

The Laneway and Carriage House Program

The City of New Westminster permits the development of laneway and carriage houses on many single detached dwelling properties.

These housing forms contribute to the amount and diversity of rental housing available in the city. Laneway and carriage houses offer more privacy and independence than secondary suites.

Laneway and carriage houses must meet the [Streamlined Guidelines](#), [zoning regulations](#), [Building Code regulations](#), and if applicable, the [Supplemental Guidelines for Accessible Laneway and Carriage Houses](#). Other Bylaws to reference include, but are not limited to, the [Streets and Traffic Bylaw](#) and [Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw](#).



Examples of completed laneway houses in New Westminster

About Laneway and Carriage Houses

Laneway and carriage houses are compact, detached, ground oriented dwellings located in back yards.

Laneway houses are located on properties that have access to a lane. Carriage houses are located on properties without lanes.

Laneway and carriage houses can be used for family or as rental units but cannot be sold separately or used for short term rentals.

Tips for Streamlined Permitting

- Hire an experienced design professional and arborist.
- For shortest review timelines, ensure the proposal complies with all guidelines listed as “must be met”.
- Complete the checklist on page 3 of this Guide to ensure your application package is complete.

Application Review Process

Both a Development Permit and a Building Permit are required prior to building a laneway or carriage house.

Thinking of building?

1. **Preliminary Inquiry:** Contact the Planning Division to determine if a laneway or carriage house is permitted on your property (e.g. has proper zoning). Properties designated (RD) Residential – Detached or Semi-Detached or (RGO) Residential – Ground Oriented Infill Housing in the Official Community Plan, may be eligible for a laneway or carriage house.
2. **Pre-Application:** If there are technical questions, a meeting can be requested with planning staff before applicants can decide to proceed ([see City Contacts on page 7 of this Guide](#)).

When you are ready to make a Development Permit application:

3. **Hire Professionals to Prepare Drawings and Submission Materials:** Applicants must prepare drawings that include building design to the specifications noted on the following pages. At this stage, a servicing (e.g. water, sanitary, electrical) capacity assessment of the property by the applicant's plumber, electrician and engineer must be conducted. The laneway and carriage house must be designed in accordance with the Development Permit guidelines and the regulations of the Zoning Bylaw.
4. **Development Permit Application:** Applicants should contact the Planning Division to make an application. A Planner will be assigned to manage the application. A [Tree Permit](#) must also be submitted at this time. If the laneway or carriage house is being developed in the Queen's Park neighbourhood, a [Heritage Alteration Permit \(HAP\)](#) is also required and must meet the [Queen's Park New Construction Design Guidelines](#) which supersedes the Laneway and Carriage Houses Streamlined Guidelines.
5. **Development Permit Review:** The Planner will review the application for compliance with the Streamlined Guidelines and Zoning Bylaw. The application will also be circulated to other City departments (e.g. Building, Engineering, and Trees) for review and comments. Feedback will be provided to the applicant from the Planner regarding any required revisions to the application.
6. **Finalize Plans:** The applicant must submit finalized Development Permit plans if revisions are needed. Additional revisions may be requested from staff up until approval. A lane right-of-way, if required, will be finalized at this stage. A refundable deposit of \$7,500 for landscaping must be submitted.
7. **Development Permit Approval:** Final approval of the application will be considered by the Director of Climate Action, Planning and Development. The Development Permit will be registered by the City on title for the property.
8. **Building Permit Application:** Once the Development Permit has been approved, the applicant must apply for a Building Permit and pay any associated Building Permit fees. Contact the Building Division to discuss the submission requirements ([see City Contacts on page 7 of this Guide](#)).
9. **Servicing:** The applicant will enter into a Works and Services Agreement with the Engineering Department.
10. **Building Permit Issuance:** Once all Building Permit requirements have been met, the Building Division will issue a Building Permit.
11. **Construction and Inspections:** Once a Building Permit has been issued, construction can begin. The applicant must contact the Building Division to schedule relevant inspections. Once landscaping has been installed, the applicant can contact Planning to arrange for their landscaping inspection. If the landscaping has been installed according to the landscape components of the Site Plan that forms part of the Development Permit, then the \$7,500 deposit will be returned.

Submission Package Checklist

Please check the box indicating the documents are included in your Development Permit submission package. The completed checklist must be submitted with your application.

When submitting your Development Permit application:

- Submit architectural drawings as a separate package from application forms and reports
- Include the property address, the date of submission and page numbers
- All requirements to be provided digitally in PDF format

Incomplete applications will be returned.

If necessary during the review process, staff may ask for additional documents or drawings.

APPLICATION AUTHORIZATION MATERIAL AND REQUIREMENTS			
✓	DOCUMENTS	DETAILS	NOTES
	Development Permit Application Form	Signed by all persons whose names appear on the Title Search or an authorized agent. The application form will be provided at the time of submission.	Staff will provide the application form when you contact the Planning Division.
	Development Permit Fees	Fees as required by the Climate Action, Planning and Development Fees and Rates Bylaw No. 7863, 2014 and amendments. Fees must be paid once a full application package is received and before an application can be reviewed. The landscape deposit can be paid prior to issuance of the Development Permit.	Climate Action, Planning and Development Fees and Rates Bylaw No. 7863, 2014 and amendments
	Current Title Search	Current Title Search (less than one month old), including a copy of any 'legal notations' or 'legal encumbrances' registered on title which may impact the development of the site (e.g. restrictive covenants, right-of-ways, easements).	
	Letter of Authorization	Signed by the owner(s), if an applicant is applying on behalf of the owner(s) registered on the Title Search.	Letter of Authorization form
	Legal Property Survey	Current signed and sealed legal survey no more than six months old reflecting the existing grades. Include the location of trees (both on-site, neighbouring and City), the principal house and any other relevant buildings or structures.	Legal Property Survey details

	Letter of Assurance: Step Code Energy Requirements	<p>The letter of assurance regarding Energy Step Code compliance must convey that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the applicant understands that, as of May 1, 2023, the minimum Step Code requirement for laneway and carriage houses is Step 3; the applicant understands that they will be required to submit an energy model prepared by a certified energy advisor, verifying that the project meets BC Energy Step Code requirements, as part of their Building Permit application; the applicant understands that the project energy model will be required to demonstrate that it meets the requirements of the targeted Step Code level; and, the applicant understands that if they cannot demonstrate that the project meets the BC Energy Step Code requirements for Steps 4 or above, they will not be permitted additional density through the Zoning Bylaw. 	
ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS (WITH BOTH METRIC AND IMPERIAL MEASUREMENTS)			
✓	DOCUMENTS	DETAILS	NOTES
	Statistical Table	Detailed projects statistic shall be provided in an easy to read tabular format, noting any element that is not in keeping with bylaw regulations.	See Statistical Table Template on page 8 of this Guide.
	Site Plan	<p>The site plan should depict:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dimensions of all buildings, structures, private open space; Setbacks, easements, right-of-ways; Ground floor plans that show the interior-exterior relationship; Existing and proposed grades at the building and site perimeter; Dimensions of garbage and recycling area; All parking spaces, driveways and pedestrian paths; Existing trees (on-site, City and neighbouring), including proposed trees to be removed and replacement trees; Paving materials; Areas of soft landscaping; Grading plan; Retaining walls; and, Surfacing and screening materials. 	Existing trees, including proposed and replacement trees must be consistent with the Tree Bylaw and the Tree Permit application.
	Floor Plans	Must include dimensions and labelled room names. Underheight areas less than 1.22 metres (4 feet) should be clearly shown.	

	Sections	Show key parts of the building, with emphasis on sloping portions of the site if any, and the highest point of the building elevation.	
	Detail Elevations	Show all four sides of the laneway or carriage house, including, and clearly labelled: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed materials; and Base height plane as defined in the Streamlined Guidelines. 	
	Principal Dwelling Elevation	Show the rear or facing side of the existing or proposed principal house, including window sizes for spatial separation calculations.	
APPLICATION SUPPORTING MATERIALS, PERMITS, AND STUDIES			
✓	DOCUMENTS	DETAILS	NOTES
	Utilities Plan	Show proposed services and connections for water, sanitary, storm, electrical, gas and telecom. This should be shown on a separate site plan.	See page 6 of this Guide for more information regarding Utility Fees and Electrical Utility. See page 9 for an Utilities Plan example.
	Arborist Report	An arborist's report, including the Tree Management Plan, addressing the size, type and condition of all trees on the property and adjacent properties and Critical Root Zone must also be provided. This will be reviewed for compliance with the City's Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw and to ensure that plans to retain or replant trees are incorporated into the design.	For more information, please refer to the Arborist Report Requirements . Must be prepared by an ISA Certified Arborist to assess any removal and retention of existing trees.
	Tree Permit Application	Every laneway or carriage house project, whether or not there are trees on site, must make a Tree Permit application. A project arborist will be required to evaluate any trees for retention, to select replacement trees and to ensure trees are protected during construction in accordance with the City's Replacement Tree List and subject final approval by the City arborist.	Must be consistent with the Site Plan. Tree Permit application details Replacement trees
	Heritage Alteration Permit, if applicable	A Heritage Alteration Permit allows and manages changes to protected heritage properties (e.g. properties within the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area, or properties with a heritage designation). There is a fee associated with Heritage Alteration Permit for design review of laneway or carriage houses.	For Heritage Alteration Permit applications that are located in Queen's Park, refer to Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area .

Additional Requirements

Potential Water, Fire Suppression Water, Storm Sewer and Sanitary Sewer Upgrade Requirements

Properties applying for a laneway or carriage house will be required to upgrade to a minimum 0.025 metres (0.082 feet) water service connection. Please contact the Engineering Department to determine the size of the existing water connection and the costs associated with upsizing.

Based on site conditions a fire protection sprinkler system may be required. If so, the services of a fire protection professional engineer will be required to design the system. As part of the design, the engineer will have to take into account the total water supply demand for the water and fire protection systems, and the available water supply from the City to determine the size of the combined water service to be installed by the City.

The on-site storm and sanitary services for the new laneway or carriage house will be required to be separated. If building a new principal dwelling, the property will be fully separated. If a separate storm line exists in the street/lane adjacent to the property, a separate storm connection is required. If no changes are proposed to the principal dwelling, only the new laneway or carriage house will be required to have separate storm and sanitary services.

Please contact the Engineering Department to determine if the services at the property line have been separated and that current service elevations will accommodate gravity drainage from the laneway or carriage house.



Utility Fees

An annual utility fee equivalent to 50% of the principal dwelling water and sanitary charge will be charged for the laneway or carriage house. This is in addition to any utility fees charged for secondary suites. Unlike secondary suites, there is no exemption process for utility fees for unoccupied laneway or carriage houses.

Electric Utility

All laneway and carriage house projects will be required to underground their electrical service connections. Each property can only have one service connection from the property line but can have meters for the principal house, secondary suite and laneway or carriage house.

Addressing

Unit number 3 will be assigned based on the property address for example:

- Principal dwelling: 1-511 Example Ave
- Secondary Suite (if applicable): 2-511 Example Ave
- Laneway House/Carriage House: 3-511 Example Ave

If the property is a corner lot, the address may be assigned off the side street.

City Contacts

Planning Division

For questions about zoning regulations, guidelines or the Development Permit process.

Phone: 604-527-4532

Email: plnpost@newwestcity.ca

Building Division

For information on Building Code and Plumbing Bylaw requirements, and the Building Permit process.

Phone: 604-527-4580

Email:

buildingdept@newwestcity.ca

Electrical Utility

For information about service connections, connection location and metering.

Phone: 604-527-4528

Water, Sewer, & Garbage Services

For information about engineering servicing and requirements (including water, sewer, and garbage).

Phone: 604-527-4592

Email: engpost@newwestcity.ca

Tree Protection Bylaw

For information about the Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw, and tree removal and protection requirements.

Phone: 604-636-4318

Email: treebylaw@newwestcity.ca

Energy Savings

For information about Energy Save New West, and access to energy evaluations, upgrades, rebates and incentives.

Phone: 604-515-3818

Email: info@energysavenewwest.ca

Statistical Table Template

The regulations noted below are provided for convenience. Refer to the Zoning Bylaw and Streamlined Guidelines for complete regulations and guidelines.

STATISTICAL TABLE		
Zoning:		
Site area:		
Targeted BC Energy Step Code Level: 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/>		
Conforms to the Supplemental Guidelines for Accessible Laneway and Carriage Houses: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
If Yes, please clearly note on the front page of the drawing package: "To comply with the Supplementary Guidelines for Accessible Laneway and Carriage Houses."		
	PERMITTED/REQUIRED	PROPOSED
LWH or CH density	Up to 11% of the site area, plus exemptions, potential density transfer from the principal house, and additional increases for Step 4 or 5 buildings	
LWH or CH floor area	Maximum 89 sq.m. (958 sq.ft.) plus 1% of the site area, with additional increases for meeting Step 4 or 5 of the Energy Step Code (LWH or CH density provision still applies)	
Ground floor area		
Second floor area (if applicable)	Maximum 80% of the ground floor area if flat or shallow pitched roof	
Attached garage size	Up to 21 sq.m. (226 sq.ft.) for an enclosed garage or up to 27.9 sq. m. (300 sq. ft.) for an enclosed garage for an accessible dwelling	
Number of off-street parking spaces	2 parking spaces for all units on site	
Front landing area	Up to 3.0 sq.m (32 sq.ft) is exempt from the maximum floor area regulation	
Uncovered upper level deck	Up to 7.0 sq.m. (75.3 sq.ft.) is exempt from the maximum floor area regulation	
Attached bicycle storage	Up to 3.0 sq.m. (32 sq. ft.) is exempt from maximum floor area calculation	
Site coverage	Up to 11% of the site area, or 16% for an accessible dwelling	
LWH or CH building height	Up to 7 m. (22.97 ft.) from the base height plane to the highest point of the building	
Setbacks from all property lines	Refer to the Setback section on page 3 of the Laneway and Carriage Houses Streamlined Guidelines	
Building separation	Minimum 4.88 m. (16 ft.) measured from the closest building face of the principal house and the closest face of the LWH or CH (for reductions in minimum separation, see Separation from Principal Dwelling on page 4 of the Guidelines.)	
Private open space	Minimum of 14.86 sq.m (160 sq. ft)	

UTILITIES PLAN EXAMPLE

