







Existing Single Family Areas

Most of Dunbar is developed with single family houses. Under current regulations, the single family zoned areas have very little potential for additional lots to be created. However, new houses frequently replace older ones on existing lots. The Vision directions address retention of single family areas, design of new single family houses, retention of character buildings, and rental suites in single family houses.



-  RS-1 single-family zoning
-  RS-1S (rental suites permitted)
-  RS-5 single-family zoning
-  RS-5S (rental suites permitted)

3. Single Family Areas and Design Of New Houses

In 1997, after a resident survey, most of Dunbar was rezoned to RS-5/5S in order to provide more control over the design and appearance of new houses. (A small area in the northeast corner of Dunbar chose to remain RS-1, largely because of concerns over view blockage.) Based on experience with RS-5 so far, about 70% of new houses can be expected to go through design review.

This Vision emphasizes the importance of keeping substantial single family areas in Dunbar and making future design adjustments in the zoning. Going back to the previous RS-1/1S was not suggested. Recognizing that RS-5/5S was intended as an “interim” zoning, alternative directions regarding design control are suggested.

Approved Vision Directions

3.1 Maintain Most Single family Areas

Most of the area that is now single family should be kept for single family, in order to retain the basic character of Dunbar. (Exceptions would only occur where the community supports new housing choices as described in Sections 6 to 9). Support %: 88/6/7

3.2 Design Review for All New Houses

All new houses should have design review, rather than it being optional, as now under RS-5/5S. Support %: 71/11/18



Older house: example



RS-5 house, full design review: example



RS-1 house, no design review: example



Modern style house: example

RS Single Family Zoning

For general information about zoning, see Rezoning Policy on page 41. The following notes provide information on the RS zones in Dunbar.

In RS-1 and RS-1S houses do not require design review. Regulations control only the position, height, and total floor space of buildings. (The second “S” in RS-1S and RS-5S indicates that houses are permitted to have a rental suite.)

In RS-5 and RS-5S there are two options: (1) build a house, with slightly less above-ground floor space than RS-1/1S, with no design review; or (2) obtain some additional floor space in return for going through design review that covers overall design, materials, detailing, and landscape. The design guidelines direct new houses to take their character from the neighbouring houses. In Dunbar that means new houses will often have a traditional, late 1920s character. RS-5/5S also allows somewhat more building depth and height than RS-1/1S.

More Planning and Consultation

Vision Directions 3.2 to 3.5 would require rezoning, based on more detailed planning with the community. (See Rezoning Policy on page 41). To achieve Vision Direction 3.2 would mean new houses, that do not go through design review, would be limited to significantly less floor space than now allowed.

3.3 More Diversity in Design than Now

More diversity in design, than now permitted under the RS-5/5S design guidelines, should be allowed, while still ensuring quality design, materials and detailing. There should be less emphasis on design being similar to neighbouring houses, with modern designs being permitted as well.

Support %: 51/15/34

3.5 Different Yard Sizes for Houses

The traditional yard and house orientation should be able to be varied to take advantage of whether a lot faces south or north, east or west.

Support %: 57/18/25

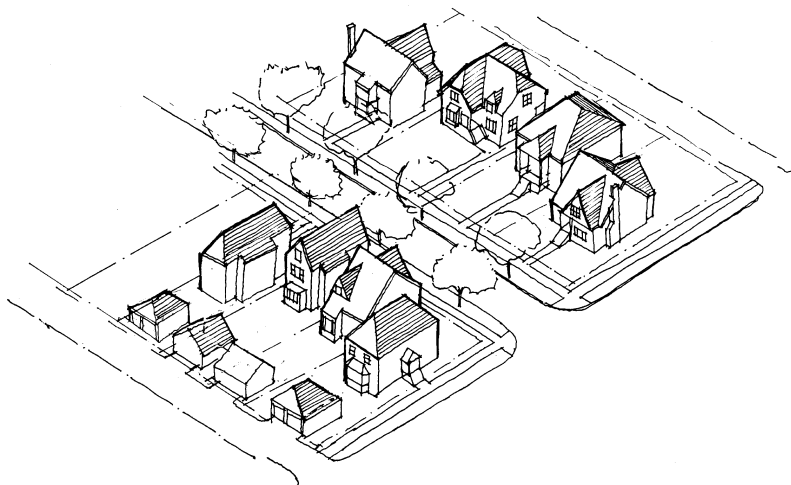
Other Vision Direction considered but not approved

3.4 Smaller New Houses

The overall size of new houses should be reduced from what is now permitted, to be similar to the older houses that were originally built.

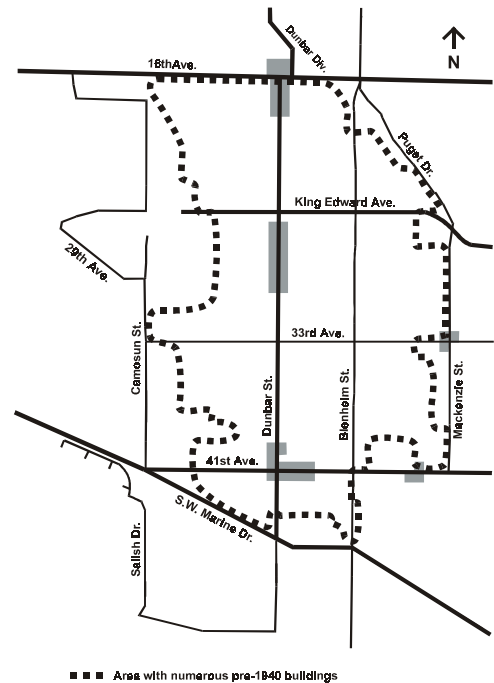
Uncertain %: 54/15/31

Comment: This direction did not receive a majority of agreement in both surveys. However, it received many more agree votes than disagree votes — one of the highest agree votes of the Uncertain directions. Consequently, this idea remains on the table, and can be more closely considered by the community as part of any work to implement Direction 3.2.



Different yard sizes and house locations for sun orientation (Vision Direction 3.5)

4. Older Character Buildings



While Dunbar's development began in the 1910s, most of the area was developed in the mid to late 1920s. Some older buildings have been torn down for new ones, but many pre-1940 "character" structures remain.

The Vancouver Heritage Register (VHR) lists older buildings that have architectural significance. Their owners are able to take advantage of some zoning incentives to encourage them to keep and renovate them. However, most "character" buildings (i.e., built before 1940) are not on the VHR. Vision direction 4.1 is based on a feeling that demolition of these buildings, to replace them with new development, is changing the area undesirably, and is an unnecessary waste.

Approved Vision Direction

4.1 Retaining Character Buildings

In order to encourage retention of “character” (e.g., pre-1940) houses and other buildings, there should be incentives to renovate, such as: additional density, suites, relaxations to building code requirements, promoting the opportunity to be included on the VHR. Support 74/11/15



Older houses: examples



5. Rental Suites

Under current zoning, houses in the area north of W. 20th Avenue are permitted to have a rental suite. This is based on community consultation some years ago. However, because of various City regulations, very few suites are actually being built in new houses, and few older suites are being brought up to building code standards.

Approved Vision Directions

5.1 Suites More Feasible

In areas where rental suites in houses are currently permitted, they should be easier to do, and be better designed for the resident.

Support %: 65/17/18

People’s ideas...

For rental suites:

- allow full basements without reducing space allowed above the basement
- relax building code regulations
- allow front entrance

5.2 Suites in More Areas

Houses with a rental suite should be permitted in more areas of Dunbar than now, in order to provide “mortgage helpers,” and to provide affordable housing.

Support %: 52/12/35

More Planning and Consultation

Vision Directions 4.1, 5.1, 5.2 would require rezoning, based on more detailed planning. (See Rezoning Policy on page 41)

For Vision Directions 5.2, issues such as boundaries, traffic and parking impacts, etc., would be dealt with as part of the detailed planning.