



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 [development permit guidelines](#), [zoning regulations](#) and Building Code regulations.

Thinking of Building?

If you are considering building a laneway or carriage house:

1. Contact the Planning Division and confirm that the zoning on your property allows a laneway or carriage house. (*See City Contacts on [page 5](#)*).
2. Set up a pre-application meeting at which time a Planner can discuss with you the requirements and approval process for building a laneway or carriage house, and answer any questions you may have. Information about the application process and requirements are provided in the following pages.

What is a Laneway or Carriage House?

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 (like a bed and breakfast).



Application Review Process

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

Before you do anything:

1. **Preliminary Inquiry:** Anyone interested in building a laneway or carriage house should contact the Planning Division to determine if a laneway or carriage house is permitted on their property (i.e. has proper zoning).
2. **Pre-Application Meeting:** Anyone interested in building a laneway or carriage house must book a meeting with a Planner to discuss the project. A preliminary sketch (with approximate dimensions and scale) showing the proposed location of the laneway or carriage house should be brought to the meeting (this sketch does not need to be done by a professional).

When you are ready to make a development application:

3. **Hire Professionals to Prepare Drawings and Submission Materials:** Applicants must prepare drawings that include building and landscape design to the specifications noted on the following pages. At this stage, servicing (e.g. water, sanitary, electrical) capacity assessment of the property by the applicant's plumber and electrician must be conducted.
4. **Development Permit Application:** Applicants should contact the Planning Division to make an appointment before submitting an application. A Planner will be assigned to manage the application at this stage. A [Tree Permit](#) and, if required, a Heritage Alteration Permit application must also be submitted at this time.
5. **Development Permit Review:** The Planner will review the application for compliance with the development permit guidelines and Zoning Bylaw. The application will also be circulated to other City departments (e.g. Building, Engineering) for review and comment. Feedback will be provided to the applicant from the Planner regarding any required revisions to the application.
6. **Consultation:** Once the application sufficiently meets the guidelines and requirements, the applicant must consult with adjacent neighbours. (See *consultation requirements on the following page.*)

(Review process is continued on following page.)

7. **Finalize Plans:** The applicant must submit finalized Development Permit plans. Additional revisions may be requested up until approval. A lane right-of-way, if required, will be finalized at this stage. The Energy Advisor must also submit a pre-construction energy model form indicating that the project meets Step Code requirements at this time.
8. **Development Permit Approval:** Before the Development Permit is approved, a refundable deposit of \$5,000 for landscaping must be submitted. Final approval of the application will be considered by the Director of Development Services. The Tree Permit would be issued at the same time. The Development Permit will then be registered by the City on title for the property.
9. **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 5](#)).
10. **Servicing:** The applicant will enter into a Works and Services Agreement with the Engineering Department.
11. **Building Permit Issuance:** Once all building permit requirements have been met, the Building Division will issue a Building Permit.
12. **Construction and Inspections:** Once a Building Permit has been issued, construction can begin. The applicant must contact the Building Division to schedule all relevant inspections. Final Inspection for occupancy will not be granted until all other inspections, including a landscaping inspection, are complete.



Example of a rain garden and permeable surface.

Consultation Requirements

As part of the application process, applicants must discuss the plans with immediate neighbours. The purpose of consultation is not to ask the neighbours whether or not a laneway or carriage house should be permitted, but to present the proposed design and discuss potential design changes that could address concerns raised by neighbours.

Consultation requires distributing a letter to neighbours, including those across the lane or rear property line.

The letter should include: name and contact information of applicant, project address, site plan, building elevation drawings and 3D renderings, landscape plan, next steps, contact information for the Planner, and a Neighbour Feedback Form.

The applicant must provide to the Planner: a copy of the letter sent, a list of all addresses that received the letter, and copies or summary of any responses or feedback forms received.

Feedback received must be discussed with the Planner prior to any changes being incorporated into the design.

Submitting a Development Permit Application

Please contact the Planning Division the day before to schedule a time to submit your application.

All design documents must be scaled appropriately to 11x17 and must be legible to staff; one paper copy and one digital PDF are required. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.



Well designed compact spaces increase livability.

The Submission Package

1. FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

The following completed forms must be included in the submission package:

Development Permit Application Form signed by all persons whose names appear on the Title Certificate or an authorized agent. The application form will be provided at the time of submission.

A Current Title Search, 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, rights of ways, easements).

A Letter of Authorization signed by the owner(s), **if** an applicant is applying on behalf of the owner(s) registered on the Title Certificate.

The Energy Advisor's name, company and identification number (with NRCAN) you are using.

2. CONTEXT INFORMATION

The following Context Information must be provided:

A Legal Property Survey that includes the location of trees, the principal house and any other relevant buildings or structures.

Lane or Flanking Street Context Elevations of the buildings on the site and one building on each side of the property. This could include providing streetscape or stitched together photos for panoramic views.

3. ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

The architectural drawings must be 11x17", scaled and dimensioned, and include the following elements:

A Statistical Table, which must document:

- Required/permitted and proposed setbacks;
- Floor Space Ratio (FSR) of the proposed principal house and of the laneway or carriage house;
- Proposed laneway or carriage house size, height, parking, open space dimensions, and site coverage;
- Spatial separation calculations;
- Any other pertinent design measurements.

Note in the table any element that is not in keeping with existing bylaws.

A Site Plan(s), which must depict:

- Grading, setbacks, easements, rights of way, paving and street trees;
- Ground floor plans of laneway or carriage house that show the interior-exterior relationship;
- Existing and proposed grades at the building and site perimeter;
- All parking spaces, driveways and pedestrian paths.

Floor Plans, of laneway or carriage house with labelled room names.

Sections through key parts of the building, with emphasis on sloping portions of the site, if any.

Detail Elevations of all sides of the laneway or carriage house and 'lanescape' elevations, including the colour palette and type of proposed materials. The building envelope should be included on the elevations.

Principal Dwelling Elevation for the rear or facing side, for the existing or proposed house, including window sizes, for spatial separation calculations.

Coloured Elevations and a 3D Massing Model, or a Fully Rendered Colour 3D Model to illustrate the form and character, and the building massing.

A Utilities Plan, showing proposed locations for water, sanitary, storm, electrical, gas and telecom services and connections. This should be shown on a separate site plan.

A Sun Shadow Study that illustrates sun access to the neighbouring property and the backyard open space at 9:00am, 12:00pm, 3:00pm, and 6:00pm for the following days throughout the year:

- Equinox (March 21 / Sept. 21)
- Summer Solstice (June 21)
- Winter Solstice (Dec. 21)

The overhead view should show property lines, streets, building footprints for the principal dwelling and adjacent buildings.

The Sun Shadow study is not required for single storey buildings.

4. LANDSCAPE PLAN & DRAWINGS

The landscape plan must be 11x17” and clearly illustrate the concept for the laneway or carriage house’s soft landscaping (e.g. planting) and hard landscaping (e.g. patios, walkways and parking).

The landscape plan must also include a plant list with a graphic key, botanical and common names, sizes, and quantities. The drawings must include a layout and grading plan (including paving, existing and proposed grading, drainage, and any structures for screening views etc.),

a materials plan (including lighting and site furnishings), and a planting plan (including locations).

An arborist’s report addressing the size, type and condition of all trees on the property and adjacent properties must also be provided. This will be reviewed for compliance with the City’s Tree Protection Bylaw and to ensure that plans to retain or replant trees are incorporated into the design.

5. FEES AND OTHER APPLICATIONS

The [Development Permit fees](#) must be provided at the time of submission.

A [Tree Permit](#) and, if required, a Heritage Alteration Permit application (and associated fees for properties in the [Queen’s Park Heritage Conservation Area](#)) must also be submitted at this time.

City Contacts

Planning Division

To set up a pre-application meeting, or for questions about zoning regulations, guidelines or the Development Permit process.

Phone: 604-527-4532

Email: plnpost@newwestcity.ca

Search newwestcity.ca: [development permits](#)

Building Division

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

Phone: 604-527-4580

Email: inspections@newwestcity.ca

Search newwestcity.ca: [building and property improvements](#)

Water, Sewer, & Garbage Services

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

Phone: 604-527-4592

Email: engpost@newwestcity.ca

Search newwestcity.ca: [services permit guide / garbage collection](#)

Electrical Utility

For information about service connections, connection location and metering.

Phone: 604-527-4528

Search newwestcity.ca: [electrical design and engineering](#)

City Arborist

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

Phone: 604-636-4318

Email: treeprotectionbylaw@newwestcity.ca

Search newwestcity.ca: [tree permit](#)

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

Search newwestcity.ca: [Energy Save New West](#)

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 1" (25mm) 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 house, 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

The electric service connection will be required to be underground to both the principal dwelling and laneway or carriage house. 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.

Hire a Professional Team

- Surveyor
- Arborist
- House Designer / Architect
- Landscape Designer / Architect
- Energy Advisor

Trees

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.

Addressing

When a laneway or carriage house Building Permit is approved, a unit number will be assigned based on the property address. The laneway house or carriage house will always be assigned as unit #3, for example:

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

What's New?

In February 2019, Council adopted Zoning Bylaw amendments to improve the design of laneway or carriage houses, including:

- Reduced required rear lane setbacks,
- Larger permitted garage spaces for fully accessible units,
- Additional permitted area for covered front entry landings (up to 32 sqft),
- Additional permitted area for un-covered upper level decks (up to 75 sqft),
- Additional permitted area for externally-accessed bicycle storage (up to 32 sqft),