



## Laneway Home      Grandview-Woodlands

“Building our laneway home is not only good for us, the builders, but for the neighbourhood aswell” - Fiona, owner

**W**ith the laneway housing zoning revisions made in May of 2013, the City of Vancouver is adopting a modified set of strategies to encourage the development of laneway housing. These revisions have been fit into the new community plans that are currently underway for

the Grandview Woodlands neighbourhood. One of the major goals for the city and Grandview Woodlands, is attempting to increase density. However the city can not simply rip up single family neighbourhoods and turn them into downtown towers to increase density. In the case of Grandview Woodlands, the planning department is looking to achieve its goals through alternative modes, such as the focus of this case study, the Grandview Woodlands laneway home. This laneway

home is a beautiful home built by Smallworks that provides an income for the owners, Fiona and her wife Emily, a place for Fiona’s mom to move into and a structure that fits in with the neighbourhood.

### Project at a Glance

Building Type  
Laneway Home

Location  
Grandview Woodlands

Construction Finished  
2013

Owner  
Fiona and Emily

Design and Build  
Smallworks

Use  
Residential Rental

### Citations

Illustration (Top):

Illustration provided by  
Smallworks



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## Citations

Images (Bottom  
From Left):

Matthew, James Skitt.  
City of Vancouver  
Archives. AM54-S4-:  
SGN 961

Two men, one holding  
a gun and one holding  
a saw, standing in front  
of a partially completed  
house in Grandview-  
Cedar Cottage area.  
1900.

Matthew, James Skitt.  
City of Vancouver  
Archives. AM54-S4-: Bu  
P308  
Exterior of residence at  
1617 Graveley Street.  
1895.

Matthew, James Skitt.  
City of Vancouver  
Archives. AM54-S4-:  
SGN 421  
J.J. Miller residence at  
1036 Salsbury Drive.  
1912.

# Laneway History

**1890** A few sporadically  
placed cottages  
rise up from the once dense  
forest.<sup>2</sup>

**1892** The Interurban  
Line arrives  
to Grandview Woodlands  
readying the land for clearing  
and settlement.<sup>3</sup>

**1900** Grandview  
Woodlands is  
looked at as a sight for the  
possible construction of  
a neighbourhood similar  
to what we know now as  
Shaughnessey. We can still  
see remanents of these  
homes like 1036 Salsbury  
Drive.<sup>2</sup>

**1891** The first house is  
built in Grandview  
Woodlands on what is now  
1617 Graveley Street.<sup>1</sup>

**1893** An early resident  
nails up a sign  
with the handpainted words  
"Grand View" at the First  
Ave. Interurban stop. The  
name Grandview is adopted  
henceforth.<sup>2</sup>

**1910** By around the  
early teens (1910-  
1915) the builders and future  
owners of larger homes  
in Vancouver had chosen  
Shaughnessey as the location  
for the elite of Vancouver.<sup>1</sup>



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**2009** City adopts the 2020 Greenest City Action Plan.

**2011** City began a new community plan for Grandview-Woodland

**2013** City adopt a new series of laneway home regulations

**2009** Council adopted laneway housing regulations and guidelines for properties in the RS-1 and RS-5 single family districts, which make up 94% of the city's single family lots.

**2013** Construction of Fiona and Emily's Grandview Woodlands laneway house is completed

**2013** The Grandview Woodlands Community Plan is to be completed and receive approval from City Council.

## Citations

### Text (Page 46):

<sup>1</sup> Kluckner, Michael. Vancouver The Way It Was. North Vancouver. Whitecap Books. 1984. Print.

<sup>2</sup> Kluckner, Michael. Vanishing Vancouver. North Vancouver, Whitecap Books. 1990. Print.

<sup>3</sup> Macdonald, Bruce. The Greater Vancouver Book: An Urban Encyclopedia. Surrey. Linkman Press. 1997. Print.

### Image (Top):

Matthew, James Skitt. City of Vancouver Archives. AM54-S4:- PAN P99  
View over False Creek Flats from Grandview. 1912.



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## Citations

### Text (Right):

Kluckner, Michael.  
Vancouver The Way It  
Was. North Vancouver.  
Whitecap Books. 1984.  
Print.

Kluckner, Michael.  
Vanishing Vancouver.  
North Vancouver,  
Whitecap Books. 1990.  
Print.

Macdonald, Bruce.  
The Greater Vancouver  
Book: An Urban  
Encyclopedia. Surrey.  
Linkman Press. 1997.  
Print.

# Laneway

## History

“Grandview Woodlands is a hodge-podge of mansions, cottages, odd streets and blocks unlike any other in Vancouver” - Michael Kluckner

**G**randview Woodlands has always been known as having a well balanced mix of housing

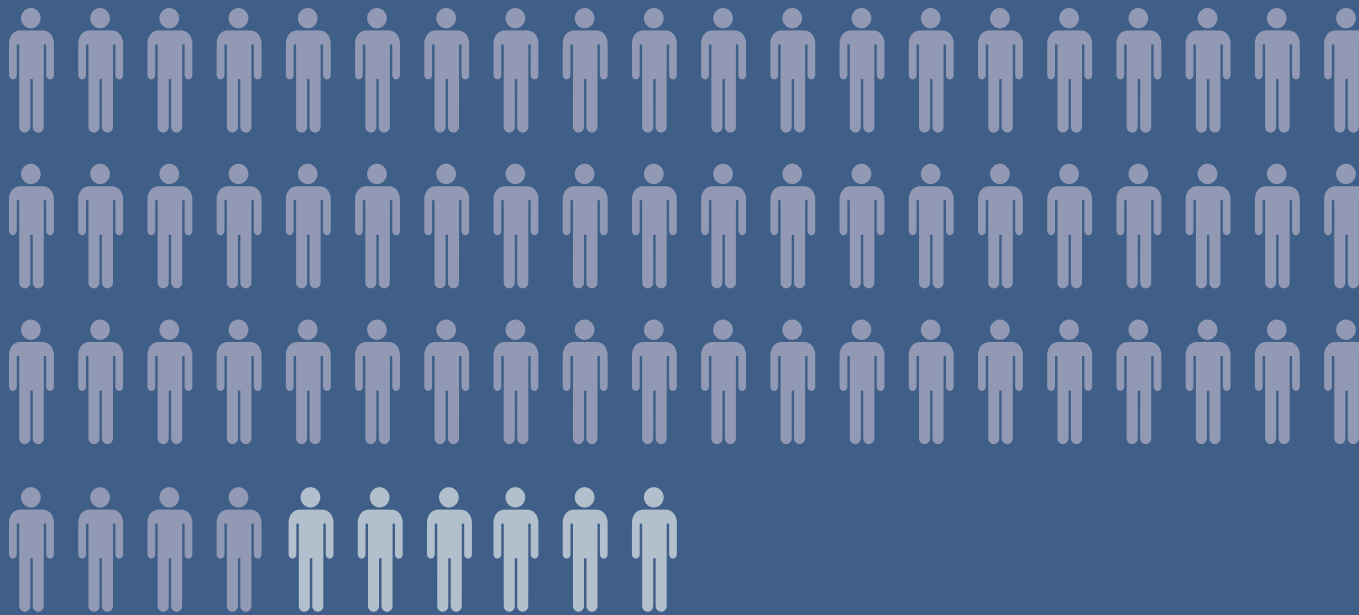
types. From small one room cottages like the one that once sat at 1617 Graveley Street, the first house in Grandview Woodlands, (built in 1891), all the way to mansions like John J. Miller’s home which stands at 1036 Salisbury Drive today. As a byproduct of this, Grandview Woodlands is the perfect place to begin introducing alternative and newer housing

types, like the lanehome. However, the lanehome is not just another housing type to add to the mix! As illustrated on the following pages, lanehomes come with a series of great benefits not only for the renter and owner, but neighbourhood and city on a whole.



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“Vancouver as a whole seeks to increase its population, and it is looking to alternative forms of housing as a means of doing so” - Andrew Pask

**G**randview Woodlands seeks to increase the population of the community from 28,380 residents (as of 2011) up to 30,670 residents by 2041

(prediction is based off of the Development Capacity Model looking at “actual rates of development and constraints in identifying redevelopment sites). These sound like lofty challenging goals, but through subtle implementation changes, the Grandview Woodlands plan will be able to increase density, while maintaining the character and feel that has so defined Grandview Woodlands.

## Legend



250 Current Residents

Current Population



250 Planned Residents

Development Capacity Model

## Further Reading

### Development Capacity Model:

We use the development capacity model in this case rather than the zoned capacity model calculation, because the development capacity accounts for all factors, not just zoning capacity.

## Citations

### Text and Diagram (Top and Left):

Grandview Woodland Residential Capacity Estimates, Grandview Woodlands Community Plan Planning Sheet, City of Vancouver, Vancouver. 2013.

Link: <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/grandview-woodland-development-capacity.pdf>



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# Citations

Chart (Left):



Single  
Family  
Residential



Laneway  
Home



Duplex



Apartment



Mixed  
Commercial  
/Residential



Industrial

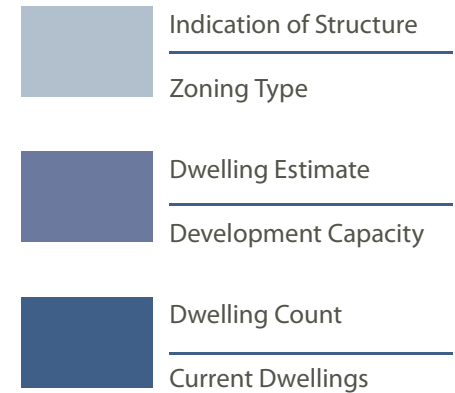


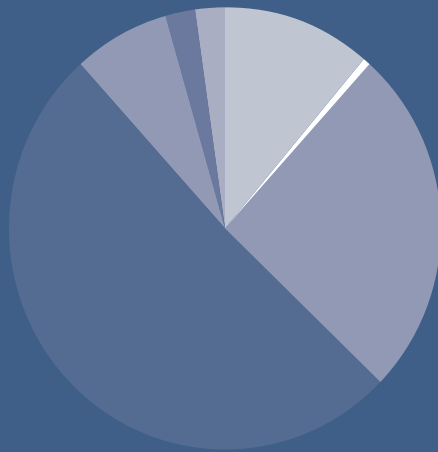
CD - 1  
Zoning



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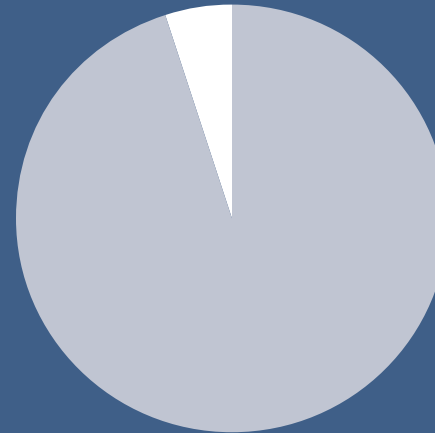




Number of residents in each housing type.










Relationship between RS zoned single family dwelling units to RT zoned duplex dwelling units



Relationship between single family homes expecting to have laneways by 2041 to single family homes not expecting laneways

## Citations

Diagrams (Right and Page 53):

	Single Family Residential
	Laneway Home
	Duplex
	Apartment
	Mixed Commercial /Residential
	Industrial
	CD - 1 Zoning

### Grandview-Woodland is an eclectic, vibrant, and diverse neighbourhood located on the east side of Vancouver" - Community Profile

The inhabitants of Grandview-Woodland reside in all sorts of dwelling types, from single family residential units to commercial/residential mixed use. In this community, most residents inhabit apartments and duplex's,

although the market for these two dwelling types (as well as single family residential) are almost completely saturated (meaning that there can be hardly any increase [if at all] in these dwelling types.

As an alternative, the city is looking to newer dwelling types to increase density. These are falling under two major categories: commercial/residential mixed use (for example see the Van East Cinema renovation) and laneway houses (like the one we are studying). Since the

recording of these statistics, the city has already been pushing growth of dwelling types in these two areas. In terms of laneway housing, there was none as of the end of 2011. Already, we have seen an increase in the number of laneway homes, one of which is our case study.



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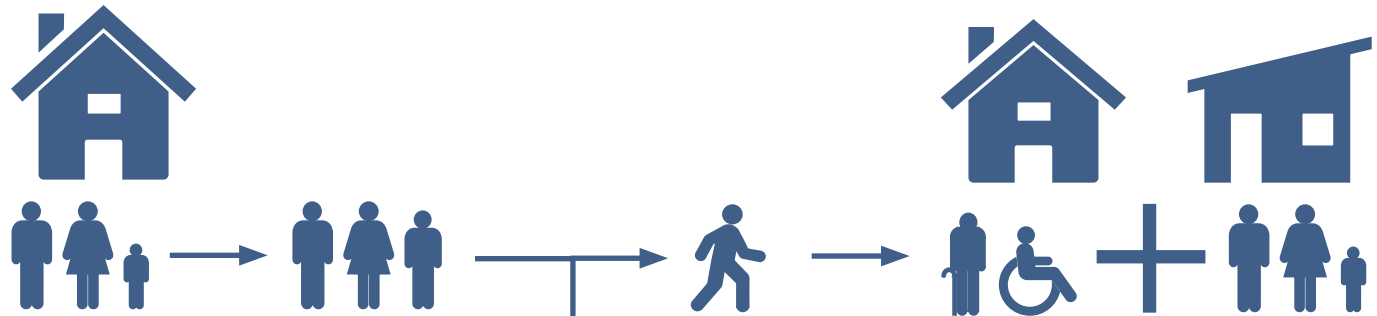
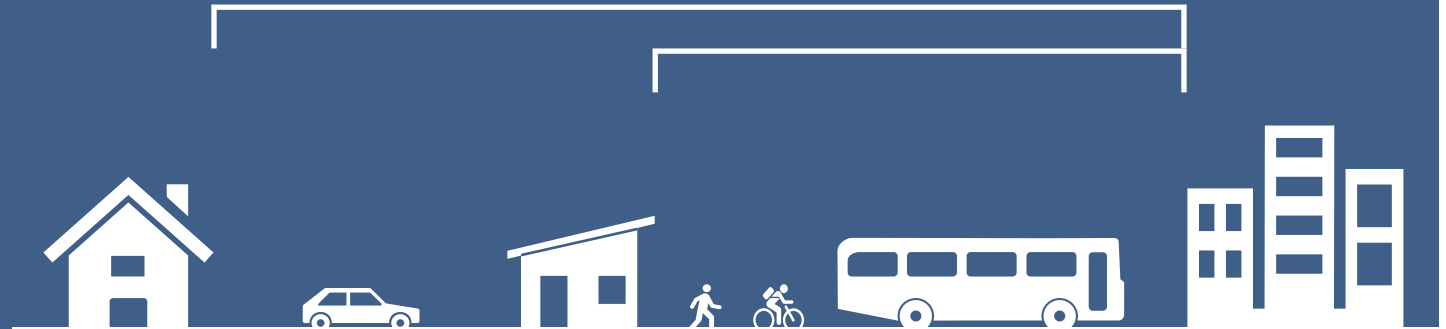
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## Citations

### Text and Information for Diagrams:

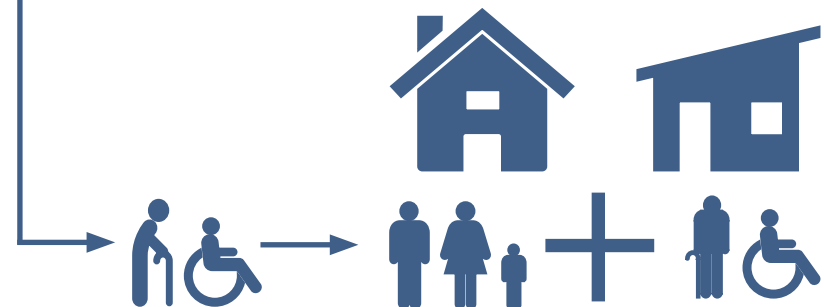
Hamilton, Janet. In My Back Yard: A Back Lane Approach To Zoning And Density. Thesis, School of Architecture Landscape Architecture, University of British Columbia. ProQuest/UMI, 2006. Print.

City of Vancouver. Laneway Housing - How-to Guide. City of Vancouver. COV Online. [www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx). Updated: June 2013. Web. July 29th 2013.

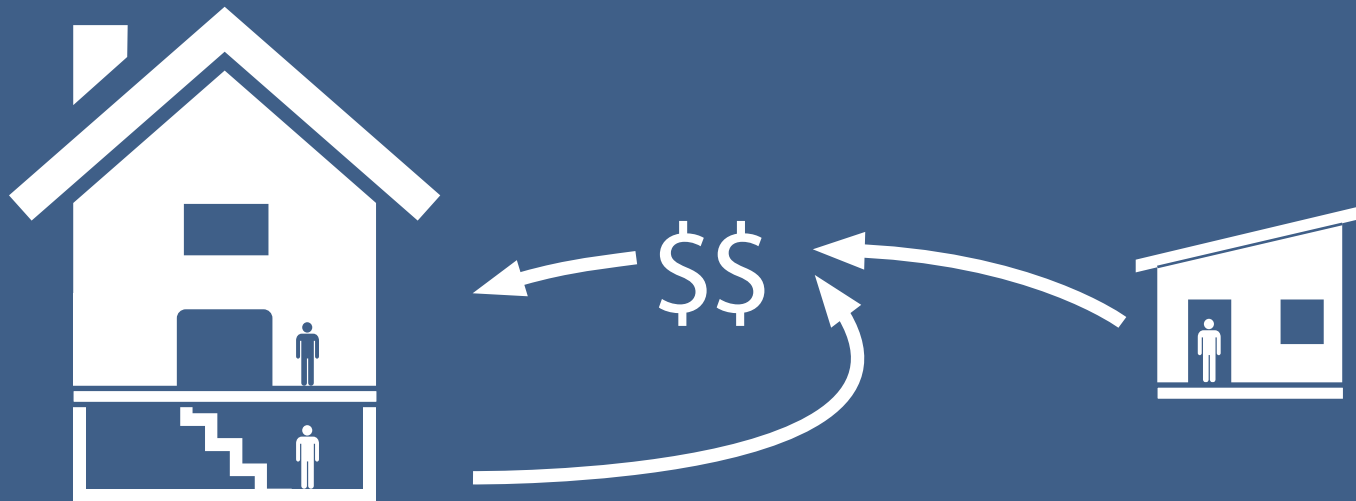


The diagram at the top is depicting how laneway homes are typically located closer to Vancouver's city center than single family homes offered as alternatives. This encourages alternative modes of transport.

Above and right is a diagram depicting how laneway homes support the lifecycle of a family by allowing more people to live on a single property. Adult children can move into lanehomes, or alternatively, older parents.







One of the greatest benefits about owning and building a laneway house is that, in conjunction with renting out a basement suite, an owner can pay off the mortgage on his or her house much faster. The property and buildings can begin to make money to help the owner, turning ownership into a source of income in of itself. However, laneway housing has received some critiques regarding cost of building

and construction. While many feel that Laneway homes are the answer to a housing and retiring shortage in Vancouver, others feel the cost of building makes the construction not worth it. One of the key factors to remember is that investing in building a laneway house does not pay off very well in the short term, but it is in the long term that it finds its strongest economic gains. In other words, most of the owners who have made a profit on laneway houses are

settling in for a number of years, rather than selling the property soon after it is built.

## Citations

### Text and Information for Diagram:

City of Vancouver, Laneway Housing. City of Vancouver Planning Department, 2012. Web July 2013.

City of Vancouver. Laneway Housing - How-to Guide. City of Vancouver. COV Online. [www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx). Updated: June 2013. Web. July 29th 2013.



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## Citations

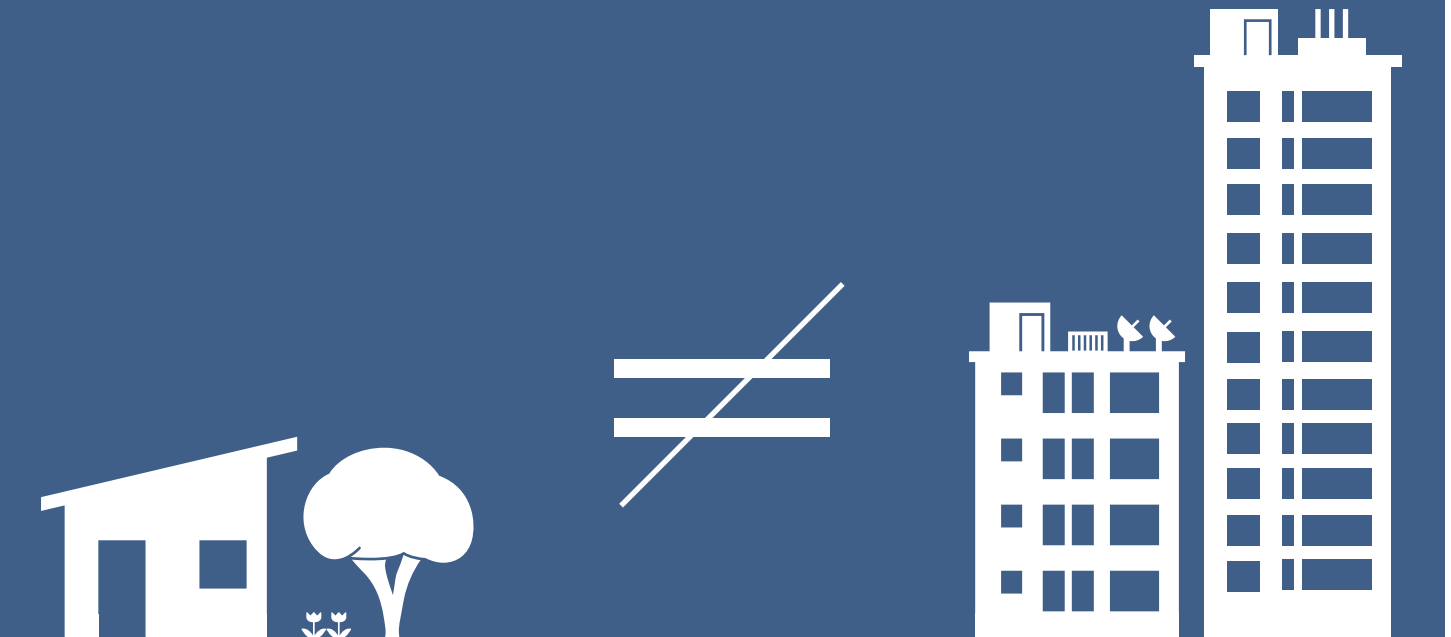
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### Text and Information for Diagrams:

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Hamilton, Janet. In  
My Back Yard: A Back  
Lane Approach To  
Zoning And Density.  
Thesis, School of  
Architecture Landscape  
Architecture, University  
of British Columbia.  
ProQuest/UMI, 2006.  
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City of Vancouver.  
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How-to Guide. City  
of Vancouver. COV  
Online. [www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx). Updated:  
June 2013. Web. July  
29th 2013.



“Laneway houses are currently allowed in two single family zones (RS-1 and RS-5) which make up 94% of the single family areas in the City”

**M**uch of the fear with laneway housing is that it will increase density too much, turning a seemingly quiet single family residential RS-1 zoned area into the downtown core. Not only are

laneway houses an aesthetic choice to increasing density (they fit with the aesthetic style of the neighbourhood while also preserving the ‘character’ that has, in some cases, defined it for nearly a hundred years), but a functional one as well. But, part of the concept of the above statement is flawed. It seems to make the assumption that density is inherently bad and something worth hiding, when this isn’t necessarily the case. But lanehomes do effect the

neighbourhood for the better. By adding homes that open onto the lane, lanehomes offer a beautiful yet subtle option to renters and builders for adding density.



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"I get my own place without the huge costs of owning my own home. Its great!" Christoff, Renter.

Laneway housing seeks to tackle one of the greatest problems Vancouver is facing right now, a lack of quality, affordable renting space. Perhaps, in regards to this issue, laneway houses offer a unique solution. Most importantly, they can only really be rented. Laneway houses alone cannot be

bought or sold, they are attached to the house out front. What this means for renters is that every laneway house offers an opportunity for new rentable units to open up (unless the owners choose otherwise). One of the greatest rewards about the laneway house for renters is that it is a separate structure. Instead of being stuck in some busy residential apartment, which is definitely on the table for most renters, the renters gets their own place in a single family



residential neighbourhood. They get a home, a yard and don't have to worry so much about neighbours noises as they don't border on one of thier neighbours walls. For a renter, it is like owning their own home, without the huge costs of ownership.

## Citations

### Text and Information for Diagram:

City of Vancouver, Laneway Housing. City of Vancouver Planning Department, 2012. Web July 2013.

City of Vancouver. Laneway Housing - How-to Guide. City of Vancouver. COV Online. [www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx). Updated: June 2013. Web. July 29th 2013.



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## Further Reading

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### Current Status of Renting:

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While this laneway house was originally built for Fiona's mother, she is unable to move into it for a couple of years. In the meantime Fiona and her family are renting it out, thus making an income from their property.



"We needed a place that was close, small and beautiful for my Mom" - Fiona, Owner

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When Fiona, her wife and daughter sought out to build this project they were originally looking for a place for Fiona's Mom. They wanted a number of things that only a laneway house could really offer. One, they wanted a place that was one of two stories, with ground level access, so Fiona's mom could

come and go as she pleased. They wanted it to be close-by so that if there were ever any problems, they could be there quickly. They wanted a place that she could call her own, and that she could make her own, but without all the upkeep. These are all things that the laneway house and laneway housing in general affords.

A person living on their own does not necessarily want all the space, cost or upkeep of a single family home, especially as they are getting older. A

laneway house provides all the freedom of the single family home, without all the work. Hence this seemed the natural fit.

While this dictated the need of a laneway home, Fiona and Emily worked with Smallworks to lay out some other important design features that they wanted to see from the laneway house.





“We realized it needed to be small, but that didn’t mean it needed to be cramped” - Fiona, Owner

One of the design features that drove the project was the need to fit the context of the neighbourhood, while also providing an open, airy interior. They chose the openness of the interior in order to create space in a small home. Designing an

airy feel recognizes that the space is small, but doesn’t feel cramped. However, these open interiors traditionally come from the department of modernist home, a style which would not fit into Grandview Woodlands. The interior became a balancing act of providing a formal shape of a more traditional Edwardian home while also allowing for an open feeling in a small space. The result is a beautiful home that fits the style of Grandview Woodlands while

still giving itself ample interior space.

## Citations

### Text (Left):

Hamilton, Janet. In My Back Yard: A Back Lane Approach To Zoning And Density. Thesis, School of Architecture Landscape Architecture, University of British Columbia. ProQuest/UMI, 2006. Print.

City of Vancouver. Laneway Housing - How-to Guide. City of Vancouver. COV Online. [www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx). Updated: June 2013. Web. July 29th 2013.



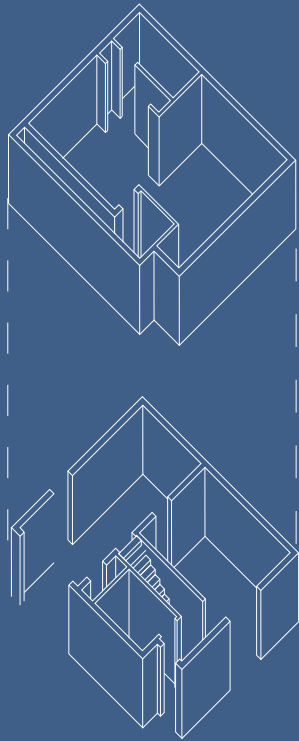
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## Further Reading

Illustration (Below):

Axonometric Drawing  
of the Lanehome





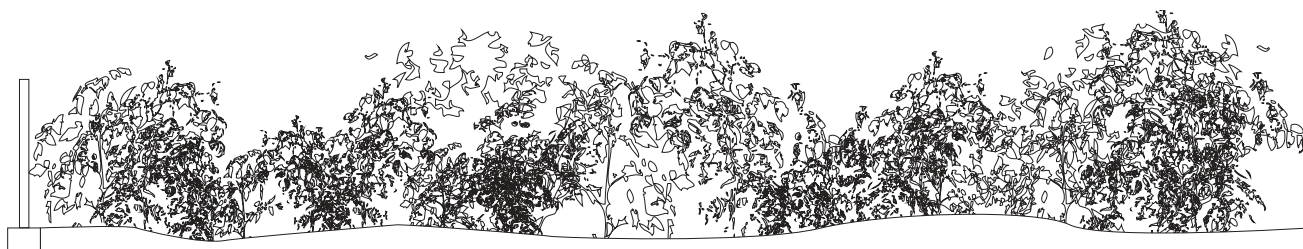


“It’s like walking into your own private garden every morning” - Christoff, Renter

This project accounted for site in a unique way. Often in the context of urban single family neighbourhoods, owners, builders and designers forget the idea that every place is at least partially defined by what it sits next to. In these neighbourhoods there is an

assumption that almost all homes simply fit into their slot in the block, not accounting for what is happening on their neighbouring properties. In the case of this project, what neighbours Fiona’s property to the west is a beautiful vegetable garden owned and maintained by an older Italian couple. This garden grows everything from zucchinis and grapes to sunflowers and marigolds. It breaks the usual style in Vancouver where the back yard is taken up by grass and a small garden. Instead

this garden makes up the whole of the backyard without a patch of grass in sight. As a result, this garden began an integral part of the design. With the patio doors facing out onto the garden and the proximity of the garden to the edge of the lanehome, the garden became an oasis in an urban context. It was one of the major selling points for Christoff, the current renter of the laneway home.



## Further Reading

### Smallworks

Smallworks specializes in the design and building of small homes and laneway houses. Since this is our primary focus we are able to provide expertise and innovation in the building of your small home.

For More Information Go To:

[www.metisdb.com](http://www.metisdb.com)

## Citations

Images (Left and Page Prior):

All images provided by Smallworks.



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## Further Reading

### The Peak's Height:

As a part of the code and zoning regulations placed on laneway homes, they have a maximum height that they may be built at. The standards are 12ft for a flat roofed design and 15ft for a peak. By allowing the extra three feet of space on the top of the lanehome, a more traditional style home is encouraged. A design with a peak becomes seen as slightly more favourable because of the added space and height, which makes the whole design of the laneway home feel more spacious.

### Citations

#### Images (Right):

All images provided by Smallworks.



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“The peak helped with giving our neighbours sun and keeping it in the style of Grandview Woodlands” - Fiona, owner

**T**he peak on this laneway home came about for two reasons, both of which were about fitting this project into the site of Grandview Woodlands. First, the peak design was derived from

shadow analysis studies. One of the major challenges in building this project was that the neighbouring garden needed natural sunlight to grow. The angle of the peak follows the path of the summer sun to allow for maximum light in the growing seasons. The project both benefitted from this amazing garden, as well as preserved it.

Second, the peak on houses is very common in older neighbourhoods like Grandview Woodlands.

Instead of going for a more modernist, flat-roofed design that is not common for the neighbourhood, they chose a structure referred to as “the Edwardian” by Smallworks. This style was chosen to maintain the visual consistency of the neighbourhood, while also increasing its density.

## Citations

### Images (Left):

All images provided by Small Works.

### Text (Left):

Hamilton, Janet. In *My Back Yard: A Back Lane Approach To Zoning And Density*. Thesis, School of Architecture Landscape Architecture, University of British Columbia. ProQuest/UMI, 2006. Print.

City of Vancouver. *Laneway Housing - How-to Guide*. City of Vancouver. COV Online. [www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx](http://www.vancouver.ca/home-property-development/laneway-houses-and-secondary-suites.aspx). Updated: June 2013. Web. July 29th 2013.



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## Further Reading

### Radiant Heat:

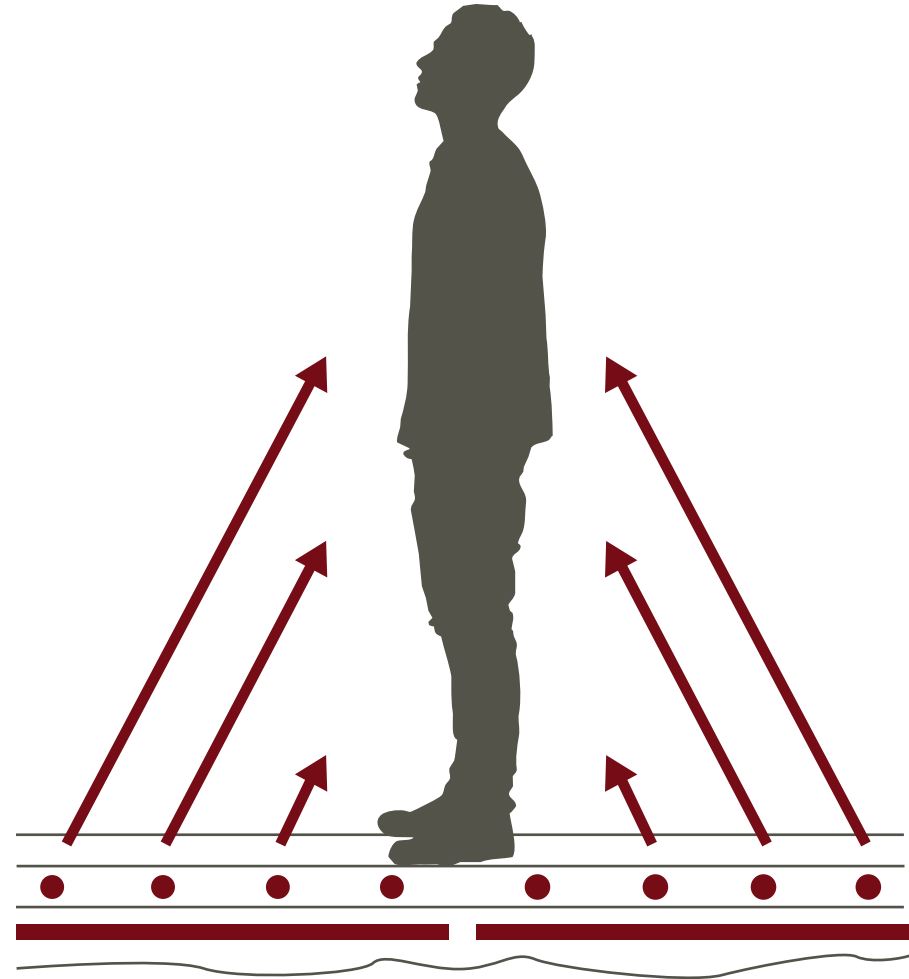
Radiant heat is the heat experienced directly on your skin. The ambient air temperature surrounding the body may be cooler, but you will still feel warm. It is a comfortable heat akin to something like a fireplace and is more energy efficient, however it does not respond as quickly as a forced air system.

## Citations

### Images (Right):

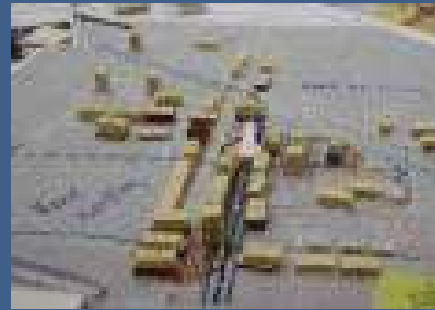
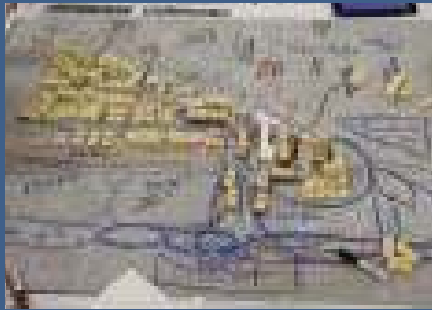
All images provided by Smallworks.

One of the major challenges with having such an open, airy design, is that heat would circulate in such a way that the main living quarters, downstairs would always be cool (heat rises to the peak and bedroom upstairs). To combat this effect the decision was made to heat the floors providing radiant heat from the floor, allowing the entire building to be heated. This wouldn't happen if something like a forced air system was used in its place. An unexpected but pleasant side effect, was that when the heat wasn't on in the summer months, these concrete floors, were quite cool, giving a nice temperature balance not only in winter, but on hotter days as well.



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## Further Reading

### The Grandview Woodlands Community Plan:

The Grandview Woodlands Community Plan is currently underway and through a series of feedback session, online forums and City Parks and meetings you can share your thoughts about the direction this community should be moving in.

## Citations

### Images, Diagrams and Text (Left):

City of Vancouver, Grandview woodlands Community Plan. City of Vancouver Planning Department, 2012. Web July 2013.



As stated earlier, the Grandview Woodlands neighbourhood is going through a process of updating their community plan. Through a series of community public consultations, the planning department is well on their way for finding a new plan that meets both the needs of the community while also supporting Mayor Gregor Robertson's 2020 Greenest City Goals. The Density of Grandview Woodlands and the city as a whole will undeniably increase. To function sustainably as a city Vancouver needs to look at its self sustainably in all senses

of the word: economically, socially and environmentally. Increasing density helps in all of these. While there has been significant push back from the residents of Grandview Woodlands to population rises particularly around hot spots like the Broadway Commercial Skytrain Station, along Nanaimo Street etc. the shape that these propositions have taken are fluid and changing. The plan looks not only to increase density in these hotspots, but throughout the entire neighbourhood, in subtle, simple and beautiful changes that preserve the character of this diverse neighbourhood



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