

Zoning Options



This section explores zoning options to encourage Character Home retention and improve size and compatibility of new homes in the study areas.

Options being explored include:

- A** Floor Area and Floor Space Ratio (FSR)
- B** Building Design and Site Options
- C** Dwelling Unit Type and Tenure

Key Questions:

- Do you support the general intent of the options presented?
- Do you support the ideas to get there?



Development Permit - The process through which a property can be approved for development under current zoning.

Outright approval - Land use and density permitted under the current zoning, provided that all the regulations and provisions of the Zoning and Development Bylaw and the Parking Bylaw are met.

Conditional approval - Land use and density may be permitted by the Director of Planning, typically with conditions, after considering the intent of the zoning and applicable policies and guidelines approved by Council.

Dwelling Uses - Includes the following uses:

Infill – A type of development permitted on the site of an existing heritage or character building to encourage its retention. Infill development may be strata-titled in some zones.

Laneway House – A Laneway House is a small, detached home built on a single-family lot at the lane. Laneway Houses are for rental or family occupancy and cannot be strata-titled.

Multiple Conversion Dwelling - A building converted to contain only two or more dwelling units. Can be strata titled.

One-Family Dwelling - A building containing one dwelling unit.

One-Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite - A building containing two dwelling units, a larger principal dwelling unit and a smaller secondary suite (rental, non-strata).

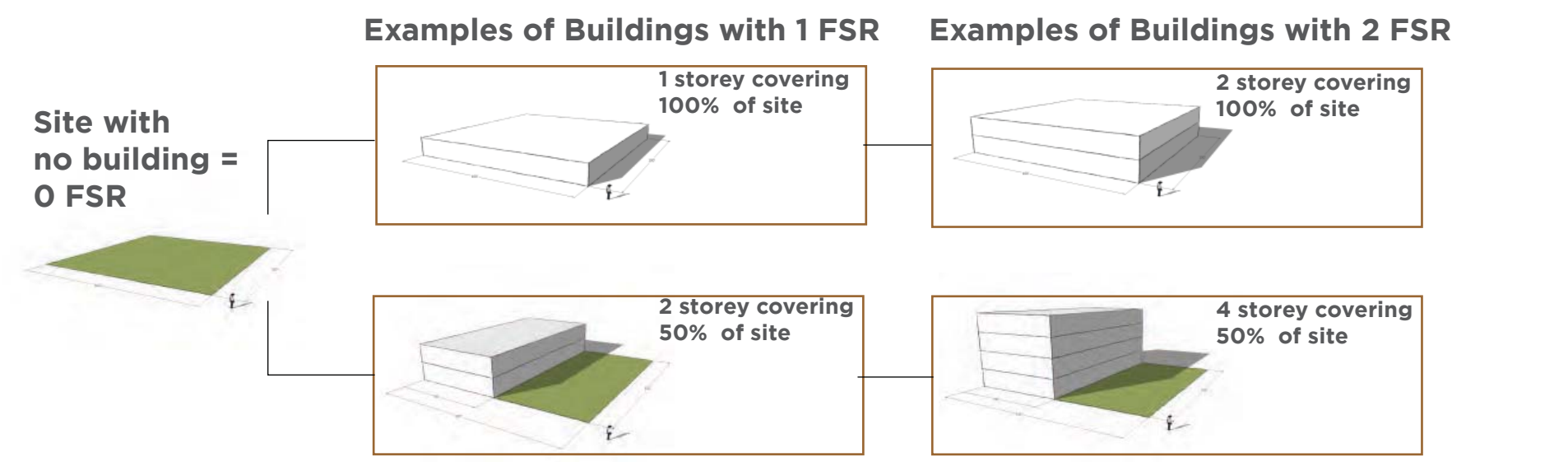
Secondary Suite - A smaller dwelling unit within a larger one-family dwelling, which must have a separate external access and may have shared internal access (rental, non strata).

Floor Area - Floor area is the total size or area of a building on all floors:

Above Grade Floor Area - The amount of floor area above the basement and/or cellar.

Basement-enabled - Policy approved in 2009 which increased the total floor area permitted in RS zones to allow development of full basements (not partial crawl space) to accommodate provision of basement suites.

Floor Space Ratio (FSR) - The ratio of the floor area of a building relative to the area of the lot on which it is located. In this manner, zoning regulations for FSR establish the size of a building based on the lot size. For example, a building with a density of 2.0 FSR has a floor area equal to twice that of the land on which it is located.



Floor Area Exclusions - Many district schedules allow exclusions from floor area calculations. Typically, exclusions are available for porches, sun decks and for thermal or building envelope performance. These spaces are not counted in the overall floor area of a building.

Principal Building - The building containing the primary land use on a site, as distinct from an infill or Laneway House, which can only be provided in conjunction with a principal building.

Relaxation - The City’s Zoning and Development By-Law and Parking By-Law allow for limited relaxations of certain regulations. Usually relaxations would be considered in the case of site specific hardships, such as irregularly shaped lots, or steeply sloping sites, where it may be difficult to comply with the regulations. Relaxations may also be considered for additions or alterations to existing buildings to facilitate retention. In some areas of the city, zoning regulations may also include the potential for increased building area, where certain guidelines are met, or where social or community goals are achieved.

Strata-titled - A form of ownership where multiple units on a site may be sold separately under the provisions of the provincial Strata Property Act.

Six different RS zoning districts are found in the four study areas.

RS Zoning District		RS-1	RS-3	RS-3A	RS-5	RS-6	RS-7	
A	Floor Area	Above grade FSR (outright)	Lesser of 0.2 + 130 m ² Or 0.45*	0.16 + 130 m ²	0.12 + 130 m ²	Lesser of 0.16** + 130 m ² Or 0.45*	Lesser of 0.16** + 130 m ² Or 0.45*	0.45*
		Total FSR*** (outright)	0.7*	NA	NA	0.7*	0.7*	0.7*
		Above grade FSR (outright for existing homes)	Lesser of 0.5 or existing*	NA	NA	Lesser of 0.5 or existing*	Lesser of 0.5 or existing*	Lesser of 0.5 or existing*
		Total FSR*** (outright for existing homes)	0.75*	NA	NA	0.75*		0.75*
		Above grade FSR (conditional)	NA	0.2 + 130 m ²	0.2 + 130 m ²	0.24 + 130 m ²	0.24 + 130 m ²	NA
		Total FSR*** (conditional)	NA	NA	NA	0.7	0.64	0.64
B	Regulations and Relaxations	Design guidelines	NA	Yes Encourages character streetscape	Yes Encourages character streetscape	Yes Encourages character streetscape	Design regulations embedded in zoning	Design regulations embedded in zoning
		HAP - Character Buildings Review - Interim Procedure post demolition	NA	Outright only	Outright only	Outright only	Outright only	Outright only
C	Dwelling Use and Tenure	Single-family home One secondary suite (rental) One Laneway House (rental)						

* Basement enabled
** 0.2 for existing homes
*** Floor area for a Laneway House is in addition to the maximum allowable for a principal building.

Examples of Current Zoning 33’ x 122’ Site (4,026 sf)

Character Retention

Character Home: 2,000 sf

Addition: 800 sf

Subtotal: 2,800 sf

Laneway House: 640 sf

Total: 3,440 sf

Existing Character Home

Addition

Laneway House

FSR: 0.70

FSR: 0.16

New Home

New home: 2,800 sf

Laneway House: 640 sf

Total: 3,440 sf

New home

Laneway House

FSR: 0.70

FSR: 0.16

Floor area can be a factor in whether a Character Home is retained or whether it is demolished and a new home is built.

Options below explore how floor area can encourage retention of Character Homes and improve compatibility of new homes.

Site Size and Floor Area

Most single family sites in Vancouver are 33-50’ wide by 122’ deep (approximately 4,000 sf to 6,700 sf in site area). Some sites are smaller (16-25’ wide) and some larger (75-100’ wide). For the purposes of this study, sites have been divided into two categories:

- Typical Sites (<8,000 sf)
- Large Sites (>8,000 sf)



Options Being Explored

Character Home Retention

Intent: Improve opportunities to increase floor area for retention.

Ideas to get there:

Typical site:	0.75 FSR
Large site:	0.65 FSR

Observations

- Allows more floor area to accommodate additional dwelling unit types
- Currently, existing houses may provide 0.75 FSR with basement additions only (e.g. crawl space conversions) or 0.70 FSR with additions over all levels with further limitations on above grade floor area
- Creates opportunities to renovate and modernize through appropriately scaled additions and dormers

New Home Construction

Intent: Decrease floor area to better manage scale and neighbourhood fit.

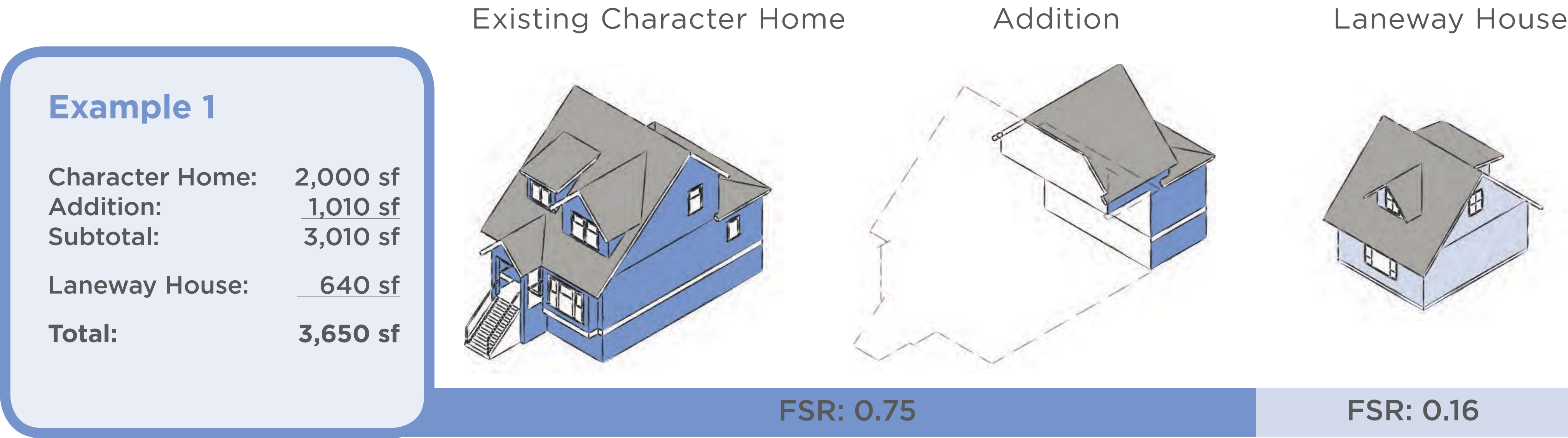
Ideas to get there:

Typical site:	0.50 FSR
Large site:	0.40 FSR
Max floor area:	10,000 sf

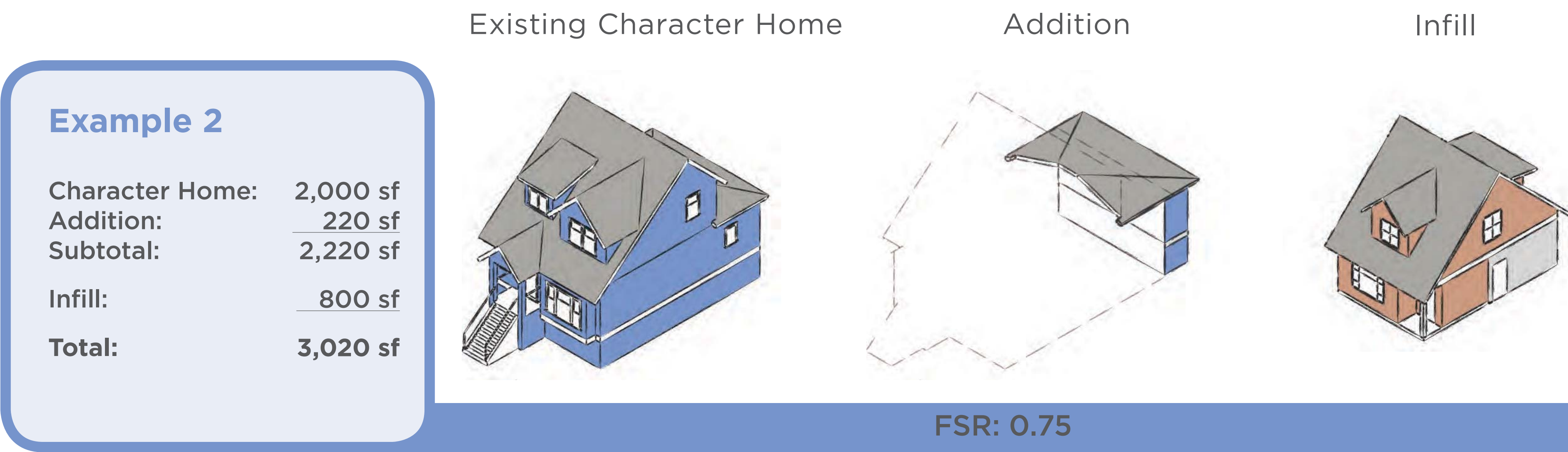
Observations

- Reduced floor area will still accommodate standard new home sizes and potential for suites
- Levels playing field between Character Homes and new homes

Character Home Retention - Typical 33' x 122' Site (4,026 sf)



Note: Floor area for a Laneway House is in addition to the maximum floor area for a principal dwelling consistent with current policy.



Note: With an Infill (potential for strata-title) the maximum floor area for a principal building is shared across the site so that each property has sufficient yard space.

New Home Construction - Typical 33' x 122' Site (4,026 sf)



Building design and site regulations determine where a building is located on a site (e.g. setbacks and yard requirements) and how long or deep a building can be (building depth), among other things.

Options below explore how regulations could better support Character Home retention, and how zoning and permit processing could be improved for new homes.



Options Being Explored

Character Home Retention

Intent: Increase flexibility in zoning to support Character Homes retention.

Ideas to get there:

- Include broad zoning relaxations for Character Homes to support retention projects
- Use design guidelines to help clarify requirements and support renovations that maintain character

Observations

- Character Homes may not conform to current zoning regulations and relaxations could support better retention outcomes

New Home Construction

Intent: Simplify zoning regulations for new homes.

Ideas to get there:

- Simplify floor area allocations:
 - 2/3 allowed above-grade
 - 1/3 allowed below-grade
- Include basic design regulations in zoning (no separate design guidelines)

Observations

- Basic design regulations embedded in zoning would result in new homes that better fit their surroundings, while still allowing for design flexibility and modern building styles

Dwelling unit options in current RS zoning are the same whether building a new home or retaining a Character Home. RS zoning also requires that all properties are under single-title ownership (strata-titling is not allowed).

Options explore new dwelling unit types for Character Homes as an incentive for retention.



Options Being Explored

Character Home Retention

Intent: Provide new dwelling unit opportunities for Character Home retention projects.

Ideas to get there:

- Add the following new uses:
 - Multiple secondary suites (rental)
 - Multiple conversion dwelling
 - Infill (max 0.20 FSR)
- Allow stratification of dwelling units to support Character Home retention and increase housing choices in older neighbourhoods

Observations

- Could create value for retention projects, making them more attractive
- Could increase rental and ownership housing choices
- Smaller strata-titled units may be more affordable than current single-family homes
- Infill and MCD are currently permitted uses in RS-7 on larger lots

New Home Construction

Intent: Maintain the number and type of dwelling units current in zoning:

- Single-family home
- One secondary suite (rental)
- Laneway House (rental)

Note: No stratification allowed

Observations

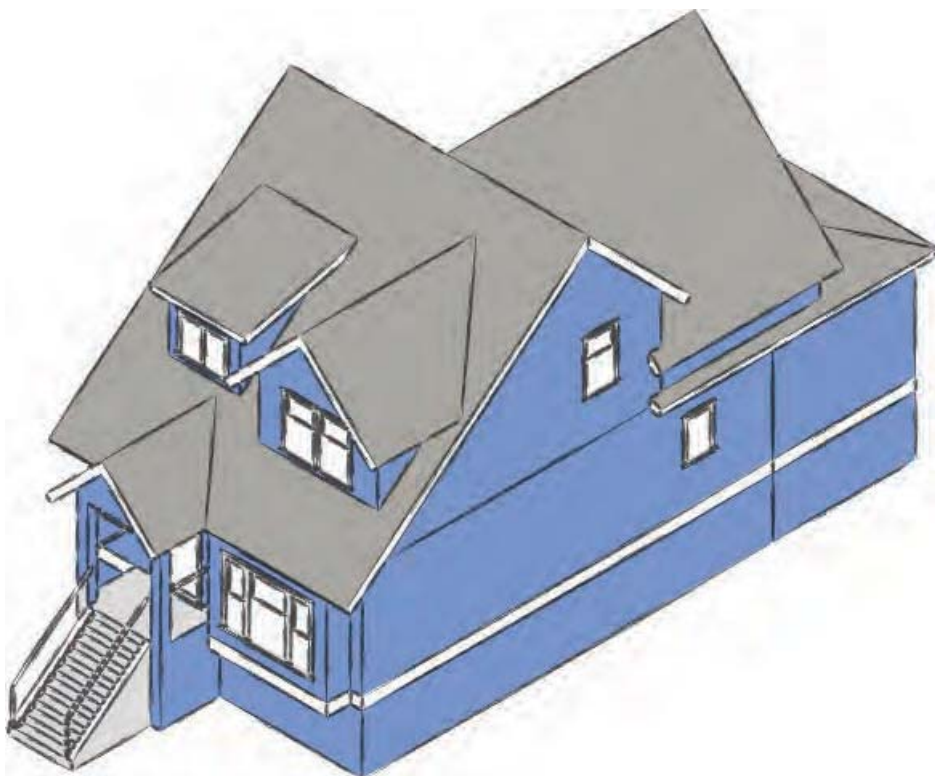
- New planning programs or direction from City Council are required in order to explore other dwelling unit types, tenures, and building forms for new home development in RS zones (e.g. duplex, townhouse etc.)

Character Home Retention - Typical 33' x 122' Site (4,026 sf)

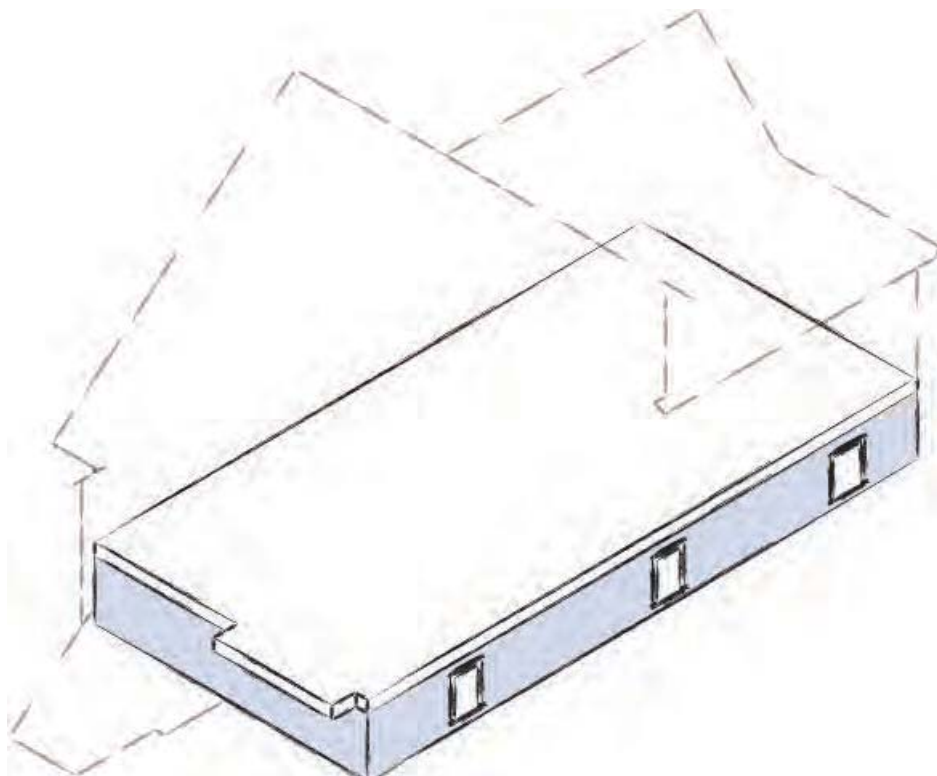
Suite Options

- One-family dwelling unit
- One-family dwelling unit with one secondary suite (rental)
- One-family dwelling unit with two secondary suites (rental)

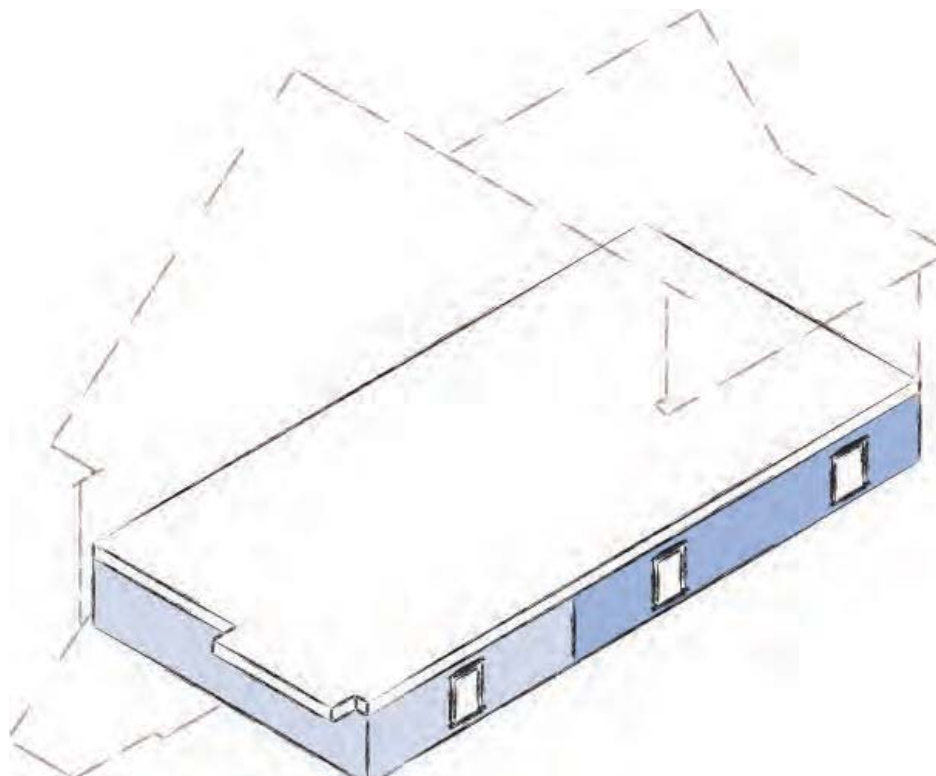
Single-family Character Home with addition



One secondary suite



Two secondary suites



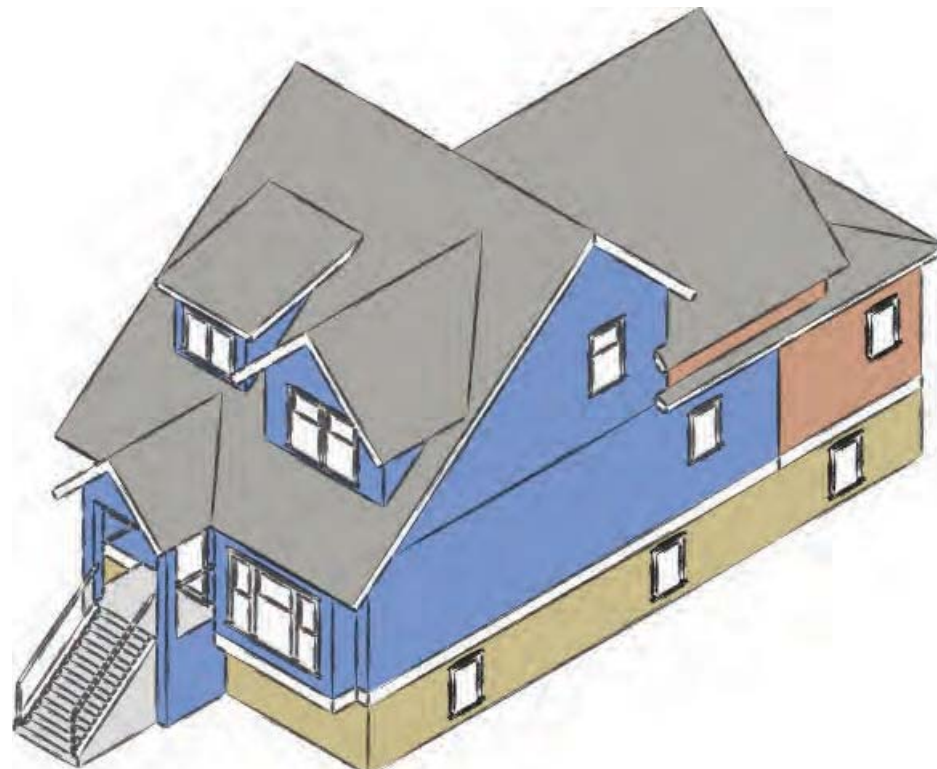
Tenure Options

- Two Multiple Conversion Dwelling units (strata or rental)
- Three Multiple Conversion Dwelling units (strata or rental)

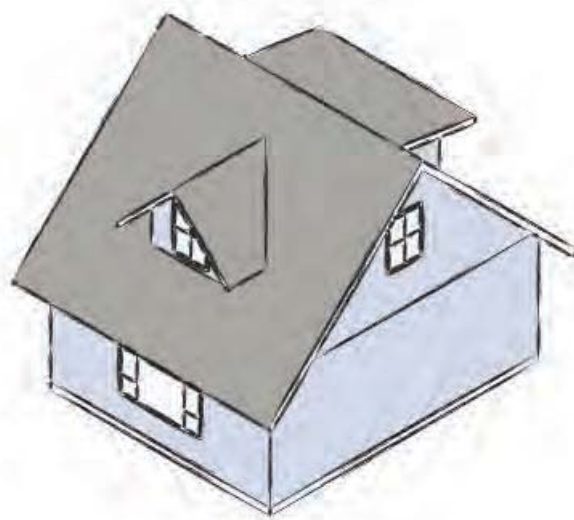
Character Home with addition and two MCD



Character Home with addition and three MCD



Laneway House



Infill



Rear Yard Options

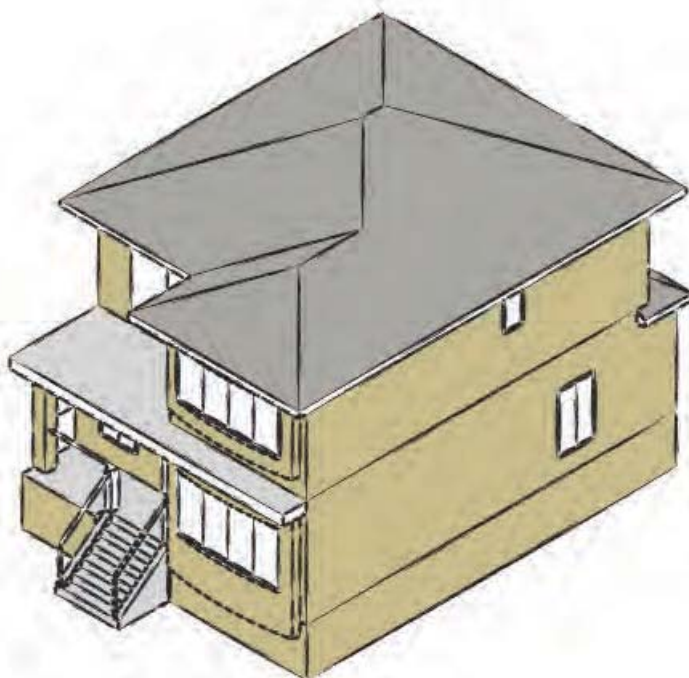
- Laneway House (rental)
- Infill (strata or rental)

New Home Construction - Typical 33' x 122' Site (4,026 sf)

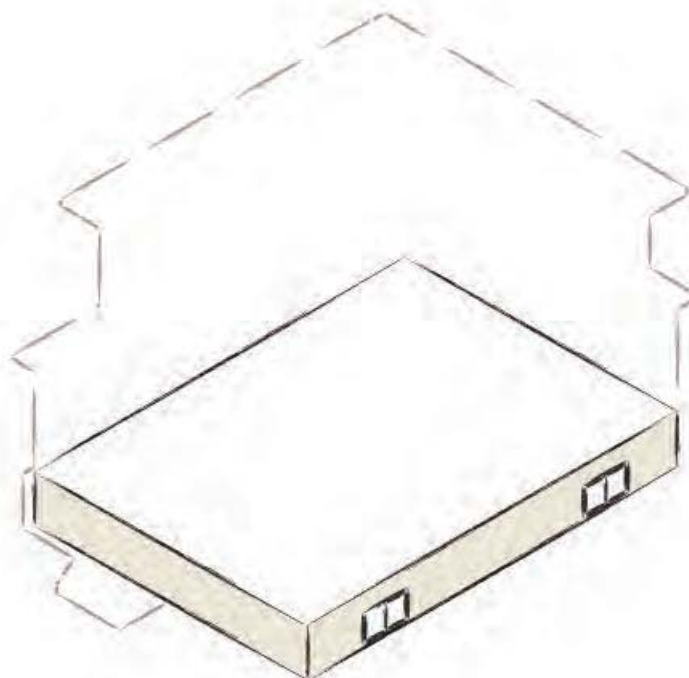
Current Zoning (No Change)

- One-family dwelling unit
- One-family dwelling unit with one secondary suite (rental)
- Laneway House (rental)

Single-family home



One secondary suite



Laneway House



Illustrated below are the Character Home retention scenarios based on options being explored.

Typical 33’ x 110’ Site (3,360 sf)



Character Home retention on a 3,360 sf site

Character Home with addition, secondary suite and Laneway House

- Single-family with secondary suite and Laneway House
- Three dwelling units (one owned and two rental)
- One off street parking space
- 0.75 + 0.16 FSR (total 3,303 sf)

New home with Secondary Suite and Laneway House: 0.5 + 0.16 FSR (total 2,396 sf)

Typical 50’ x 122’ Site (6,100 sf)



Character Home retention on a 6,100 sf site

Character Home with addition and infill

- Single-family with Infill (potential to strata title)
- Two dwelling units (could be one unit owned and one rental or two separate owners)
- Two off street parking spaces
- 0.75 FSR (total 4,575 sf)

New home with secondary suite and Laneway House: 0.5 + 0.16 FSR (total 4,026 sf)

Large 80’ x 125’ Site (10,000 sf)



Character Home retention on a 10,000 sf site

Character Home with addition and infill

- Multiple Conversion Dwelling with Infill (potential to strata title)
- Three dwelling units (could be three units owned or combination of ownership and rental)
- Three off street parking spaces
- 0.65 FSR (total 6,500 sf)

New home with secondary suite and Laneway House: 0.4 FSR + 0.16 (total 5,600 sf)

Note: Parking implications for additional dwelling units have not been studied in detail. Should there be support for additional dwelling units in RS zones for Character Home retention, further analysis of parking needs and implications will be undertaken.