

# **City of Vancouver** *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

**Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department**

453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4 | tel: 3-1-1, outside Vancouver 604.873.7000 | fax: 604.873.7100  
website: [vancouver.ca](http://vancouver.ca) | email: [planning@vancouver.ca](mailto:planning@vancouver.ca)

## JOYCE STATION AREA CD-1 GUIDELINES (VANNESS AVENUE AND SPENCER STREET SITE) (BY-LAW NO. 6322)

*Adopted by City Council on March 22, 1988  
Amended October 4, 2016*

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**Note:** The guidelines in this document are organized under standardized headings. As a consequence, there are gaps in the numbering sequence where no guidelines apply under a standardized heading.

# 1 Application and Intent

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the CD-1 By-law for multiple residential developments on the Vanness Avenue and Spencer Street site, zoned CD-1 (Figure 1). The guidelines will be used by City staff in the evaluation of projects. Applicants should also refer to Chapter 4: New Residential Development Opportunities and Chapter 9: Implementation and Joyce Urban Design Principles in the Joyce Station Area Plan.

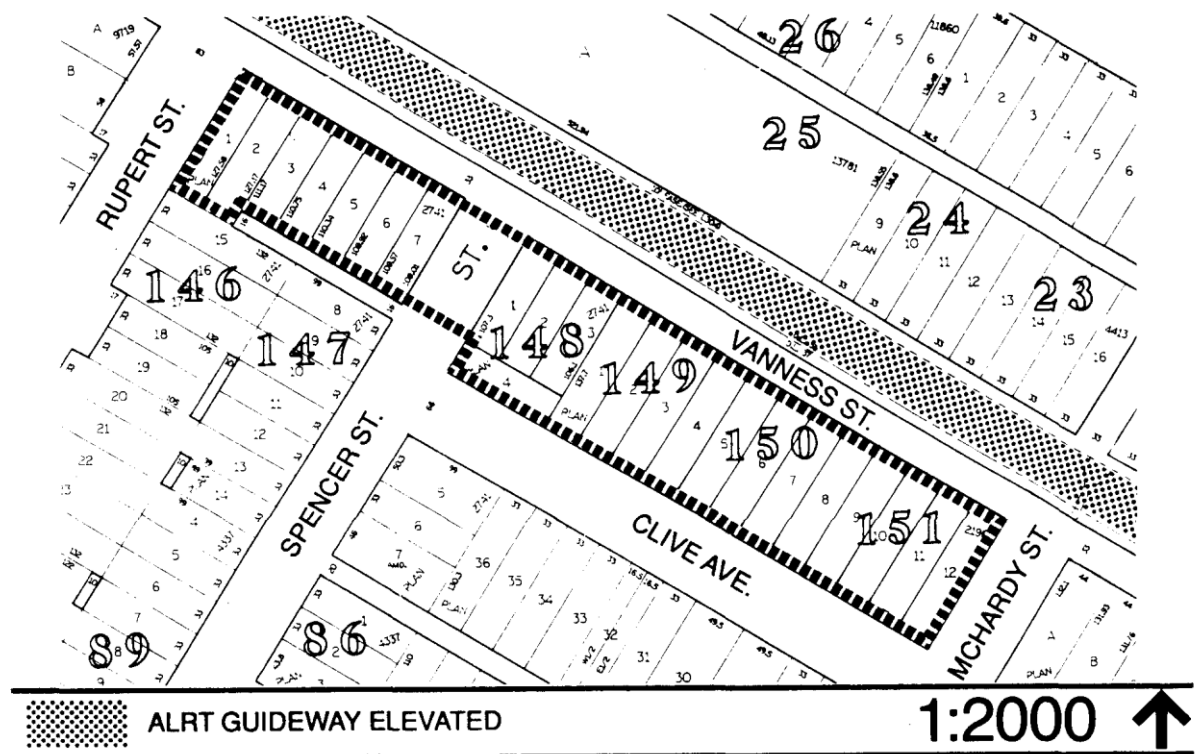
The ALRT redevelopment sites are mainly located in established single-family neighbourhoods. Most sites are also adjacent to and physically impacted by the ALRT system or busy arterial streets. The major guideline objectives are:

- (a) To ensure that new development is compatible with the physical character of the neighbourhood;
- (b) To achieve residential liveability by dealing with the impacts of the ALRT system and arterial streets; and
- (c) To achieve high quality development that assists in establishing a stronger neighbourhood character and image.

It may not always be possible to achieve all the guideline objectives outlined in this document. On each site trade offs will be considered to achieve the major guideline objectives.

The intent in developing the Vanness Avenue and Spencer Street site is to provide multiple housing that can deal with the impact of the ALRT system. This housing should also create a noise and visual buffer between the ALRT guideway and nearby single-family homes. It should be scaled to fit into the area and should create a frontage character for both Vanness and Clive Avenues.

Figure 1. Joyce Station Area - Vanness Avenue and Spencer Street Site



## 2 General Design Considerations

### 2.1 Site Context

The site is located in a stable residential area with single-family homes located to the south. The site fronts on both Vanness and Clive Avenues and is bordered by the elevated ALRT guideway and B.C. Parkway on the north side of Vanness Avenue. Another CD-1 zoned residential site is located to the east along Vanness Avenue.

Although there are few prominent design elements in the surrounding neighbourhood, there is potential for emphasizing the positive characteristics to create a more identifiable community. Elements that establish character include topography, view, landscaping, building scale and building features such as roof types, windows, entrances and finishing materials.

#### **Objective:**

New development should respond positively to the site context and the existing scale and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Being compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- (b) Assisting in limiting ALRT impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood.
- (c) Ensuring that the liveability of any new dwelling units is not compromised by ALRT and traffic noise.
- (d) Helping establish a stronger neighbourhood character and image.

### 2.3 Orientation

The elevated ALRT guideway creates privacy and noise problems which limit the orientation of new development. The neighbourhood subdivision pattern results in most existing homes, being oriented north or south. The site is oriented north-south fronting on both Vanness and Clive Avenues. New development provides the opportunity to help limit ALRT impacts on the neighbourhood, provide a neighbourly orientation to nearby single-family homes and reinforce the existing development pattern.

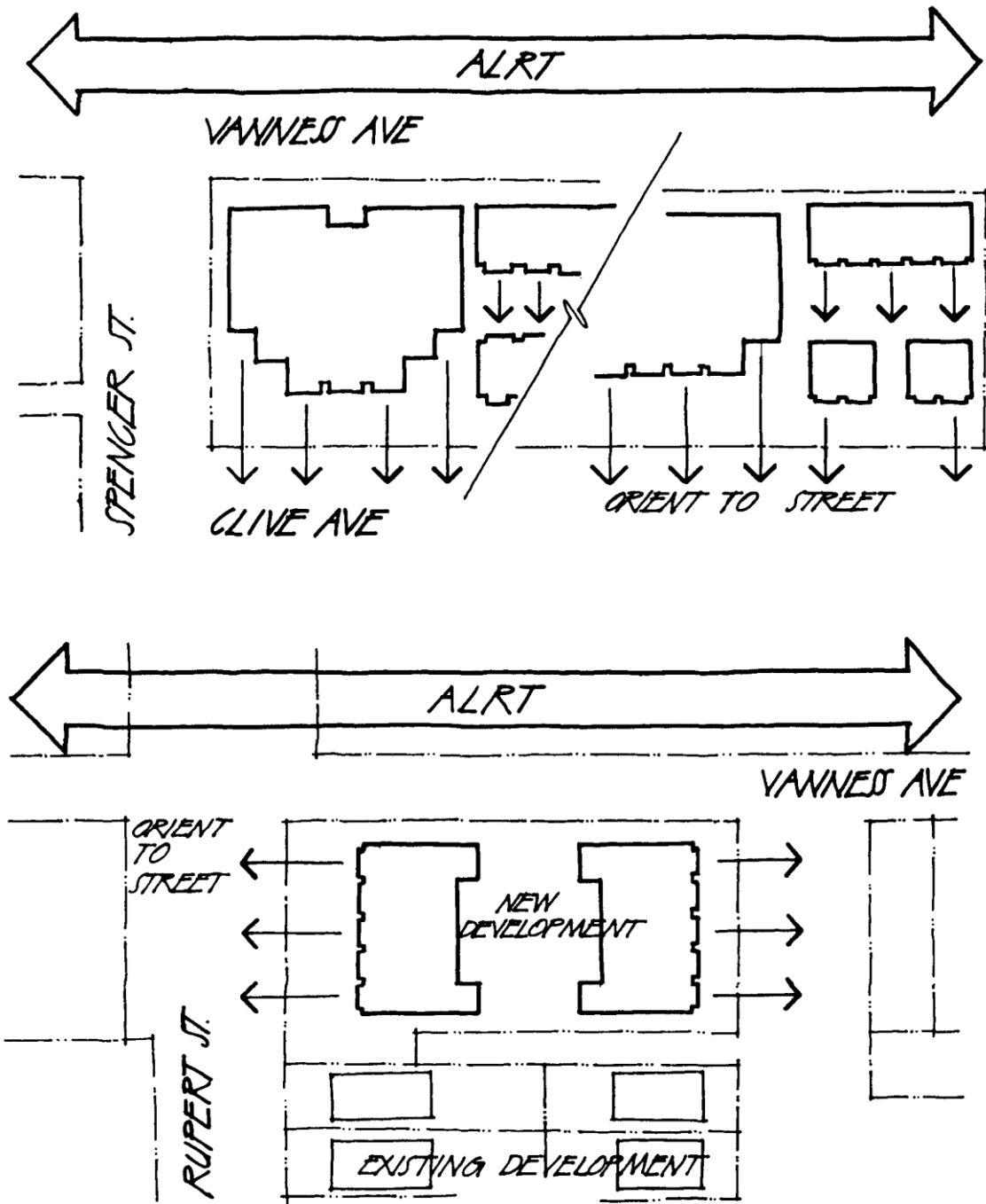
#### **Objective:**

New development should be oriented to limit ALRT impacts and reinforce the existing development pattern.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Orienting new development east of Spencer Street away from the ALRT guideway and towards Clive Avenue.
- (b) Limiting orientation towards Vanness Avenue but ensuring that a frontage character is provided.

Figure 2. Suggested Orientation for New Development



**2.4 View**

Views are a major amenity in residential development. Views of the north shore mountains may be possible from the site. However, taking advantage of this view can conflict with mitigating ALRT impacts. New development which takes advantage of this view opportunity must also respect views from homes to the south.

**Objective:**

New development should take advantage of any potential views without unduly compromising existing views enjoyed by nearby homes or compromising the livability of new dwelling units.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Ensuring that any opening oriented towards the view is ALRT-tolerant.
- (b) Articulating and providing breaks in roof lines to open up views.

**2.6 Light and Ventilation**

Adequate natural light and ventilation are necessary for residential liveability. However, the need to mitigate impacts could conflict with providing light and ventilation along building walls facing the ALRT guideway. New development must achieve solutions to this conflict to ensure residential liveability. Below grade units and their private outdoor spaces do not receive adequate light.

**Objective:**

New development should provide adequate natural light and ventilation to all dwelling units.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Maximizing the number of exterior walls with windows for each dwelling unit not impacted by the ALRT.
- (b) Using alternatives to standard windows such as skylights and glass block to allow light through walls facing the guideway.
- (c) Locating dwelling units at or above grade only.
- (d) Minimizing the impact of building massing on present light levels enjoyed by adjacent properties.

**2.8 Noise**

Low noise levels are a major element in residential liveability. This site is impacted by ALRT noise. New development must be noise tolerant itself and should contribute in reducing noise impacts on the surrounding neighbourhood.

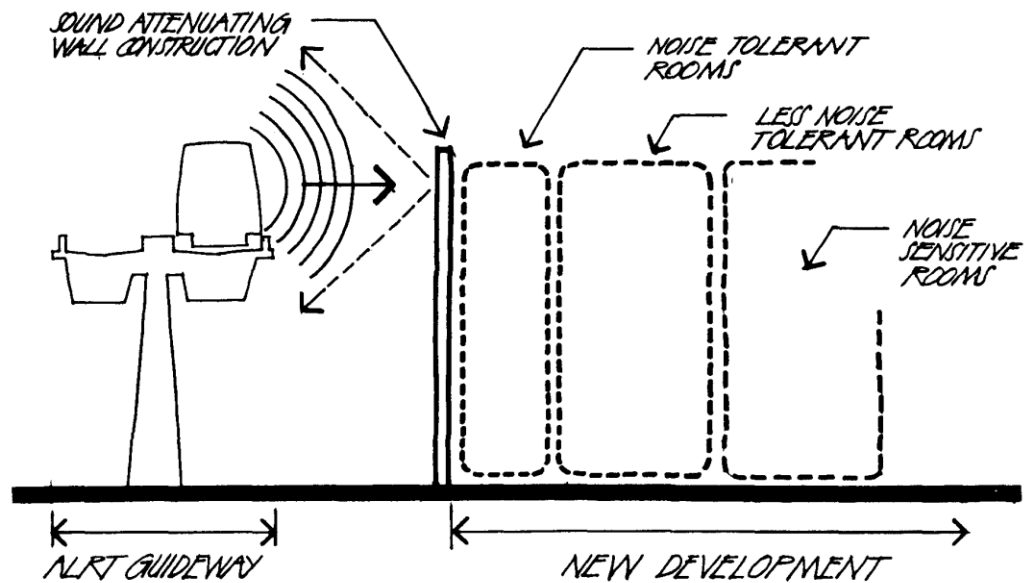
**Objective:**

New development should minimize ALRT and traffic noise in new dwelling units and assist in reducing ALRT noise impacts on nearby single-family homes.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Locating rooms most affected by noise such as living rooms and bedrooms away from the noise source (Figure 3).
- (b) Locating areas not affected by noise such as stairwells and single loaded corridors between the noise source and dwelling units.
- (c) Using materials and construction methods that limit noise transmission such as masonry construction, double stud insulated walls, triple glazing and glass block.
- (d) Locating noise buffers such as glazed balconies, walls, fences and berms between the noise source and dwelling units.
- (e) Providing alternate ventilation systems such as baffled wall vents.

Figure 3. Example of New Development Responding to Noise Impacts



## 2.9 Privacy

The ALRT guideway creates privacy problems due to overlooking from trains into the site and the surrounding neighbourhood. New development that is higher than adjacent buildings could also create privacy problems. However, sensitive site and dwelling unit planning can reduce overlook problems and minimize loss of privacy on adjacent sites.

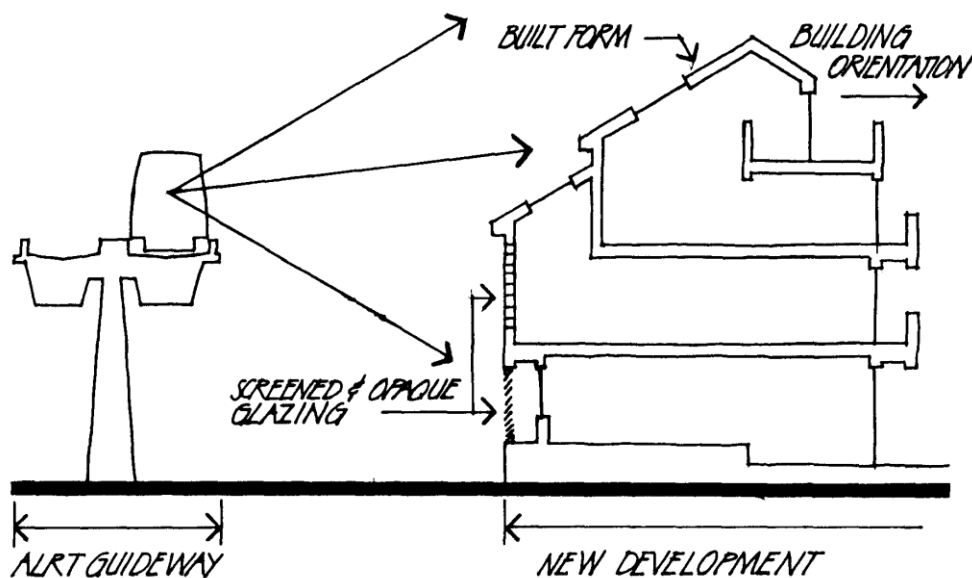
### Objective:

New development should respect and improve existing levels of privacy.

This can be achieved by:

- Using building massing and landscaping to block views from the ALRT into new development and the surrounding neighbourhood.
- Designing and landscaping new development to ensure that the privacy of adjacent sites is not unduly compromised.
- Ensuring that new development has a high degree of individual unit privacy through careful location and treatment of windows and balconies.

Figure 4. Examples of Building Configuration to Ensure Privacy



## 2.13 Parking

Underground parking should be located below grade limiting any exposed structure. Any exposed structure and surface parking areas should be well screened and suitably treated.

## 3 Uses

### 3.1 Multiple Dwelling: Locked In Lot

A locked in lot includes:

- (a) A lot left at the end of a block and beside a proposed multiple dwelling; or
- (b) A lot left between an existing and proposed multiple dwelling; and the site area of the lot would be less than that required by the by-law for development of a multiple dwelling.

Before granting approval for a proposed multiple dwelling which would create a locked in lot, the following process is to be followed in trying to avoid the creation of a locked in lot:

- (a) The owner(s) of the lot to be locked in is advised, via letter from the Planning Department, of the proposed development on the adjacent property and the effect it would have on future redevelopment of their lot, which would be below the minimum site area required for a multiple dwelling.
- (b) The applicant of the proposed multiple dwelling is requested to submit written confirmation of offers to purchase the lot to be locked in. These offers are then sent by the Planning Department to the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in.
- (c) If the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in accepts an offer to purchase, written confirmation of this is to be submitted to the Planning Department.
- (d) If the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in refuses the offers to purchase, written confirmation of this being supplied by the applicant, but does not object to the proposed development creating their locked in lot, the application may proceed.
- (e) If the owner(s) of the lot to be locked in refuses the offer to purchase, written confirmation of this being supplied by the applicant, and objects to the proposed development creating their locked in lot, Planning Department staff are then to meet with the owner(s) and the applicant of the proposed development to seek resolution.
- (f) If resolution is not obtained, the Director of Planning is to draw the matter to the attention of Council in presenting the proposed development for approval of the form of development.

## 4 Guidelines Pertaining to Regulations of the Zoning and Development By-law

### 4.2 Frontage

The most common building frontage in the neighbourhood is that of a single-family home on a single lot. This sets up a recognizable rhythm of spacing from house to house. New higher density development will be built on larger sites, possibly disrupting this established pattern.

#### **Objective:**

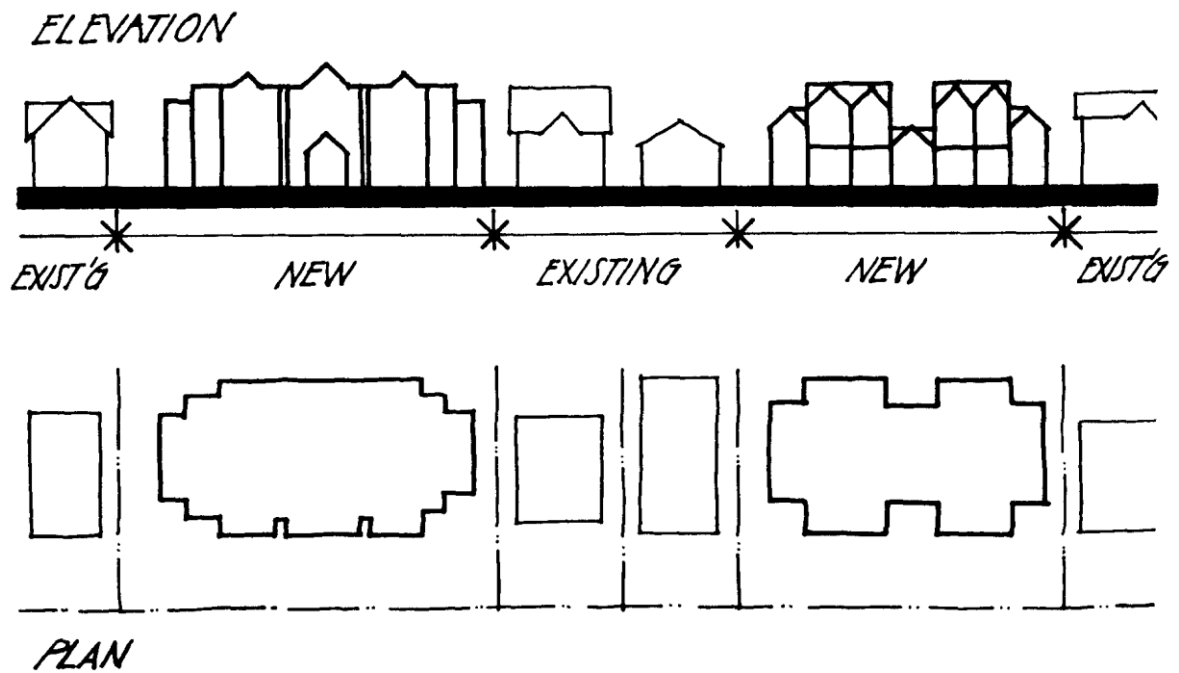
New development should provide a frontage character which is compatible with existing single-family development. It should also create visual interest and avoid an anonymous box-like image.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Visually breaking facades on multi-lot development into smaller individual components.
- (b) Articulating building facades to express individual units.



Figure 5. Example of New Development Creating Frontage Character



#### 4.3 Height

The existing character of the surrounding neighbourhood is in part created by the predominant one to two-storey height of single-family development. New development will be higher in order to deal with the impact of the ALRT guideway and achieve its maximum density. It should also respond to lower building heights in the surrounding neighbourhood.

##### Objective:

New development should screen the ALRT from the surrounding neighbourhood and should provide a visual transition to the lower height of nearby single-family homes.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Locating the highest building elements adjacent to the ALRT guideway.
- (b) Providing variations in height to create visual interest.
- (c) Scaling development down to the existing neighbourhood height as the distance from the ALRT increases.
- (d) Reducing the height of new multi-lot development when next to a single-family house.

#### 4.4 Yards

Yards are an important element that create scale and character for an area. Most single-family homes in the neighbourhood have typical front yards of 6.1 to 7.3 metres (20 to 24 feet) and 1.0 metre (3 foot) side yards. Typical rear yards are 7.6 metres (25 feet). Front yards provide a continuous strip of open space on the street edge while rear yards provide private outdoor open space. The issue of providing setbacks from the ALRT guideway is complex and requires consideration of the benefits to site development and impact mitigation.

##### Objective:

New development should use building setbacks that respond to ALRT impacts and respect and continue the existing yard rhythm and character of the neighbourhood.

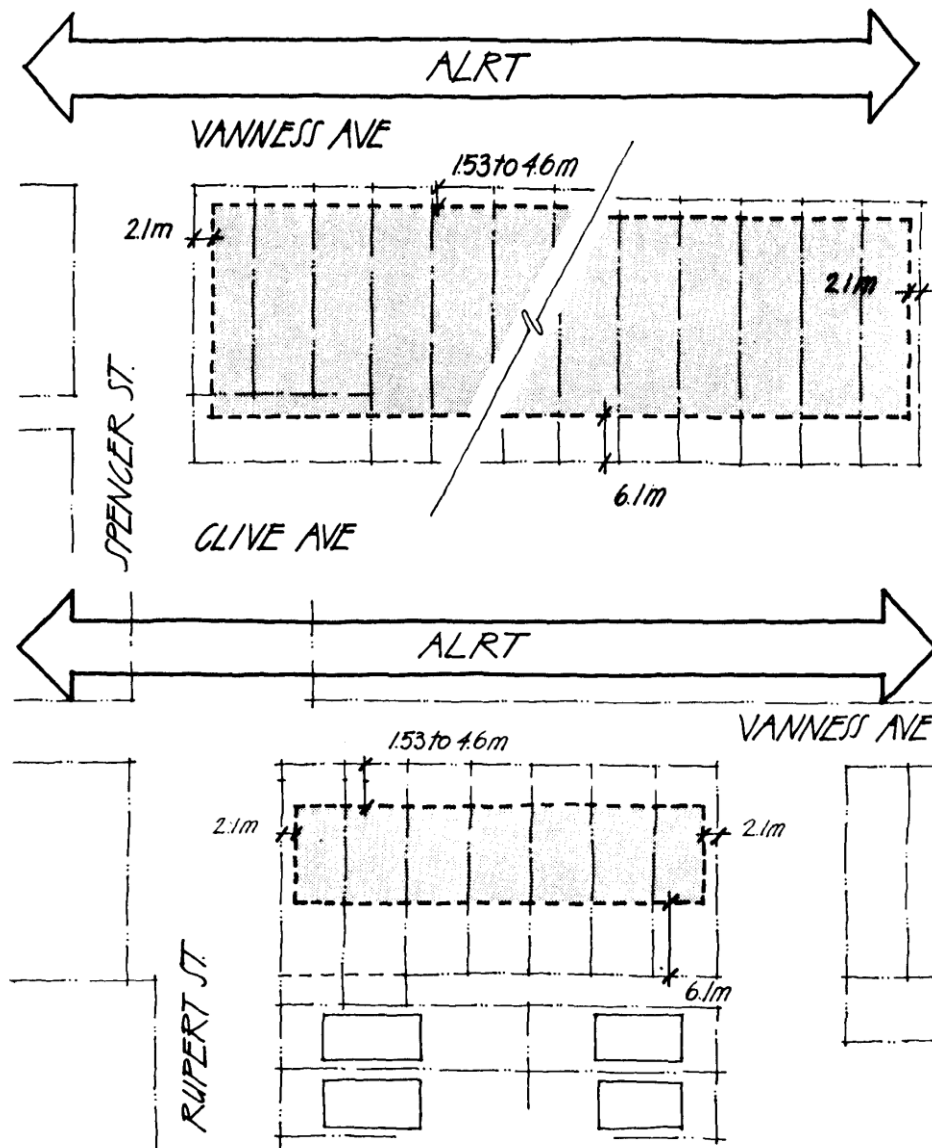
In the case of a multiple dwelling containing four or more units, this can be achieved by:

- (a) Providing a 6.1 metre (20 foot) setback along Clive Avenue (Figure 6).

- (b) Providing a minimum 1.53 metre (5 foot) or maximum 4.6 metre (15 foot) setback along Vanness Avenue. This can be done when the walls facing the ALRT guideway have been designed to reduce noise and ensure privacy. This permits more flexible site planning, provides more useable open space and orients more units away from the ALRT.
- (c) Providing a minimum 2.1 metre (7 foot) setback from all other site boundaries but increased so that the outer walls are contained within a 135 degree angle extended horizontally and measured inwardly from any and all point on the side property line provided however that the Director of Planning may, after consultation with the adjacent property owner, relax this setback or require no setback from the boundary between sites where he is satisfied that such relaxation allows for improved building design and does not adversely affect an adjacent single-family home.

In the case of a multiple dwelling on a locked-in lot, the preceding guidelines shall apply except that side yards need only be a minimum 10% of site width to a maximum of 1.53 metres (5 feet).

Figure 6. Suggested Setbacks for the Vanness Avenue and Rupert Street Site



## 5 Architectural Components

### 5.1 Roofs

Roofs can assist in giving an area character and identity and often define the building's use. There are a variety of pitched roof types in the neighbourhood, reflecting a residential character.

#### **Objective:**

New development should have roofs that are compatible with the existing neighbourhood character and create visual interest.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Integrating pitched roofs into the overall design to provide residential character. They should strengthen neighbourhood identity, be compatible with adjacent housing and avoid a “tacked-on” look.
- (b) Emphasizing entrances and expressing dwelling unit identity by incorporating secondary roofs.
- (c) Creating an attractive roofscape when adjacent to and lower than the ALRT guideway.
- (d) Clustering and screening any mechanical equipment and venting.

### 5.2 Windows

Windows are an important element in establishing character. Generally windows in the neighbourhood are of the standard residential type. New development provides an opportunity to enhance visual interest and a sense of quality construction through window detailing. However, particular care must be taken in the treatment of any windows affected by ALRT and traffic impacts.

#### **Objective:**

New development should use windows that create visual interest and reinforce the residential character of the neighbourhood.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Emphasizing residential character using articulated window types such as bay windows and windows with more detailing and emphasized framing that express unit individuality.
- (b) Suitably treating any windows affected by ALRT and traffic impacts to reduce noise and ensure privacy.

### 5.3 Entrances

Entrances are a key component in a building's design and traditionally are its major focus. Most older houses in the area have highly visible, single street-facing entrances, some at grade and others accessible from a substantial staircase.

#### **Objective:**

New development should emphasize entrances.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Providing individual grade access to as many dwelling units as possible.
- (b) Creating visual interest by the use of porches, staircases, entrance roofs and door detailing.
- (c) Locating and designing lobbies to be clearly visible and directly accessible from the street.

### 5.4 Balconies

With an increase in density, balconies will provide needed outdoor space. The design of balconies should consider privacy, useability, integration with the overall design, and ALRT and traffic impacts.

**Objective:**

New residential development should provide balconies which are useable, private and ALRT and traffic-tolerant.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Providing balconies with a minimum depth of 6 feet.
- (b) Orienting and screening balconies to ensure a high degree of privacy from other units, adjacent balconies and for private areas of nearby single-family homes.
- (c) Suitably screening any balconies affected by ALRT and traffic impacts to reduce noise and ensure privacy.
- (d) Integrating balconies into the overall building design to avoid a “tacked-on” look.

**5.5 Exterior Walls and Finishes**

Most houses in the neighbourhood are finished in a combination of stucco and wood with some use of brick and stone as trim. The need to mitigate ALRT impacts may result in blank walls facing the guideway. The detailing and finishing of these walls require careful attention to ensure an attractive image when viewed from the nearby homes, Vanness Avenue or the ALRT.

**Objective:**

New development should employ finishing materials that create a strong, attractive and cohesive character and minimize the visual impact of continuous building walls.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Using a limited number of finishing materials common to the area.
- (b) Limiting uninterrupted stucco walls.
- (c) Articulating and texturing building walls adjacent to the ALRT.

**7 Open Space**

Open space is a major element in creating character and liveability in residential areas. Surrounding single-family homes provide open space in their front and rear yards. New development at a higher density will likely provide open space in the form of large communal spaces or patios and balconies.

**Objective:**

New development should provide a variety of open spaces which are useable, easily supervised, compatible with the characteristic open space of the neighbourhood and buffered from ALRT and traffic impacts.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Defining open space by the careful siting and massing of buildings rather than it being left over areas resulting from the building design.
- (b) Providing alternatives to ground floor open space when site coverage is greater than 50% such as large balconies and roof decks.
- (c) Providing private open space directly accessible from each unit in the form of a yard, roof garden or large balcony. Ground level private open space should be defined by screening or landscaping.
- (d) Suitably screening any open space affected by ALRT and traffic impacts to reduce noise and ensure privacy.
- (e) Setting back any privacy fencing from the property line to ensure the visual continuity of the open space along the street. Any fencing should be designed to promote casual neighbourhood surveillance from the street by permitting some view of the dwelling unit without sacrificing privacy.

**8 Landscaping**

Landscaping defines public-private space and creates neighbourhood character. It can also assist in mitigating ALRT impacts. The predominant form of landscaping in the neighbourhood is simple, formal front yards with ornamental trees and gardens. Some areas have continuous trees which help create a cohesive image for the street. Surface treatment in new development should

respond to the variety of uses to which open space will be put. Both hard and soft surfaces should be provided as needed and may include pavers, cobblestones, tile and lawn areas.

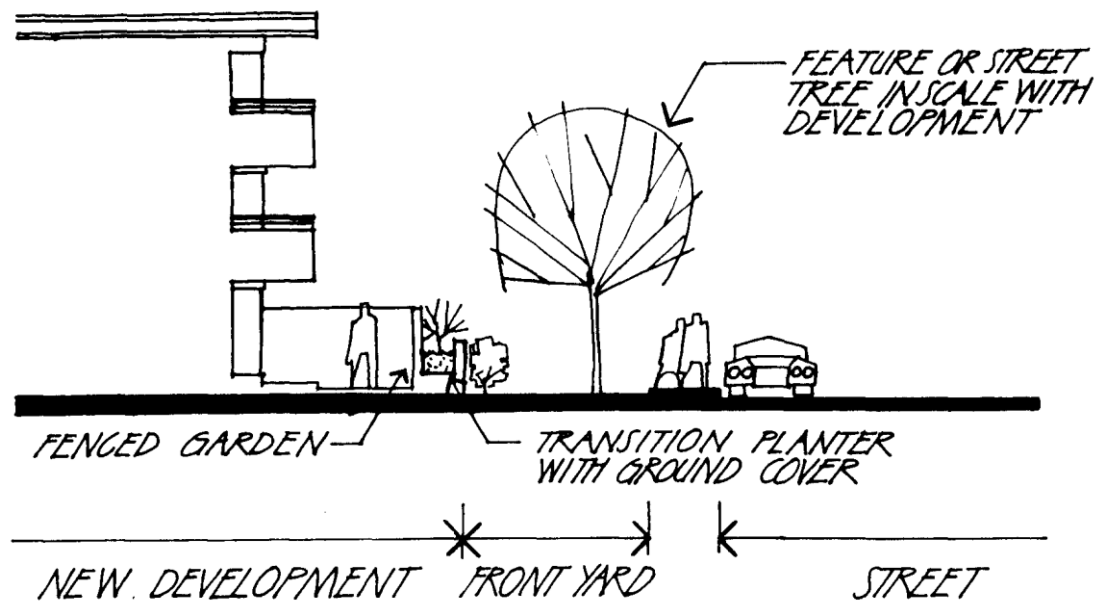
**Objective:**

New landscaping should compliment and enhance the predominant landscaping character of the neighbourhood. It should also help mitigate ALRT impacts and help integrate new development into the neighbourhood.

This can be achieved by:

- (a) Ensuring that new landscaping is compatible with the existing neighbourhood character.
- (b) Providing landscaped balconies, patios and roof decks.
- (c) Using landscape treatments adjacent to the ALRT guideway to visually screen new development and soften the impact of continuous building walls.
- (d) Layering landscaping materials to achieve an appropriate interface along the street (Figure 7).
- (e) Providing consistent boulevard trees in agreement with the City Engineer to visually tie the neighbourhood together.

**Figure 7. Suggested Street Edge Landscape Treatment**



9 Storm Water Storage

The following table, prepared by the City Engineer, rates the pervious character of various surfaces to guide applicants in the City’s administration of the storm water storage provision of the by-law.

<b>Pervious</b>	<b>Impervious</b>
- Grass	- Buildings
- Gardens	- Concrete
- Decorative Stone Driveways and Walkways (Gravel size or smaller)	- Black Top
- Turfstone Pavers for Driveways (use % of pervious area in pavers)	- Asphalt
- Overhangs such as Bay Windows with pervious ground beneath	- Wood
	- Wooden Decks with spaces between the slats to pervious ground beneath
	- Swimming Pools
	- Concrete/Brick Pavers
	- Gravel Driveways

## Submission Requirements

Applicants should refer to the information required for significant development permit applications contained in the Checklist in Brochure #3 - **How To... Development Permits for Major Applications**.