

Basements in Single Family Houses

Approved Zoning Changes
June 16, 2009

Basements in Single Family Houses

Outline

1. Background - Why?
2. Approved Zoning Changes
3. Evaluation / Benefits

Background - Why?

Council Priorities for Affordable Housing

More rental opportunities in single family areas

- Functional and Livable Basements

EcoDensity Action C-6

More Options for Rental Secondary Suites

- Enabling basements that can accommodate suites

Vancouver residents have told us that single family zoning does not permit enough floor area for a suitable size house with a full basement.

Approved Zoning Changes

Part 1: More Functional Basements

Additional floor area in the basement

Part 2: More Livable Basements

Basement higher out of the ground

Part 1: More Functional Basements

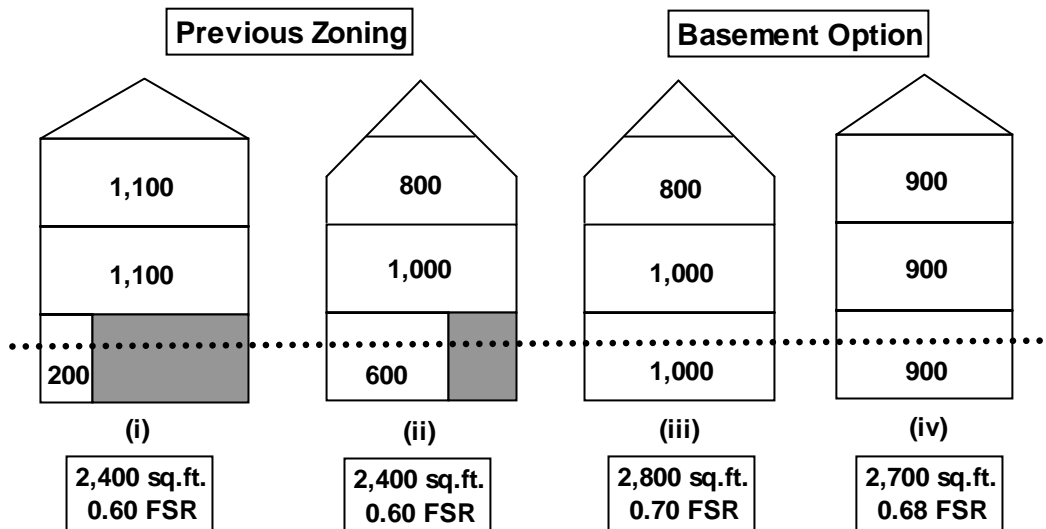
Basement option for **new** houses

- More floor area overall - up to 0.70 FSR
- Less floor area above grade - 0.45 FSR or less, if the zoning permits less
- All additional floor area in the basement
- A smaller house footprint - 25% of lot area

Part 1: More Functional Basements

Basement option for new houses

Examples: RS-1 - 33 foot lot (4,000 sq.ft.)



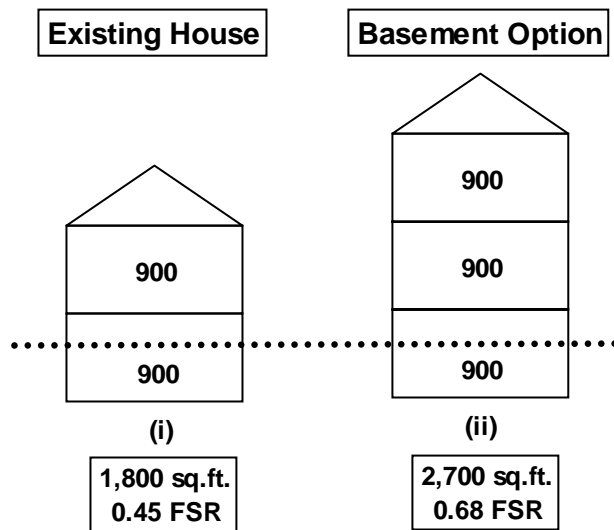
Full Basement – example (iv)

Note: The dotted line represents finished grade.

Part 1: More Functional Basements

Basement option for **existing** houses

Example - 33 foot lot (4,000 sq.ft.) - can add a second-storey



Add a second storey – example (ii)

Note: The dotted line represents finished grade.

Part 1: More Functional Basements

Basement option for **existing** houses

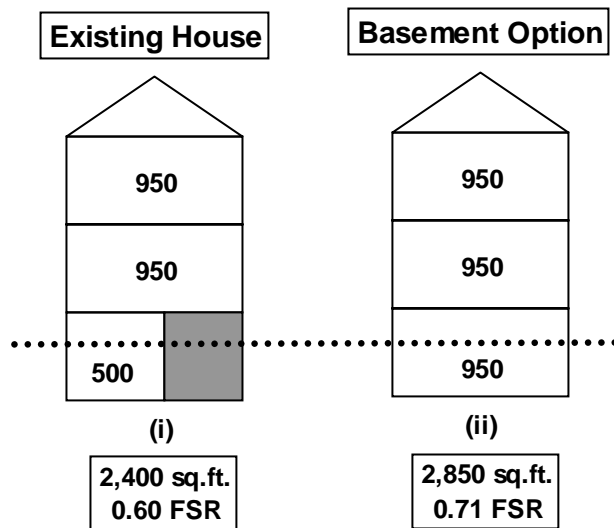
If existing above grade floor area is larger,
Permit a basement if:

- Total floor area - up to 0.75 FSR with basement
- Above grade floor area - 0.50 FSR or less
- No additional floor area above grade
- House footprint - 25% of lot area

Part 1: More Functional Basements

Basement option for **existing** houses

Example - 33 foot lot (4,000 sq.ft.) - above grade is more than 0.45 FSR



Partial Basement – example (i)

Note: The dotted line represents finished grade.

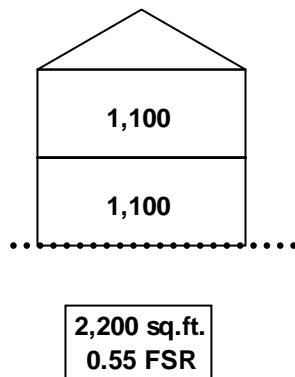
Part 1: More Functional Basements

Basement is an **option**

Zoning still permits houses as before

Example - RS-1 - 33 foot lot (4,000 sq.ft.)

Previous Zoning



No Basement – Maximum above grade

Note: The dotted line represents finished grade.

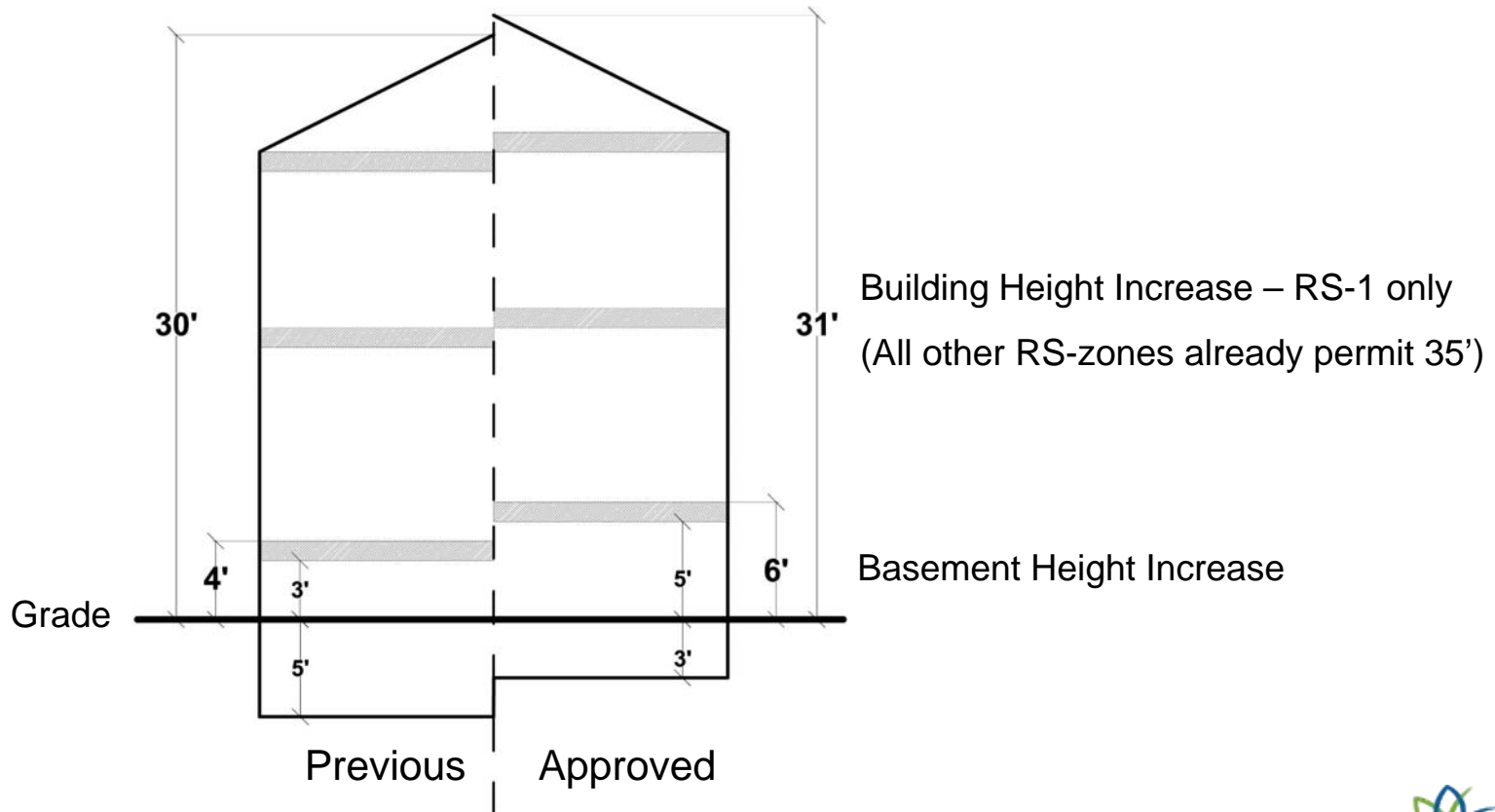
Part 2: More Livable Basements

Basements higher out of the ground

- Two foot **Basement** height increase from 4 feet to 6 feet
- One foot **Building** height increase - RS-1 only from 30 feet to 31 feet

Part 2: More Livable Basements

Basements higher out of the ground



Evaluation / Benefits

Potential Benefits

- More full-size basements
- More livable basement suites
- More affordable rental housing
- More open space (25% house footprint)
- No impact on land values
- More renovations - Fewer demolitions

Evaluation / Benefits

No impact on land values

- Above grade floor area is more desirable than basement area
- More floor area in the basement is offset by less floor area above grade on most single-family lots
- As a result, land value should not increase

Evaluation / Benefits

More renovations - Fewer demolitions

Two Examples:

1) Existing One-storey bungalow

- Incentive to renovate
- Basement option allows a full second storey

2) Existing Two-storey house

- No incentive to demolish
- Basement option allows a similar size house