

Row Housing Design Analysis

Administration conducted an analysis of a variety of development permits approved in 2024 for row housing within the RS Zone to assess how these are currently designed and to identify areas for improvement. Administration focused on how row housing developments complied with the current design regulations to add visual interest and minimize the perception of scale of the development by using features such as:

- Variations in rooflines and vertical or horizontal wall projections or recessions;
- Visual breaks in building facades into smaller sections;
- Combinations of exterior finishing materials; or
- Main entrances that are covered and visually well defined

Through this review, Administration identified that the street facing facades associated with midblock row houses generally appeared to be less visually appealing and have less cohesive design features related to the placement and proportion of windows and exterior finishing materials than the facades often associated with houses oriented towards the street. The front facades of these midblock row houses appeared to resemble the side of a building facing the street.

As part of the One Year Review stakeholder interview participants shared feedback related to row housing, including concerns about:

- How new row housing developments were being integrated into their neighbourhoods.
- The appearance of midblock row housing, lack of design guidelines and consistent decision-making regarding building design.
- The lack of variety in building appearances.

In addition to the interviews, internal City staff highlighted concerns about site design for row housing, indicating that maximizing density sometimes results in unintended consequences for site functionality, such as staircases extending into the public boulevard or walkways that are too narrow to comfortably pass between buildings.