

# Secondary Suite Design Guidelines



## The Purpose and Use of These Guidelines

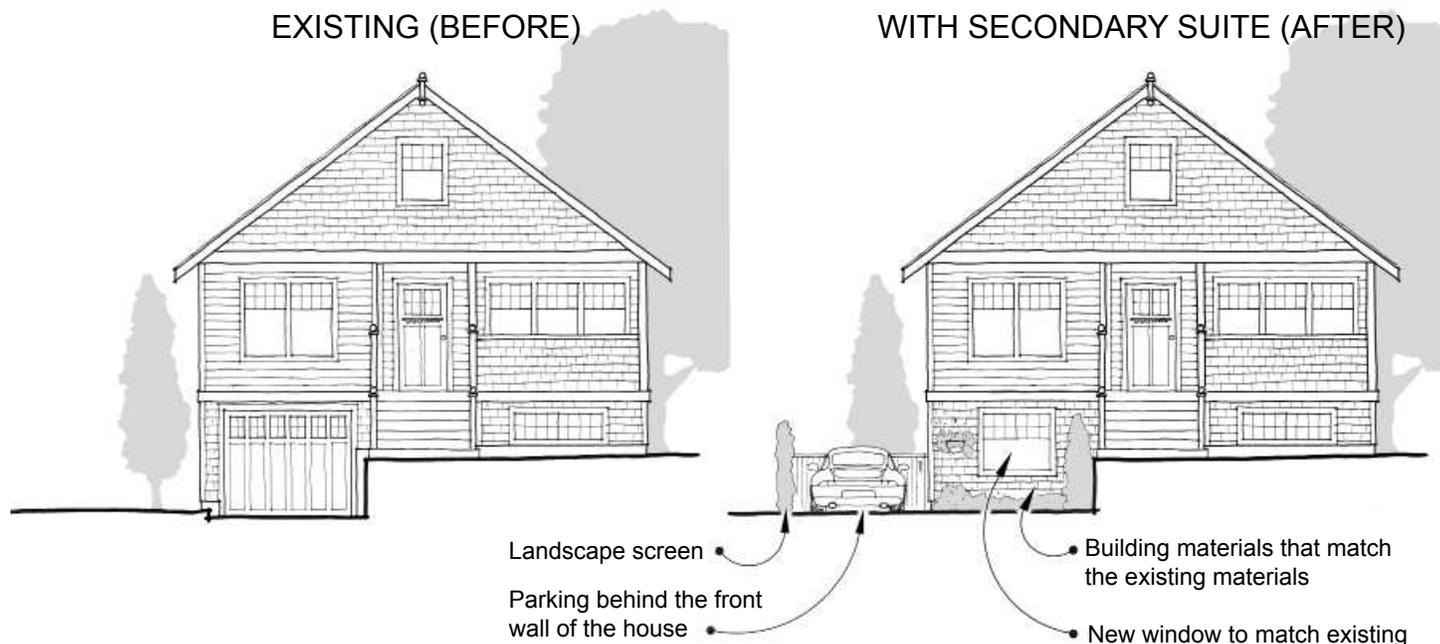
The purpose of these design guidelines is to provide guidance to owners who would like to install a secondary suite. The overall aim of these guidelines is to help ensure that secondary suites are seen as a discreet yet valued addition to Victoria's neighbourhoods. Owners should consider the overall character of their home while planning for the addition of a secondary suite, but feel free to use design solutions which would enhance the unique features of their home and neighbourhood.

These guidelines are advisory only. This document must be used in conjunction with the Zoning Regulation Bylaw and British Columbia Building Code. Illustrations are provided as examples only.

The key design guidelines for single family dwellings with secondary suites can be divided into five categories:

### 1. Overall Design of the House

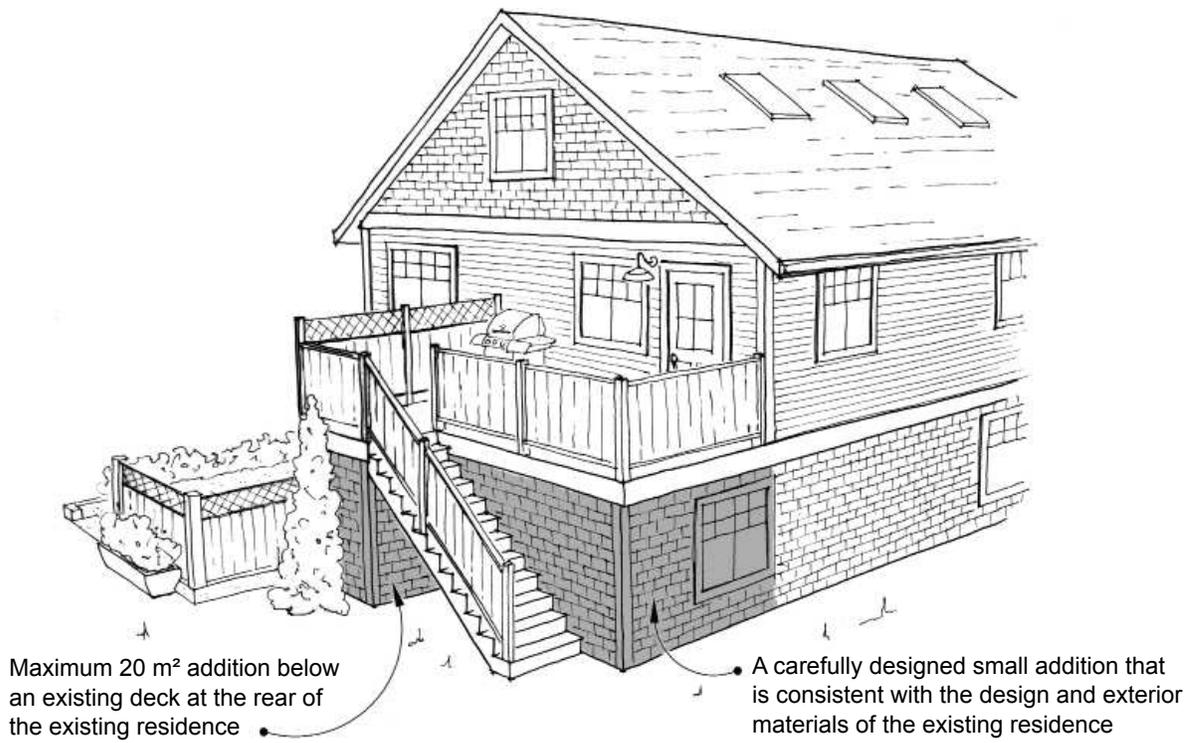
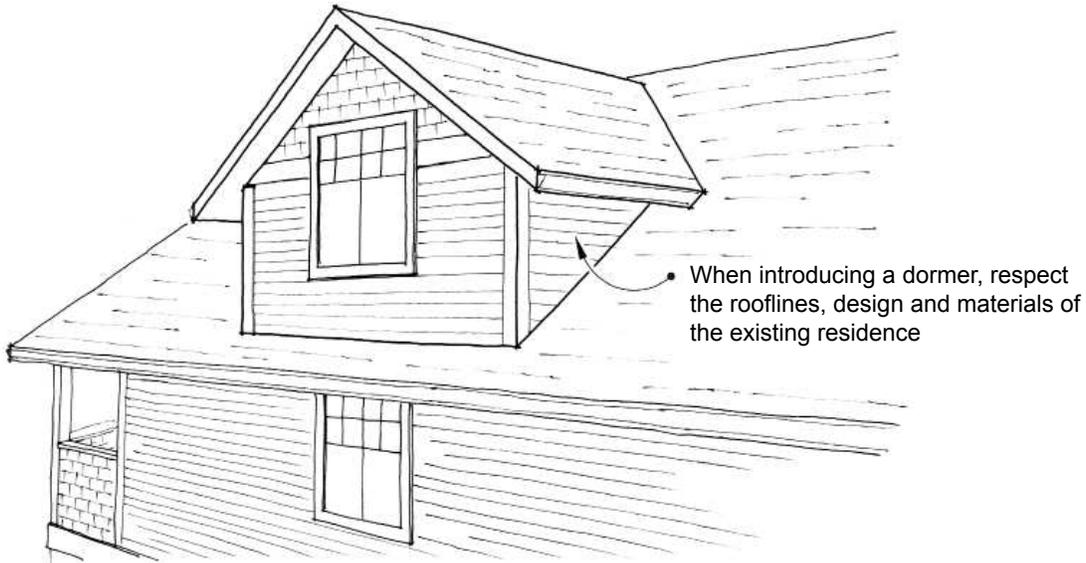
- Minimize exterior changes to the front façade.
- Wherever possible, retain a single entrance on the front façade.
- If converting an attached garage to provide more living space, consider the overall parking needs of the property and neighbourhood. One properly located parking space is still required for the single family dwelling.
- If closing off a garage opening, match or complement the materials and style of the existing house.
- It is generally better to lower the basement floor rather than raise the house to create the required ceiling height for the secondary suite.
- When adding windows and/or doors, match or complement the design and style of the existing windows and doors.



MINIMIZE EXTERIOR CHANGE ON THE FRONT FACADE OF THE HOUSE

## 1. Overall Design of the House, continued

- When introducing an addition or a dormer, respect the existing rooflines, design and materials of the house. Wherever possible, locate additions at the back of the building.

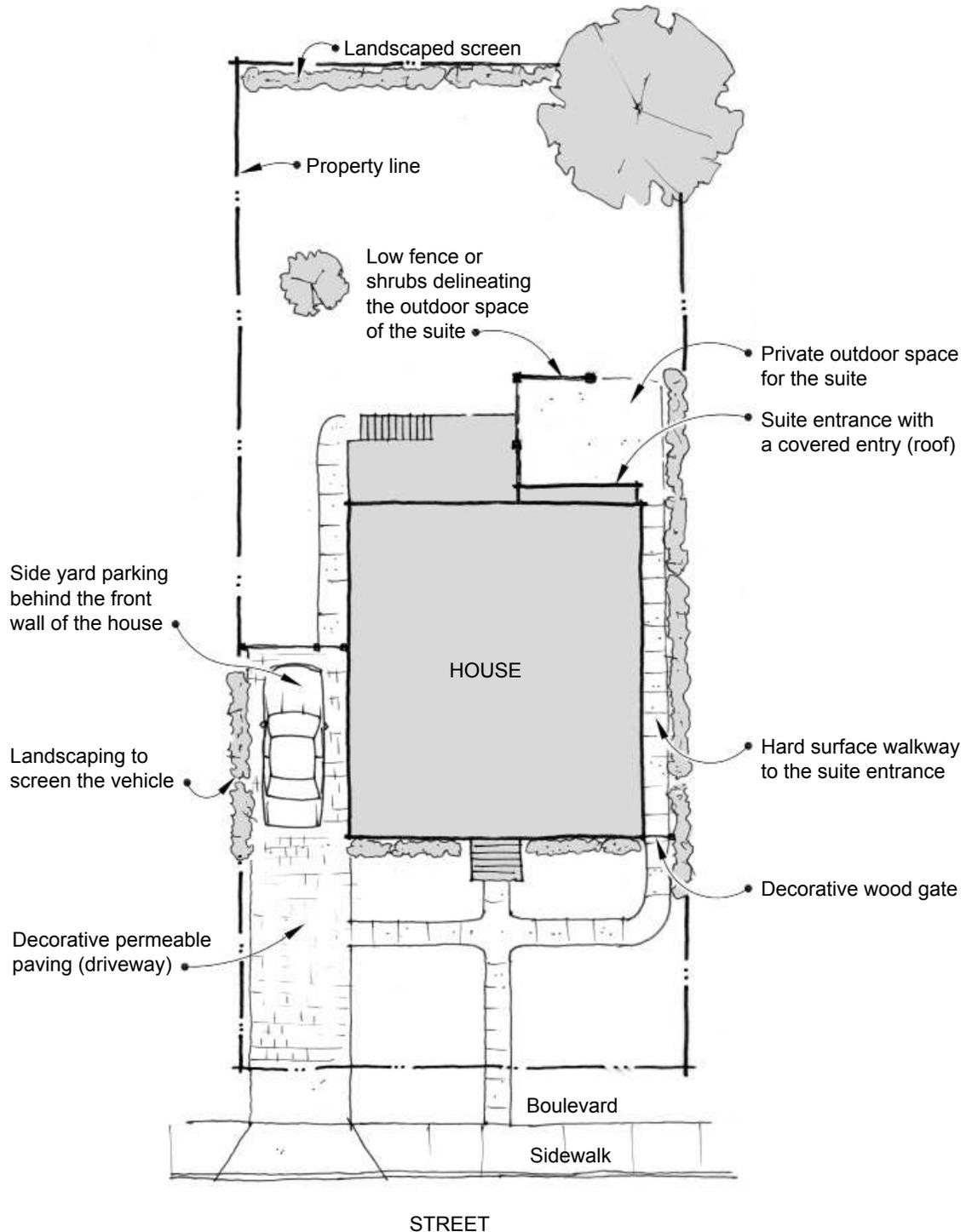


## 2. Landscaping and Parking

- Minimize additional paving and try to preserve landscaped area.
- If additional paving is necessary, use decorative permeable materials such as brick or stone pavers.
- Screen and landscape parking space(s) to minimize the amount of light and noise that may spill over to adjacent properties.

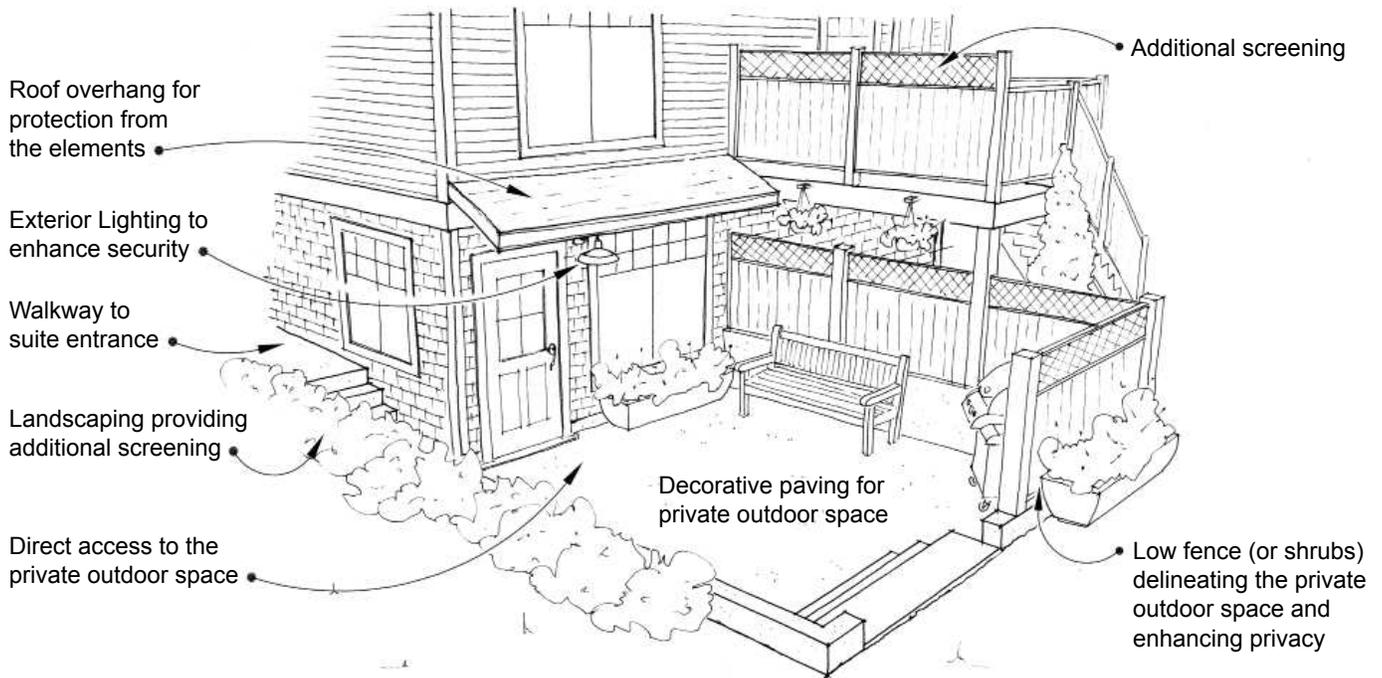
## 3. Private Outdoor Space

- Provide private outdoor space for the secondary suite which is separate from the principal unit (e.g. provide a ground level patio in the rear yard or use decorative wooden gates or shrubs to delineate the secondary outdoor space).



#### 4. Design of the Secondary Suite Entrance

- If the entrance to the secondary suite is located on the side or rear of the house, provide a walkway to the secondary suite entrance. Also, provide defining features such as a roof overhang or other features to help identify the entrance to the secondary suite.
- If the entrance to the secondary suite can only be on the front of the house, design it in such a way that it is similar to the existing front façade by using similar or complementary materials.
- If the entrance is immediately adjacent to a parking area, delineate the entrance with planters or other landscape features to provide visual relief and a clear separation from the parking area.
- Provide low-glare outdoor lighting beside or above the suite entry door as well as the walkway, to enhance security and to help identify the entrance to the suite.



#### 5. Suite Livability

- Provide adequate storage space including bicycle storage for the secondary suite.
- Design the suite to be accessible to individuals with mobility challenges.