

**TEXT AMENDMENT: Amendments to the Zoning and
Development By-law and Building By-law:**

Accessible Path of Travel Policy Review

July 24, 2018

Council motion (Sept 2013)

“THAT Council direct the Director of Planning and Chief Building Official to report back ... on the feasibility of mandating an **accessible path of travel from the street to at least one exterior entrance** of all 1- and 2-family houses, laneway houses, secondary suites, town houses and stacked town houses type units.”

POLICY OUTCOMES:

These policies will help to increase Vancouver's stock of visitable/adaptable housing units, including:

- 100% of units in new apartment buildings, 4+ storeys;
- 100% of new laneway houses (site frontage >/40ft);
- 100% of new townhouses integrated in apartment bldgs;
- 20% of new townhouses (site frontage >/90ft).

*(Among)
1st in
Canada!*

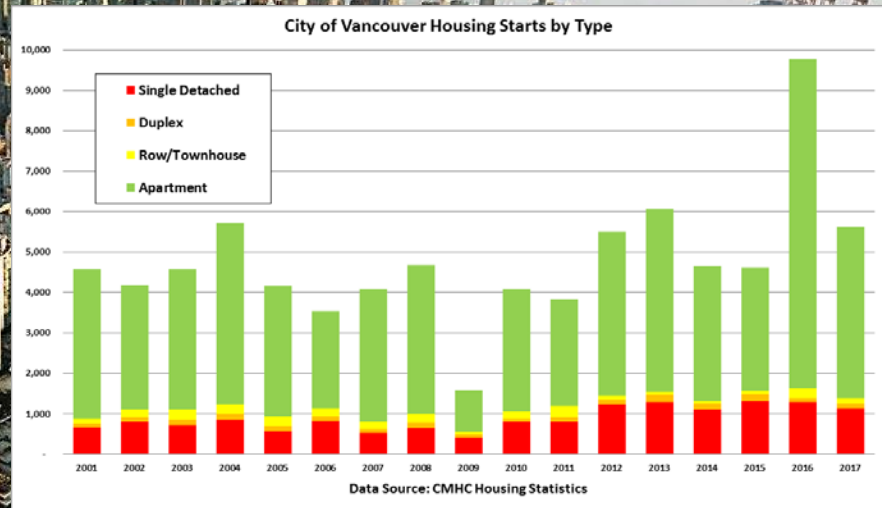
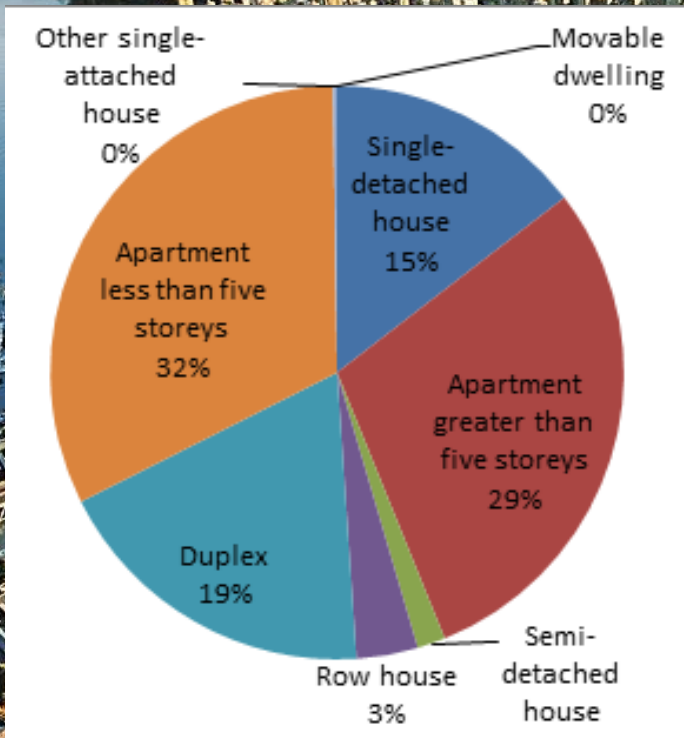
Additionally, these policies will:

- require adaptability for the interior of low-density units (via VBBL);
- enable an exterior path of travel for any low-density unit;
- Initiate monitoring (ie. tracking of no. of visitable units);

and...

- Are a positive first step in increasing visitable/adaptable housing in low-density neighbourhoods.

OUR LOCAL HOUSING STOCK

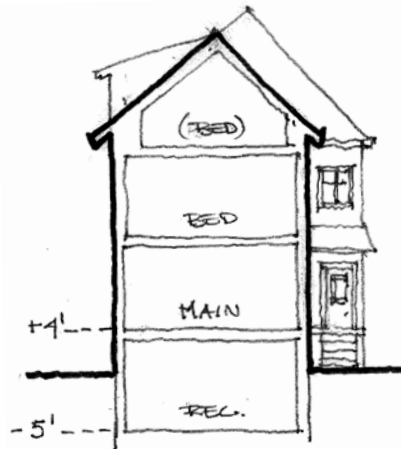
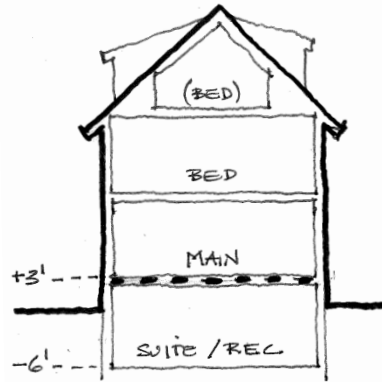


- All low-density housing: 39%
- Apartment starts outpace all low-density starts by 5:1 (2017)

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- Low-density housing accounts for less than 40% of existing housing stock.
- Trend: Proportion of units in apartments/high-density types is increasing.
- Majority of visitable/adaptable units will be provided in apartment buildings.
- "New" house types (ie. townhouses) open up opportunities for visitable units in low-density neighbourhoods.

1- & 2-FAMILY DWELLINGS



URBAN DESIGN CONSTRAINTS:

- Provide access to 3+ units (basement suites, lock-offs, laneway houses)
- Retain mature trees
- Retain character house
- Provide access to site functions (private outdoor space, garbage, parking)
- Accommodate slope (inc. shared retaining walls, etc)
- Limited yards (ie. for ramps)

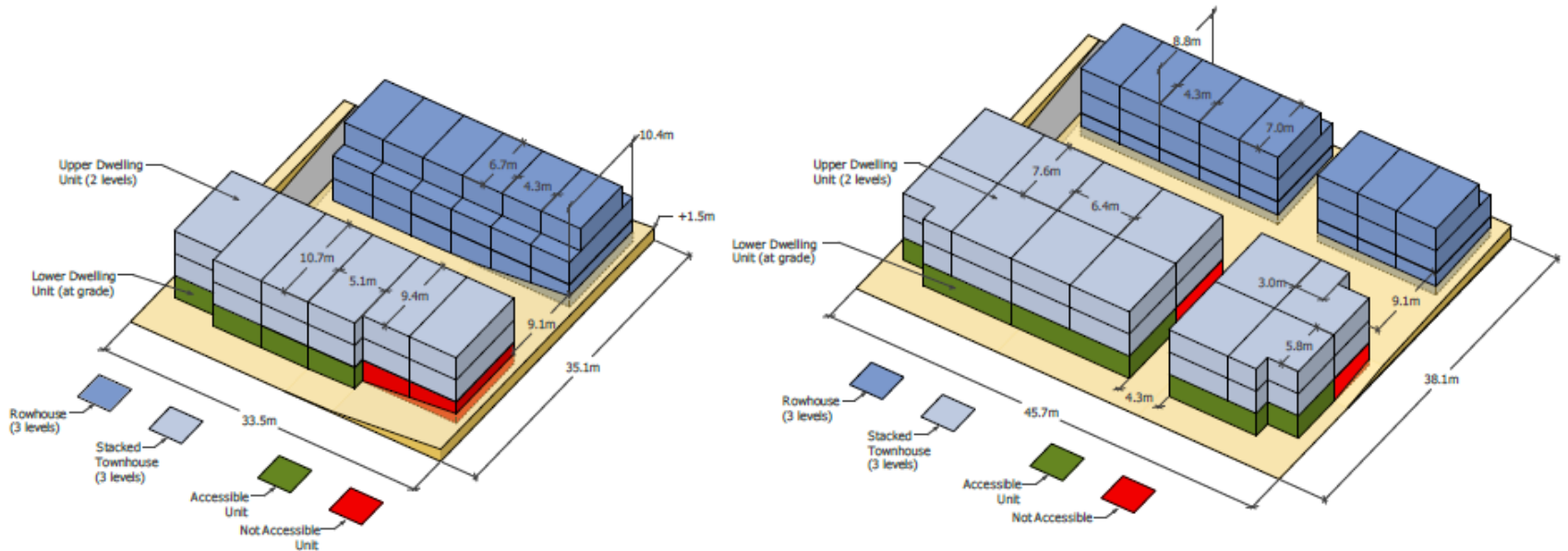
KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- In jurisdictions that mandate POT, house type is single level/slab-on-grade.
- Vancouver, sites accommodate multiple units (narrow and/or "stacked").
- *If livable basements & multiple units remain a priority, mandating POT for 1- & 2- Family Dwellings is not feasible.*

TOWNHOUSES & STACKED TOWNHOUSES

Form of Development Studies:

- Study of “typical” townhouse building forms in RM zones city-wide;
- Scoped site constraints: Topography, parkade access, PMT, trees, etc.
- Scoped potential relaxations: Height



KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- Many units are +6ft above grade, narrow, multi-level: challenging for visitability/adaptability. Garden units very suitable for adaptability.
- Path of travel to 20% of units is achievable for most sites in existing RM zones.

TOWNHOUSES & STACKED TOWNHOUSES - VBBL Revisions

“Issues” in 2014 VBBL adaptability regulations:

- “Paper compliance” without achieving real adaptability
ie. wider stair cannot always accommodate chairlift
- Conflicts with other codes, health & safety standards
ie. 3-pc adaptable washroom
- Compromised living space & affordability
ie. smaller rooms, potential loss of bedrooms and total units

Approach to VBBL revisions:

- Rationalize regulations that are not producing intended outcomes.
- Tailor regulations to “suitable” and “less suitable” townhouse unit types.
- Achieve real adaptability in 20% visitable and other suitable units, while regaining living space and affordability, by:
 - **ADDING** requirements for garden units;
 - **MAINTAINING** requirements for visitable main level;
 - **WAIVING** requirements for upper storeys to regain living space.

CONSULTATION PROCESS - KEY MEETINGS

COV Committee Consultation

- April 2016: Scoping with COV Committees



Stakeholder Workshop

- June 2016: Workshop with COV Committees, community organizations, and Industry



Public Open House

- Dec 2016: Present draft policy directions



Stakeholder Consultations

- April 2018: Present revised policy directions to COV Committees and Industry



Present Recommendations

- June & July 2018: Present final policy recommendations (*2 sessions*)

KEY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

*(Among)
1st in
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➤ Townhouses and rowhouses:

- Mandate exterior path of travel from street to entrance for 20% of units (sites >90ft).

➤ Laneway houses:

- Mandate exterior path of travel from street or parking (sites >40ft).

➤ One- and Two-family Dwellings:

- Permit a 0.5% floorspace exclusion (sites <33ft).

➤ Allow DOP relaxations to enable path of travel for all low-density types.

➤ Improve Enhanced Accessibility Guidelines to include townhouses, rowhouses, duplexes and laneway houses.

*Most
progressive
in Canada!*

➤ Harmonize Z&D Bylaw and Building Bylaw requirements, and tailor VBBL requirements to achieve real, enhanced visitability/adaptability in townhouse developments.

“DEGREES” OF ACCESSIBILITY

Visitable

People with disabilities may visit with ease today:

- Exterior path from curb to no-step entrance
- Interior route
- Living space for visiting (min. 120 ft.)
- Accessible bathroom (2-pc) on main floor



Focus of Council Motion

Adaptable

Visitability plus features for renovation “tomorrow”

- Reinforced washroom walls; stacked closets for elevator



Focus of VBBL

Accessible

All/most features to accommodate a wheelchair today

20% Visitable Units - Supporting Research

Quantity Surveyor Cost Study:

Non-stacked Row/Townhouse:

- ❑ SAVE \$590 per visitable unit:
 - Provide no-step entry & visitable 2-pc on main level
 - Waive some VBBL requirements on upper levels

- ❑ SAVE \$990 per standard unit:
 - Waive some VBBL requirements on upper levels

Stacked Townhouse :

- ❑ ADD \$750 per ground-level visitable unit;
 - Provide no-step entry for exterior path of travel
 - Provide suitable kitchen turning radius

- ❑ SAVE \$990 per standard unit.
 - Standard front door entry
 - Waive some Building B/L requirements on upper levels



Conclusion: Minimal financial impact on townhouse development for 20% visitable units