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**BULLETIN 2000-011-BU**

*Revised January 12, 2015*

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**DETACHED GARAGE AND PARKING SLAB ELEVATIONS  
FOR ONE AND TWO FAMILY DWELLINGS**

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There have been many instances where new detached residential garages and parking slabs have been built too high or too low with respect to the elevation of the adjacent lane. In situations where the garage or parking slab elevation is too low with respect to the elevation of the adjacent lane, it is difficult to prevent the entry of drainage water from the lane into the garage. When the difference between the elevation of the garage/parking slab and the elevation of the lane is too great, it is difficult for vehicles to move into garages or onto parking slabs without additional ramping at the garage/parking slab entrance.

With the increasing number of 3-car garages as well as RS-1 zoning requirements which require garages to be built closer to the rear lane, it is necessary to address this issue. This bulletin has been prepared to help homeowners avoid these errors prior to the construction of detached garages and parking slabs. In order to avoid problems after construction, we are asking that additional information be provided by applicants prior to issuance of building permits for garages/parking slabs. This information will facilitate the processing of these building permit applications.

The following information is required for all building permit applications which include the construction or alteration of a detached garage, carport or parking slab where access is provided from a lane:

**1. Confirmation of the lane condition:**

- a. paved lane (i.e. fully paved lane with asphalt),
- b. partially paved or unpaved lane (i.e. usually gravel surface or oiled gravel pavement), and
- c. open or closed lane (i.e. lane not in use and requires opening for vehicular access).

Please contact the Engineering Department, Streets Planning and Design Branch at 3-1-1 or 604.873.7000 to confirm lane condition if necessary.

**2. Required elevations along the centre line of the existing lane opposite the following locations:**

- a. centre line of the garage (mid-point along the width of the garage),
- b. corners of the garage (adjacent to lane), and
- c. corners of the lot/property (adjacent to lane).

**3. Additional Information for Paved Lanes: elevations indicated in item 2 must also be shown along the centre line of the gutter (i.e. lane drainage path, which is usually about 1 metre from the property line), adjacent to the proposed garage.**

**Note:** The elevations noted in items 2 and 3 must be supplied by a Land Surveyor registered in the Province of British Columbia, **except** where the building permit application is for a detached garage or parking slab only.

#### 4. Garage/Parking Slab Elevation

In order to allow for reasonable vehicle access between the lane and the garage or parking slab, the elevation of the slab must not vary greatly from the elevation of the lane. The following table provides the maximum distance permitted between the top of the garage/parking slab elevation and the centre line elevation of the lane. The maximum elevation difference should only be used in extreme situations. The selected garage/parking slab elevation should be as close as possible to the average centre line elevation of the lane.

<i>Garage Set Back (measured from property line adjacent to lane)</i>	<i>Maximum Top of Slab Elevation Difference (measured between elevation of slab and elevation at centre line of the lane)</i>
0.6 m (2 ft.)	250 mm (10 in.)
1.2 m (4 ft.)	350 mm (14 in.)
1.8 m (6 ft.)	400 mm (16 in.)

When the lane is **not paved**, the elevation of the garage/parking slab is not permitted to be lower than the elevation at any point along the centre line of the lane. The rationale for this requirement is due to the City's inability to contain lane drainage run-off where lanes are not paved. Therefore the elevation of the garage/parking slab must not be lower than that of the lane.

**Note:** These requirements may result in split floor slabs for some multiple car garages/parking slabs which are adjacent to unpaved lanes and/or lanes containing a significant gradient. The Engineering Department Building Grades Section (873-7316), can be contacted to discuss alternate design arrangements if necessary at 3-1-1 or 604.873.7000.

If the above information is not provided, it may be necessary to hold up the processing of the building permit application until sufficient information is available to check the elevation of the garage/parking slab.

We appreciate your cooperation in providing this information with your application.

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