



# Increasing Housing Choices in Mississauga's Neighbourhoods

## City of Mississauga

# Executive Summary

As part of the City of Mississauga's decennial Official Plan update, the City is examining neighbourhood policies to expand the range of low-rise housing forms permitted in residential neighbourhoods to ensure they conform to current provincial regulations

Amendments to the Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement require that all municipalities in Ontario permit three dwelling units in detached, semi-detached and rowhouse forms.

This report was completed by Smart Density who was retained by the City of Mississauga to demonstrate what gentle intensification built forms could look like in Mississauga's Neighbourhoods and provide planning policy recommendations.

A Financial Feasibility Assessment completed by Parcel Economics provides insight into the financial feasibility of the four typologies in this report.

## Key Recommendations

- Include language that encourages the provision of housing that meets the needs of young adults, older adults and families to all residential areas in the Official Plans, including Neighbourhoods, rather than specific land use areas.
- Address land use designations to permit more than only detached dwellings as this will prevent the development of Garage Conversions and Plexes.
- Modify language in the Official Plan that encourages new development to fit or preserve the existing scale, massing, or character of an area.
- Remove parking minimums for secondary units to permit Accessory Residential Units.
- Remove parking minimums or implement parking minimums of no more than 0.5 parking spaces per units to permit multiplexes.
- Revise minimum setback requirements to permit multiplexes and accessory residential units throughout all residential zones.

# Methodology

The lots used for the hypothetical developments in this report were selected based on two criteria. The lots are common and typical sizes in Mississauga. Lot sizes on the more modest side of the spectrum were selected to ensure that the typologies are possible to implement on a wide range of lot sizes.

Three lots were selected for this exercise:

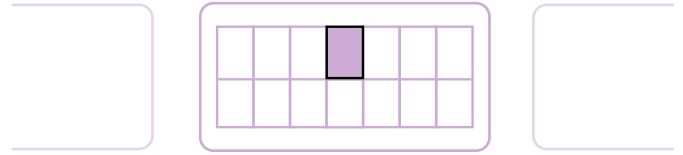
- Interior
- Corner
- Laneway

The footprint and size of the typologies were then determined to achieve functional units while maintaining privacy in the principal building and neighbouring properties and minimizing visual impact on the streetscape.

## Note Regarding Utilities and Mechanical Equipment

- The location of mechanical equipment is not included at this level of analysis, and precise designs will be site-specific. HVAC solutions such as ductless mini-split heat pumps are effective in minimizing both energy use and the spatial requirements for mechanical equipment.
- It is assumed that utilities can be connected from the principal dwelling for garden suites.

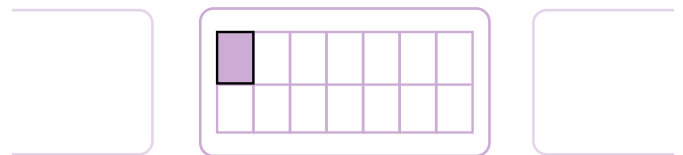
### Interior Lot



Frontage: 15 m | Depth: 36 m | Area: 540 m<sup>2</sup>

The selected interior lot was modelled after lots in older neighbourhoods. Since the lots in these neighbourhoods are relatively large, it is possible to achieve small-scale intensification even on interior lots, which are more constrained than corner lots.

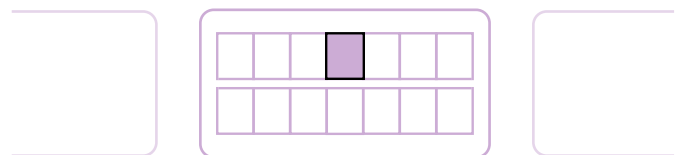
### Corner Lot



Frontage: 13.5 m | Depth: 36 m | Area: 493 m<sup>2</sup>

The selected corner lot was modelled after lots in newer neighbourhoods. Since the lots in these neighbourhoods are relatively small, a corner lot was used since an interior lot of this size might have been too constrained to achieve small-scale intensification.

### Laneway Lot



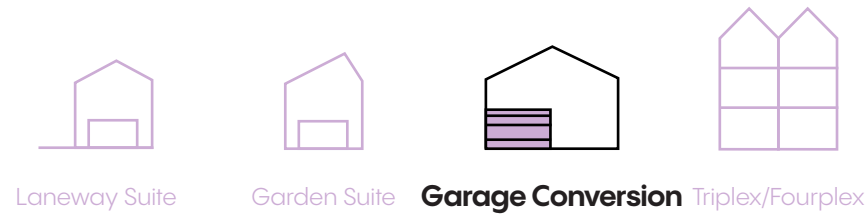
Frontage: 6.7 m | Depth: 30 m | Area: 201 m<sup>2</sup>

The selected laneway lot was modelled after a typical freehold townhouse with a laneway, which exist in newer neighbourhoods and provide access to lots that face streets that do not allow access to front garages.

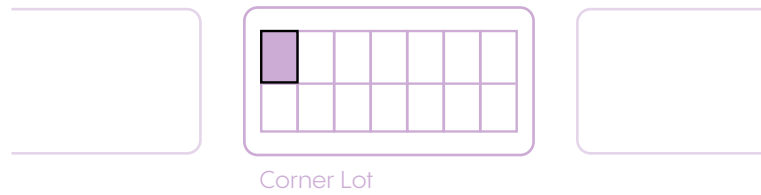


# Garage Conversion | Corner Lot

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

One 1-bedroom unit

## Parking

No additional parking required

The driveway of the main house will accommodate parking. The City may also wish to consider an on-street parking permit system to address any future parking demand

## Height

1 level

## Windows

Facing the front

In most cases, this is the only direction where large openings are possible

## Entrances

Side

Providing a side entrance lessens visual impact on the streetscape and reserves the front of the unit for large windows.

## Amenities

None

The design maximizes light in the living areas while considering the privacy of the residents of the converted garage and the existing home.

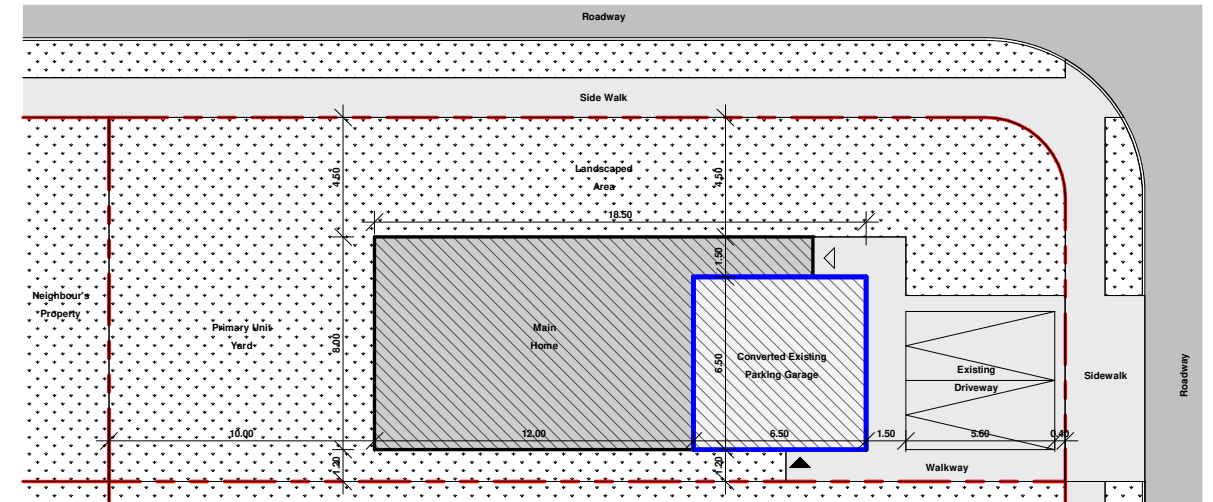


Image 1: Site Plan



Image 2: Rendering of a potential design

This rendering is for illustrative purposes only; it communicates the scale of the design and its relationship to the streetscape, but not specific details of the exterior design.



## Setbacks

There are no setbacks associated with a garage conversion. The setback of the existing building is maintained.

## Interior Layout

The living room and bedroom are oriented to the front because this is the only direction that can feature large openings. The kitchen, washroom, and washer/dryer are located at the back, in areas that receive less natural light. This typology has the potential to be accessible. It was designed to have AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) compliance potential as the unit features a bedroom and washroom on the main level. Separation walls between the garage and the existing unit will require treatment to achieve the minimum fire-resistance rating of the Ontario Building Code.

## Zoning By-Law Comments

The only zoning change needed to facilitate garage conversions is the removal of parking requirements.

## Tradeoffs

Converting the garage removes the opportunity to use it for parking but parking in the driveway is still possible.



Image 3: Street View



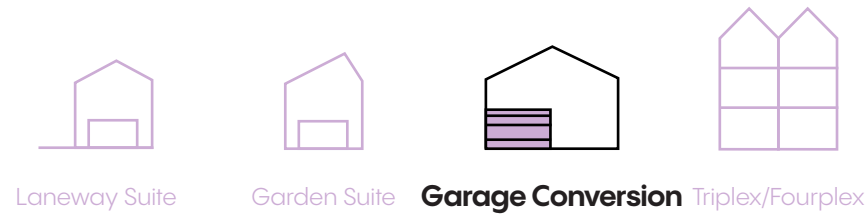
Image 4: Ground Floor Plan

1-Bedroom Unit - 36 m<sup>2</sup> - 420 ft<sup>2</sup>

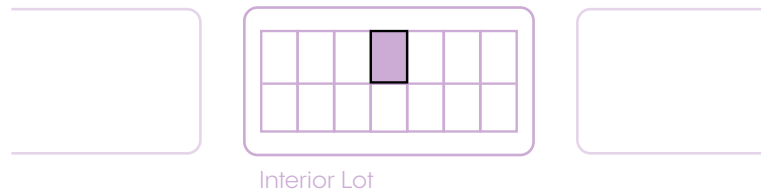


# Garage Conversion | Interior Lot

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

One 1-bedroom unit

## Parking

No additional parking required

The driveway of the main house will accommodate parking. The City may also wish to consider an on-street parking permit system to address any future parking demand

## Height

1 level

## Windows

Facing the front

In most cases, this is the only direction where large openings are possible

## Entrances

Side

Providing a side entrance lessens visual impact on the streetscape and reserves the front of the unit for large windows.

## Amenities

None

The design maximizes light in the living areas while considering the privacy of the residents of the converted garage and the existing home.

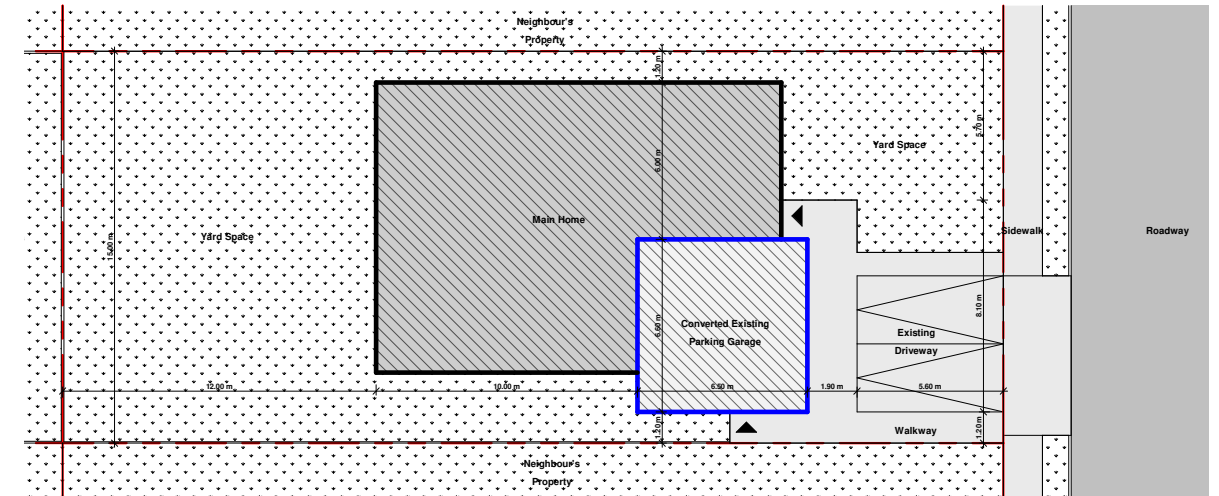


Image 1: Site Plan



Image 2: Rendering of a potential design



## Setbacks

There are no setbacks associated with a garage conversion. The setback of the existing building is maintained.

## Interior Layout

The living room and bedroom are oriented to the front because this is the only direction that can feature large openings. The kitchen, washroom, and washer/dryer are located at the back, in areas that receive less natural light. This typology was designed to have AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) compliance potential. As the unit features a bedroom and washroom on the main level it has the potential to be accessible. Separation walls between the garage and the existing unit will require treatment to achieve the minimum fire-resistance rating of the Ontario Building Code.

## Zoning By-Law Comments

The only zoning change needed to facilitate garage conversions is the removal of parking requirements.

## Tradeoffs

Converting the garage removes the opportunity to use it for parking but parking in the driveway is still possible.



Image 3: Street View



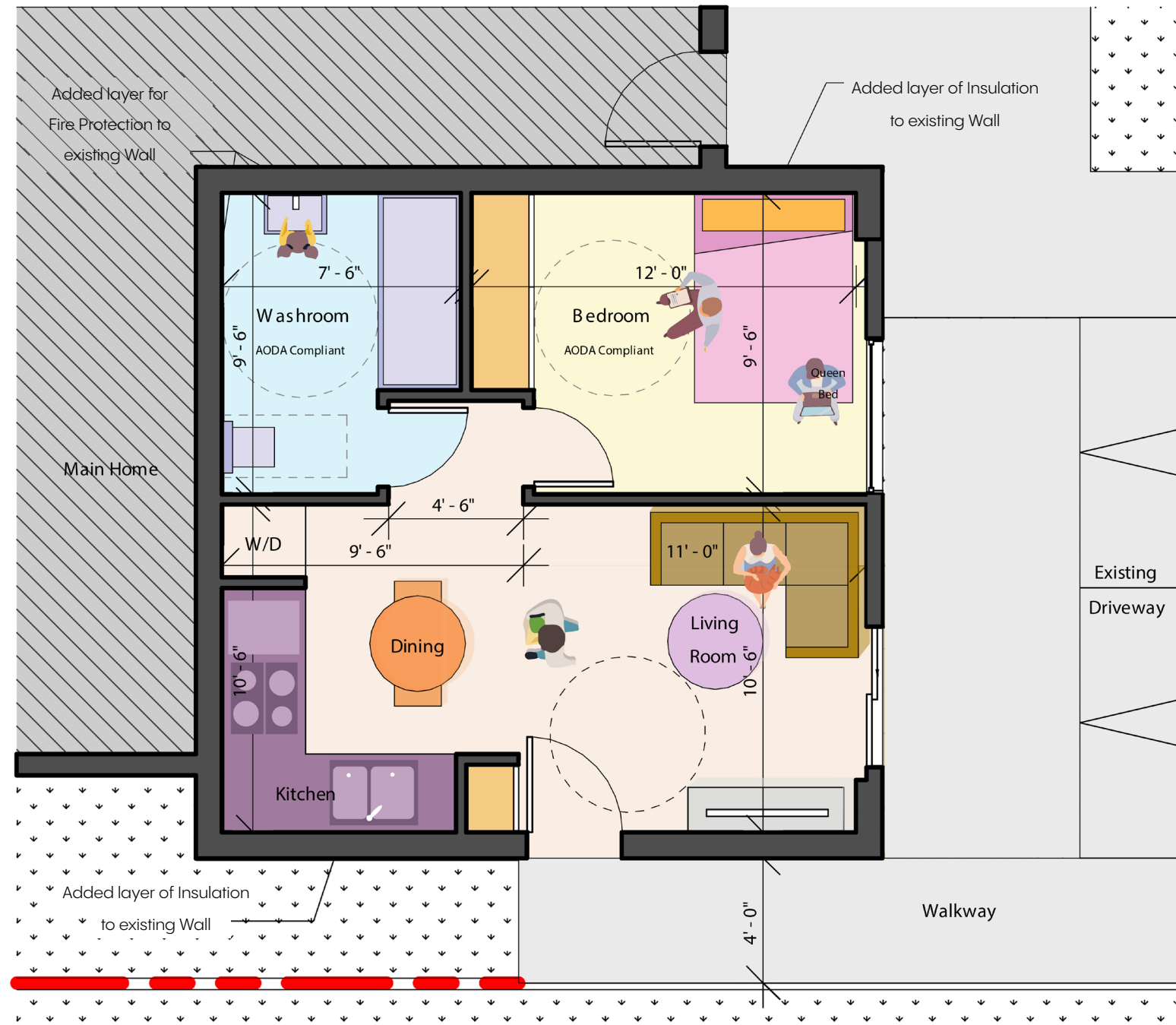


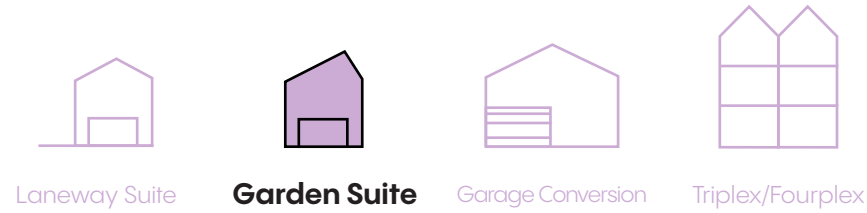
Image 4: Ground Floor Plan

1-Bedroom Unit - 42 m<sup>2</sup> - 455 ft<sup>2</sup>

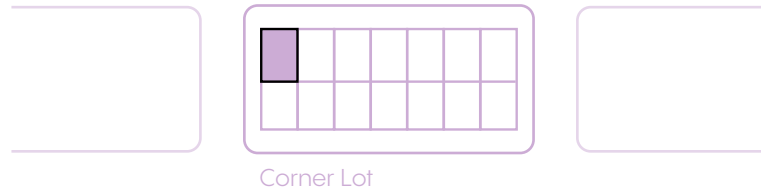


# Garden Suite | Corner Lot

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

One 1-bedroom plus den unit

## Parking

No additional parking required

Parking can be shared with the existing driveway of the main house.

## Height

1 level

A taller building would have too heavy of a visual impact. The height was limited to lessen visual impact on the streetscape.

## Windows

Facing the Street and Rear

These directions limit openings to the street and the private secondary backyard, enhancing the privacy of both buildings.

## Entrances

Side Street

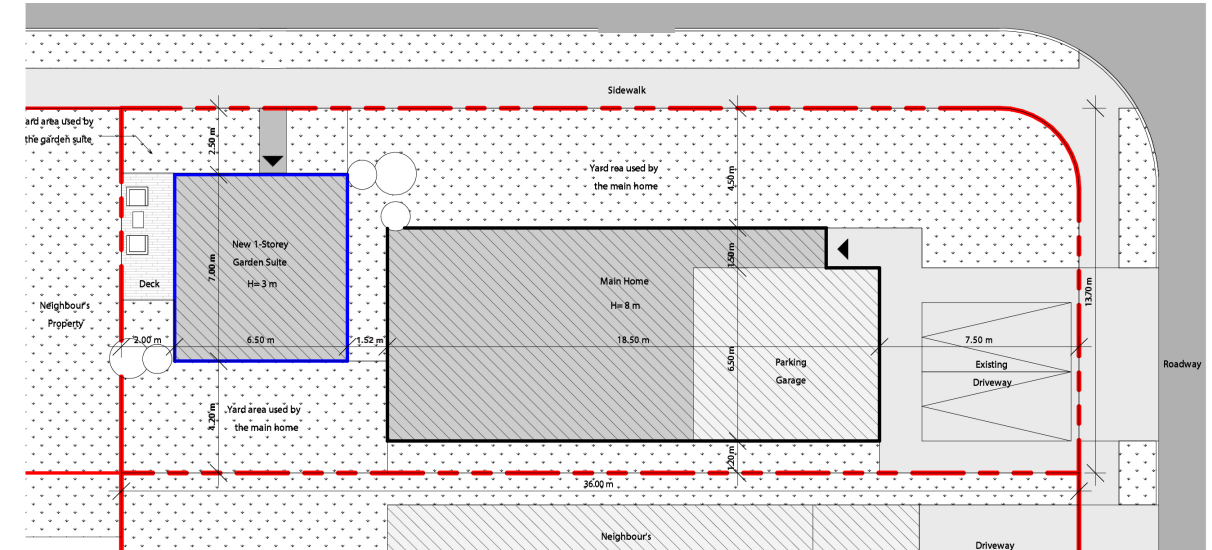
A side entry provides easy access to the suite without visual impact on the main street.

## Amenities

Backyard and deck

The private backyard and deck space is 2 m wide to ensure adequate separation from the main building. Landscaping is used to enhance privacy between the backyard of the main building.

The design provides a spacious 1-bedroom unit with marginal visual impact on the street and achieves good lighting without windows facing the main building.





## Setbacks

A 4.5 m front setback from the side street allows a large separation from the street, aligns with the main building, and provides room for landscaping and a small deck. The interior side yard separation is 4.2 m, which leaves space for a private backyard for the principal residence. However, it can be reduced as the principal residence also has a yard on the side street. A side setback of 2 m leaves space for landscaping. A portion of the garden suite has only a small 1.5 m separation from the existing building, which will remain without openings. However, the impact on the existing building is limited because only a portion of the rear building face is impacted, and the buildings can have openings in the same room to the side street.



Image 3: Street View

## Interior Layout

The living areas and bedroom are mainly oriented towards the side street and back of the property to reduce the privacy impact on the main building. The suite has the potential to be AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) compliant as the unit features a bedroom and washroom on the main level.

## Zoning By-Law Comments

Accessory buildings are permitted in zones R1 to R11, R15, R16, and RM1 to RM9. However, minimum setback requirements and the maximum accessory building size need to be revisited to permit this typology in any zone.

## Tradeoffs

The height and size of the unit were limited to minimize its visual impact, but this limits its size to only a small unit.



Image 4: Rear View

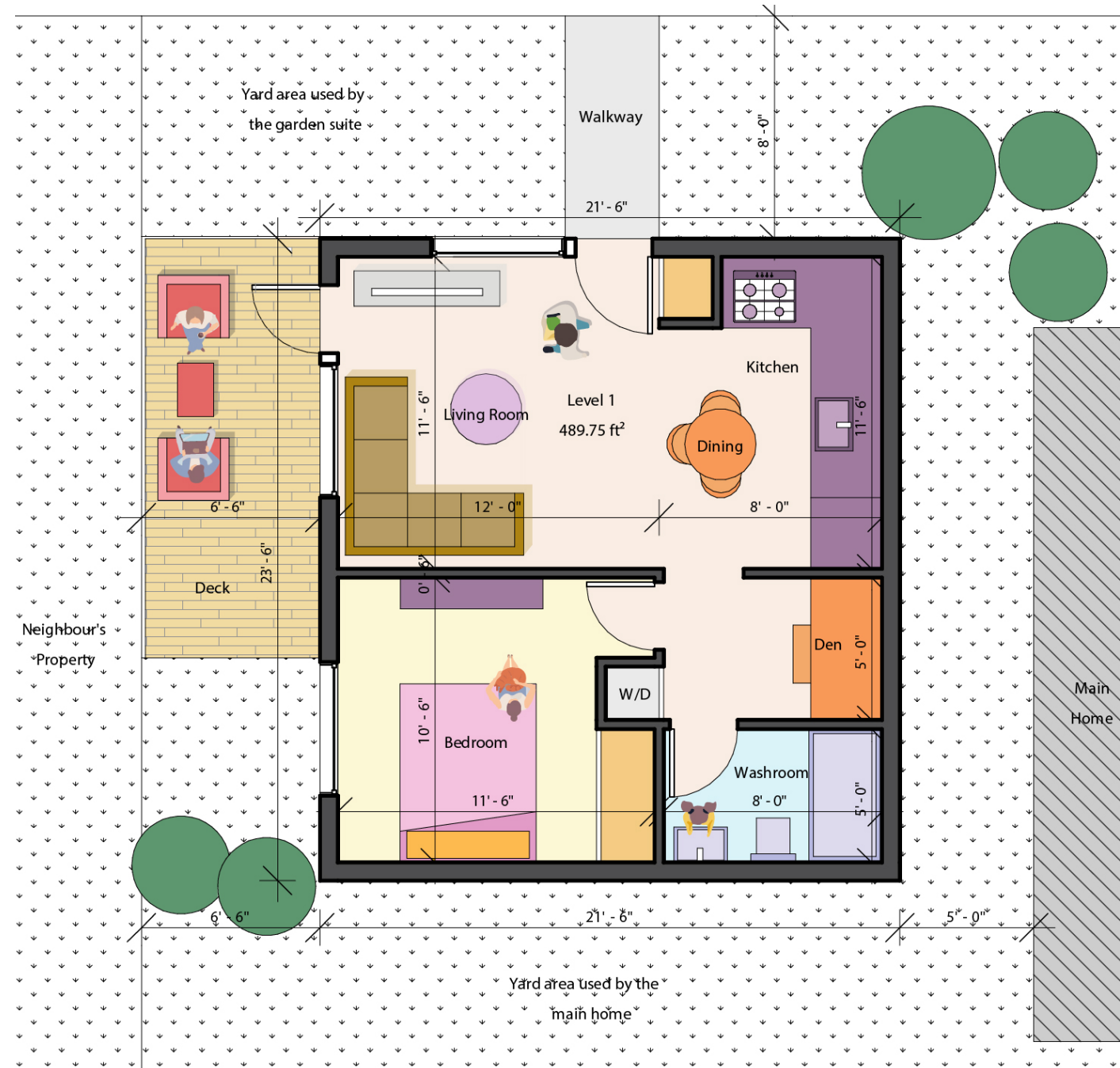


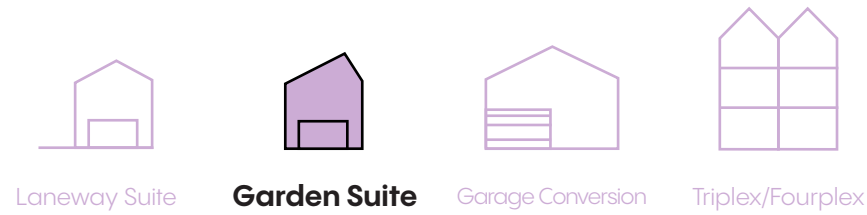
Image 5: Ground Floor Plan

1-Bedroom Unit - 41 m<sup>2</sup> - 441 ft<sup>2</sup>

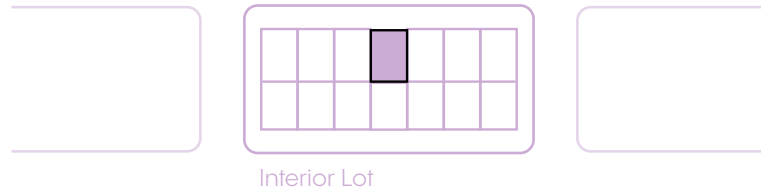


# Garden Suite | Interior Lot

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

One 2-bedroom unit

## Height

2 levels

This height is achievable without impacting the privacy of the main or neighbouring buildings while the location on an interior lot results in minimal visual impact on the street.

## Entrances

Access path to the side of the garage

This form of entry maximizes privacy and is easily achieved as the main buildings typically have space on their sides to accommodate a path to the rear.

## Parking

No additional parking required

Parking can be shared with the existing driveway of the main house.

## Windows

Facing the side and rear

Windows facing the main unit would impact privacy and are not necessary since other directions provide sufficient light.

## Amenities

Side yard and deck

The side yard features a small deck and landscaping that adds privacy by separating it from the yard of the main building.

The design fits this 2-storey, 2-bedroom typology into its context with minimal privacy impacts on the neighbours or visual impact on the street while maximizing the usable area of the unit.

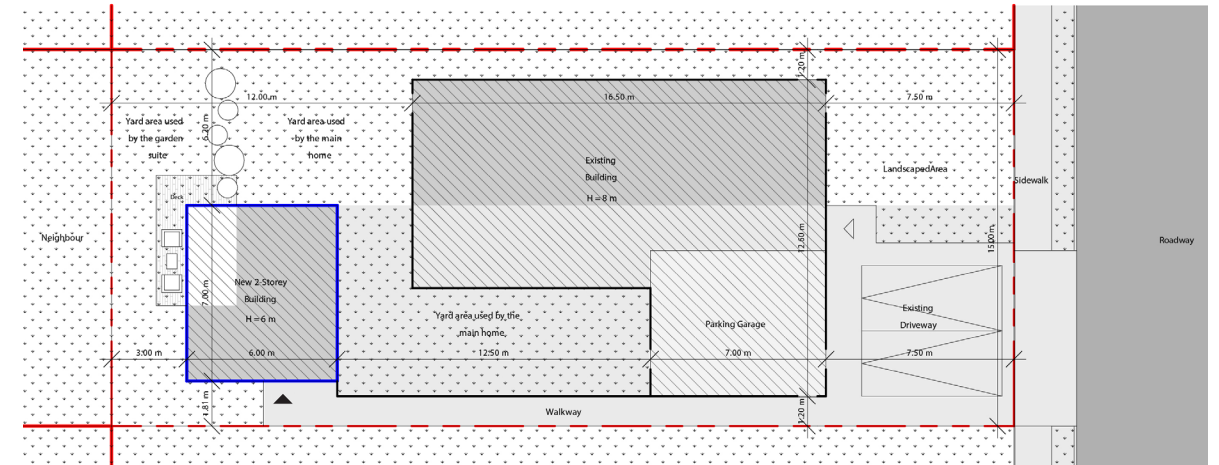


Image 1: Site Plan



Image 2: Rendering of a potential design



## Setbacks

The rear setback of 3 m maximizes the separation from the rear property line, allows for landscaping and a large amenity space, and minimizes overlook on adjacent properties. A side setback of 1.81 m meets the zoning by-law requirements and allows for small windows. On the opposite side, a setback of approximately 6 m leaves room for yards for both residences, but can be reduced since there are other yard areas. The height of 2-storeys requires a rear setback of 3 m to provide adequate separation from the existing building.

## Interior Layout

The living areas, open kitchen, and powder room are located on the ground floor. The two large bedrooms and washroom are located on the top floor.

## Zoning By-Law Comments:

Accessory buildings are permitted in zones R1 to R11, R15, R16, and RM1 to RM9. However, minimum setback requirements and the maximum accessory building size need to be revisited to permit this typology in all zones.

## Tradeoffs

The size of the suite was limited to provide large separation distances from the adjacent property lines and the existing house; while large separations have advantages, they limit the potential to maximize opportunities for housing.



Image 3: Rear View

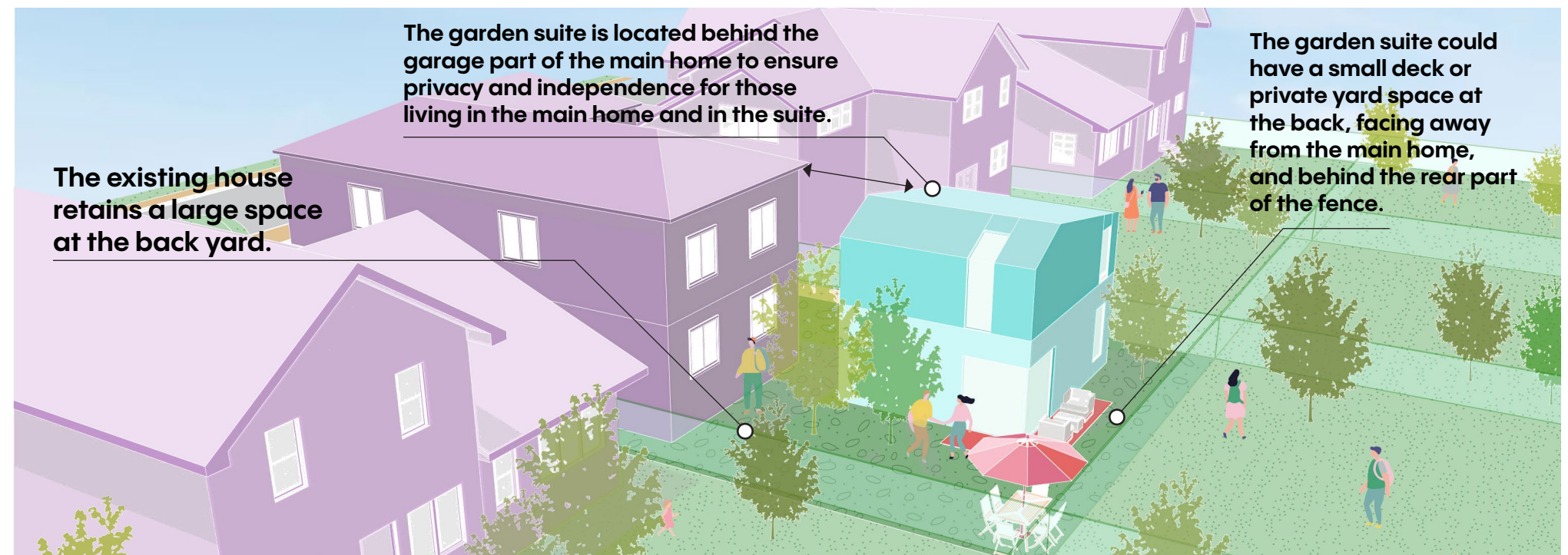


Image 4: Side View





Image 5: Ground Floor Plan

**2-Bedroom Unit - 75 m<sup>2</sup> - 802 ft<sup>2</sup>**

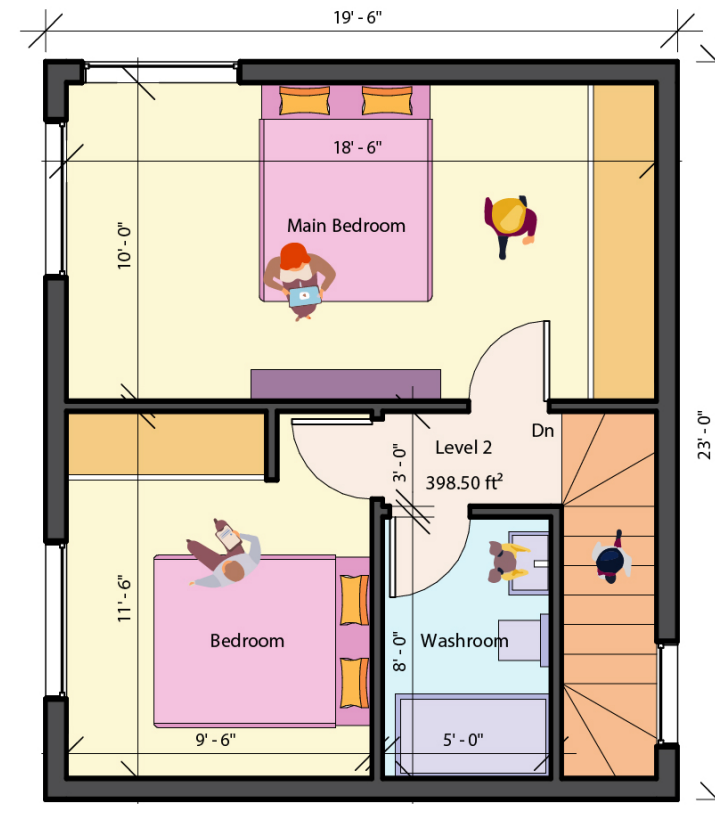
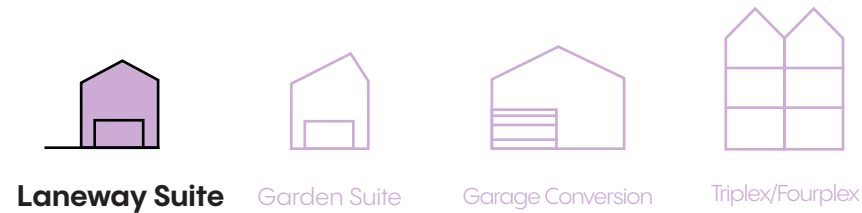


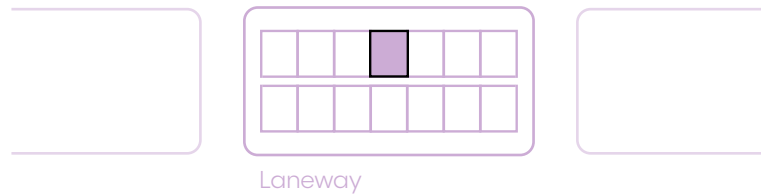
Image 6: Second Floor Plan

# Laneway Suite

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

One 1-bedroom unit

## Parking

2 spaces

## Height

2 levels

This height allows for two parking spaces while limiting privacy impact on the existing home.

## Windows

Facing laneway and rear yard

The living areas are mainly oriented towards the laneway to allow larger openings and limit overlook on the main building

## Entrances

Side

Providing a side entrance reserves the front of the unit for vehicular entrances and minimizes internal circulation.

## Amenities

Deck

The rear yard features a small deck and landscaping that adds privacy by separating it from the yard that is used by the main home.

This interior lot design optimizes the privacy between the new and existing buildings by orienting most openings toward the laneway. This approach succeeds in adding housing to the neighbourhood while retaining parking spaces.

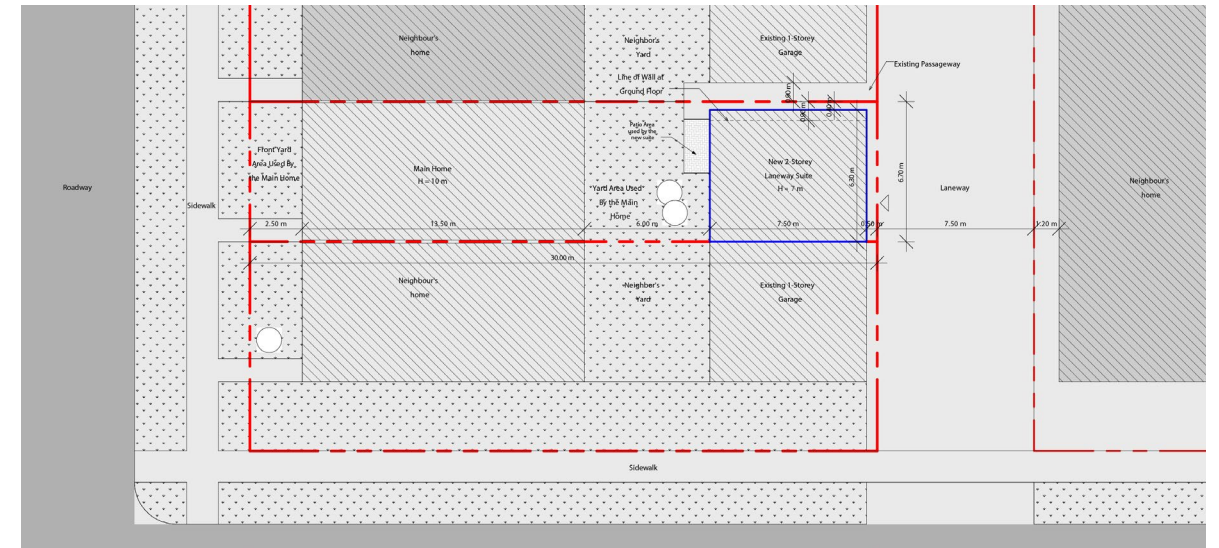


Image 1: Site Plan



Image 2: Rendering of a potential design



## Setbacks

A side setback of 0.9 m at the ground level allows the unit to be accessed using a side entrance.

## Interior Layout

The unit is located on the top floor, accessed by stairs located to the rear of the building, with car parking on the ground floor. The living area and open kitchen are oriented towards the laneway and the bedroom is oriented towards the rear.

## Zoning By-Law Comments

Accessory buildings are permitted in zones R1 to R11, R15, R16, and RM1 to RM9. However, minimum setback requirements and the maximum accessory building size must be revisited to permit this typology in any zone.

## Tradeoffs

Retaining the two parking spaces limits the potential to achieve a larger unit.

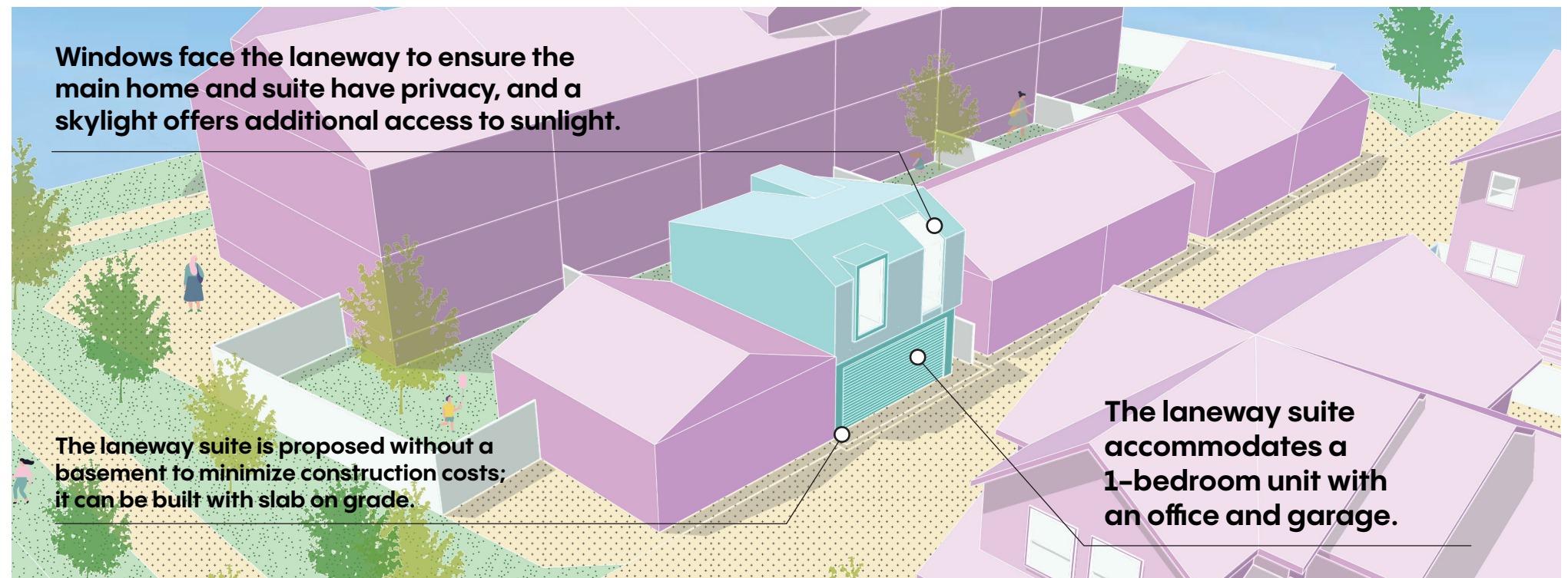


Image 3: Laneway View

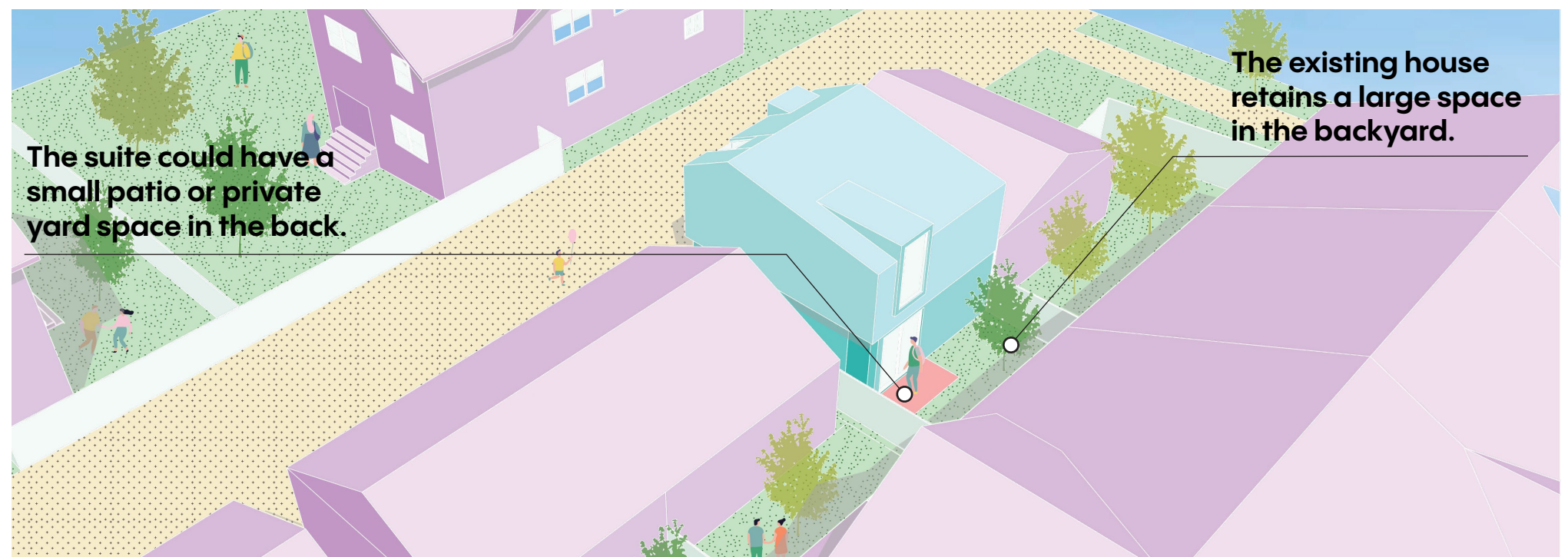


Image 4: Rear View

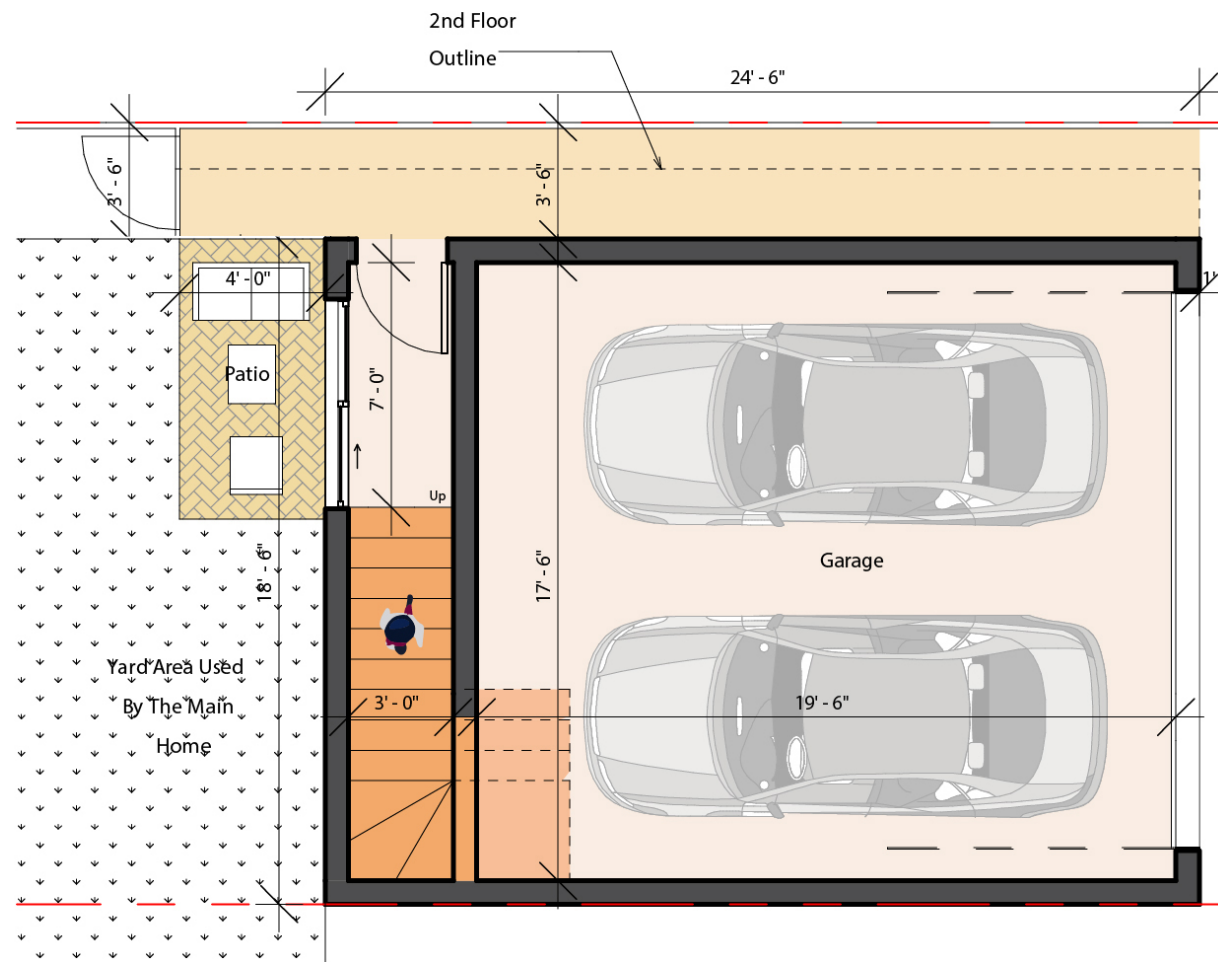


Image 5: Ground Floor Plan

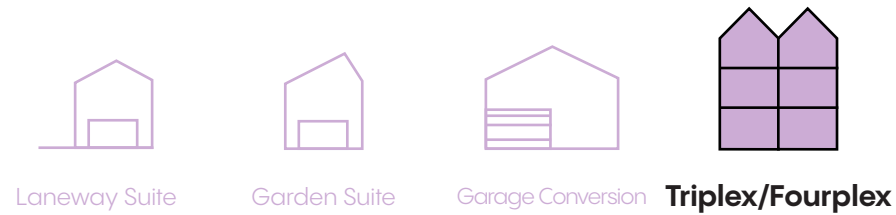
Image 6: Second Floor Plan

**1-Bedroom Unit - 44 m<sup>2</sup> - 468 ft<sup>2</sup>**

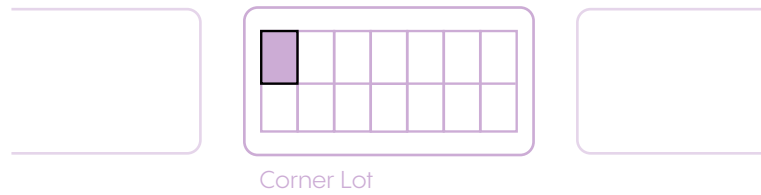


# Fourplex | Corner Lot

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

Four 3-bedroom units

## Parking

3-spaces

## Height

2 levels

This height is much lower than the 10.7 m maximum height permitted by the zoning by-law.

## Windows

All directions

Each unit has windows facing three directions.

## Entrances

Side street and interior side

The main entrance is from the street. The ground level units are also accessed directly from the street to optimize yard space and animate the street.

## Amenities

Balconies | Private Yards

The ground level units have private yards with decks facing the street, while the upper level units have balconies in the same direction. A shared amenity area is also provided in the rear yard.

The design takes advantage of the side street frontage to avoid impacts on neighbouring properties and integrates private amenity areas with the streetscape to foster a positive pedestrian experience while providing six units on a single property that would traditionally house only one family.

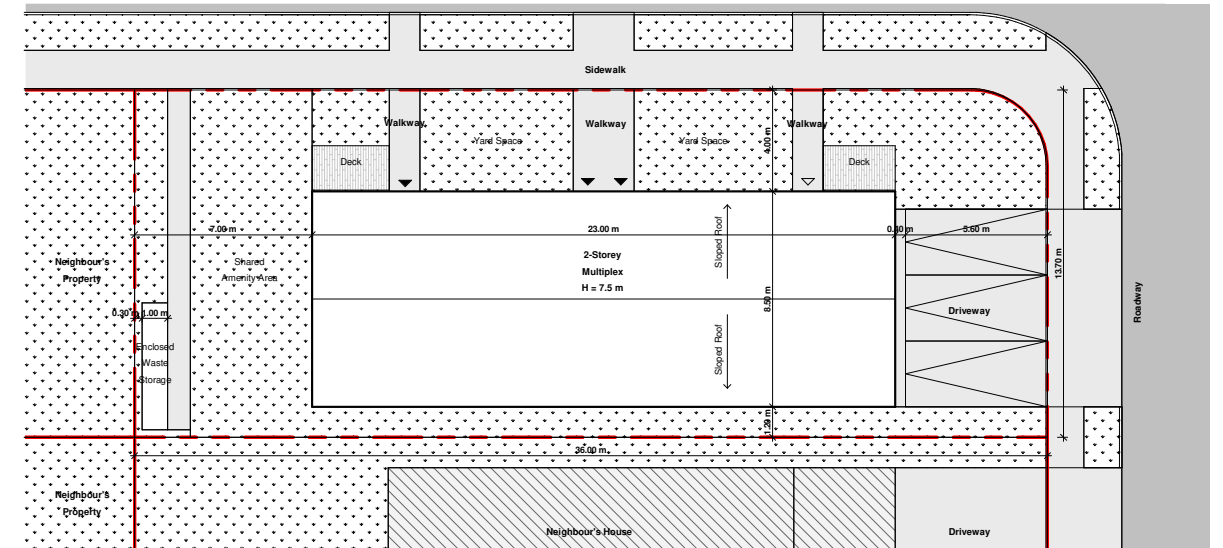


Image 1: Site Plan



Image 2: Rendering of a potential design



## Setbacks

The side street setback is 4 m, enough for landscaping while allowing efficient interior layouts; the balconies are cantilevered and are setback 2.8 m from the side street. The rear setback is 7 m to provide a large separation. The rear side setback is 1.2 m to allow small windows. The front setback is defined by the dimensions of the parking pad.

## Interior Layout

In the ground level units, living rooms and main bedrooms are oriented towards the side street and private landscaped areas while the second bedroom, kitchen, and washroom are oriented towards the interior side. The rear upper units have bedrooms oriented to the rear yard with living space and kitchen oriented to the side street. The front upper units have bedrooms oriented to the side street with the living space and kitchen oriented to the front.

## Zoning By-Law Comments

All zones must be revisited to permit multiplexes. The side street setback needs to be reduced to 4.0 m for the main wall and 2.8 m for balconies. This typology is otherwise compatible with the required setbacks in zones R3-R7, R9-R11, R15 and RM1-7 zones.

## Tradeoffs

Limiting the building to 2 storeys reduces the potential number of units from 6 to 4.

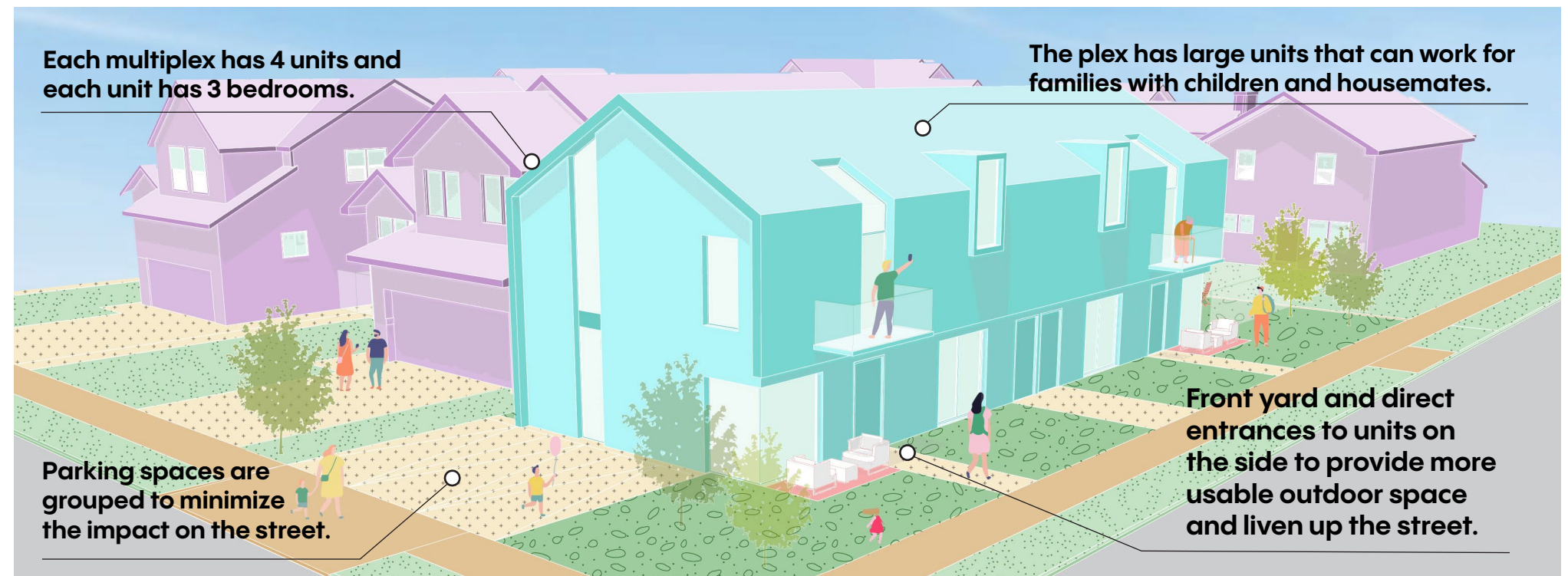


Image 3: Street View



Image 4: Rear View





Image 5: Ground Floor Plan

**3-Bedroom Units - 92 m<sup>2</sup> - 985 ft<sup>2</sup>**

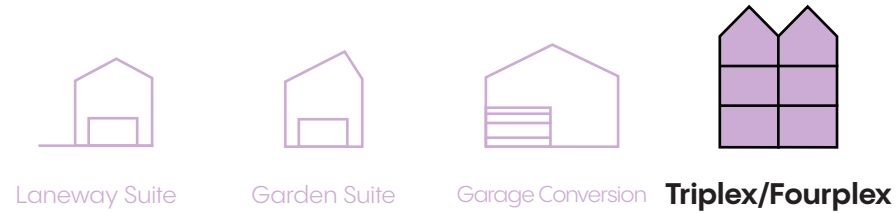


Image 6: Second Floor Plan

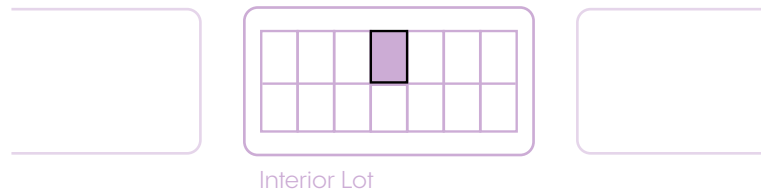
**3-Bedroom Units - 98 m<sup>2</sup> - 1,052 ft<sup>2</sup>**

# Triplex | Interior Lot

## Housing Typologies:



## Lot Position:



## Units

Three 3-bedroom units

## Height

2 levels

This height aligns with what it is typical in Mississauga's neighbourhoods and is tall enough to achieve 3 large units. The zoning by-law does permit a greater height.

## Entrances

Front and Side

Each unit has an access path from the street leading to their private entrances. The rear units are accessed from opposite sides of the building.

## Parking

2-spaces

## Windows

All directions

In the front unit, all three bedrooms face the front yard and the street. In the rear units, the main bedrooms face the backyard while the other two bedrooms open to the side.

## Amenities

Yard and deck

The front yard is provided for the front unit and the back yard is divided by landscaping for the two rear units. Each has a private deck.

The design adds an uncommon but in-demand unit type to the housing stock without compromising the feel of neighbourhoods, and provides three family-sized units on a single property that would traditionally have just one.

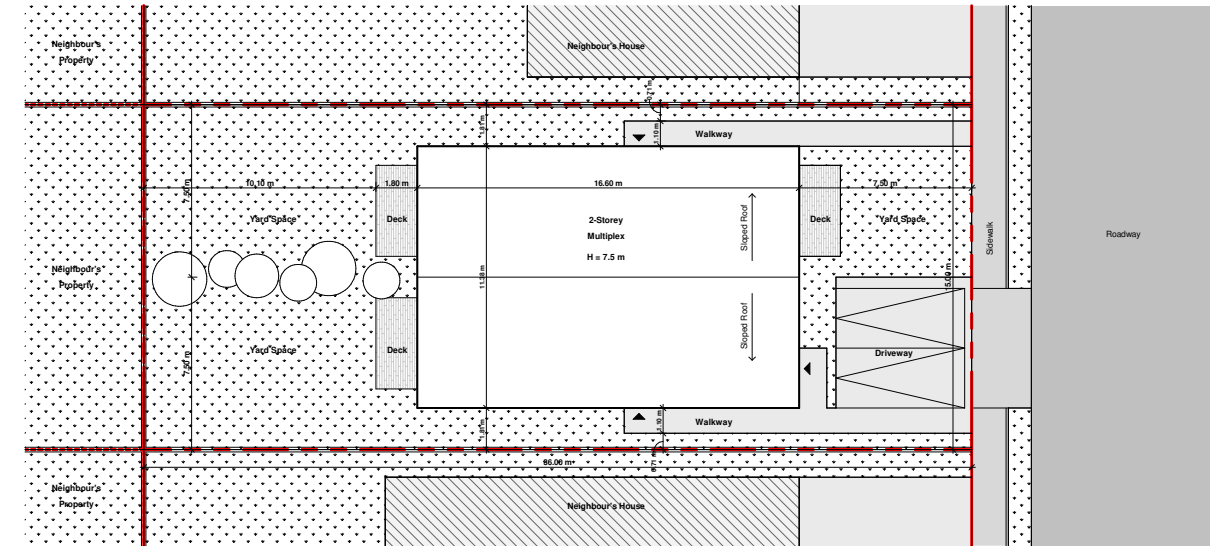


Image 1: Site Plan



Image 2: Rendering of a potential design



## Setbacks

The front setback is 7.5 m per the zoning by-law. The rear setback is approximately 10 m, more than required, since a deeper building will have too much floor area. The side setback of 1.81 m allows for pedestrian access and landscaping. The side setback can be increased if needed by reducing the size of the rear yard, but a narrower building will make the interior layout harder to resolve.

## Interior Layout

All three units are generally the same layout with the kitchen, living areas, and powder room on the ground level and bedrooms on the upper level. The upper levels have one shared washroom and one private washroom attached to the main bedroom.

## Zoning By-Law Comments:

Currently only the RM7 zone permits triplexes. This typology is compatible with the required setbacks in zones R3-R7, R9-11, R16, RM1-RM3, RM5, and RM6 only.

## Tradeoffs

While the zoning by-law permits a greater height, the building is limited to two stories to be similar to the height of the existing buildings.

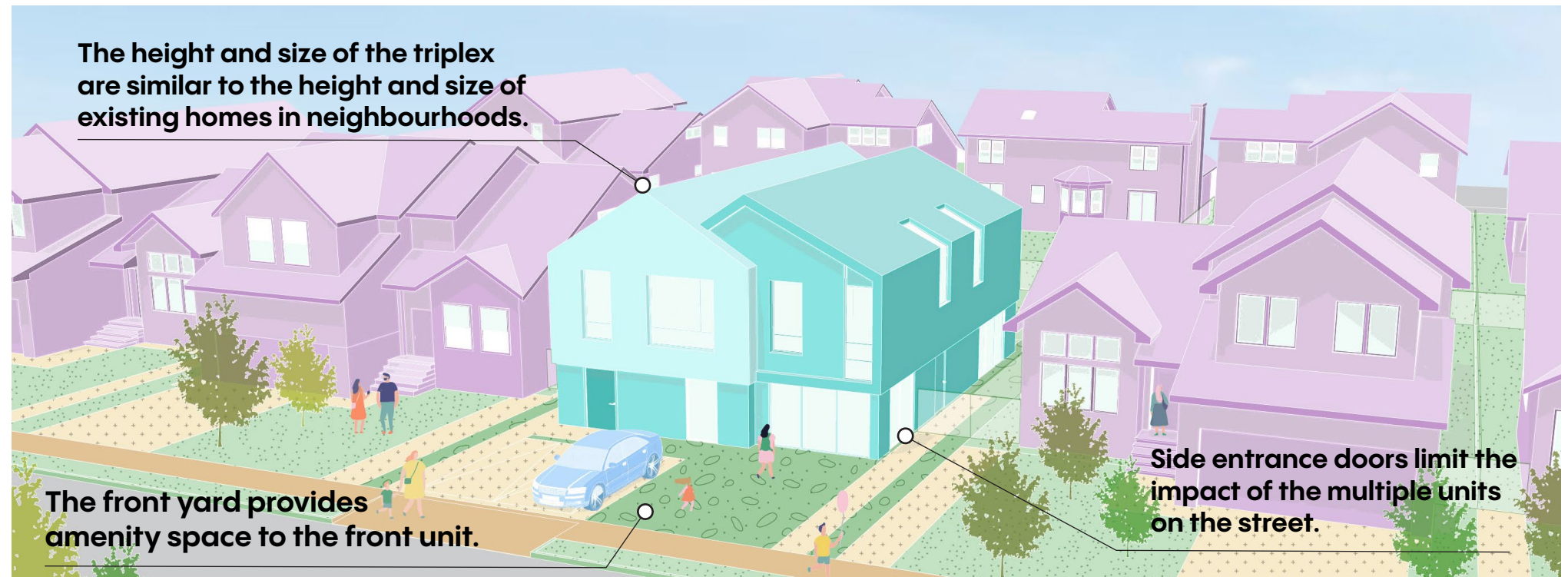


Image 3: Street View

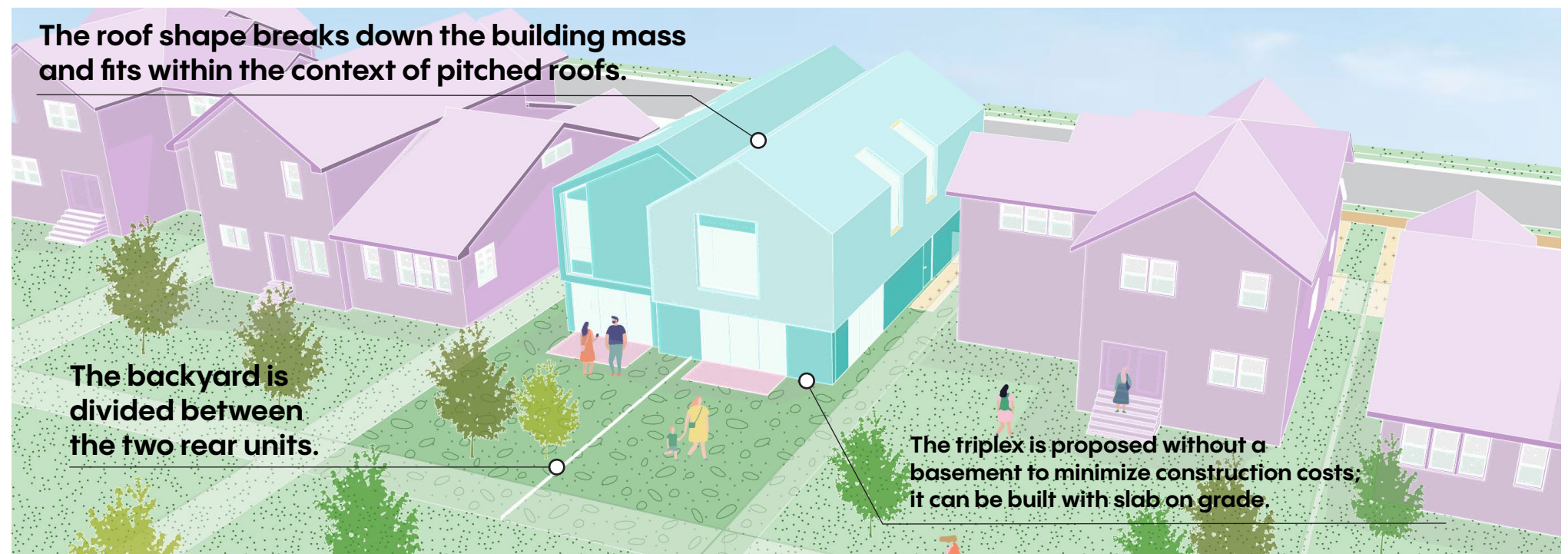


Image 4: Rear View



Image 5: Ground Floor Plan

**Unit 1: 3-Bedroom Unit - 124 m<sup>2</sup> - 1,330 ft<sup>2</sup>**  
**Unit 2 and 3: 3- Bedroom Unit - 127 m<sup>2</sup> - 1,368 ft<sup>2</sup>**



Image 6: Second Floor Plan



# Recommended Changes to the Official Plan

## Chapter 7 – Complete Communities

### 7.2 Housing

- Language that encourages the provision of housing that meets the needs of young adults, older adults and families should be applied to all residential areas, including Neighbourhoods, rather than specific land use areas.

## Chapter 9 – Build a Desirable Urban Form

### 9.1 Intro

- Language about respecting existing or planned identity and character may need to be modified (ie. 9.1.3, 9.1.10a).

### 9.2.2 Non-Intensification Areas

- Phrasing of new development in Neighbourhoods respecting existing lotting patterns, continuity of setbacks, scale, and character as well as minimizing overshadowing and overlook on adjacent neighbourhoods may need to be modified (9.2.2.3).

### 9.5 Site Development and Buildings

- Phrasing of new development being compatible with the existing character and having regard for existing yards, building orientations, architecture, and overlook may inhibit the uptake of the typologies (ie. 9.5.1.1, 9.5.1.2, 9.5.2.1).

## Chapter 11 – General Land Use

### 11.2.5 Residential

- Residential Low Density I, Residential Low Density II, and Residential Medium Density designations must be modified to include language that permits ARUs, garage conversions, and multiplexes.

## Chapter 16 – Neighbourhoods

### 16.1.2 Residential & 16.2-16.24 (Urban Design and Land Use only)

- Land use designations that permit only detached dwellings will prevent the development of Garage Conversions and Plexes.
- Land use designations that do not permit triplexes will prevent the development of Plexes (16.2.3.2).
- Emphasis on generous rear setbacks may prevent the construction of Garden Suites and Laneway Suites (ie. 16.5.1.4, 16.18.1.1).
- Language that encourages new development to fit or preserve the existing scale, massing, or character of an area may need to be modified (ie. 16.5.1.4, 16.18.1.1, 16.24.1.3)
- Language that emphasizes minimizing overshadowing and overlook may need to be modified (ie. 16.5.1.4, 16.18.1.1)
- Remove 'notwithstanding clauses' to further support residential designation change.

## Chapter 19 – Implementation

### 19.4 Development Applications

- Emphasis on the consistent application of planning and urban design principles related to existing land uses and built form may be prohibitive to the uptake of ARUs (19.4.3a).

# Recommended Changes to the Zoning By-law

## Minimum Setbacks

- Minimum front, side, and rear setback requirements should be revisited to permit multiplexes and accessory residential units throughout all residential zones.
- The Plex A is the only typology that can currently be built in any zone while meeting the setback requirements. Plexes A meet the requirements of R3-R7, R8-11, R16, RM1-RM3, RM5, and RM6. The Plex B does not meet exterior side yard requirements, it is recommended that the minimum exterior side yard on corner lots be revisited.
- The Plex B, ARU typologies, garden suites and laneway suite, do not meet the setback requirement in any zone.
- It is recommended that separate minimum setback requirements for ARUs be added to the Zoning By-law, using the dimensions demonstrated in the designs.

## Maximum Height

- All of the typologies meet the maximum height requirements across all residential zones.
- For clarity, it is recommended that the language in the Zoning By-law include maximum ARU heights explicitly.

## Minimum Parking Spaces

- While the laneway suite design includes two parking spaces, it is recommended to remove parking requirements. This would provide maximum flexibility through the potential to build just one storey or two storeys with more residential space.
- Removing parking minimums for secondary units is recommended as this is necessary to allow ARUs.
- Plexes A and B have 3 and 4 units respectively and therefore cannot meet the existing parking minimums. The typologies currently provide parking at a rate of .66 and .75 per unit.
- To allow multiplexes, it is recommended to either remove parking minimums or implement parking minimums of no more than 0.5 parking spaces per unit.
- Garage conversions cannot have any parking spaces after the conversion; parking minimums are the only requirements affecting this typology. Therefore, removing parking minimums for secondary units is recommended.



## Conclusion

The 4 gentle intensification typologies demonstrated in this report seamlessly integrate into Mississauga's existing neighbourhoods.

Gentle intensification-built forms such as additional accessory residential units, more units in the same building envelope, and the same type of units but at higher densities can increase the supply of ground-related housing in the City of Mississauga. It can also utilize existing municipal services, create more affordable units, and expand the housing options range in neighbourhoods.

While gentle intensification built forms are not expected to account for a large portion of the City's growth, there is a need for more housing options between single-family houses and one or two-bedroom condominium apartments that will suit different demographics. More ground-related units and density in neighbourhoods can create accessible units for seniors and people with mobility issues.

Creating more housing choices in neighbourhoods through infill is a growing movement across North America. Provincial policies are changing to become more permissive of neighbourhood infill.

Bill 108, More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 requires that municipal Official Plans contain policies allowing up to two additional residential units in conjunction with a single detached, semi-detached or row house primary dwelling.

The Provincial Policy Statement also encourages planning authorities to permit and facilitate a range and mix of housing options.

On November 28, 2022, Bill 23, the *More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022* received royal assent. Bill 23 changed land use regulations that guide how municipalities can implement gentle density. These changes generally align with the objectives of the Increasing Housing Choices in Neighbourhoods study and involve:

- Permitting 3 residential units per residential lot.
- Exemption from Development Charges, Parkland contribution or Cash-in lieu and the site plan control process for the second and third residential units.
- No more than 1.0 parking spaces per unit for the three residential units must be required per lot.
- No minimum floor space area may be required for accessory residential units.

Aligning the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law to Provincial requirements to permit and facilitate gentle intensification in neighbourhoods will achieve more diverse housing choices in the City's neighbourhoods.

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DENSITY