built to 35% parcel coverage on an R1.0 parcel, there will still be 5% parcel coverage remaining for an additional dwelling unit, 10% for two additional dwelling units, and 15% for three additional dwelling units.

Applicable Zoning Bylaw Definition

Parcel coverage: “the portion of parcel area covered by all buildings, structures, and projections thereof as expressed as a percentage of the parcel area, not including

- (1) underground structures;
- (2) patios, decks, stairs and landings;
- (3) uncovered swimming pools;
- (4) parking areas, loading areas, and driveways that are open sided and roofless, unless such use is a principal use;
- (5) one accessory building having a gross floor area 10.0 square metres or less;
- (6) awnings, sunshades, canopies, pilasters, cornices, eaves, gutters, leaders, sills, and ornamental features; and
- (7) fences, retaining walls, and landscape materials.”

Setbacks

Setbacks are minimum distances that buildings and structures must be located from property lines. They maintain privacy between neighbours, provide adequate space for emergency services to access rear yards, and achieve consistency from the street view. Each zone outlines specific setbacks from the front, side, and rear lot lines. Setbacks can be different for different types of buildings. For example, coach houses have different rear yard setbacks than single-family dwellings because they are smaller and have less effect on rear yards of neighbouring properties. 1-storey coach houses have smaller setbacks than 2-storey coach houses for the same reason (see Figure 100-2 above). Setbacks can also differ for parts of a building. As shown in Figure 100-1 above, the garage front setback is 6.0 metres while the setback for the remainder of the building is 3.0 metres

Heat pumps and other outdoor noise generating mechanical equipment have different setbacks, require screening and their location is restricted, as outlined in Zoning Bylaw section 5.4.

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Applicable Zoning Bylaw Definitions

Setbacks: The required minimum distance between each of the respective lot lines and: (1) a building and any attached structure, or (2) a principal use; does not include underground structures, structures at finished grade, fences or trellises.

Zoning Bylaw Section 5.4 (pp. 39-40):

5.4 Noise Generating Mechanical Equipment

Noise generating mechanical equipment affixed to land, to a building or structure, or for the better use of the land or buildings and structures on the land, shall;

- (1) Be located no closer to a lot line than 3.0m;
- (2) Not be located in a front or exterior side yard; and
- (3) If located in an interior side yard, a. be within 2.0m of an exterior wall of a principal building; and b. be screened from the front and interior side lot line in accordance with Figures 5-3 and 5-4, by wood framed walls with a minimum width of 0.1m (excluding exterior cladding) and exterior cladding on both sides is to match that of the principal building.

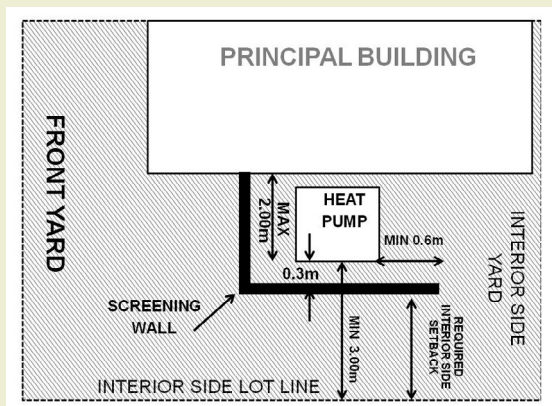


Figure 0-8: Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 5-3. Site Plan view of Heat Pump side yard screening

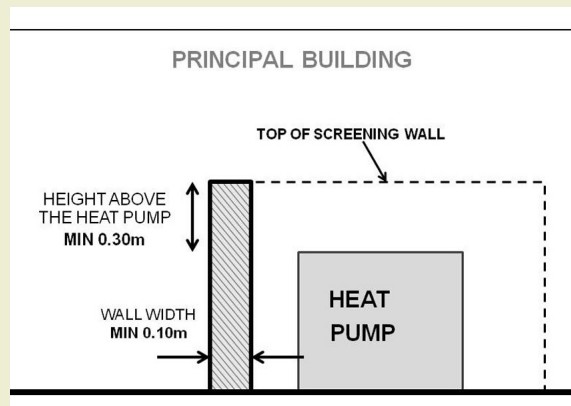


Figure 0-9: Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 5-4. Section view of Heat Pump side yard screening

Though each zone lists the specific required setback for that zone, Zoning Bylaw section 5.12 lists the permitted “projections into required setbacks”. For example, in the R1.0 and R1.2 zones, eaves, gutters, and leaders may project up to 0.6 metres into a required front, side, or rear setback. Awnings and canopies over a main entrance door may project 1.0 metres into front and exterior side setbacks.

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Parking

Section 6 of the Zoning Bylaw includes regulations for parking stall size and siting. 1 parking stall per dwelling unit must be provided on the parcel and demonstrated on a site layout submitted with a development permit area application or development permit area exemption application, as applicable, and building permit application. Tandem parking spaces cannot count toward the minimum required number of parking spaces.

The minimum size of parking spaces is 2.5 metres by 5.5 metres. The minimum width must be increased to 2.8 metres when the long side of a parking space is beside a structure that is 0.15 metres high or greater. An example is a parking stall within or beside a garage. This does not apply if the structure is within 1.0 metre of the front or rear of the parking space, as shown by the right hand parking stall in Figure 4 below. Where a parking stall is adjacent to walls on both sides, like in a single-car garage, the width must be at least 3.1 metres to count as a parking stall.

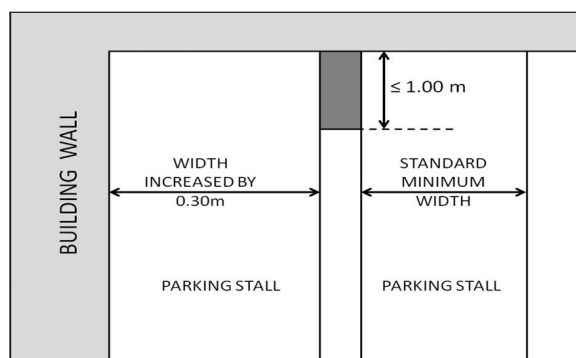


Figure 0-10: Illustration of when parking spaces must be increased due to an adjacent structure, as shown in the Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 6-2. Increased Parking Space Width

Driveways must be provided and maintained to access parking spaces. 3.6 metres is the minimum driveway width and 6.0 metres is the maximum. Under the Zoning Bylaw, a driveway is the portion of a parcel used by vehicles to travel from the street to parking stalls. A development variance permit would be required for a second driveway to access parking spaces, which is not currently permitted by the Highway Use Bylaw.

Under the [Highway Use Bylaw](#), a driveway is only the portion of a driveway as described in the Zoning Bylaw, that crosses a public boulevard, and can be a maximum of 5.5 metres wide.

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Landscaping

SSMFH zones for smaller lots (R1.0, R1.2) have front yard landscaping requirements to limit stormwater runoff, among other livability objectives. Requirements are in section 100.12 of the R1.0 zone and 102.13 of the R1.2 zone and explained in more detail below.

Soil-based Landscaping

Within the R1.0 and R1.2 zones, 50% of the front yard must comprise of soil-based landscaping. Soil-based landscaping limits the amount of water that will run off the parcel and into storm drains. The definitions of front yard and soil-based landscaping are outlined below.

Applicable Zoning Bylaw Definitions

Front yard: The area of land extending across the full width of a parcel, between a front lot line and the adjoining walls or supporting members of a principal building other than an urban produce stand, or where no principal building exists, a principal use.

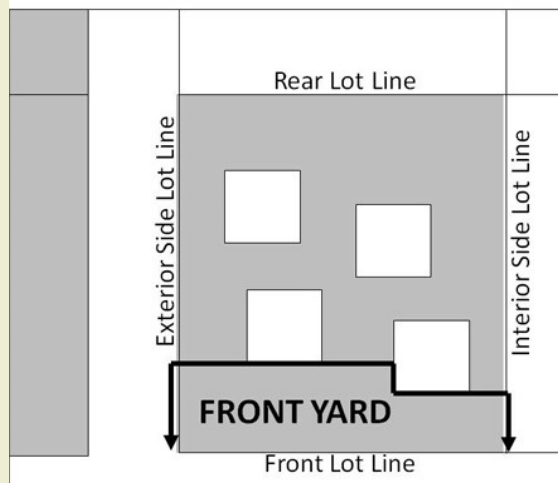


Figure 0-11: Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 3-2. Front Yard

Soil-based Landscaping: Any combination of trees, shrubs, flowers, grass, or other horticultural elements designed to enhance the visual amenity of a parcel that is supported by growing medium that meets the Canadian Landscape Standard, but does not include rock mulch or hard surface treatments.

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



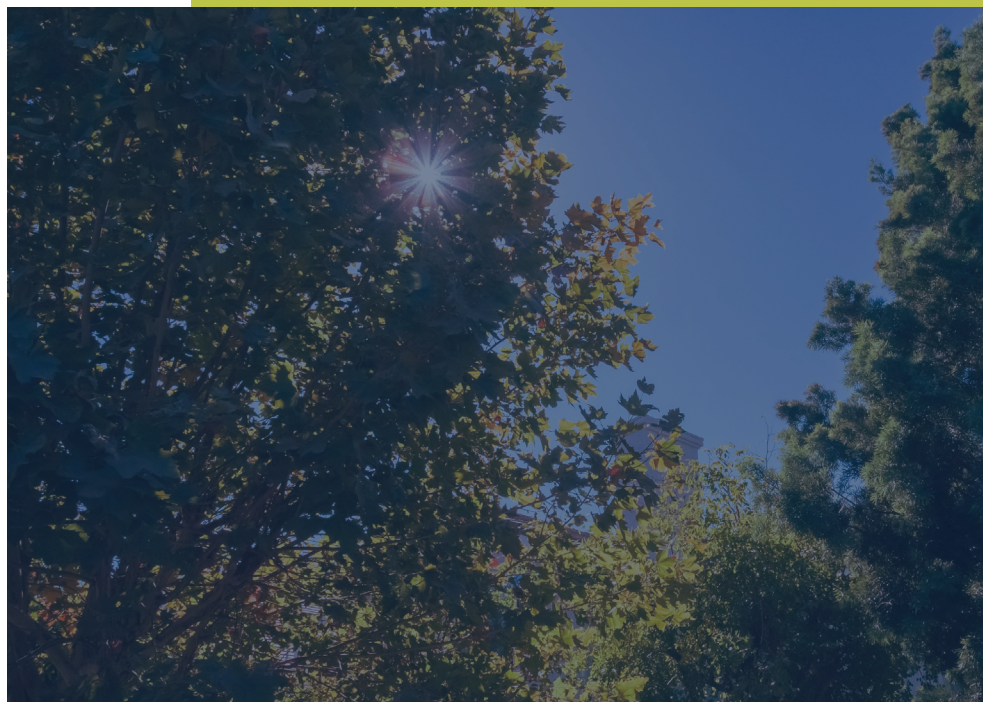
Required Trees

One tree must be provided in the front yard for every full 10 metres of parcel frontage in the R1.0 and R1.2 zones. For example, a parcel with frontage width of 18 metres would only need to provide one tree, and a parcel with a frontage width of 20 metres would need to provide 2 trees. Parcel frontage is the width of the front lot line between the side lot lines as defined in the Zoning Bylaw, included below. There are nuances to determining the frontage width for corner parcels and those fronting a cul-de-sac outlined in the Zoning Bylaw definition and figures 3-6 and 3-7 below.

Each required tree must be a 5 cm caliper (at time of planting) shade tree planted with 30 cubic metres of soil volume. The Comox Urban Forest Management Plan – Appendix 4: Preferred Tree Species to Plant, includes a list of trees that can be planted in Comox under the right growing conditions.

Shade trees are large deciduous species with an upright and spreading canopy. Ideal shade trees have high-branching growth to prevent obstruction of adjacent sidewalks. They can aid in passive cooling and heating by shading windows in the warmer months and allowing sun to penetrate windows when leaves have fallen. Some examples include:

- » Red Oak
- » Pin Oak
- » London planetree
- » Tulip tree
- » Sweet Gum
- » European beech
- » Norwegian maple
- » Pacific sunset maple
- » Raywood ash



APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Applicable Zoning Bylaw Definitions

Parcel Frontage: The aggregate length of lot lines common to a parcel and a street other than a lane. Where a parcel abuts two or more streets, only the street with the shortest length along the parcel shall be used to determine parcel frontage. That portion of a street abutting a corner cut-off lot line shall not be used to determine the street with the shortest length, as shown in Figure 0-12. Parcel frontage for a parcel with a corner cut-off lot line shall be determined by projecting the non-corner cut off lot lines as shown in Figure 0-13. Where a parcel does not abut a street, lot lines from which common vehicle access is provided shall be deemed to be common to a street. However, for the purpose of this definition, where a lot line has a radius of 80 metres or less, length shall be measured along a parallel line located at the required setback, as shown in Figure 0-14.

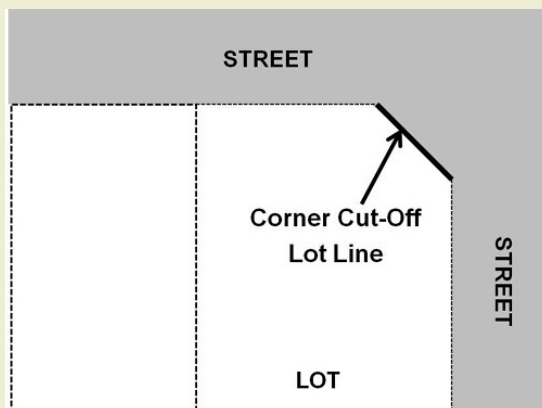


Figure 0-12: Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 3-5. Corner cut-off lot line

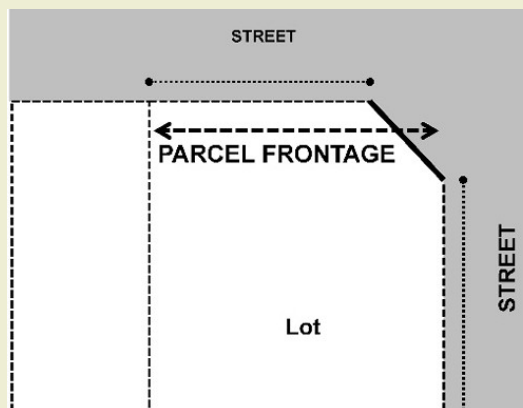


Figure 0-13: Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 3-6. Determining Parcel Frontage

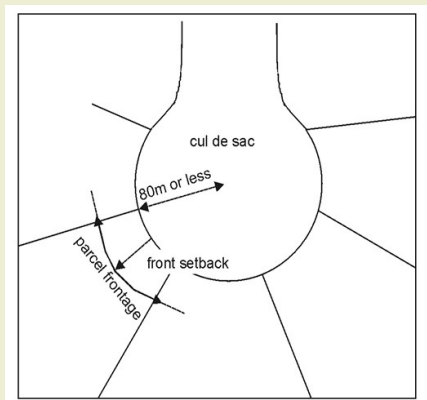


Figure 0-14: Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 3-7. Calculation of parcel frontage on a curve

APPENDIX F: ZONING DETAILS



Fencing

In the R1.0 and R1.2 zones, fence heights are restricted to 1.0 m in height within a front yard or exterior side yard., as shown in Figure 0-15.

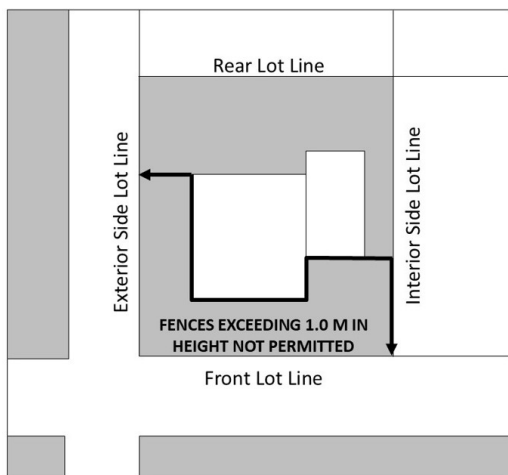


Figure 0-15: Illustration of where on a parcel the maximum fence height cannot exceed 1.0 metre, as shown in the Town of Comox Zoning Bylaw Figure 2-9.