Guide: Infill Housing Program

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Purpose of the Guide

The City of New Westminster (the "City") permits infill housing on many properties across the city, increasing opportunities for housing choice. This Guide informs potential development applicants on how to navigate the review process for new infill housing. With a new, streamlined process, most infill housing projects will not require rezoning. The permits required include Development Permit, Building Permit, and Tree Permit. Some projects may also require a Heritage Alteration Permit. Please see the Bylaw Resources section of this report for a list of applicable regulations.

How to Use the Guide

The Guide: Infill Housing ("Guide") is divided into two sections to provide information on the application review process:

1. Considerations for Infill Housing Development
2. Development Review Process

Note: *This Guide is a summary provided for convenience. In the case of a difference in requirements between this Guide and City regulations, the City regulations shall prevail.*

Queensborough

This guide does not apply to properties in Queensborough. The City has not yet made changes to housing regulations in Queensborough because more research is needed on infrastructure, such as water and sewer systems, to see if the area can support infill housing. The City will consult with residents on any changes proposed in Queensborough.

What is Infill Housing?

Infill housing is a ground oriented type of housing, where each home has its own exterior entrance. Infill housing provides a denser form of development than single detached dwellings (houses) and duplexes, but with similar features, including entrances directly accessible from a street or open space, and often front or rear yards, or a central courtyard.

Examples of possible infill housing forms include detached accessory dwelling units (laneway or carriage houses), multiplexes (e.g. duplex, quadraplex), and other equivalent ground oriented housing. Small scale townhouse with six or fewer units on a single property are also permitted.

Units in the same infill housing project may be stratified and sold to separate owners, except for secondary suites, which are considered accessory to a principal dwelling unit. The units can also be owned by one person and rented.



Figure 1: **Multiplex Infill Housing**



Figure 2: **Multi-Building Infill Housing**

1.0 Considerations for Infill Housing

Costs

Infill housing projects can involve significant costs for applicants, including:

- construction costs,
- servicing costs *(see call-out box),*
- financing growth contributions *(see call-out box),*
- land costs,
- professional consultant costs *(see call-out box),*
- permit fees, and
- legal fees.

Servicing Costs

Applicants' project budgets must account for servicing costs. This can include pipe upgrades, new curb and gutter, or street lighting (see more details in the Application Review Process section of this Guide). Water, sanitary, and sewer upgrade costs may be substantial, depending on the site location. Applicants are advised to hire a professional engineer to understand likely servicing costs when considering a land purchase or potential redevelopment.

Financing Growth Tools

As the city grows, new infrastructure and amenities will be required to support residents and businesses. The City collects charges to finance upgrades to support growth. These include the following contributions to upgrades:

- **Development Cost Charges:** for transportation, drainage, water and sanitary infrastructure, and parkland acquisition and development.
- **Amenity Cost Charges:** for community centres, libraries, and child care.
- **Charges from external agencies:** such as regional charges (more details in the Application Review Process section of this Guide).

For more information see the City's Financing Growth webpage.

Consultants

There are a number of professional consultants typically required for development permit and building permit applications, including, but not limited to the below. Their involvement depends on the size and type of project, and on the requirements of the BC Building Code and provincial Architect's Regulation.

Development Permit
You may need:

- Landscape architect or landscape designer
- Arborist
- Registered architect or design professional
- Civil engineer (for frontage improvements, servicing, or stormwater management)

Building Permit
You may need:

- Structural engineer
- Geotechnical engineer
- Certified Energy Advisor
- Registered architect or design professional

Tree Permit
You may need:

- Arborist

Heritage Alteration Permit /Heritage Revitalization Agreement
You may need:

- Heritage professional accredited through the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals

**Note:* A registered architect is required for buildings that are greater than or equal to 600 sq. m. (6,458 sq. ft.) and/or contain 5 or more dwelling units.*

Zoning

The Zoning Bylaw regulates all development, including infill housing. The Ground Oriented Infill Housing Residential Districts (i.e. RGO-A and RGO-B) in Section 400 of the Zoning Bylaw control the density, height, building coverage, pervious site coverage, planted site space and setbacks for a development site. Section 100 of the Bylaw includes additional regulations such as the required bicycle spaces and vehicle parking spaces. Applications will be reviewed to make sure they meet the Zoning Bylaw regulations.

Development Permit Area and Design Guidelines

Infill housing applications require a Development Permit. Applications will be reviewed to make sure they meet the Ground Oriented Infill Housing Development Permit Area Guidelines.

Infrastructure

Road / Lane Land Conveyances

Lanes must be sufficiently wide to accommodate operational needs, including solid waste vehicles. To meet these needs, the Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw (SDCB) requires lanes to be at least 6.0 metres (19.7 ft.). If a property does not have a full width lane, applicants may have to provide land for future lane widening, generally no more than half of the required lane width.

Road widening may also be required when roads are below the roadway width required by the SDCB to allow for necessary travel lanes, utilities, and/or sustainable transportation infrastructure.

Site Access

To improve safety, and reduce vehicles access from busy streets, vehicular access must be taken from the rear lane or local narrow road (where one exists).

Where a site can be accessed (either before or after land conveyance) from a lane of 4.27 metres (14 feet) or greater, that maintains that width to its closest abutting road, access should be taken from the lane. Even if this access is supported, land conveyance would still be required as usual.

If no lane is present, access must be taken from the street with the lowest classification as required by the Street and Traffic Bylaw. Where access is from a

collector, arterial or major road a vehicle turn around must be provided. Clear sightlines and visibility must be ensured where vehicle ingress/egress occurs.

Servicing

The Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw sets out requirements for off-site infrastructure. More details are provided in the Application Review section of this Guide. Considerations include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Water:** Applicant budgets must account for the construction of water servicing, not just on-site, but also off-site to connect to existing City utility connections. Some, but not all, areas within the city have the available hydrant fire flows that accommodate infill housing. Additional off-site water system upgrades will likely be required if the site does not have sufficient fire flows.
- **Sewer:** Projects must account for on-site sewage piping costs. Some areas within the city have been sewer separated (i.e. both a dedicated sanitary main, and a dedicated stormwater main are available), and the City is advancing sewer separation in the remaining areas. Applicants must provide the on-site piping for an independent sanitary service, and an independent stormwater service, regardless of whether the property is in a sewer separated area, or a non-sewer separated area.
- **Stormwater management:** To ensure rainwater is infiltrated before entering the municipal system and not directed onto neighbouring properties, applicants must design and properly install on-site stormwater management, such as by minimizing impervious surfaces. See *Attachment 1* for high-level examples of on-site stormwater management options.
- **Electrical:** Applicants should seek advice from consulting professionals and City staff on electrical requirements. Some infill housing projects may require on-site pad-mounted transformers.
- **Frontage improvements:** Off-site services are required, and may include all or some of the following, depending on the project: reconstruction of the existing road(s), off-site landscaping, and street lighting.

Bicycle & Vehicle Parking Requirements

- **Vehicle Parking:** Requirements in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw are:
  - **Frequent Transit & Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Areas:** In keeping with provincial legislation, the City does not require a minimum number of residential off-street vehicle parking spaces for properties located within 400 metres of a prescribed bus stop or in TOD Areas.
  - **All other infill housing properties:** For infill housing developments not located within 400 metres of a prescribed bus stop, off-street vehicle parking is required in accordance with the rates and design requirements specified in the Zoning Bylaw.
- **Bicycle Parking:** To support active transportation and offset vehicle parking, developments must provide secure, on-site bicycle parking in accordance with Zoning Bylaw requirements.

Figure 3: **Example of Pervious Paving**



Tree Protection

Urban Forest Management

The Urban Forest Management Strategy is a 20 year vision to protect and enhance the urban forest through many approaches, including: tree retention, tree planting, increasing canopy cover, and adapting to a changing climate.

Protected Trees

One of the tools supporting this strategy is the Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw, which regulates the cutting or removal of protected trees and hedges. When reviewing a site for development potential, it is important to identify which trees would be considered protected under the bylaw.

All trees on City owned or occupied land are considered protected. For all protected trees that are removed, an arborist or landscape architect should prepare a tree replacement plan, as per the bylaw. For most removed trees, each tree must be replaced with two trees.

New Trees

Each proposed development must provide a new tree, in alignment with the Development Permit guidelines.

High Value Trees

It is also important to identify trees with high-retention value. These include those that are healthy and mature, have a significantly large canopy, or are a species native to our region. The City would consider zoning variances and design guidelines relaxations resulting in retention of high value trees.

Figure 4: Example of **Tree Retention**



Heritage

Heritage Revitalization Agreements

If the development site has been assessed as having heritage value, a Heritage Revitalization Agreement (HRA) may be supportable. Through an HRA, the development may be eligible for relaxations of zoning requirements, such as reduced parking requirements, which would make it viable to conserve assets with heritage merit. A Heritage Revitalization Agreement has a public process and must be approved by Council. A Heritage Assessment written by a member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP) is required to determine the heritage value of the building and how the proposed changes would affect it. More information can be found on the City's Heritage Protection and Development website.

Heritage Alteration Permits

Applications on properties located in the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area require a Heritage Alteration Permit for certain renovations of protected properties, and to build any new house or infill housing. A property in the designated area can be categorized as Protected or Non-protected. More information on the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area can be found here. Other heritage protected properties outside of the conservation area also require a Heritage Alteration Permit.

Figure 5: **Back Building and Two Front Buildings**



Secondary Suites

Secondary suites in infill housing are a dwelling unit that:

- is rental,
- is accessory to a principal dwelling unit,
- is contained within the same structure,
- has an internal connection to a principal dwelling unit,
- has separate exterior access, and
- includes cooking facilities, a bathroom, and a sleeping area.

All properties with secondary suites are subject to secondary suite utility charges (e.g. water and sewer).

Subdivision

Subdivision of properties is expected to be rare. To qualify for subdivision the existing property must be over 1,114.84 square metres (12,000 sq. ft.) in area, so that each new property meets the minimum site area site area requirement of 557.40 sq. m. (6,000 sq. ft.). Each property must have a minimum frontage of not less than 10% of its perimeter.

Please contact City Planning staff for questions related to subdivision.

Bylaw Resources

- Building Bylaw No. 8125, 2019
- Development Approval Procedures Bylaw No. 5658, 1987
- Planning & Development Fees and Rates Bylaw No. 7683, 2014
- Street and Traffic Bylaw No. 7664, 2015
- Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw No. 7142, 2007
- Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw No. 7799, 2016
- Zoning Bylaw No. 6680, 2001

For more information or questions about the Infill Housing Program, visit newwestcity.ca/infillhousing, email plnpost@newwestcity.ca or call 604-527-4532.

2.0 Development Review Process

Development Pathway

Eligible properties are already zoned for infill housing. This means a site specific rezoning is not required before building infill housing. Only two major permit types are needed: Development Permit and Building Permit. Tree Permits are also required. Other types of permits may be required, such as Heritage Alteration Permits, depending on property specifics.

Application Review Process

This section outlines the review process for an infill housing development application.

Preliminary Inquiry

1. **Designation and zoning identification:** For preliminary inquiries about a development site, applicants are encouraged to:
    - consult the Ground Oriented Infill Housing Development Permit Areas to learn about the Residential Ground Oriented land use designation's development permit area guidelines and map,
    - consult the RGO-A (up to four units) or RGO-B (up to six units) zoning districts to learn about zoning regulations, and
    - contact the Planning Division at plnpost@newwestcity.ca or 604-527-4532.

2. **Servicing cost assessment:** Infill housing developments are a more intensive use than a single detached house. Potential applications must account for off-site infrastructure upgrade costs including potential water upgrades, on-site stormwater management systems, and electrical upgrades. With a Development Permit application, the applicant must submit to the Planning Division confirmation (in the form of a fee slip) that they have provided to the Engineering Division a "Utilities Modeling Analysis Application Form" to determine the utilities upgrades required. See the Development Application Submission Requirements checklist. If unsure of the utilities / infrastructure requirements regarding a potential infill housing project, reach out to engpost@newwestcity.ca.

Development Permit Application

A Development Permit application helps the City to review what the building and landscaping of the proposed development will look like. City staff will review the application using the Zoning Bylaw, the City's development permit area design guidelines and other relevant municipal regulation. More information on the Development Permit process can be found here.

1. **Submission material review:** Prior to submitting a formal Development Permit application, the applicant shall review the City's Application Submission Materials. All applications will be reviewed by staff for completeness, including the City's Application Cover Sheet, and incomplete applications will not be accepted. More information is on the Making a Development Application webpage.
2. **Development Permit submission**: Complete Development Permit applications are sent to plnpost@newwestcity.ca. Once confirmed complete by staff, application forms and invoices will be provided. Fees payable are per the Planning and Development Fees and Rates Bylaw.
3. **Development Permit application review by staff:** Upon acceptance, all applications are assigned a Planning File Manager. The File Manager will complete a detailed review and initiate referrals to internal City departments for review; they may request additional documents, prior to circulation. In some cases, the application may also be sent to external agencies for review. Once all referral comments have been received, the File Manager will provide the applicant with a review memo which includes the items which need to be addressed in a resubmission. Where items are not completed, additional review and applicant resubmission would be required.
4. **Development Permit issuance:** Once the proposal has been verified by staff as consistent with design guidelines and regulations, it will be forwarded to the Director of Planning and Development for consideration of issuance. A notice of permit will be filed at the Land Titles Office. A landscape deposit must be submitted in accordance with the Planning and Development Fees and Rates Bylaw. This deposit can be refunded after landscaping has been installed and inspected by the City as compliant with the landscape components of the Site or Landscape Plan that forms part of the Development Permit.

Building Permit Application

1. **Building Permit submission:** A building permit application is required for City staff to ensure that the proposed buildings meet the requirements of the BC Building Code, which sets standards for safety, health, accessibility, fire and structural protection, and energy and water efficiency.

2. **Fee payments:** The applicant must pay any associated fees, including:

    - **Development Cost Charges** which contribute toward municipal sanitary, storm, water, transportation, and park infrastructure
    - **Amenity Cost Charges**, which contribute toward community facilities and public amenities
    - **Regional Charges:** Metro Vancouver's water and sewer charges
    - **TransLink transportation charges**
    - **School Site Acquisition Charges**
    - **Permit and Engineering Fees**, including standard building permit fees, engineering review and inspection fees, and utility connection fees.

3. **Works and Services Agreement:** Under the Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw, the applicant will enter into a Works and Services Agreement with the City addressing off-site servicing requirements prior to issuance of a building permit. This requires providing a security deposit (such as a Letter of Credit or Letter of Assurance) to guarantee the construction of the off-site works. Costs for infill housing off-site servicing are likely to be substantial, so applicants should seek advice from professionals as early as possible to understand these implications. The applicant's civil engineering consultant will work with the Engineering Department to identify frontage and servicing requirements. The off-site services may include but are not limited to reconstruction of the existing road(s) structure, Off-Site Landscaping, and Integrated Storm Water Management.

4. **Building Permit issuance:** Once all City requirements for building code and servicing have been met, a Building Permit can be issued.

Heritage Alteration Permits or Heritage Revitalization Agreements

Additional approvals may be required if the development site has heritage value or is a Protected property within the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area. More details are provided in the Heritage section of this Guide.

Tree Permit Application

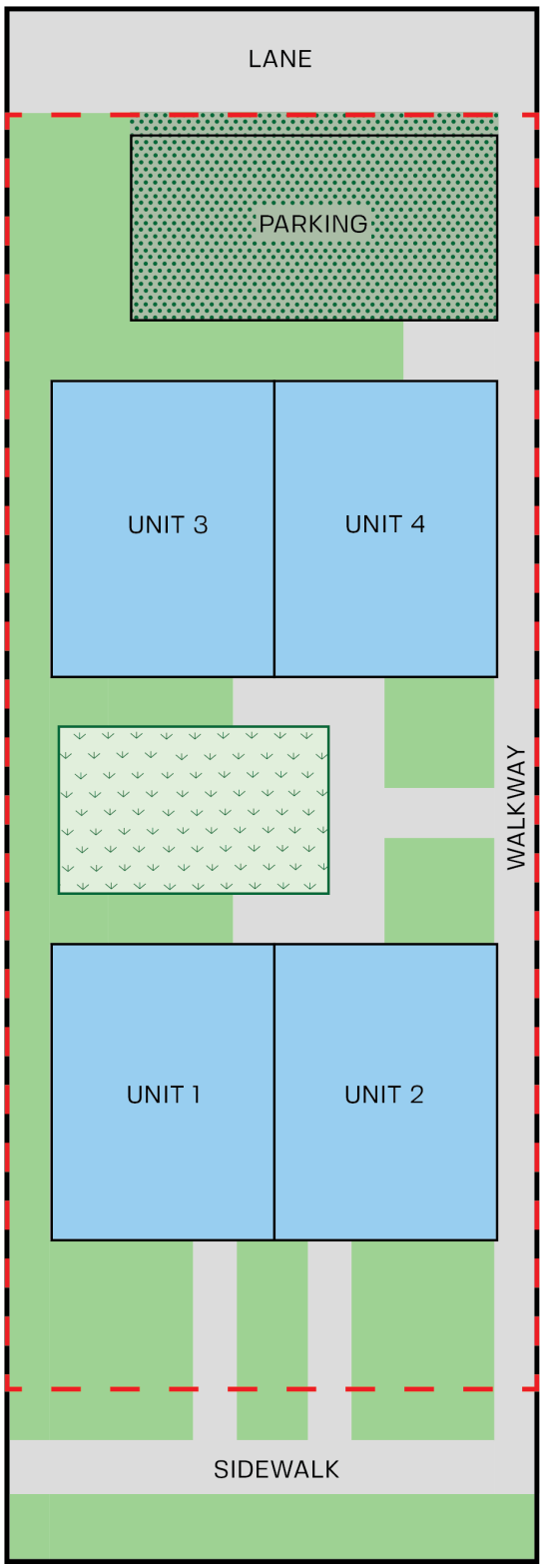
1. **Tree Permit submission:** A tree permit application is required for City staff to ensure trees are protected during all phases of construction. A tree permit is required even if there are no "protected" trees on the property.

Note: *Tree permit application must be concurrent with a Development Permit application.*

Tips for Efficient Permitting

- Hire professionals with experience in and understanding of the New Westminster context.
- For shortest review timelines, ensure the proposal complies with all **development permit guidelines** listed as "must be met".
- Review the Climate Ready New Homes bulletin, which outlines requirements for compliance with Energy and Zero Carbon Step Codes and heating and cooling for secondary suites, to facilitate Building Permit process efficiency.

Rain Garden - Combined



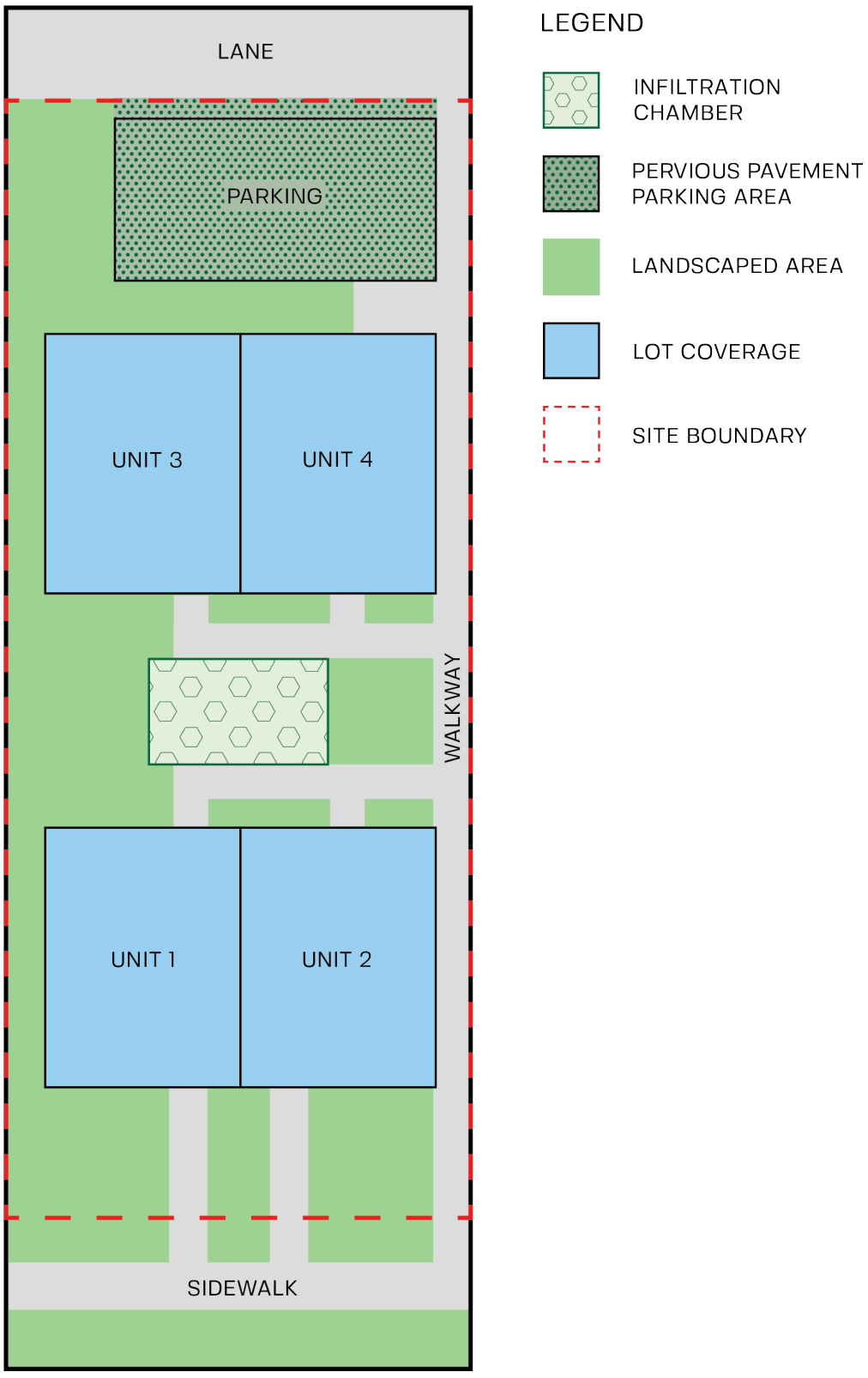
LEGEND

- RAIN GARDEN
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

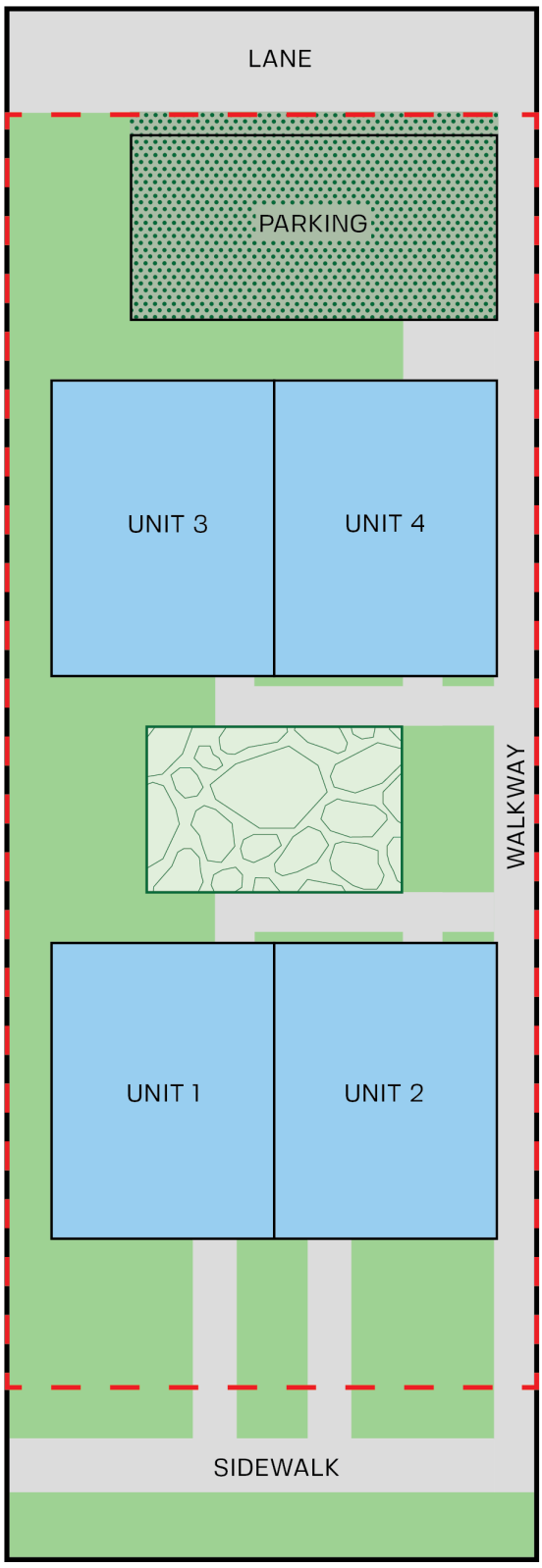
Planter Style Rain Garden – Combined



Infiltration Chamber – Combined



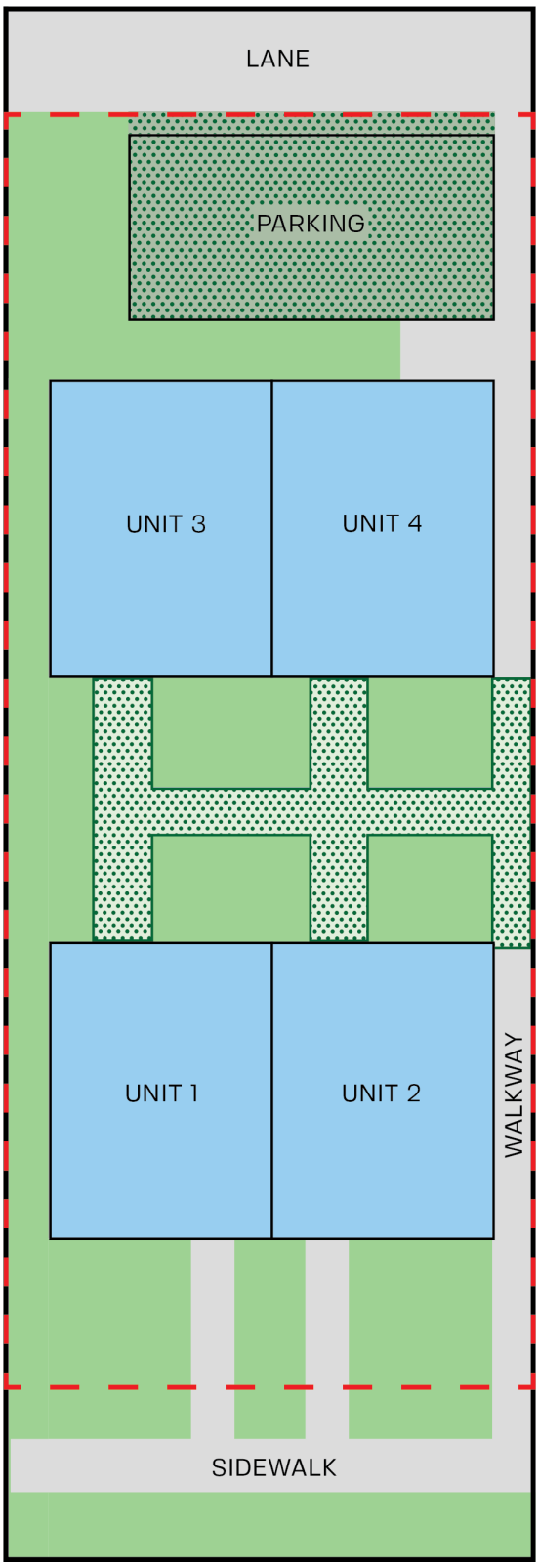
Rock Trench – Combined



LEGEND

- ROCK TRENCH
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

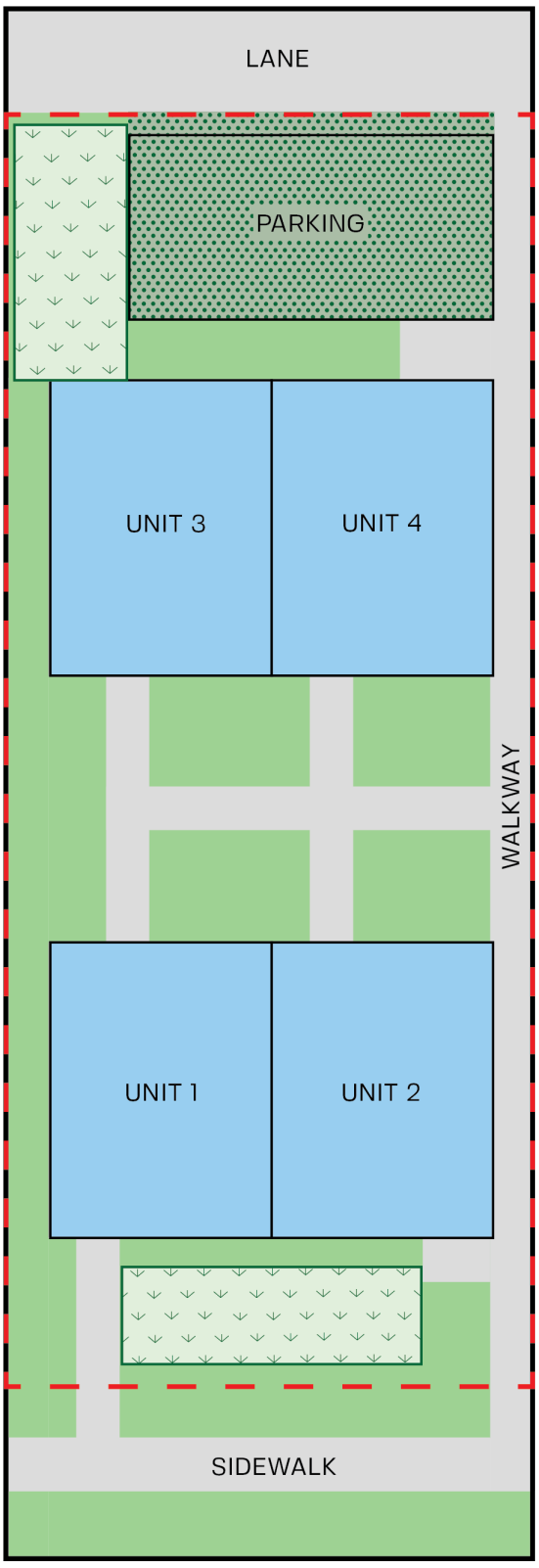
Pervious Pavement – Combined



LEGEND

- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

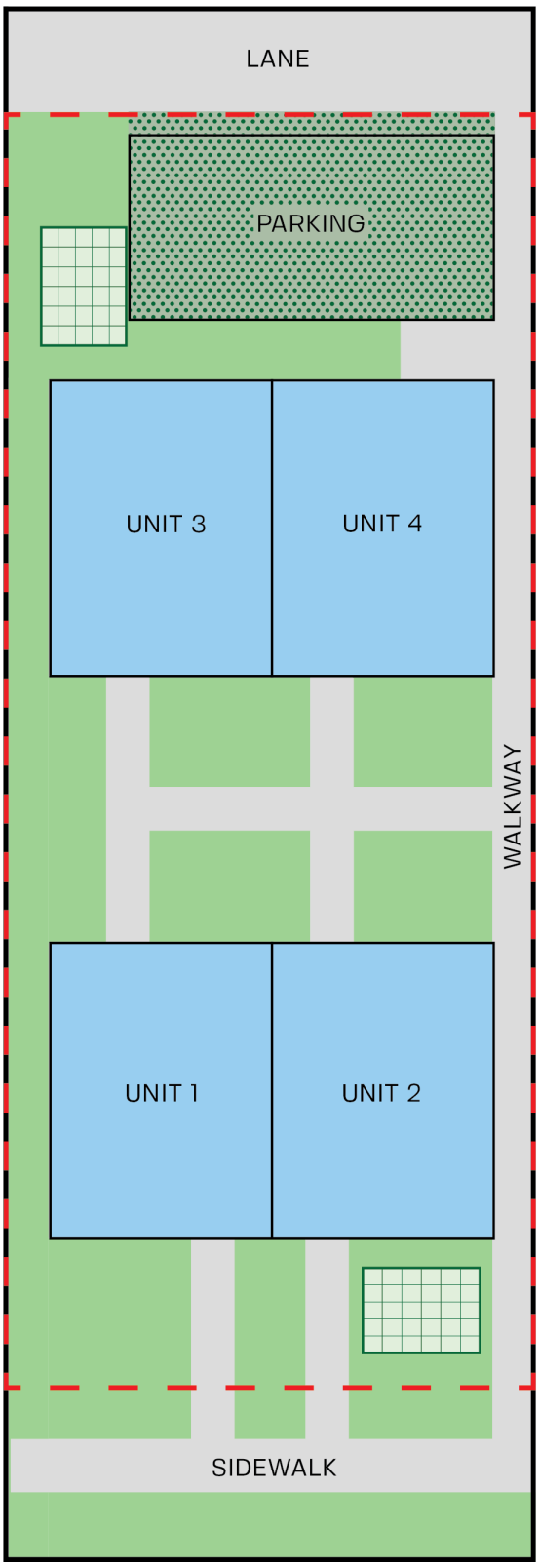
Rain Garden – Separated



LEGEND

- RAIN GARDEN
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

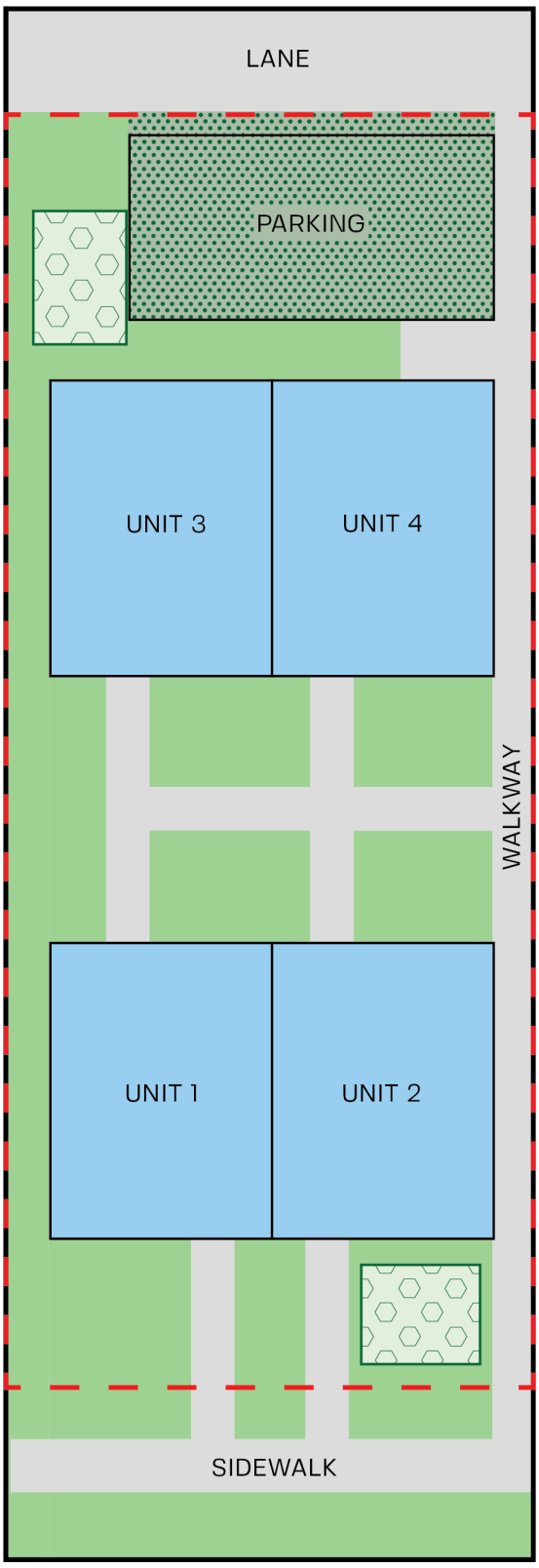
Planter Style Rain Garden – Separated



LEGEND

- PLANTER STYLE RAIN GARDEN
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

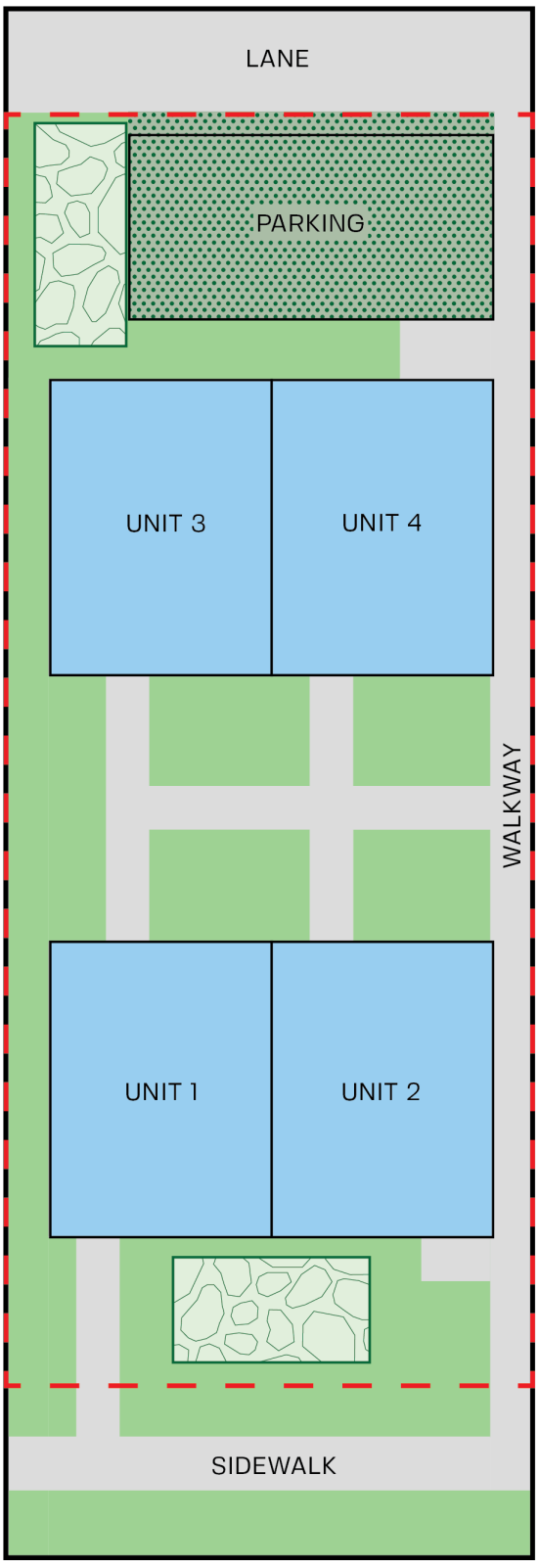
Infiltration Chamber – Separated



LEGEND

- INFILTRATION CHAMBER
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

Rock Trench – Separated



LEGEND

- ROCK TRENCH
- PERVIOUS PAVEMENT PARKING AREA
- LANDSCAPED AREA
- LOT COVERAGE
- SITE BOUNDARY

Pervious Pavement – Separated

