NEW WESTMINSTER

STREAMLINED GUIDELINES: LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES









(Photo: lanefab.com)

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LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES



INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are a streamlined version of the Development Permit Area guidelines that are part of the Official Community Plan. The shortened and clearer guidelines are informed by public consultation and analysis of the laneway and carriage house program implementation. The guidelines are being piloted in an effort to simplify the application and review process, while clarifying which guidelines are critical to ensuring laneway (LWHs) and carriage houses (CHs) continue to fit well into neighbourhoods and reflect the guiding principles for these forms of infill housing.

These guidelines apply to the laneway and carriage house, and not the principal house.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles for these forms of infill are:

- Enhance ground-oriented housing options.
- Design infill buildings to be good neighbours by minimizing shade, shadow and overlook onto adjacent properties.
- Optimize site layout to preserve and enhance permeable spaces and biodiversity, and maximize tree canopy.

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

SITING

Setbacks

Intent: Setbacks optimize privacy between developments, access to sunlight and opportunities for open space. Additional details about setbacks can be found in the Zoning Bylaw.

The following guidelines must be met:

- Minimum 1.52 metre (5 foot) side setback is required from a flanking street.
- Minimum 1.22 metre (4 foot) setback is required from an interior side property line and from a flanking lane.
- A minimum 2.44 metre (8 foot) rear setback is required from rear lot lines abutting another property.
- A minimum 1.22 metre (4 foot) setback is required from the rear property line.
- In addition, the side or rear setback from a property line abutting a lane or a future lane must be increased to accommodate a future 6 metre (19.69 foot) wide lane.
- Where parking access is taken from the street and where there are lane dedications or right-of-ways (ROW), the rear setback of the CH will be based on the LWH, not CH standard.
- Additional setbacks may be required from a lane when a LWH is built on the same side of the lane as above ground electrical lines. Setbacks will be based on CSA standards and the Canadian Electrical Code.

Parking and building locations for illustrative purposes only

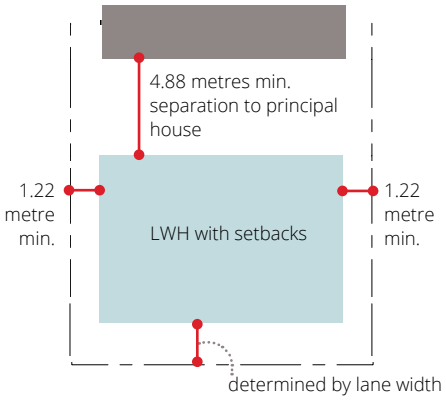


Fig. 1 - LWH setbacks with rear lane.

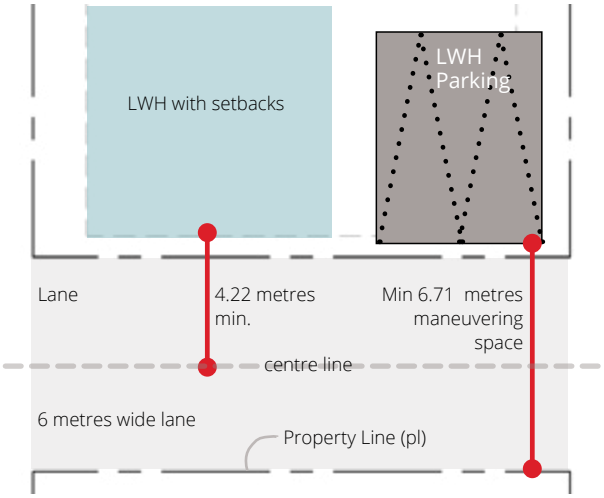


Fig. 2 - Setbacks from the lane.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF LANES?

A key focus of managing the road network is to support road safety for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and to facilitate transit services. Minimizing driveways along the Major Road Network, City arterial and collector streets, and those on the Cycle Network in the Street and Traffic Bylaw would reduce the number of conflicts on major streets and improve bicyclist and pedestrian safety.

The siting of laneway houses takes into account the importance of using lanes and providing lane access, and maintains the opportunities for narrow lanes to be widened in the future (i.e. a laneway house cannot be built in the location of a potential future lane).

The minimum required width of lanes is 6 metre (19.69 foot) under the Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw.

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

The following guideline should be considered:

- One interior side setback may be reduced to a minimum 0.61 metres (2 feet) in order to:
  - Facilitate the retention of an existing tree.
  - Facilitate a single storey accessible unit that meets the City's Supplemental Guidelines for Accessible Laneway and Carriage Houses.
  - Facilitate a LWH or CH on a protected property in the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area or listed on the City's Heritage Register.

Separation from Principal Dwelling

The following guideline must be met:

- A minimum separation of 4.88 metres (16 feet) is required, measured between the closest building face of the principal house and the closest face of the LWH or CH.

The following guideline should be considered:

- Reductions to the minimum separation, up to a maximum of 0.91 metres (3 feet) may be considered if a reduced separation is needed to:
  - Facilitate the retention of an existing tree.
  - Facilitate a single storey accessible unit that meets the City's Supplemental Guidelines for Accessible Laneway and Carriage Houses.
  - Facilitate a LWH or CH on a protected property in the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area or listed on the City's Heritage Register.

Site Coverage

Site coverage, for LWHs and CHs, consist of the total area of the ground floor, including attached bike storage, garages, carports, front landing areas, decks above 0.61 metres (2 feet), covered patios and bay windows. Site coverage is limited as follows:

The following guideline must be met:

- The LWH or CH shall not exceed 11% site coverage.

The following guideline should be considered:

- If a single storey accessible unit that meets the City's Supplemental Guidelines for Accessible Laneway and Carriage Houses can demonstrate that 11% site coverage prohibits a single storey accessible unit that has a functional plan for aging in place, the site coverage can be increased to 16%.

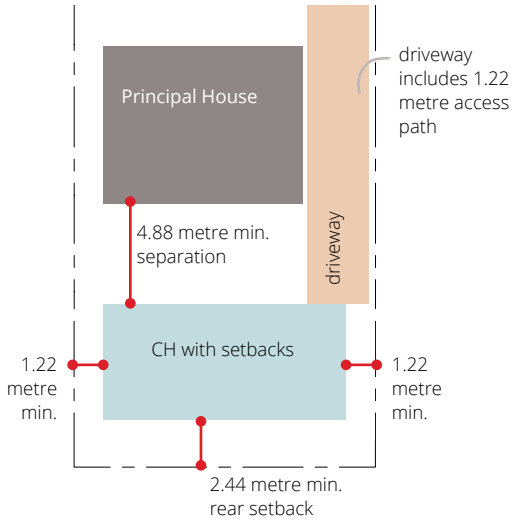


Fig. 3 - Mid-block CH setbacks.

Building locations for illustrative purposes only

ENERGY STEP CODE AND ENERGY SAVE NEW WEST

The City is committed to energy conservation, through implementation of the BC Energy Step Code. As of January 1, 2025, new LWH and CH proposals must meet minimum Step Code 4 + Emissions Level 4 (Zero Carbon Ready), or Step Code 5 + Emissions Level 2 (Moderate Carbon). More information is available on the Buildings and Climate Action webpage.

Energy Save New West is a local organization that can assist applicants to meet or exceed Step Code requirements, and connect with available resources and programs. For more information, please refer to the Energy Save New West webpage.

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

BUILDING SIZE AND MASSING

Intent: Giving careful attention to the size and mass of CHs and LWHs ensures these housing forms fit into residential neighbourhoods. Efficient and compact building design is expected. These guidelines aim to minimize the impact of shade, shadow and overlook on neighbouring properties. Regulations about density and height can be found in the Zoning Bylaw.

Building Envelope

The building envelope of the LWH or CH is defined by the siting guidelines and height regulations.

The following guideline must be met:

- Exterior stairs, except those to the main level, are not permitted.

The following guideline should be considered:

- Locate the tallest portion of the building adjacent to the lane or flanking street and/or near the centre of the lot.

Retaining Walls

Regulations about retaining walls can be found in the Zoning Bylaw.

The following guideline should be considered:

- Over use of retaining walls is discouraged.

Projections

The following guidelines must be met:

Projections are permitted within the required setbacks and building separation only as follows:

CH Rear Yard and Separation to Principal House (applicable to the LWH or CH and the Principal House):

- Eaves up to 0.61 metres (2 feet).
- Unenclosed porches off the main level up to 1.22 metres (4 feet).
- Cantilevered canopies over entrances up to 1.22 metres (4 feet).
- Steps and ramps from first floor to grade – no maximum projection.

Side Yard and LWH Rear Yard:

- Eaves up to 0.61 metres (2 feet).

BASE HEIGHT PLANE

Maximum height is regulated by the Zoning Bylaw and measured from a horizontal base height plane, established at the mid-point of the envelope at existing grade on each side elevation. On flat sites, these values on each side elevation are the same. Sites that slope across the width of the property will have different values. When this is the case, the average of these two values is used to establish the base height plane.

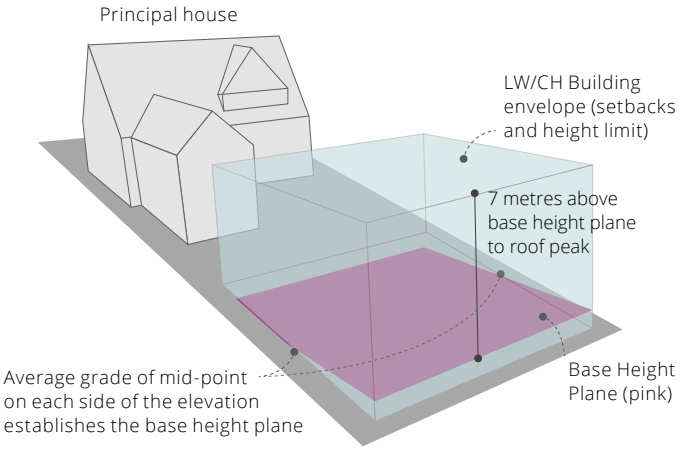


Fig. 4 - Base height plane on a sloped site.

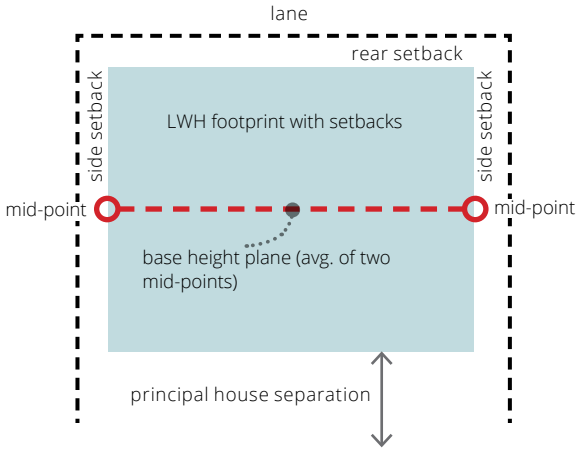


Fig. 5 - Bird's eye view of the mid-points and base height plane.

LWH/CH building envelope and base height plane for illustrative purposes only.

Roof Forms

Intent: Roof forms are critical to the design of compact buildings. The height, shape and opportunities for windows impact shade, shadowing and overlook on neighbouring properties, the principal house and open space. Secondary roof forms (e.g. dormers) can increase headroom and provide opportunities for glazing.

The following guidelines must be met:

- Roof design must comply with one of the following:
  - Where a pitched roof is proposed, the upper floor area should be integrated into the roof form.
  - Projects with a flat or shallow pitched roof must reduce the area of the upper floor to 80% of the area of the ground floor, excluding the carport.
- Total dormer width facing interior side yards must not exceed 40% of the width of the upper floor.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- One simple roof form is encouraged.
- For one storey developments, floor to ceiling heights should generally not exceed 3.65 metres (12 feet).



Example of dormer integrated into simple roof form. (Photo: lanefab.com)



Example of recommended flat and low sloping roof form. (Photo: smallworks.ca)

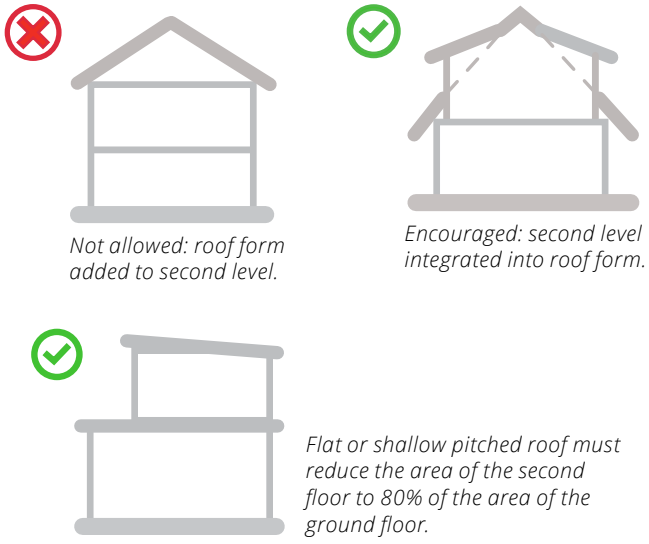


Fig. 4 - Roof forms.

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION AND LANE FRONTAGE

Intent: LWH and CH designs should enhance existing neighbourhoods, while maintaining design excellence and innovation. Careful consideration of the form and character of LWH lane frontages supports lanes as interesting, active, pedestrian oriented public spaces.

The following guidelines must be met:

- LWH entry must be visible from the lane, or oriented to the flanking street if the LWH or CH is on a corner lot.
- Vinyl siding is not permitted.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Architectural style should complement the principal house.
- The residential address should be clearly visible to vehicles and pedestrian on the lane and on the street.
- Non-durable cladding and synthetic materials intended to mimic natural materials are not recommended.
- A minimal number of cladding materials are recommended.
- LWH and CH entrances should incorporate an adequately sized landing or "stoop", connected to the access path leading to the street, and to the lane for LWH.
- Lane elevations should include design elements that are identified with traditional "front" street elevations.

QUEEN'S PARK CONSERVATION AREA

If the proposed LWH or CH is in the Queen's Park neighbourhood, a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP) is also required. The LWH or CH must meet the Queen's Park New Construction Design Guidelines which supersedes the Laneway and Carriage Houses Streamlined Design Guidelines.



Example of well crafted details, trim and high quality, durable cladding. (Photo: lanefab.com)



Examples of "front" street elevation design elements. (Photo: smallworks.ca)



Example of a contemporary laneway house design. (Photo: ontario.ca)

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

PRIVACY AND OVERLOOK

Intent: Optimizing privacy and minimizing bulk for all dwelling units is essential for successful LWH and CH developments. The design and location of upper level windows, balconies and decks in particular must minimize impact to privacy and overlook.

Upper Level Decks and Balconies

The following guidelines must be met:

- Any upper level decks and balconies must be on the exterior side, on the lane elevation or facing the principal building.
- Upper level decks and balconies may not be enclosed or covered.

Windows

The following guideline must be met:

- Clear eye level windows are permitted on the exterior side, facing the principal house, and on the lane elevation.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Dormers are encouraged to have windows.
- Skylights, translucent eye level windows, floor level and clerestory windows (with sills above 1.75 metres / 5.75 feet) are encouraged on the upper level.

OPEN SPACE AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Intent: Landscape and open space design must optimize livability and support sustainability goals.

Private Open Space

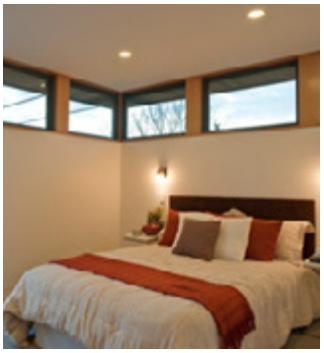
The following guidelines must be met:

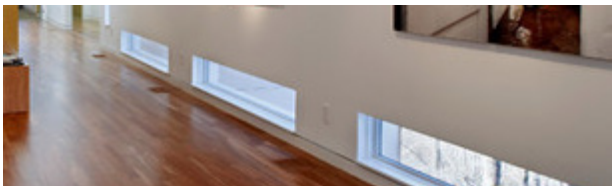
- A minimum of 14.86 square metres (160 square feet) of clearly defined, at grade, private open space with direct access from the interior must be provided for exclusive use by LWH or CH residents.
- All dimensions of the private open space must be a minimum of 1.83 metres (6 feet).

The following guideline should be considered:

- Private open spaces areas should be made up of a combination of soft and hard surfaces, to allow for multiple programming options (e.g. entertaining, gardening, dog relief).







Example of skylights, clerestory and floor level windows. (Photo: lanefab.com)



Example of a laneway house window with optimum daylight. (Photo: JDLhomesvancouver.com)



Examples of landscape design and soft landscaping. (Photo: lanefab.com)

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

Soft Landscaping, Planting and Trees
Intent: Trees are a key element in the landscape design. Removal of healthy, mature, high-value trees may not be supported. See the Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw.

The following guideline must be met:

- The design and location of the LWH or CH should focus on the retention of existing trees, including by using the flexibility offered for a side setback and separation to the Principal House where tree retention is achieved (see Siting guidelines, page 4).
- Provide trees on properties without trees and provide additional trees on all other properties.
- Areas of soft landscaping are required between the LWH and the lane and/or flanking street.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Planting strips are encouraged on the public side of screens or fences.
- Trees and plants should be suitable for the local climate.

Garbage, Recycling and Organics Storage

The following guideline must be met:

- Adequate space for three carts (garbage, recycling and organics) must be provided: at least 0.5 by 1.8 metres (1.6 by 5.9 feet), or 0.7 by 2.2 metres (2.3 by 7.2 feet) for larger carts.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Garbage and recycling carts should be screened from view.
- When determining the location of cart storage, consider the impact to livability, such as not locating carts by bedroom windows.



Example of soft landscaping along the lane. (Photo: smallworks.ca)

BIODIVERSITY AND NATURAL AREAS STRATEGY

Unsure of what to plant? Appendix 2 of the Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy provides great ideas for native, high value planting species well-suited to our climate.

Enhancing biodiversity is a key strategy for protecting the environment and building resilience to climate change. The City's Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy outlines opportunities for urban residential areas to support biodiversity by integrating habitat features like bird nesting boxes, bat boxes or rock piles, and other measures.

URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The trees on public and private lands collectively make up the urban forest that provides valuable services such as rainwater management, improved air quality, biodiversity services, increased privacy, and cooling.

The Strategy identifies a comprehensive set of 40 actions to reverse the current trend and increase the declining tree canopy cover over the next 20 years. New development proposals must consider the Urban Forest Management Strategy and comply with the Tree Protection and Regulation Bylaw.



Enhancing biodiversity and maximizing tree canopy. (Photo: smallworks.ca)

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

Rainwater Management and Paving Materials
Intent: Permeable surfaces should be maximized as they provide important opportunity for rainwater infiltration and support stormwater management. They also provide filtration services and can support biodiversity and cooling.

The following guidelines must be met:

- Parking pad and driveway areas must be permeable.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Permeable surfaces should not impede access for persons with a disability.
- Hard surface areas should be designed so as to allow rainwater to drain into areas of soft landcaping.

PERMEABLE PAVEMENTS
Permeable surface options include but are not limited to wheel paths, grass-crete, or permeable pavement such as permeable concrete or ungrouted pavers with gapped joints. If permeable pavement options are selected, installation and maintenance are important for continued permeability. Subsurface considerations, from the top down, include that:

- A stabilizing course of single-size crushed stones should stabilize the surface;
- A stone recharge bed with about 40% voids should temporarily store stormwater as it infiltrates into the soil below; and
- An uncompacted subgrade should maximize the infiltration rate of the soil.

Exterior Lighting
The following guideline should be considered:

- Exterior and pedestrian level lighting should create safe, welcoming and clearly identified building entrances, lanes, and access path.

INTEGRATED STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN
The City's Integrated Stormwater Management Plan outlines and guides the planning of stormwater management initiatives for the City, with the goal of minimizing runoff volume and reducing the risks and consequences of pollutants entering the Fraser and Brunette rivers. The plan includes a Best Management Practice Toolkit that provides options to infiltrate, treat or detain stormwater. Best practices for single detached neighbourhoods include having at least of 450 mm of topsoil, connecting roof leaders to rain barrels, and maximizing areas of permeable surface.



Examples of permeable surface options.







Examples of entry and pedestrian level lighting. (Photos: smallworks.ca, opensource)

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

PEDESTRIAN AND SERVICE ACCESS PATH

Intent: Carefully considered pedestrian access from the front street to LWHs and CHs for emergency responders, deliveries and visitors is an important livability consideration.

The following guidelines must be met:

- A clear access route with a hard surface is required from the street to the entrance of the LWH or CH for access. This access shall be a minimum width of 0.91 metres (3 feet) where an existing principal house is retained and a minimum width of 1.22 metres (4 feet) where a new principal house is constructed.
- No projections or overlap with required parking space or private open space, other than eaves, are permitted into the access route.



Example of a clear access route from the street to entrance of the LWH or CH. (Photo: newwestrecord.ca)

PARKING

Regulations about the number and size of parking spaces are included in the Zoning Bylaw.

Parking Access and Location

Intent: Minimizing driveway accesses onto major streets and the cycle network promotes pedestrian and cyclist safety. Access regulations can be found in the Street and Traffic Bylaw.

The following guidelines must be met:

- Parking is required to be accessed from a lane where a lane is developed or is already used for parking access by a majority of the properties on the block.
- Where driveway access is onto a collector street or on the cycle network (as indicated in the Street and Traffic Bylaw), backing onto the street is not permitted and therefore an on-site turnaround, designed to the satisfaction of a Transportation Engineer and approved by the City, is required.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Two access points may be permitted until the principal house is rebuilt.
- Parking between the CH and principal house is discouraged.

VEHICULAR ACCESS

Where vehicular access is provided onto a lot is dependent on a number of factors, including the road hierarchy (classification) of the streets adjacent and/or fronting the lot.

Road classifications categorize streets according to their functions and capacities, which in order from lowest to highest level of access to a lot generally includes: major road network, arterials, collectors, local roads designated as part of the cycle network, local roads not designated on the cycle network, and lanes.

Only one vehicular access (driveway) is permitted per lot. Where a lot abuts both a lane and a street, or where a lot abuts two streets with different road classifications, the Street and Traffic Bylaw directs that vehicular access be taken from the lane or street with the road classification that supports the highest level of access.

LANEWAY AND CARRIAGE HOUSES STREAMLINED GUIDELINES

Parking Type
Intent: Optimizing open space, reducing shade and shadowing on neighbouring properties, and minimizing building bulk along the lane are key design considerations.

The following guidelines must be met:

- One vehicle space must be a parking pad. The second space can be a carport or one space in a garage but a second parking pad is encouraged instead.
- Carport roofs may extend up to 0.45 metres (1.5 feet) beyond the perimeter of the parking stall.
- Compact and tandem parking spaces are not permitted.
- Detached garages are not permitted.

Attached Principal House Parking
The following guidelines must be met:

- Existing parking spaces attached to the principal house on a LWH property count towards the parking requirement.
  - The Site Plan must show how two future parking spaces can be accommodated at the rear of the property. The parking spaces will be required to be relocated to the rear of the property, and not attached to the principal house, at the time of redevelopment of the principal house.
  - If the principal house is being concurrently redeveloped, parking spaces must be at the rear of the site.
- Parking spaces attached to the principal house on a CH property count towards the parking requirement.

Bicycle Parking
The following guideline should be considered:

- All LWHs and CHs are encouraged to provide at least one long term bicycle parking space with weather protection.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT PARKING TYPES?

Parking Pad
A portion of a site that has a surface which is intended to be used primarily for parking or storing a vehicle.

Carport
A portion of a site that has a surface which is intended to be used primarily for parking or storing a vehicle, and which has a roof structure but is not enclosed.

Garage
A building, or portion of building, with the primary purpose of parking or storage of a vehicle.



Example of a carport used as flexible outdoor space. (Photo: Ramsay Worden Architects)