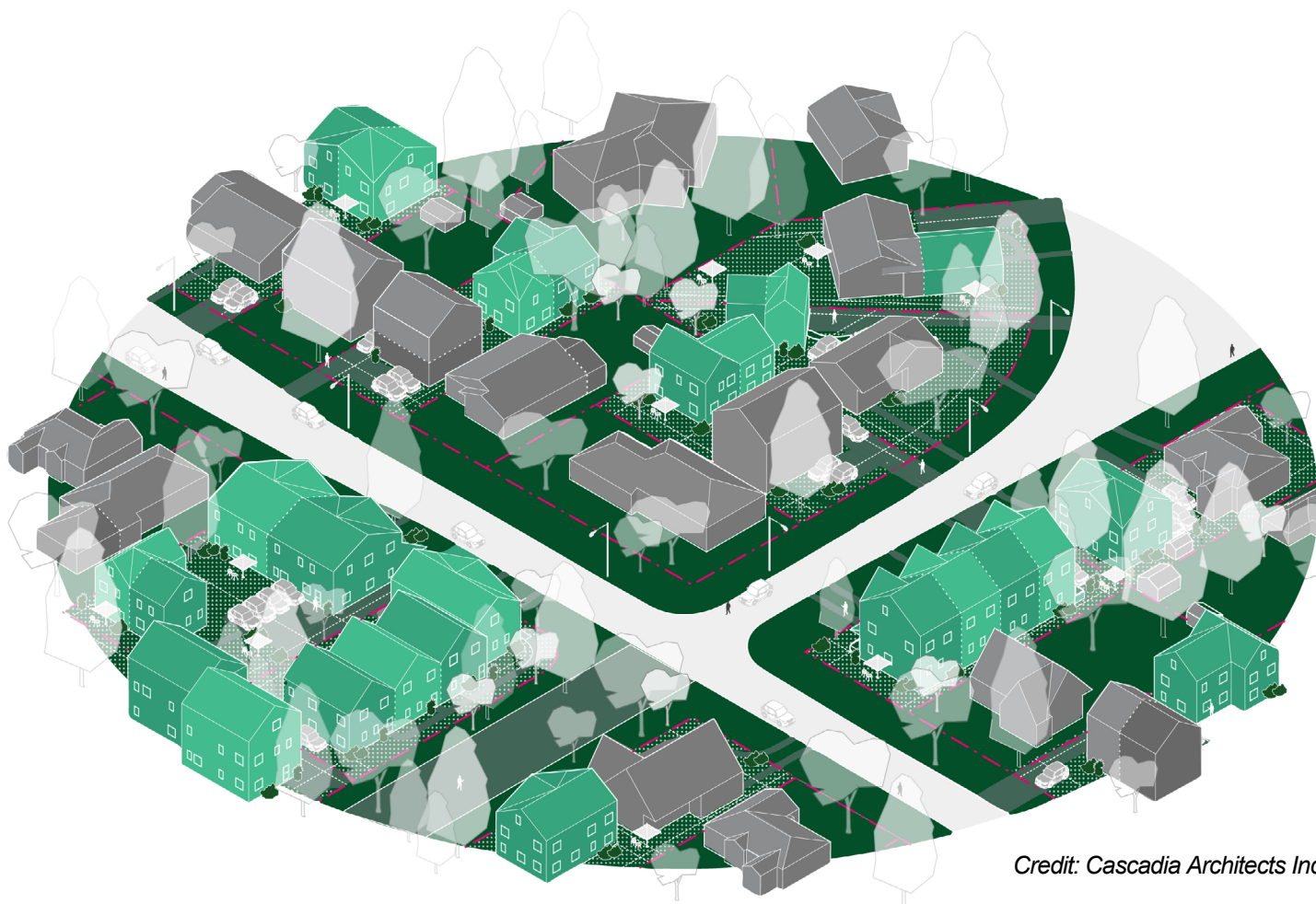


Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) APPLICATION GUIDE



Credit: Cascadia Architects Inc

Released: June 2024

Updated:

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OVERVIEW

The purpose of this document is to guide users through the process of designing and building Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) in the District of Saanich, where the Zoning Bylaw permits this form of development. The guide provides an overview of what SSMUH is, how to determine the eligibility and permissions, and what permits are required. Illustrated examples of the zoning bylaw regulations for SSMUH are also presented.

The information and illustrations provided in this document do not replace Saanich bylaws and polices. It is for reference only, and The District of Saanich disclaims any liability from its use.

What is Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH)?

Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) is a type of infill housing that allows for multiple units in a variety of housing forms in Neighbourhood areas.

Since June 30, 2024, the [Saanich Zoning Bylaw](#) includes “small-scale multi-unit housing” as a permitted use in zones that were previously restricted to single family dwelling or two family dwellings.

If your property is in a zone where SSMUH is a permitted use, you *may* be allowed a total of 3, 4, or 6 dwelling units depending on lot size and location. Additional eligibility criteria are outlined in Section 5.37 of the Zoning Bylaw.

The regulations for SSMUH are outlined in Schedule G of the Zoning Bylaw. In order to build to Schedule G regulations, the lot must contain at least one “Houseplex”.

The dwelling units can be distributed in a variety of ways between up to two buildings. Permitted housing forms include single family homes, houseplexes, and secondary suites.

What is Schedule G?

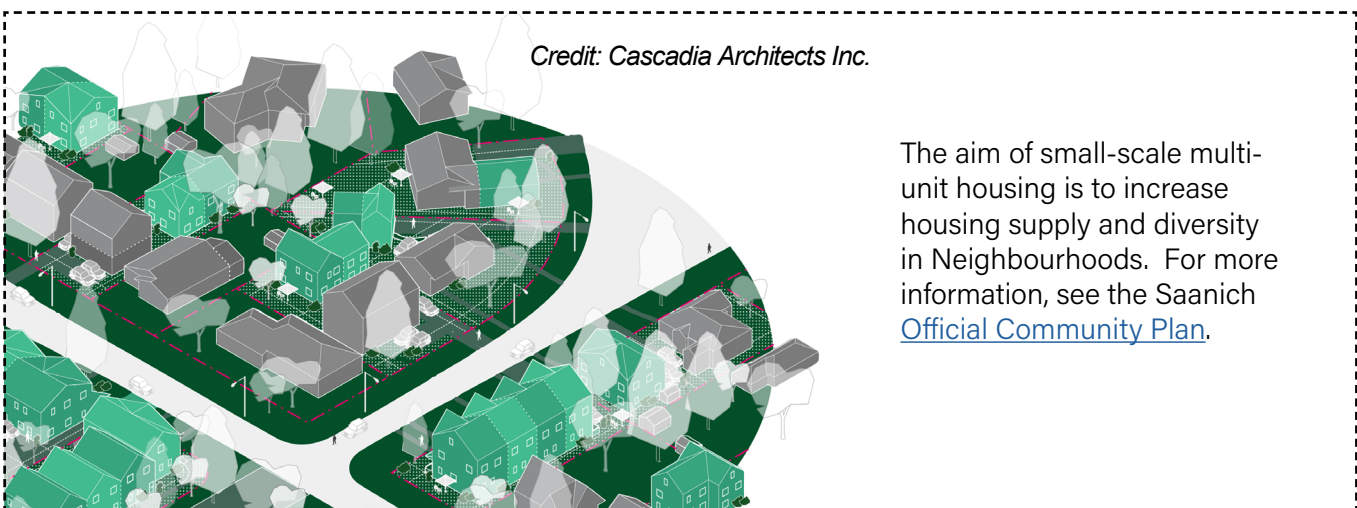
Schedule G of the Zoning Bylaw contains the regulations for small-scale multi-unit housing. There are 4 sets of regulations, depending on the lot size and location.

What is a Houseplex?

- A houseplex is a residential building containing two or more self-contained primary dwelling units.
- A duplex, a triplex and a fourplex are all examples of a houseplex.
- Rowhouses, or townhouses, could also be a houseplex.
- Houseplexes can have one secondary suite per primary unit.
- A single family dwelling with a secondary suite is not a houseplex. To qualify as a houseplex, both units would have to be primary units.
- For more information see the Houseplex definition in the Zoning Bylaw.

What is an SSMUH Transit Proximity Area Lot?

- Lots within 400 metres of an SSMUH Bus Stop are considered to be within the SSMUH Transit Proximity Area (for more details, see Zoning Bylaw Section 2: Definitions).
- These lots are eligible for 6 units.
- See page 8 of this guide to determine if your lot is in the SSMUH Transit Proximity Area.



The aim of small-scale multi-unit housing is to increase housing supply and diversity in Neighbourhoods. For more information, see the [Saanich Official Community Plan](#).

What is my property eligible for?

IMPORTANT!

SSMUH is regulated in the [Zoning Bylaw](#). Review and familiarize yourself with:

- Section 5.37 – Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing
- Schedule G – Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing

Click Here!
 Refer to the Zoning Bylaw as you go through the steps.

Use the online tool, SaanichMap, to identify if your property fulfills the eligibility criteria outlined in the Zoning Bylaw, and which part of Schedule G applies.

1. Find SSMUH information on SaanichMap

- » Navigate to the [SaanichMap](#) web page. Here you will find a general How To Guide, Frequently Asked Questions, and help videos, if needed. When ready to explore, click the “Launch SaanichMap” icon to jump in.
- » Click on “Layers” at the bottom left to open the Layers panel.
- » At the top of the Layers panel, click the “Themed Layers” drop down menu and choose “Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH)”. *This opens up the layers you will need to identify SSMUH eligibility, Schedule G application, and parking requirements.*
- » Click the icon next to “Layers” and choose “Show legend”, to see what each symbol displayed in the map represents. If you zoom in on the map, you will also see each of these layers labeled in the corresponding colour.

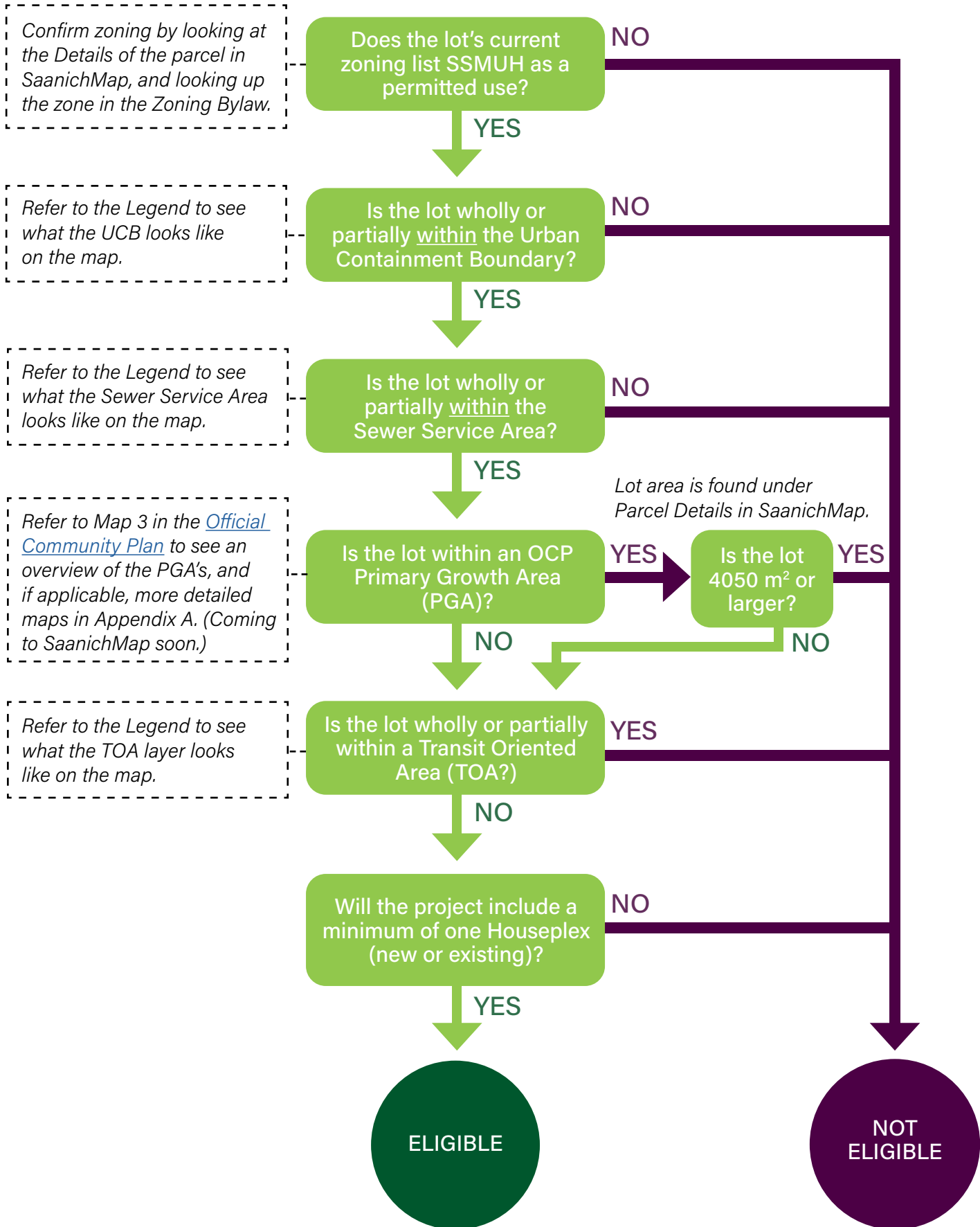
2. How to identify if a lot is eligible for SSMUH

- » To find your property, search for the address in the bar on the top right of the map. The search results will now show up in the left panel.
- » In the Search Results, click on Parcel and then click on the address again to display details about the parcel in the side bar. The map also zooms to the parcel.
- » Note the Zoning of your parcel, as this is the first step in determining SSMUH eligibility.
- » Note the Lot Area (sq m) of your parcel, as this will determine what part of Schedule G applies if the property is eligible.
- » **With SaanichMap open, and the SSMUH Theme turned on, refer to the flow chart on page 4 to walk through the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 5.37 of the Zoning Bylaw.**

TIP!

If it is difficult to distinguish between several SSMUH layers intersecting a parcel, you can right click in an area of the parcel where the layers overlap and select “what’s here?”. This will display a list of all the layers that are currently turned on and that intersect that point on the map.

SSMUH Eligibility Flow Chart



3. How many units are allowed on my property?

The maximum number of units allowed on a lot depends on the lot size and if it is located in an SSMUH Transit Proximity Area. Schedule G regulations vary depending on if the lot qualifies as:

- Small Lot (279 m² or less) - 3 units
- Regular Lot (280 m² to 1,215 m²) - 4 units
- Large Lot (1,216 m² or larger) - 4 units
- SSMUH Transit Proximity Area Lot (280 m² or larger) - 6 units

To confirm which part of Schedule G applies:

- » Confirm lot size (area) by opening up the Parcel information in SaanichMap (see step 2 on page 3), and scrolling through the Details until you find the Lot Area (sq m).
- » Identify if your lot falls within a SSMUH Transit Proximity Area as shown in the SSMUH Theme. If the lot is wholly or partially within this area, it is considered a SSMUH Transit Proximity Area Lot.

4. Parking requirements

Parking requirements for SSMUH are found in Table 7.1A in the Zoning Bylaw. Refer to the following layers, found within the SSMUH Theme, to determine which part of Table 7.1A applies to your lot:

- SSMUH Regular Transit Area
- SSMUH Transit Proximity Area

There are also bike parking requirements that apply to SSMUH developments. See Table 7.4 in the Zoning Bylaw.

Additional considerations that may impact the number of units

If the lot is eligible for SSMUH under Saanich's Zoning Bylaw, there may be other laws that restrict what you are able to build.

Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

If the lot is in the ALR, it is subject to the regulations of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). On ALR lots that are eligible for SSMUH, the number of units is limited by the ALC to a maximum of 3 units: a primary dwelling, a secondary suite, and an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). These units must be constructed according to the regulations of the ALC.

You can see the extent of the ALR on [Saanich Map](#). Under "Land", turn on "Agricultural Land Reserve" layer. Search for the address on the top right.

Private Covenants

There may be a covenant registered on title that restricts the number of units which can be constructed on the lot. For more information on private covenants you should seek legal advice.

Covenants are registered on Title. See [Land Titles Record Search](#) to determine if this applies to your property.

Saanich-held Covenants

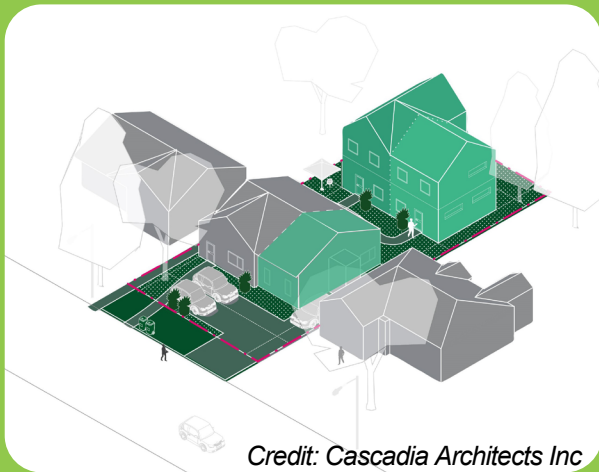
There may be a Saanich-held covenant registered on title that restricts the number of units which can be constructed on the lot. For more information on Saanich-held covenants, or to apply to discharge a covenant, you can contact planning@saanich.ca.

Covenants are registered on Title. See [Land Titles Record Search](#) to determine if this applies to your property.

Secondary Suites

- Secondary suites are regulated by the BC Building Code. The code requirements for secondary suites differ from the code requirements for a primary dwelling unit.
- Secondary suites counts towards the total number of units on a lot.
- Under Schedule G, a secondary suite can be added to any primary unit as per the Building Code. For example, a duplex could have a secondary suite in each unit, for a total of 4 units on the lot.

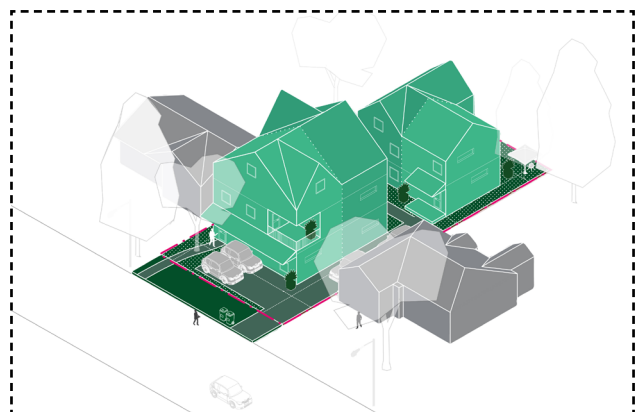
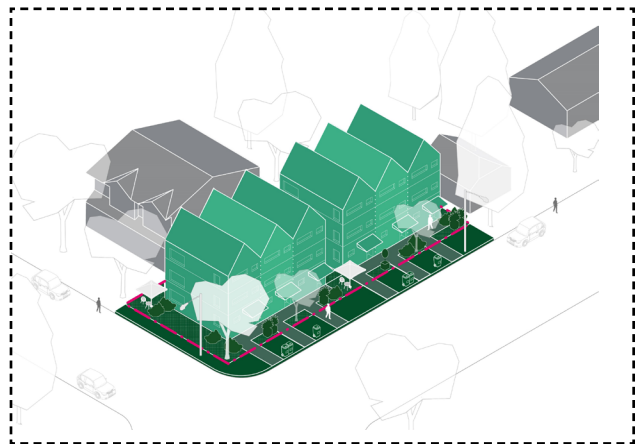
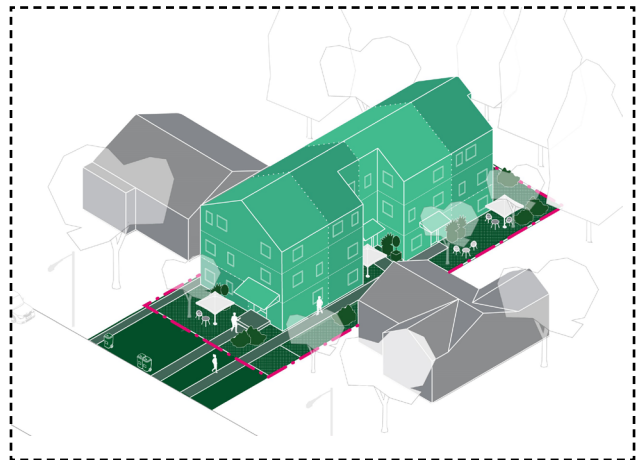
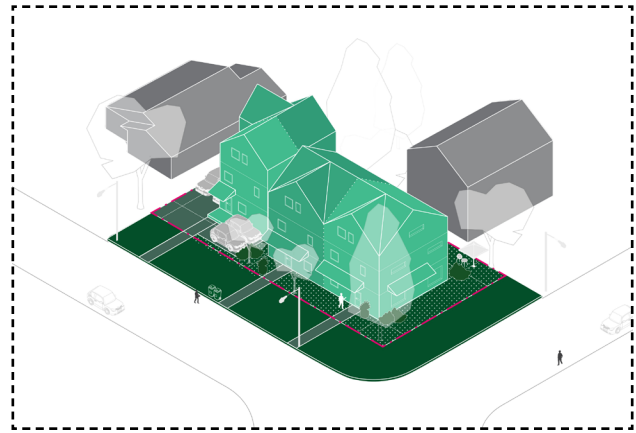
*If you have previously decommissioned a secondary suite or a garden suite, and you wish to recommission it, a new Building Permit is required. See page 13 for details.



Credit: Cascadia Architects Inc

Hiring a Professional Team

To facilitate a successful application it is recommended you hire a professional team to assist you with your application. The team may include an engineer and/or surveyor, a certified arborist, and a designer/architect.



Credit: Cascadia Architects Inc

What information will I need to include in my application?

IMPORTANT!

Familiarize yourself with the specific requirements that may apply to your project. The following pages provide an overview of what you need to consider, including contact information and links to more information.

SSMUH Data Table

An SSMUH Project Data Table is attached to this document (see Appendix A). The Data Table lists the information required for Planning to determine zoning compliance. Please complete the Data Table and/or ensure that all the information is clearly included on your plans in order for Planning staff to complete their review of your application.

Tenure: Rental or Strata?

In determining the tenure for SSMUH, there are a few things property owners should consider.

- Short-term rentals are not permitted in any residential units in Saanich.
- SSMUH units can be rental tenure. There is no owner-occupancy requirement.
- SSMUH units can be stratified.
- If an existing building is to be included in a strata plan, the property owner will have additional considerations, including that the existing building must be code compliant. *It is recommended a professional be consulted prior to design and application for SSMUH projects that include an existing building.*

You may be asked to provide tenure information to ensure the correct Building Permit is issued for your development.

More information on stratifying SSMUH can be found on the [Subdivision page](#).

Contact Information:

Subdivision
(250) 475-5471
subdivision@saanich.ca

Parking Requirements

For more information about SSMUH parking requirements, see Table 7.1A in the Zoning Bylaw. Guidance for determining which part of Table 7.1A applies can be found on page 5 of this Guide.

Servicing Requirements

Development Cost Charges (DCCs) are applicable on most SSMUH developments.

As a part of the Building Permit application, the servicing requirements will also be reviewed. Applicants should consider the following:

- Does the lot have a storm sewer connection?
- Where are the services located, and what is the size of the water service? (Check [SaanichMap](#))
- What route will the services take from the municipal connection to each unit?
- Is the development on a corner lot, and if so, will a second driveway be required?
- Are there any easements or statutory rights-of-way on the property? (Check property title)
- Is there a stormwater tank on the property and, if so, where is it located?

More information about servicing requirements and DCCs for SSMUH can be found on [Engineering Specifications](#).

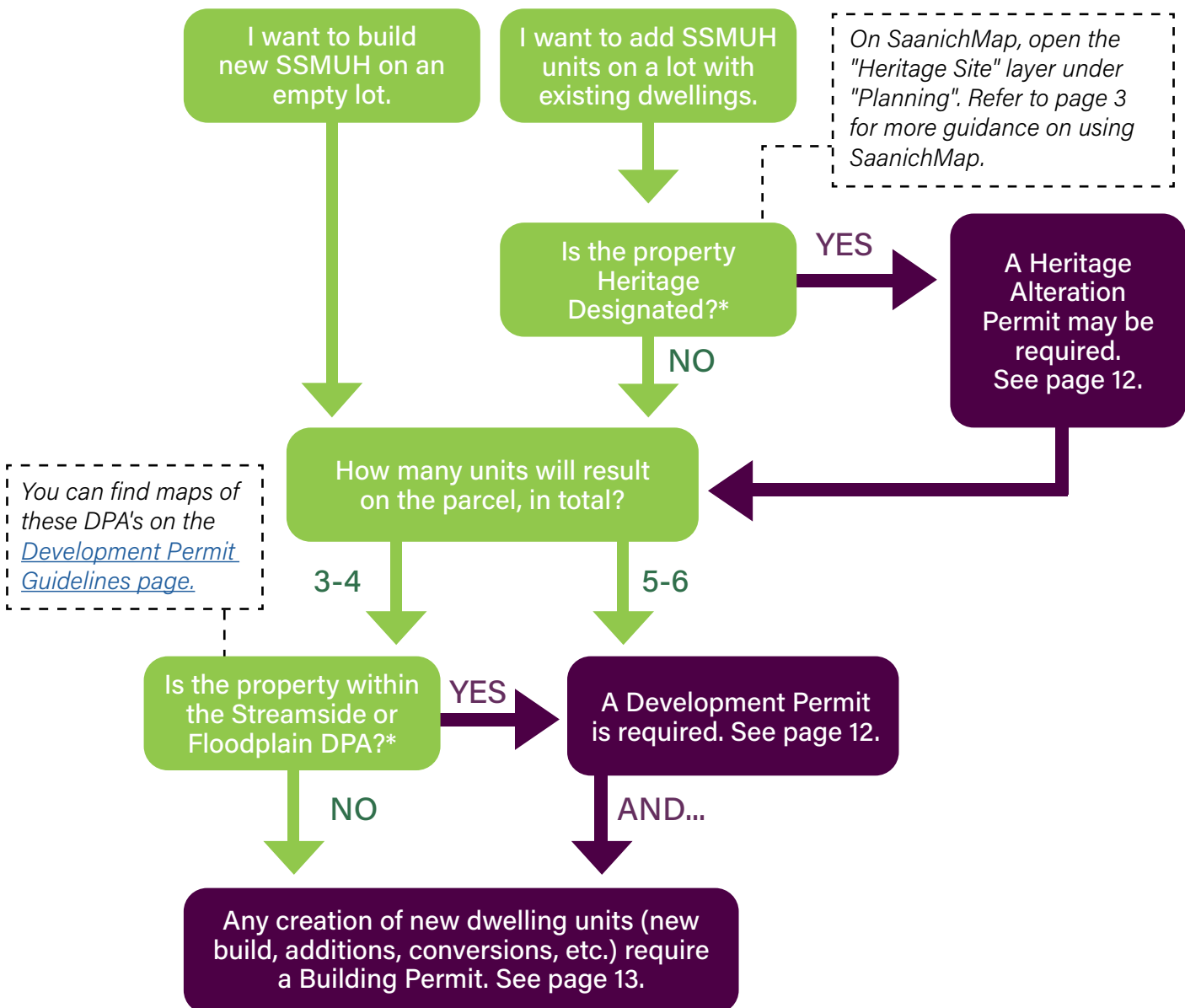
Contact Information:

Engineering
(250) 475-5575
development@saanich.ca

What permits are required?

- A **Building Permit** is required for all residential units, including secondary suites. You may need more than one building permit, and the application will vary depending on how the new units are being achieved (e.g., demolition, new build, conversion).
- A Form and Character **Development Permit** will be required if 5-6 units result on the parcel.
- A **Development Permit** will be required if the lot is within the Streamside or Floodplain Development Permit Area.
- A **Heritage Alteration Permit** may be required if the property is Heritage Designated.
- A **Tree Cutting Permit** may be required if protected trees are being impacted.

Use the chart below to determine which permits are required for your project.





HERITAGE ALTERATION PERMIT

Heritage Alteration Permit

- If the property is Heritage Designated, a Heritage Alteration Permit may be required depending on how the protected property will be impacted.
- Contact the Planning Department with a Heritage Alteration Request.

More information about how to apply for a Heritage Alteration Permit can be found on the [Heritage Alteration Requests page](#).

Contact Information:

Planning
(250) 475-5471
planning@saanich.ca

What if my property is Heritage Registered?

If your property is on the Heritage registry, but not Designated, please contact the Planning Department to discuss your SSMUH project.



DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

Development Permit

Form & Character Development Permit Area (DPA)

- If 5-6 units result on the lot, a Form & Character Development Permit (DP) is required. The DPA Guidelines for “Houseplexes” will apply.
- All applications resulting in 4 or fewer dwellings on a parcel are exempt from the Form & Character DP.
- If the property has an existing Development Permit, you may be required to amend or rescind the permit. Contact planning@saanich.ca for more information.

Other Development Permit Area

- If your property is located within any other DPA, such as the Floodplain DPA or the Streamside DPA, you will need a Development Permit regardless of the number of units proposed.

Development Permit Area Guidelines, including relevant maps, are available on the [Development Permit Guidelines page](#). Projects that require a Form & Character DP will be required to align with all relevant General Design Guidelines, and the Houseplex Guidelines.

More information about how to apply for a Development Permit can be found on the [Development Permit Application page](#).

Contact Information:

Planning
(250) 475-5471
planning@saanich.ca



BUILDING PERMIT



TREE PERMIT

Building Permits

- All dwelling units in Saanich must be approved by Inspections Services - each residential structure will require a Building Permit.
- A Building Permit will also be required if you wish to recommission a secondary suite or a garden suite.
- Once all necessary Building Permits have been issued, construction can begin.
- If any other permits or approvals are required, Inspections staff will hold your building permit application until those have been obtained. Therefore, make sure to review Part 2: Getting Ready to Apply before starting the building permit application process.

When the Building Permit and Tree Permit (if required) are approved, construction can begin. Inspections will be scheduled at different stages of construction and tree removal. Final inspection for occupancy will occur once construction is complete.

You must have a final occupancy inspection, and occupancy permit, before anyone can live in the units.

More information about how to apply for the necessary Building Permit(s) can be found on the [Residential Permits page](#).

Contact Information:

Inspection Services
(250) 475-5457
inspections@saanich.ca

Every residential unit requires a Building Permit!

Every residential unit in Saanich requires a Building Permit, including secondary suites. This is for the health and safety of all Saanich residents.

Tree Cutting Permit

- If any trees will be affected by your SSMUH project, you should review Saanich's [Tree Protection Bylaw](#).
- Before altering, cutting, or removing any Protected trees, you will need a Tree Cutting Permit. District Staff will let you know if such a permit is required, after you have submitted either a Development Permit application or a Building Permit application, whichever comes first.

More information about the Tree Protection Bylaw and how to apply for a Tree Cutting Permit can be found on the [Application for Tree Cutting Permit page](#).

Contact Information:

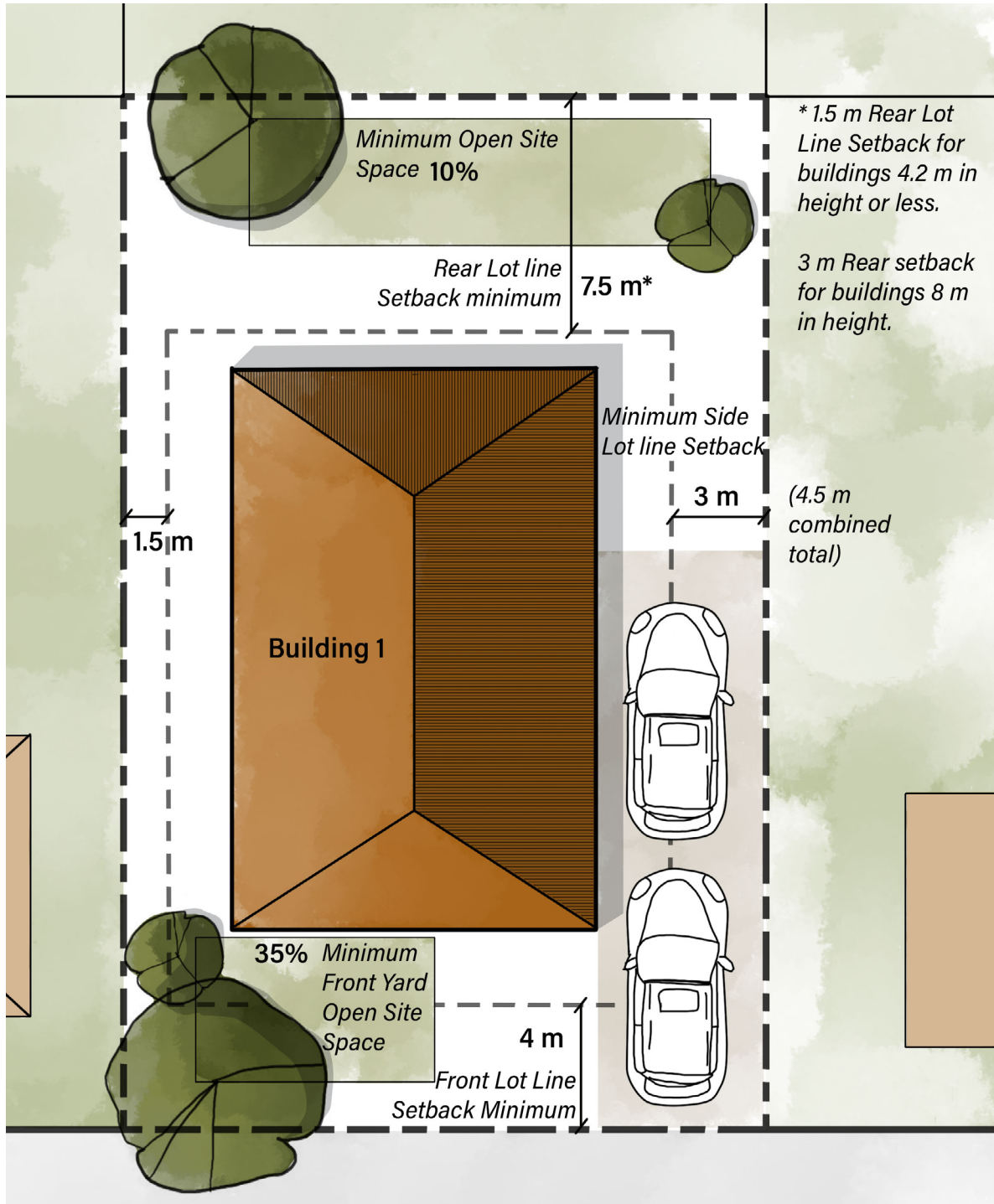
Parks
(250) 475-5522
parks@saanich.ca

GUIDE TO ZONING REGULATIONS

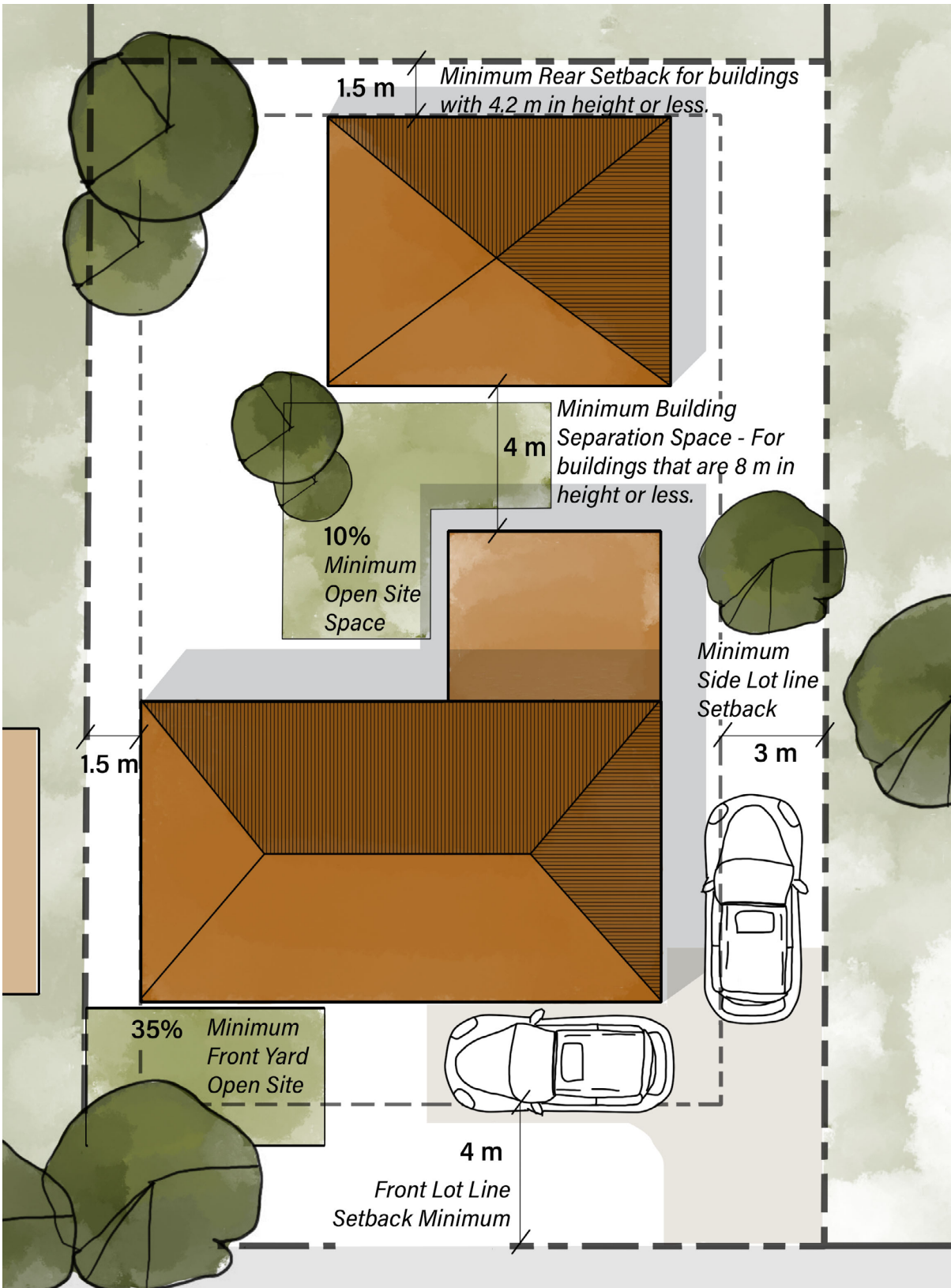
Schedule G lists regulations for Small Lots, Regular Lots, Large Lots and SSMUH Transit Proximity Area Lots. To help with interpretation of Schedule G, This section illustrates the zoning regulations for **Regular Lots**. Illustrations are examples only and may not be possible on all lots.

Click Here!
 Refer to the Zoning Bylaw as you review the information on the following pages.

REFER TO SCHEDULE G IN THE [ZONING BYLAW](#) FOR COMPLETE REGULATIONS.

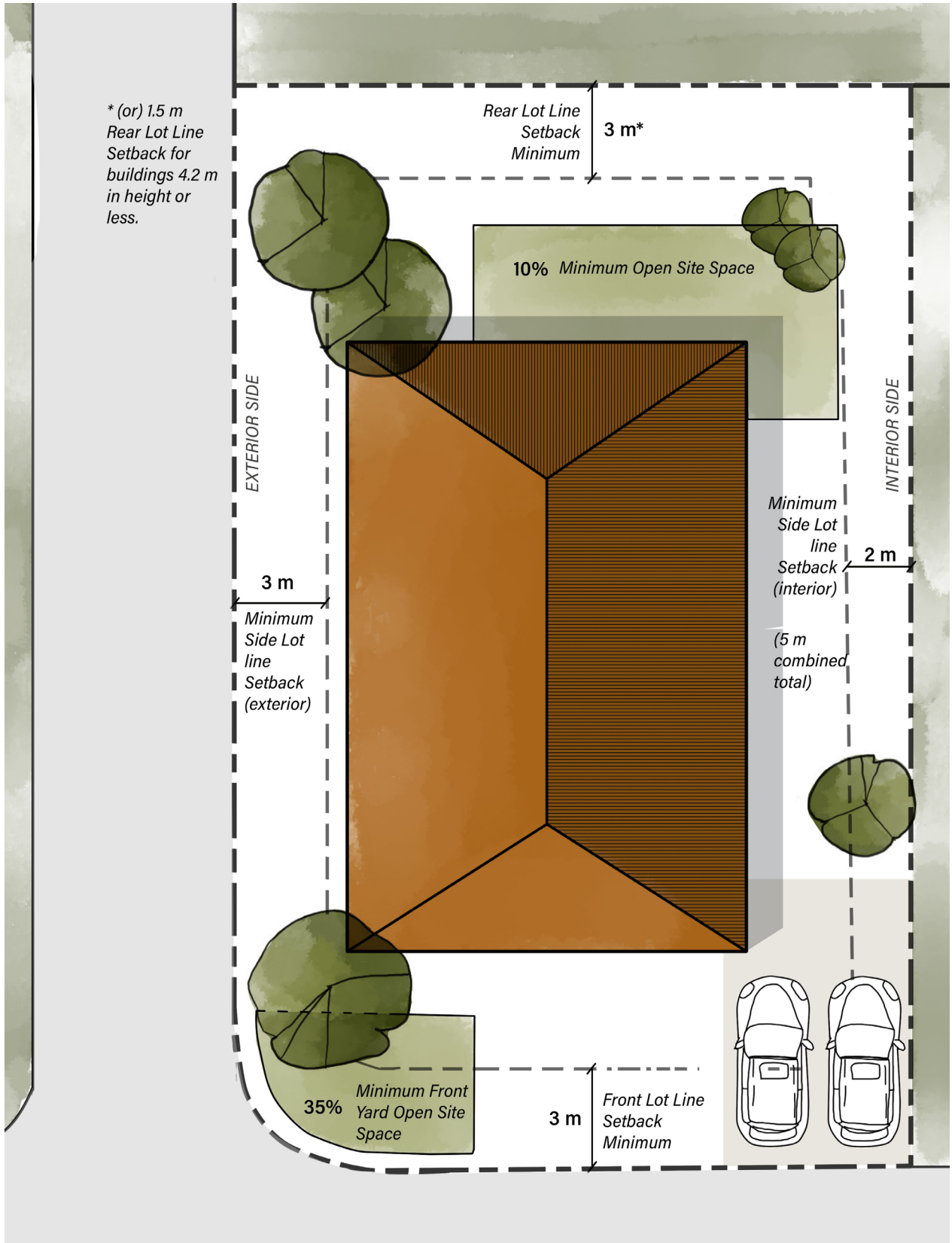


Regular Lot - Mid block example, one building

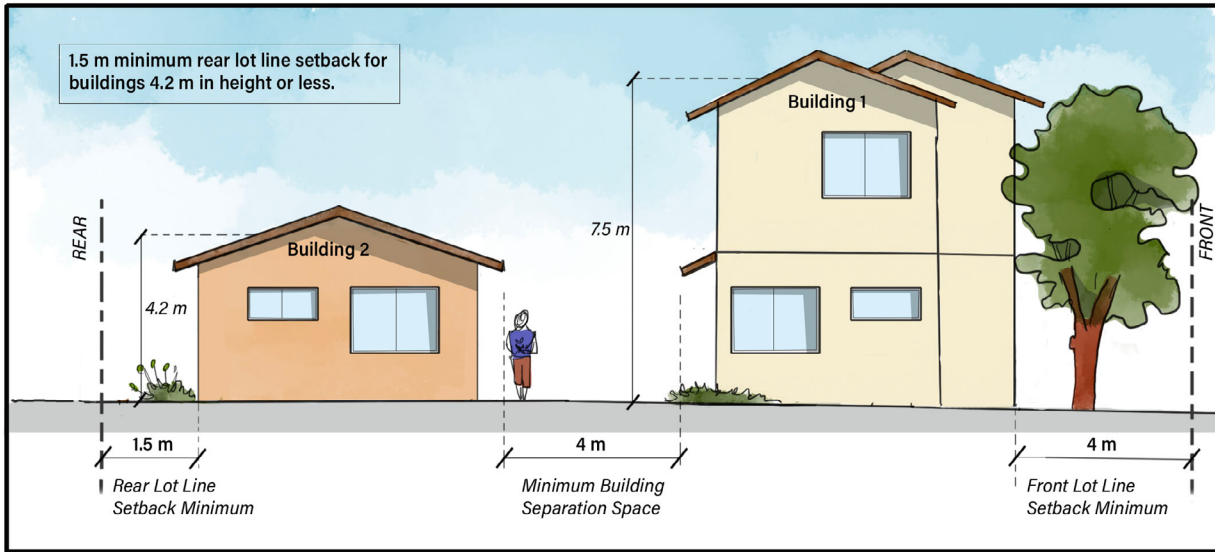


Regular Lot - Mid block example, two buildings

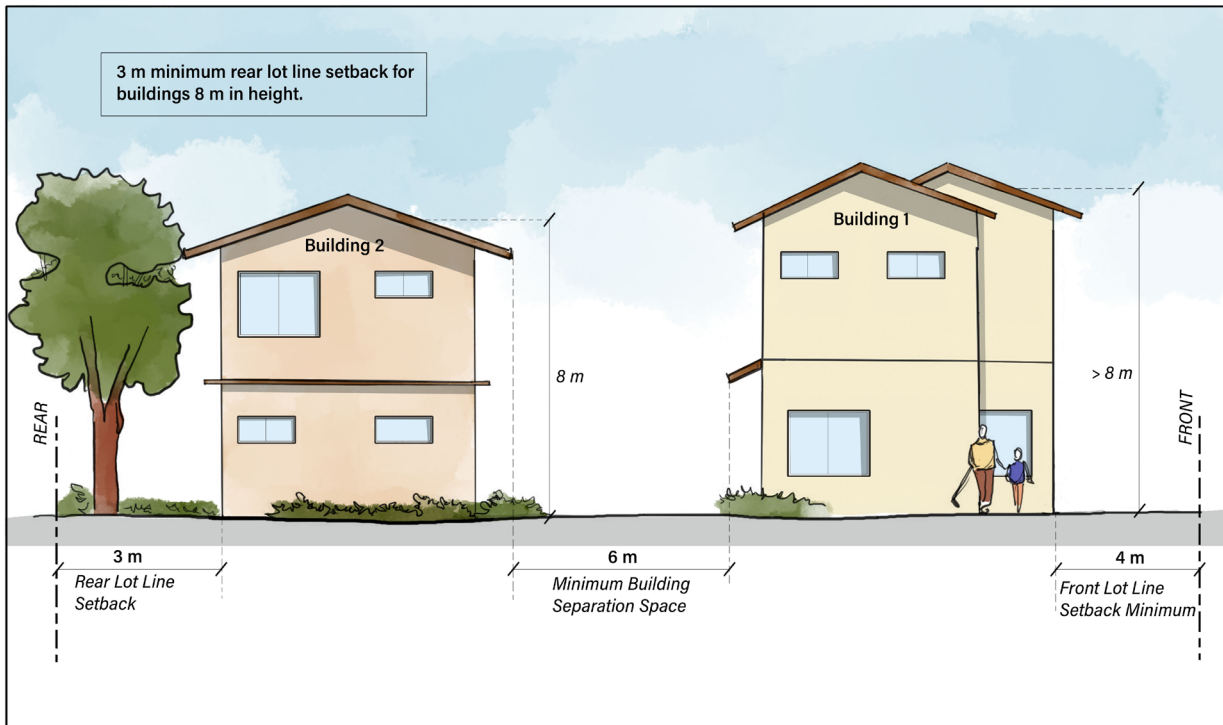
4: Guide to Zoning Regulations



Regular Lot - Corner lot example



Regular Lot - Example heights and separations



Regular Lot - Example heights and separations

Appendix A: SSMUH Project Data Table

Project Data Table – SSMUH

Fill out this table with the data for your project and include it on the front page of your plans.

Ensure that: All values in metric and rounded to two decimal places

Address: _____

Eligibility Requirements to access Schedule G	Yes	No
Is Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing a permitted use in the Zone?		
Is the lot within the Urban Containment Boundary?		
Is the lot within the Sewer Service Area?		
Is the lot within the Primary Growth Area, and less than 4,050m ² ?		

	Schedule G Section	Zoning Bylaw Requirement	Proposed/ Existing	Notes
Lot Size				
Small Lot (m ²)	G. 1(a)	279 m ² or less		
Regular Lot (m ²)	G. 1(a)	280 m ² -1,215 m ²		
Large Lot (m ²)	G. 1(a)	1,216 m ² or larger		
Transit Proximity Area Lot (m ²)	G. 1(b)	≥ 280 m ²		Located wholly or partially
Density				
Minimum # of Units	G. 4(a)	2 dwellings (1 houseplex)		(to qualify for Schedule G)
Maximum # of Units	G. 4(b)	3, 4 or 6 units		
Maximum # of Residential Bldgs	G. 4(c)	2		
Maximum # of Single Family Dwellings	G. 4(d)	1 (if 5 or more units SFD's are not permitted)		
Floor Space Ratio	G.4(f)	0.6, 1.0 or 1.1		
Lot Coverage				
Houseplex (m ²)	-	-		
Single Family Dwelling (m ²)	-	-		
Accessory Buildings (m ²)	-	Table 5.3		
Total Lot Coverage (all bldgs) (%)	G. 4(e)	40%, 50%, 55% or 60%		
Impervious surface area (m ²)	-	-		
Open Site Space Requirement (%)	G. 7(a)	10% or 15% min		
Front Yard Area (m ²)	-	-		
Front Yard Open Site Space (%)	G. 7(b)	35% min		

Project Data Table – SSMUH

	Schedule G Section	Zoning Bylaw Requirement	Proposed/ Existing	Notes
Siting and Height				
Front Lot Line Setback (m)	G. 6(a)	3 m or 4 m		
Rear Lot Line Setback (m)	G. 6(b)	1.5 m, 3 m, 4 m, 5 m or 7.5 m		
Interior Side Lot Line Setback (m)	G. 6(c)	1.5 m or 2 m		
Interior Side Lot Line Setback (m)	G. 6(c)	1.5 m or 2 m		
Combined Sideyard Setback (m)	G. 6(c)	3 m, 4.5 m or 5 m		
Exterior Side Lot Line Setback (m)	G. 6(d)	3 m		
Separation Space (m)	G. 6(e)	2.4 m, 4 m or 6 m		
Average Natural Grade	-	Section 5.18		
Height Roof (m)	G. 5(a)	8 m or 11 m		
Below Grade Height (m)	G. 5(b)	1.2 m		
Height within 7.5 m from Ocean (m)	-	Section 5.16 0.60 max		
Setback from Watercourse (m)	-	Section 5.19 7.5 m from natural boundary		
Accessory Bldg Separation Space (m)	-	Section 5.29		
Allowable Projections	-	Section 5.8 0.6/1.2 max		
Parking Requirements				
# of Parking spaces (Level 2 EV charger)	-	Table 7.1A		1 space per unit
Regular Transit Area* (Level 2 EV charger)	-	Table 7.1A		0.5 spaces per unit
Transit Proximity Area* (Level 2 EV charger)	-	Table 7.1A		0 spaces per unit
# of Bike Spaces (Class I or II)	-	Table 7.4		1 space per unit

*If property is wholly or partially within a Regular Transit Area or Transit Proximity Area the least restrictive parking requirement will apply.

Project Data Table - SSMUH

Unit Size & Maximum Gross Floor Area - See Schedule G.3 (a&b)

		Existing	Proposed	Total	Notes
UNIT #1	2nd Floor (m ²)				
	1st Floor (m ²)				
	Main Floor (m ²)				
	Lower Floor (m ²)				
	Total GFA (m ²)				
	Permitted Unit Size GFA (min 33m ² - max 260m ² or 350m ²)				
UNIT #2	2nd Floor (m ²)				
	1st Floor (m ²)				
	Main Floor (m ²)				
	Lower Floor (m ²)				
	Total GFA (m ²)				
	Permitted Unit Size GFA (min 33m ² - max 260m ² or 350m ²)				
UNIT #3	2nd Floor (m ²)				
	1st Floor (m ²)				
	Main Floor (m ²)				
	Lower Floor (m ²)				
	Total GFA (m ²)				
	Permitted Unit Size GFA (min 33m ² - max 260m ² or 350m ²)				
UNIT #4	2nd Floor (m ²)				
	1st Floor (m ²)				
	Main Floor (m ²)				
	Lower Floor (m ²)				
	Total GFA (m ²)				
	Permitted Unit Size GFA (min 33m ² - max 260m ² or 350m ²)				
UNIT #5	2nd Floor (m ²)				
	1st Floor (m ²)				
	Main Floor (m ²)				
	Lower Floor (m ²)				
	Total GFA (m ²)				
	Permitted Unit Size GFA (min 33m ² - max 260m ² or 350m ²)				
UNIT #6	2nd Floor (m ²)				
	1st Floor (m ²)				
	Main Floor (m ²)				
	Lower Floor (m ²)				
	Total GFA (m ²)				
	Permitted Unit Size GFA (min 33m ² - max 260m ² or 350m ²)				