

Laneway Housing: Proposed Expansion and Amendments to the Program

Council Presentation
Public Hearing

June 11, 2013

Purpose

- Expand program to equalize opportunity across all RS Districts
- Amend laneway housing (LWH) regulations to create livable units that are a good fit in single family neighbourhoods



Key Objectives

- Increase the supply of rental housing across the city
- Provide more housing options in low density residential neighbourhoods
- Provide additional housing while maintaining streetscape and neighbourhood character and add vibrancy to lane
- Promote green site and building



Background

2009

- Council adopts LWH regulations & guidelines

2010

- Council receives monitoring report and directs review of options to improve impacts on neighbours, livability and length of the permitting process

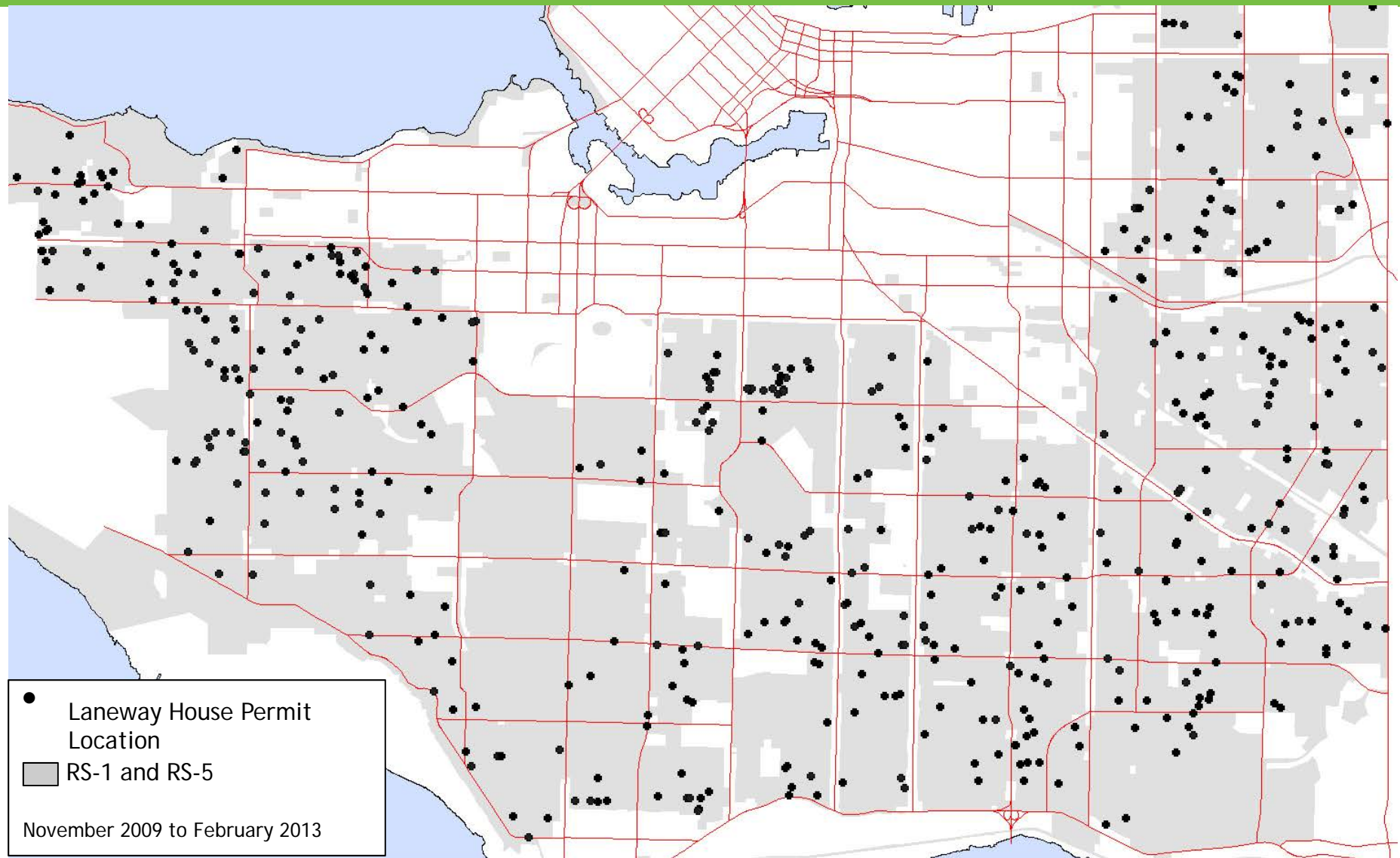
2011

- *3 Year Action Plan* of Housing and Homelessness Strategy calls for expanding LWH to other zones

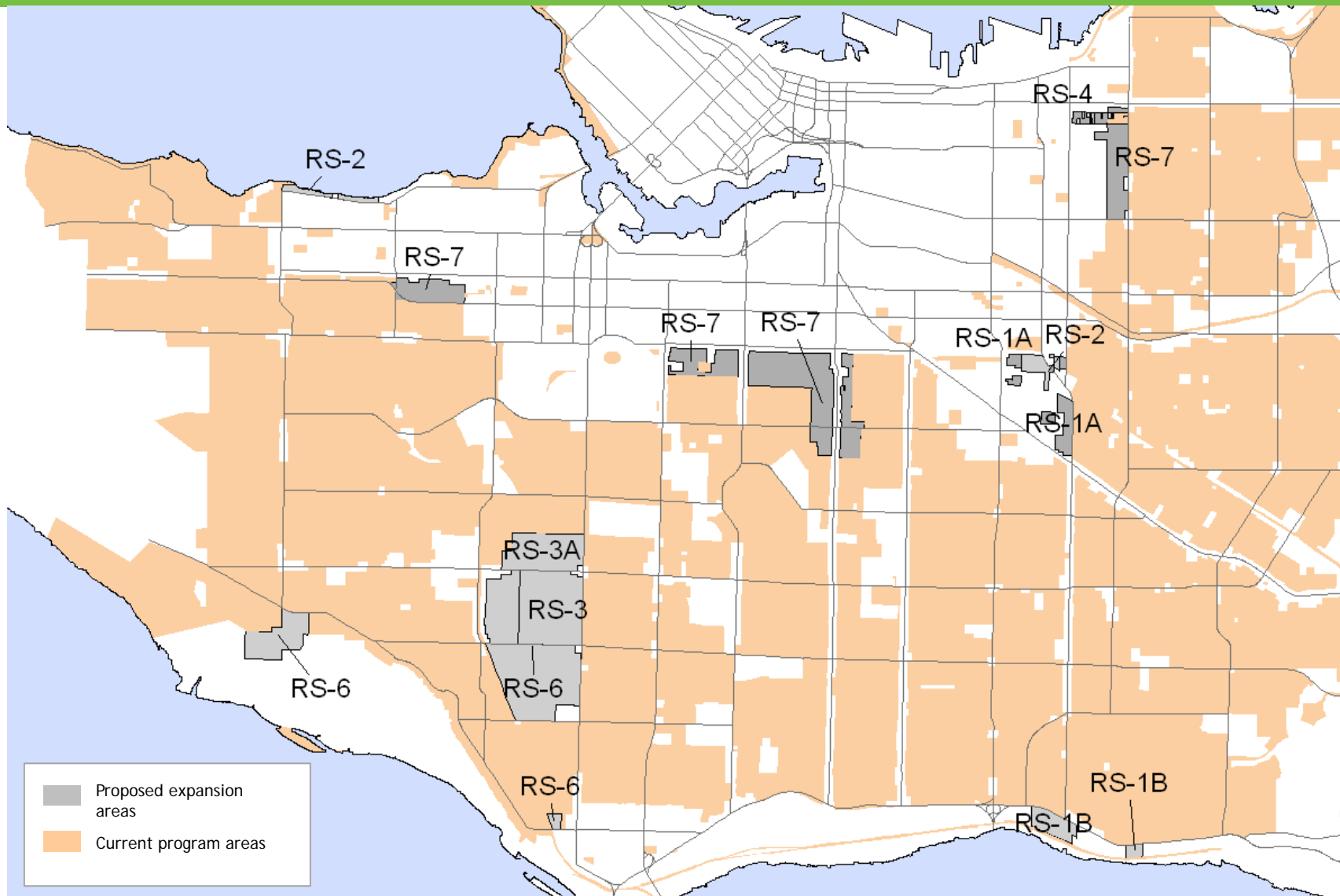
2012

- *Bold Ideas Toward an Affordable City* calls for expanding program to other single family zones

LWH Distribution



Proposed Expansion Areas



Some LWH Facts

- Average unit size is 590 sf; approximately 60% have 1 bedroom
- Average rents compare favourably with rents for market rental housing
- Most occupants are singles and couples between the ages of 20 and 49
- Occupants are 2/3 tenants and 1/3 property owner or family member
- Like living in new, detached dwelling with access to outdoor space, privacy, location; would like more space for storage, parking space

Key Concerns Addressed By Regulatory Amendments

- Impact of height and massing on neighbouring properties
- Provision of parking and use of enclosed parking space
- Livability
- Permitting process



Consultation

- Two workshops with LWH builders and designers held November 2012 and January 2013:
 - Support proposed amendments and expansion
- Two information open houses held March 2013:
 - Over 350 attended
 - Most support proposed amendments and expansion

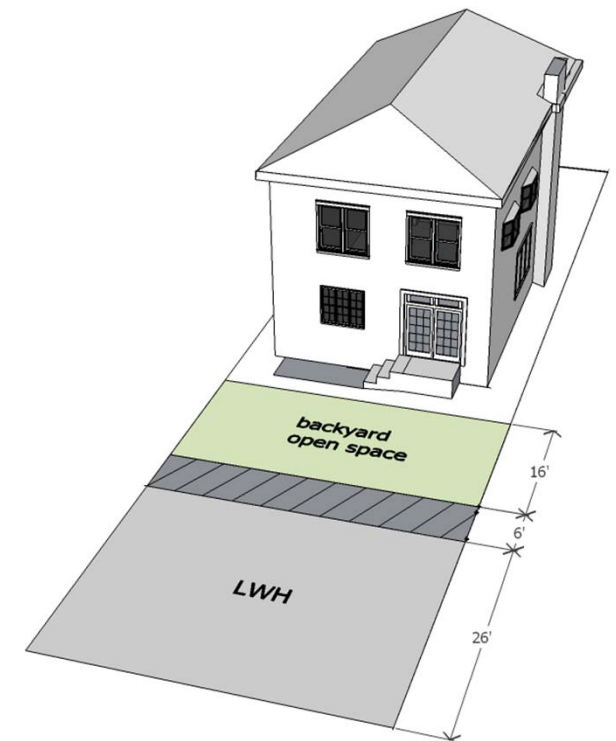
Height and Massing Concerns

- 94% of LWH are 1.5 storey
- Rate of neighbourhood complaints decreasing yet continue to focus on impacts of the upper storey:
 - Perceived height and massing
 - Loss of privacy and increased overlook
 - Shadowing



Proposed Changes to Siting

- Encourage one storey LWH by changes to siting:
 - Allow extension into rear yard of up to 6 feet for 1 storey (same height as garage)
 - No extension for 1.5 storey
- Maintain required minimum separation of 16 feet from main house
- Site permeability requirements unchanged



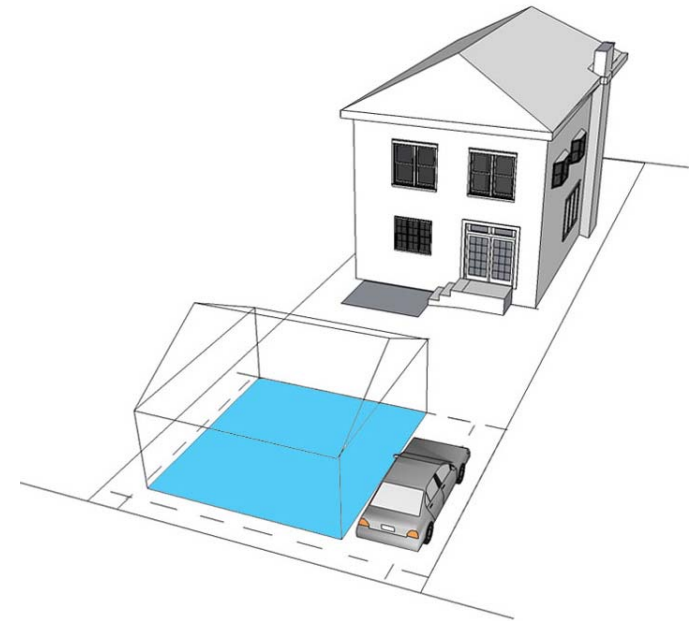
Parking Concerns

- Main areas of concern:
 - One space is inadequate for a property with 3 dwelling units
 - Could contribute to on-street parking congestion
 - Enclosed garage being used as living space



Proposed Changes to Parking

- Require 1 external parking space for all LWH, permeable materials
- Enclosed parking permitted, but no 'additional' floor area for parking



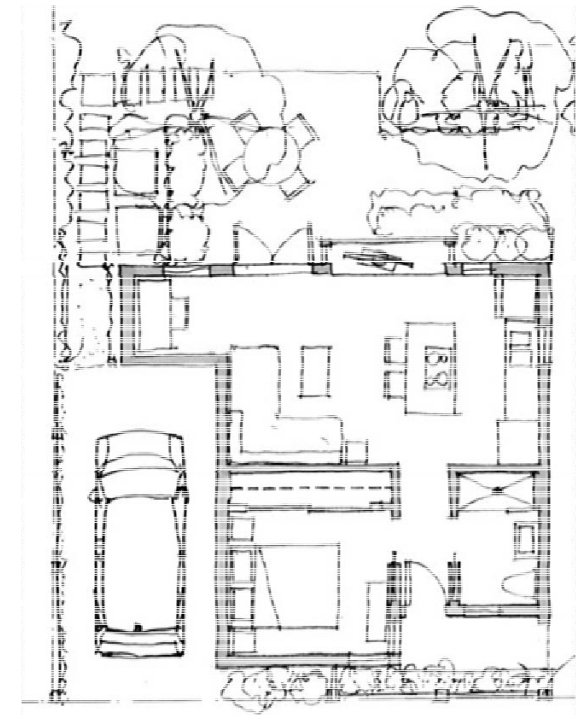
Livability Concerns

- Predominance of 1.5 storey LWH results in less accessibility for those with mobility challenges
- Average size of LWH constant but number of 2 bedrooms increasing; adequacy of common areas
- Not enough living and storage space



Proposed Changes to Size

- Allow some of the floor area previously used for enclosed parking to be used for living space:
 - On a 33 x 122 lot allow 644 sf of living space
 - On larger lots allow maximum 900 sf
- Allow an additional 40 sf for storage space



Permit Review Process Concerns

- Length of process - has improved since fall 2012
- Varying interpretation of regulations and guidelines



Proposed Changes to Review Process

- 1 storey LWH permitted through an outright review process
- 1.5 storey continues with current review process



Thank you

