
Building and Suite Number Address Assignment

The requirements of Division C of the Building By-law provide provisions for building and suite number assignment. This bulletin expands upon the topic of building and suite number assignment and complements Bulletin 2015-005-BU “Addressing and Suite Numbering”.

Overview

The Building By-law (VBBL) obligates the Chief Building Official to designate building and suite numbers (addresses) in accordance with Division C, Article 1.5.2.18.

The City’s increasing densification stemming from complex building design has created greater challenges for address assignment. As the assignment of building and suite numbers is fundamental to ensuring prompt Emergency response (Fire, Police and Ambulance) and civic function, it is necessary to respond to these challenges by re-evaluating numbering guidelines provided to owners and developers; ensuring that buildings are assigned number arrangements capable of achieving the needs of the City and public safety now and into the future.

In addition, to help applicants successfully navigate through the address review process, we have provided detailed requirements for drawings, and transparency on our process for selecting Building numbers (address ranges).

General Address Assignment Principles

A minimum of one building number (address) is required for each above grade Building located on a site (excluding accessory buildings). The building number is selected based on the direct street¹ access to the primary building entrance that contains a principal use.

A series of building numbers (addresses) may be assigned for each above grade Building located on a site, if the building contains:

- More than one unit with a separate principal use;
- There is separate direct street access to each units’ primary entrance; and
- Provided numbering is available.

For sites with limited numbers available for address assignment, one building number will be assigned to each principal building with suite numbers matching the building level being assigned to the remaining units with a principal use.

Suite numbers are required for units that share a common lobby within a building; the number prefix for the suites needs to match the approved Building Level. Similarly, suite numbers for units within a residential building comprised of dwelling units that are accessed from a common lobby will be assigned with the prefix matching the approved Building Level. For example, suites will be assigned 100 series on the 1st level (e.g. Unit 101, Unit 102, Unit 103) and 200 series 2nd level (e.g. Unit 201, Unit 202, Unit 203). For buildings with dwellings units that are directly accessed from the street (e.g. townhomes on the 1st level of a residential tower), building numbers may be assigned for the units with direct street access.

¹ For the purposes of this document, the term *street* is assigned the same meaning as defined in the Building By-law.

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Each number will be selected based on the location of the primary entrance relative to its linear position on the street and the direct Street access (walkway). Both the location of the site within the 100 Block and the building numbers assigned to the adjacent sites will be considered to avoid confusion during wayfinding.

Where possible, addresses will be assigned with building numbers being omitted (leaving a gap in numbering) and sufficient so as to facilitate future development.

Drawing requirements for Building Permit Submittals

For City staff to review, assign and approve building and suite numbers, drawings must be submitted with the following:

- Clearly identify the primary building entrance, and each primary unit entrance, with direct street access (e.g. walkway); from the street to the primary entrance.
- Highlight the location of the principal fire department response, including the annunciator panel where present (if a Fire and Emergency response plan is available, please include it with your submission as well).
- Building numbers and suite numbers clearly indicated within the unit at the unit entrance on the floor plan. Only numeric numbering is acceptable (e.g. Unit 101); alphabetical designations (e.g. Unit A) or a combination of Alpha Numeric numbering (e.g. Unit 1A) is not permitted.
- For each additional entrance to “SHELL” space, clearly indicate all future Building numbers and suite numbers labelled “Future” within the future unit on the floor plan.
- Provide a site plan with all streets and lanes adjacent to the building and the north cardinal direction clearly identified, as well as the underground parking levels, all Building levels and roof plan.
- Building uses including amenity spaces in a mixed use building to be clearly labelled on the floor plans, and matching the “work descriptions” on the Development and Building Permits.

Guidelines used to determine Building numbers

To determine the building numbers (address range) to use for building and suite number assignment when proposing addresses on drawings, please consider the following guidelines:

- Identify the exact location of the entrance(s) on the hundred block. The selection of the number to be assigned is based on the location of the entrance(s) within the block and the building numbers assigned to the adjacent sites.
- “00” addresses are not acceptable. For example, drawings with 500 ABC Street would not be accepted and would need to be updated to clear the address review.
- East/West Addresses – shall run in series, commencing with the unit block and increasing in numeric value in a westerly direction from the west side of Ontario St or the west side of Carrall St and commencing with the unit block and increasing in numeric value in a easterly direction from the east side of Ontario St or the east side of Carrall St.
- North/South Addresses – shall run in series, commencing with the unit block and increasing in numeric value in a northerly direction from the north side of Dundas St and commencing with the unit block and increasing in numeric value in a southerly direction from the south side of Dundas St.
- Assign suite numbers to the residential units in apartment buildings using the following set of rules:
 - Amenity rooms do not receive a suite number assignment.
 - Suite numbers will be assigned with the prefix matching the approved Building Level.
 - Numbering starts from the left of the point of access, then increases in a clockwise fashion.
 - For the 1st storey, the access point is the lobby entrance.

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- For the 2nd storey and above, the access point is where one exits the passenger elevator. In the absence of a passenger elevator, the access point is at the top of the flight of stairs for that level.
- In consideration of possible future developments, leave numbering options on both sides of the parcel (when possible and logical). For example, if there are 5 addresses available between the parcel and the adjacent site, do not use the very next address, leave at least a two address gap. In addition, if a parcel is at the end of the block do not leave numbering options on the side closest to the end of the block.

Please note, building and suite numbers proposed on drawings that comply with VBBL regulations and addressing guidelines will be accepted, except in rare instances with extenuating circumstances. In these cases, or if some other deficiency is identified, staff will change the building and suite numbers and assign appropriate numbers in accordance with Division C, Article 1.5.2.18 of the VBBL.

Address Assignments for Fire Department Response Points or Secondary Doors

Request for civic address assignments solely for fire department response points are not supported unless there are extraordinary circumstance that would warrant an individual and separate address to be assigned. Addresses are assigned to primary entry doors that provide access to tenant spaces within a building. Secondary doors that provide access to the same tenant spaces shall not be assigned a separate address (e.g. door to parking garage, backdoors or similar). All unique addressing requests shall be made through the assigned Building Review Branch staff member, who will internally coordinate with Address Coordinators and Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services. A proposed plan and addressing rationale shall accompany this address request and a meeting may potentially be coordinated.

Address Assignment Principles for Specific Building Types (see Appendix for illustrations of each building type)Podium Buildings

Podium Buildings refers to towers sharing a common base structure. A subsidiary building number for each distinct structure with a primary use will be assigned. This may include a distinct building number for each tower with direct street access or multiple building numbers for each portion of a building with direct street access.

Stacked Buildings

Stacked Buildings refers to the arrangement of buildings within a complex such that the buildings are located on one site, and some are in front with direct street access, and others are behind them with a single point of direct street access. Addressing of buildings in a stacked configuration is based upon assigning separate building numbers for each unit within a building located at the front of the site (if numbers are available). One primary building number will be assigned for each building located at the rear with a single point of direct street access; suite numbers will be assigned to each suite within the building(s). The numbering is assigned from the street providing the direct street access to each structure on a site for emergency response.

Multiple Dwelling (Type – Rowhouse)

Rowhouse type buildings shall be assigned one building number and each dwelling unit forming a part of the building shall be assigned a suite number.

Dwelling Unit (Type – Townhouse unit)

A townhouse type dwelling unit forming a part of a multiple dwelling building shall be assigned a suite number associated to the building number that provides emergency response to that dwelling (townhouse) unit.

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Dwelling Unit (Type – Townhouse with primary entrance fronting and accessed from the flanking Public Lane)

A townhouse type dwelling unit with primary entrance fronting and accessed from the flanking Public Lane forming a part of a multiple dwelling building shall be assigned one primary building number and a suite number per the location of the access path from the flanking street.

Dual Access to Townhouse Units:

Townhouse units with dual access shall be assigned one primary building number at the principal entry providing emergency response. This is typically the entry facing the street or which most facilitates convenient and logical wayfinding on the site, and which satisfying the minimum requirements for emergency access as required by the Building By-law.

Dwelling Unit (Type – Ancillary / Associated)

All dwelling units including dwelling units ancillary to a building (guest suite), ancillary to a site (caretaker suite) or associated to a primary dwelling unit (secondary suite or Lock-off suite) shall be provided with a suite number.

Two-Family Dwelling without Ancillary Units

A Two Family Dwelling without ancillary units (secondary suites or lock offs), where each principal residence is accessed from the same street shall be assigned one primary building number and each dwelling unit forming part of the building shall be assigned a suite number. Two-Family Dwellings that are located on a corner or double fronting lot, where each principal residence is accessed from a differing street shall each be assigned a separate street address number.

Two-Family Dwelling with Ancillary Units

A Two Family Dwelling with Ancillary Units shall be assigned one street address number for each principal residence, and the ancillary units shall be assigned a suite number subordinate to the principal residence

Laneway House

A laneway house² will be assigned a suite number subordinate to the principal residence suite as if the laneway house formed a part of the principal residential building. Suite numbers assigned in this manner will be in a simple and logical manner that makes the location and relationship of each suite self-evident.

Vacant Land / Parking Lot

For Vacant Land, after the building is demolished, the original primary address for the land parcel will be retained, and all secondary addresses³ will be retired. A Development Permit is required if the site is to be used for parking after demolition.

Level designation and Suite Numbering

Level designation and Suite numbering is addressed in Bulletin 2015-005-BU “Addressing and Suite Numbering”.

Unusual Circumstances

In some instances existing building numbers along the roadway may prohibit the assignment of additional primary building numbers for a site or within a site. In these instances, it may be

² A laneway house refers to a building that complies with the requirements of Section 11.17 of the Zoning and Development By-law, that is subordinate to the a principal residential building and may not be strata titled, and that is constructed as ancillary residential building under the Building By-law.

³ Each lot is assigned a primary address. This is also known as the main address. Any other address(es) assigned to a suite on the lot, whether commercial or residential, is known as a secondary address.

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necessary to use unit numbers with the primary address number that has been assigned to the parcel, or the principle building that fronts the roadway. In such instances, it will be necessary to coordinate fire response plans, life safety equipment and facilities with the Vancouver Fire Rescue Services to address the needs of responders.

In the case of landlocked parcels, defined as a parcel not abutting a public or private street, it will be necessary to coordinate the building number assignment with the Building Review Branch and Vancouver Fire Rescue Services. A landlocked parcel will require a special set of addressing guidelines and those needs will be coordinated on a case by case basis.

If you have comments or concerns related to the information provided in this bulletin, please contact the Chief Building Official's office or email: cbo@vancouver.ca

(Original Signed by)

(Original Signed by)

S. Schwebs, Architect AIBC
Chief Building Official and Director
Building Policy, Inspections and Bylaw
Services

K. Lau, P.Eng., CP
Manager, Building Policy Branch

Appendix

Illustrations for Specific Building Types:

1. [One Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite and Laneway House – Corner Lot #1](#)
2. [One Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite and Laneway House – Corner Lot #2](#)
3. [One Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite and Laneway House – Located in the Middle of the Block or With the Same Access to All Units](#)
4. [One Family Dwelling and Laneway House – Double Fronting Lot](#)
5. [Low Density Multi Residential Building Site](#)
6. [Two Family Dwelling – Front and Back](#)
7. [Two Family Dwelling – Side by Side](#)
8. [Two Family Dwelling with One Secondary Suite – Front and Back](#)
9. [Two Family Dwelling with Two Secondary Suites – Front and Back](#)
10. [Two Family Dwelling with Two Secondary Suites – Side by Side](#)
11. [Residential Tower – Level 1](#)
12. [Residential Tower – Level 2](#)
13. [Podium Building – Level 1 – Lobby & Retail](#)
14. [Podium Building – Level 2 – Office](#)
15. [Podium Building – Level 3 – Office](#)
16. [Podium Building – Level 4 – Residential & Office](#)
17. [Commercial Building – Level 1](#)
18. [Commercial Building – Level 2](#)
19. [Commercial Building – Level 3](#)
20. [Commercial Building – Level 4](#)
21. [Mixed Use – Level 1](#)
22. [Row Townhouses – Level 1](#)
23. [Row Townhouses – Level 2](#)
24. [Row Townhouses – Level 3](#)
25. [Stacked Townhouses – Level 1](#)
26. [Stacked Townhouses – Level 2](#)
27. [Stacked Townhouses – Level 3](#)

One Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite
& Laneway House - Corner Lot #1



**Please note that "named lanes" are not included in these examples, because lanes are not suitable for fire and emergency response, and therefore addressing. The only double-fronted lots that will be addressed to the rear/side are ones that face two actual streets.*

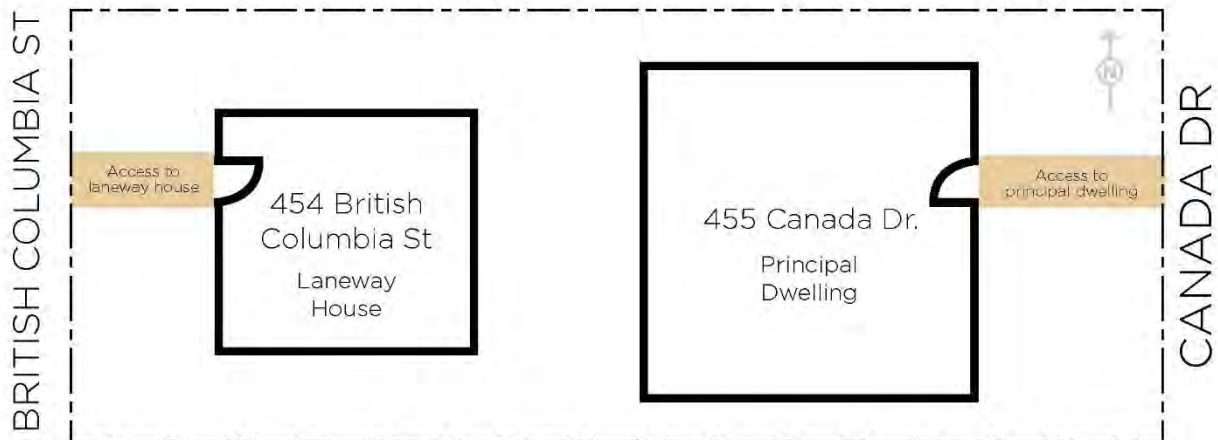
One Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite
& Laneway House - Corner Lot #2



One Family Dwelling with Secondary Suite & Laneway House
- Located in the Middle of the Block or With the Same Access to All Units



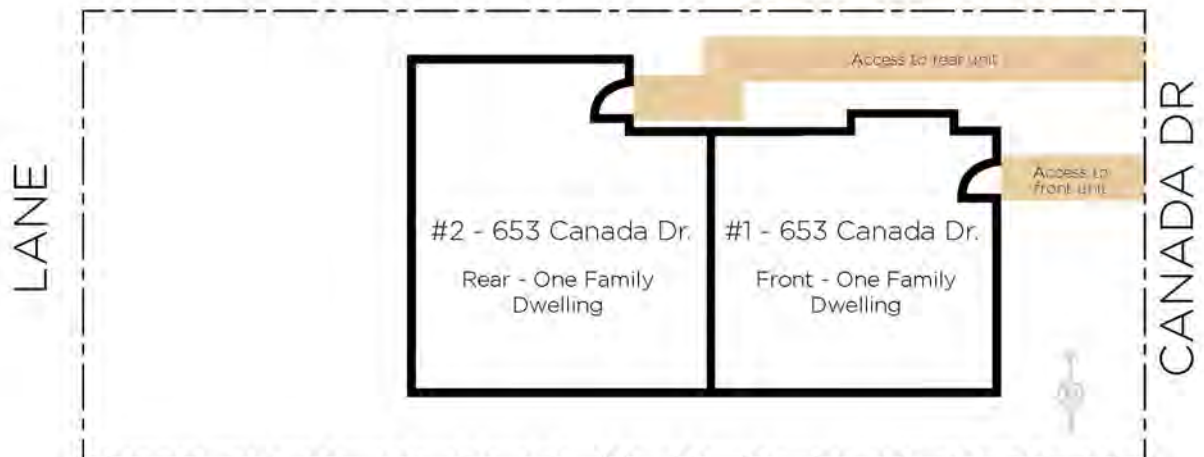
One Family Dwelling & Laneway House
- Double Fronting Lot



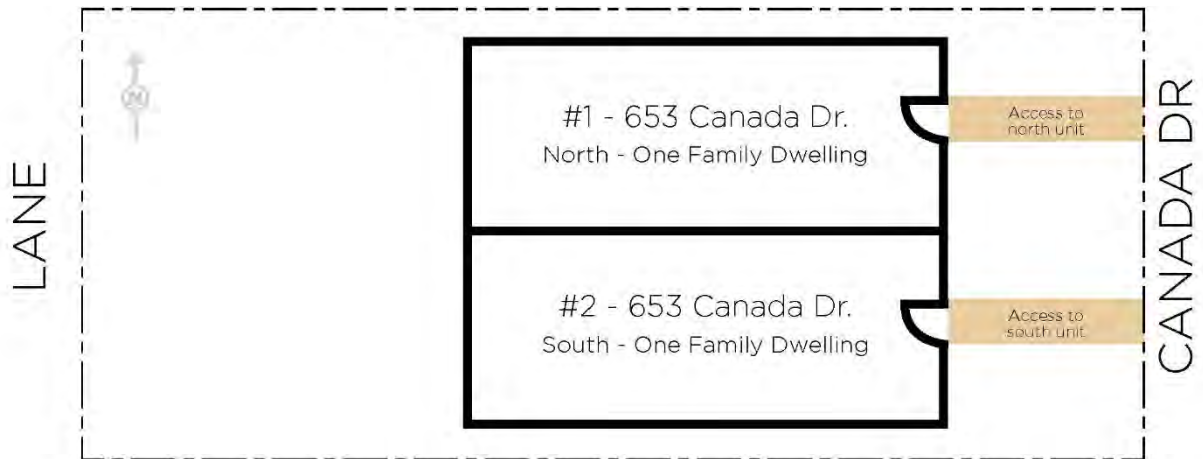
Low Density Multi-Residential Building Site



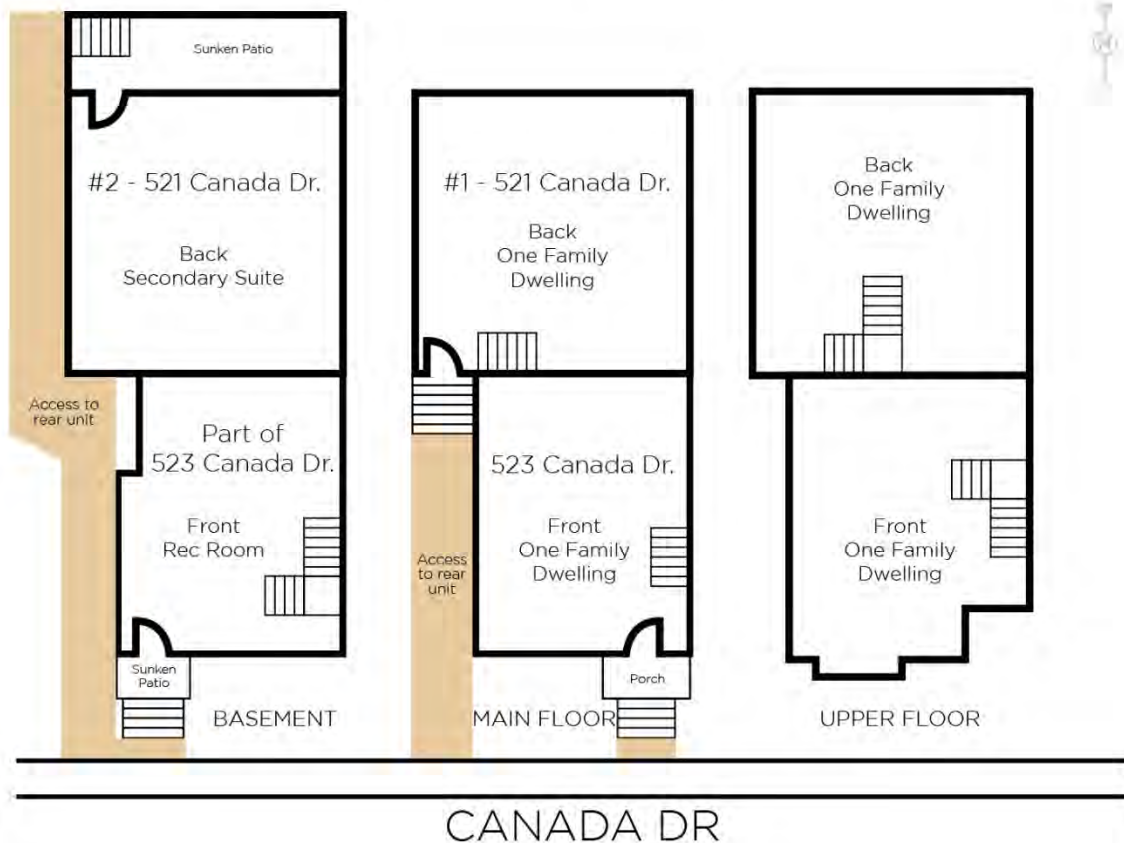
Two Family Dwelling - Front & Back



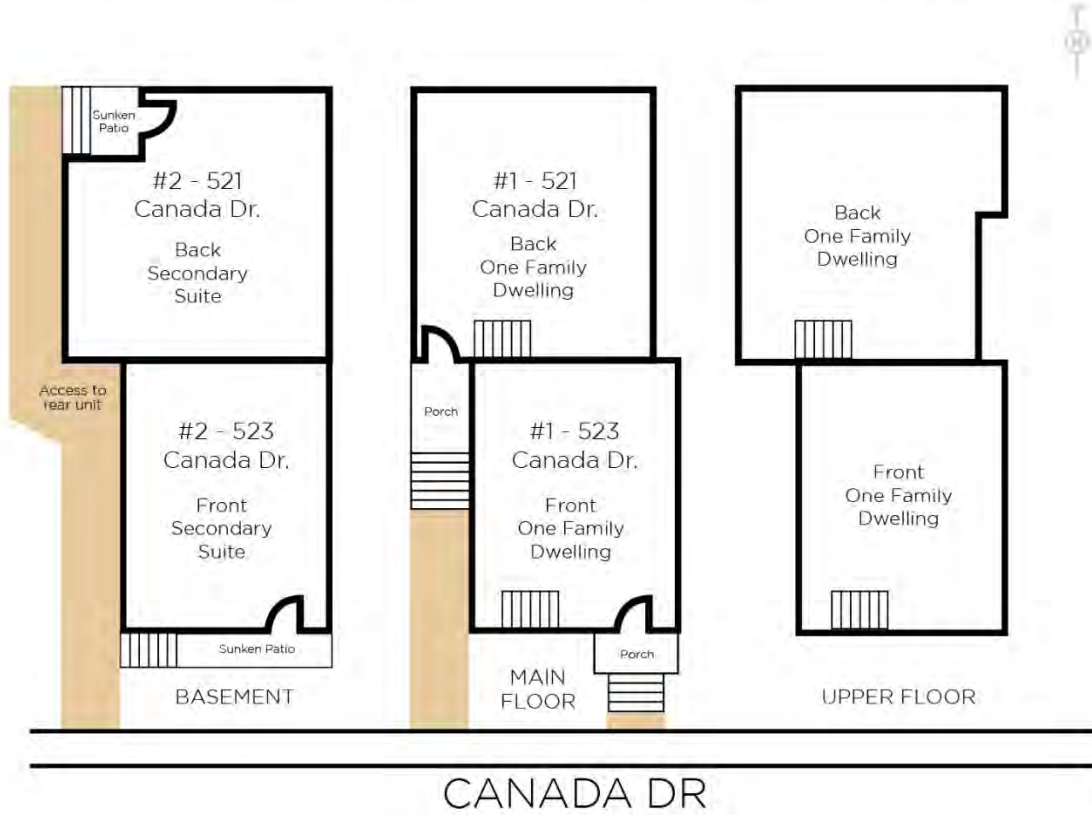
Two Family Dwelling - Side by Side



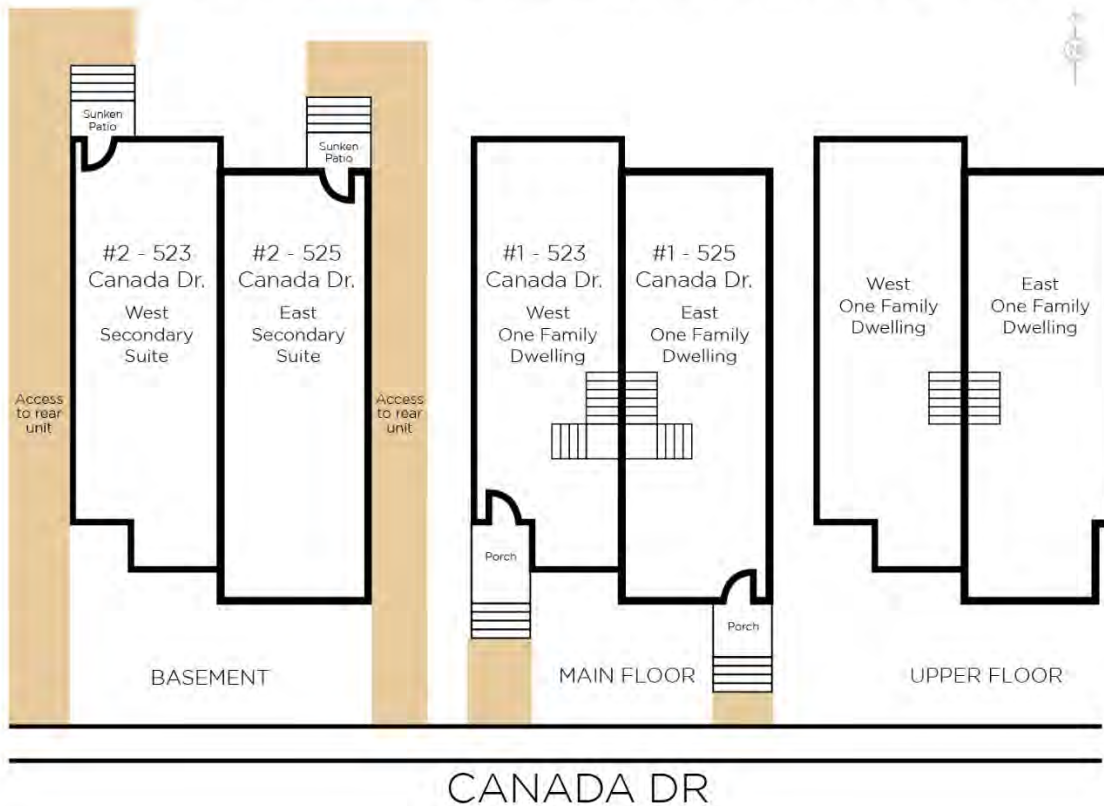
Two Family Dwelling with One Secondary Suite - Front and Back



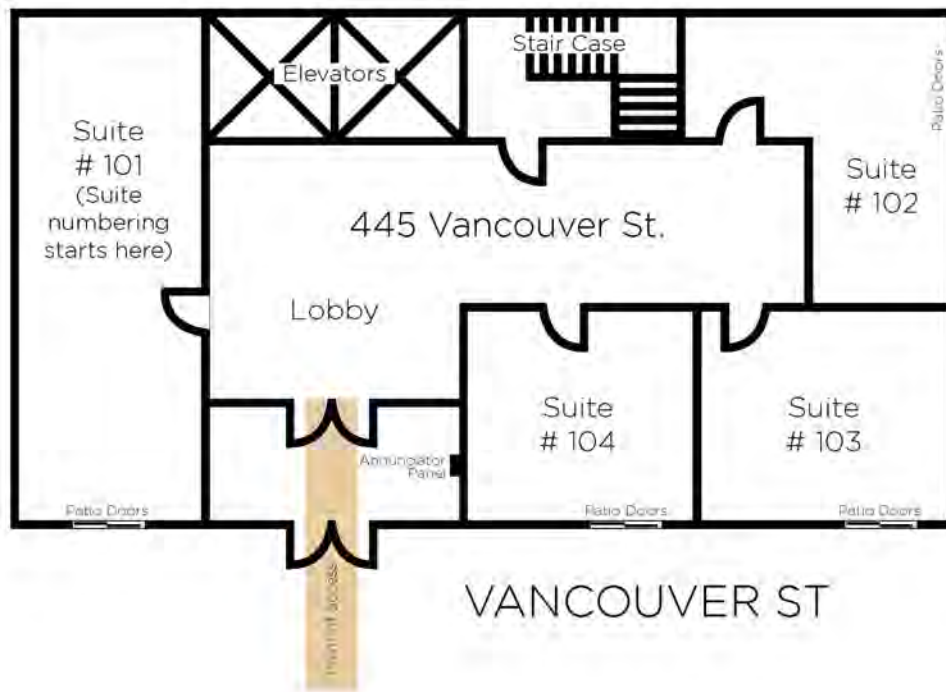
Two Family Dwelling with Two Secondary Suites – Front and Back



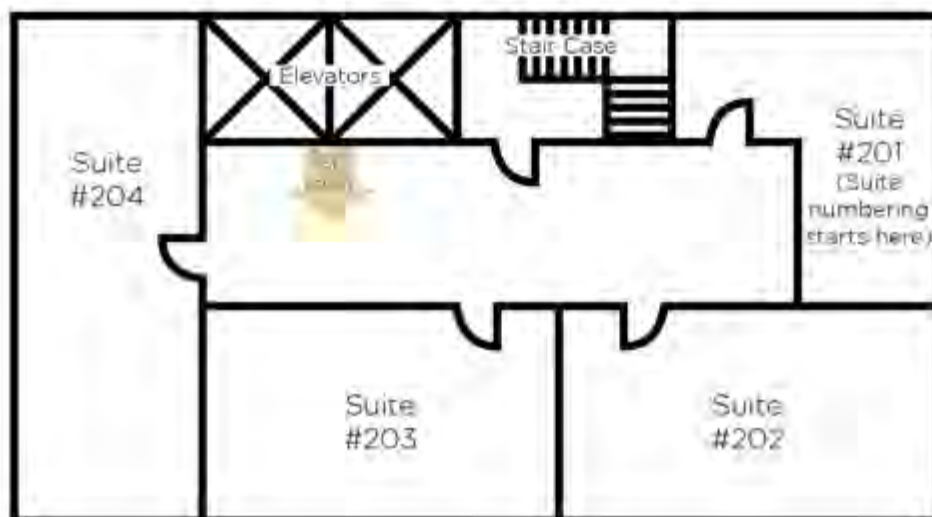
Two Family Dwelling with Two Secondary Suites – Side by Side



Residential Tower
Level 1



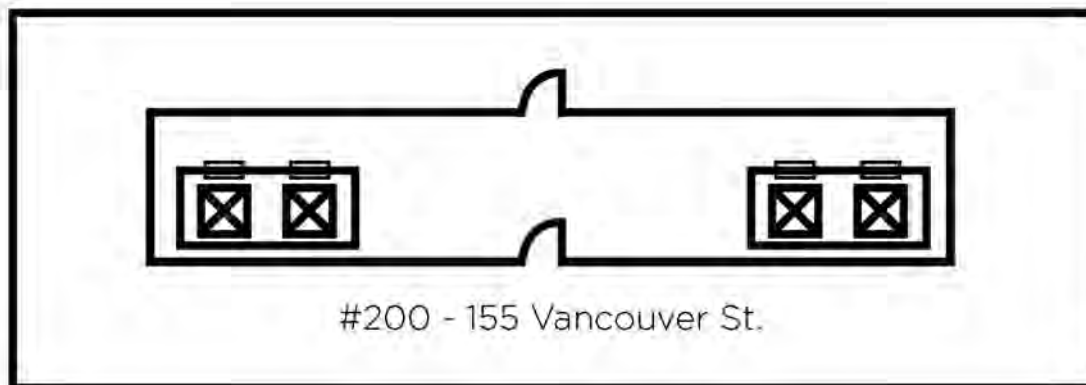
Residential Tower
Level 2



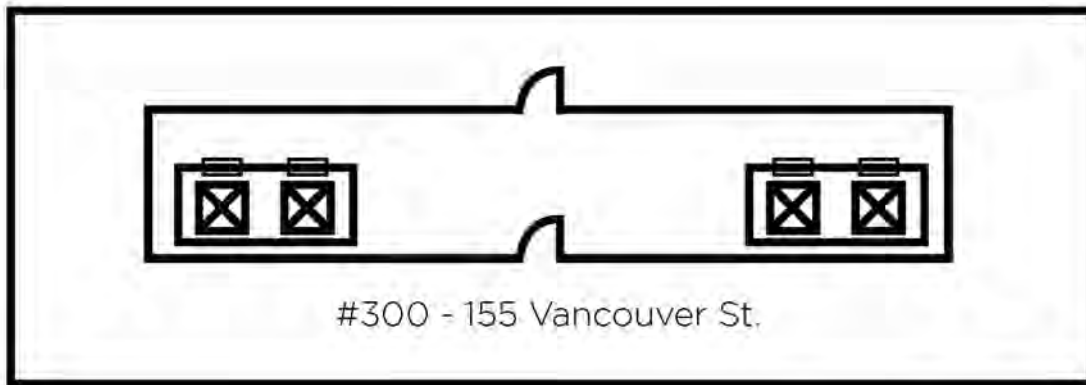
Podium Building
Level 1



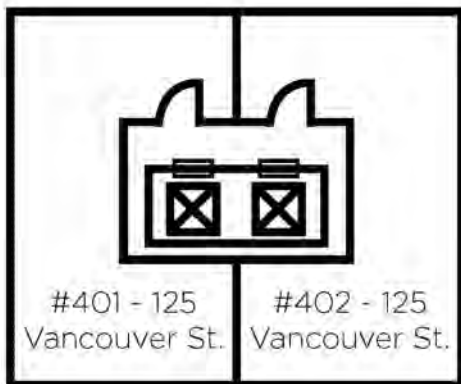
Podium Building
Level 2 - Office



Podium Building
Level 3 - Office



Podium Building
Level 4 - Residential & Office

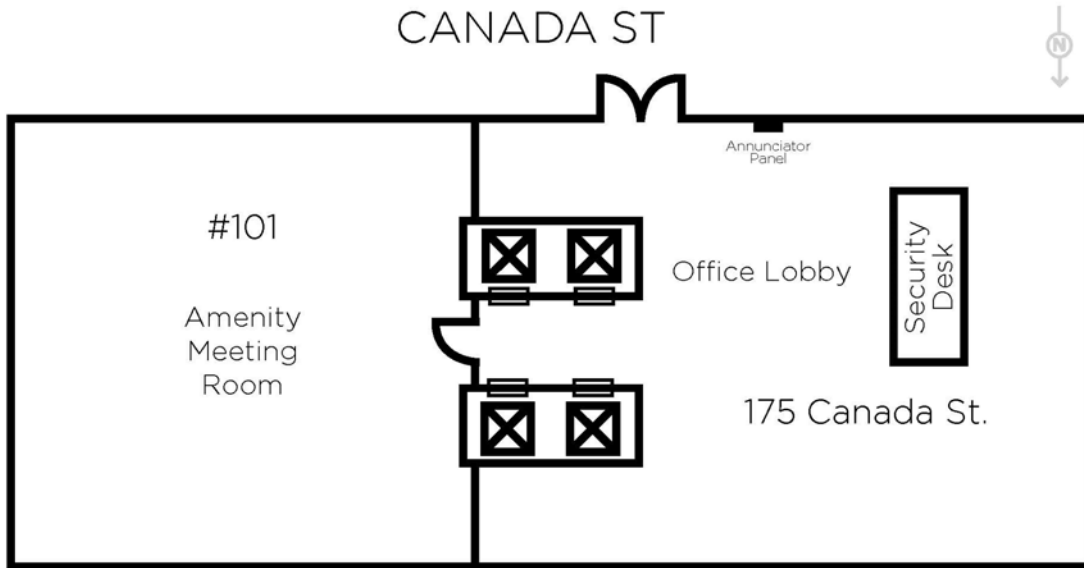


Residential Tower

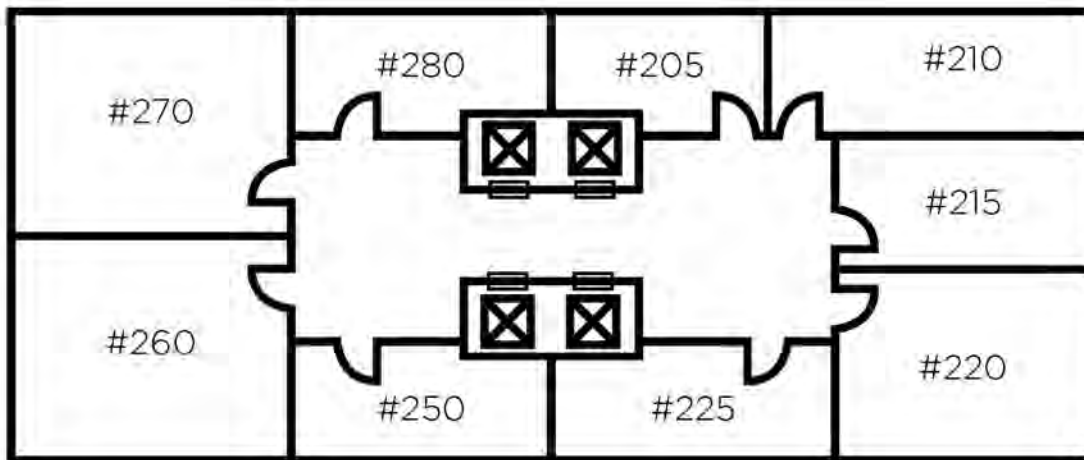


Commercial Office Tower

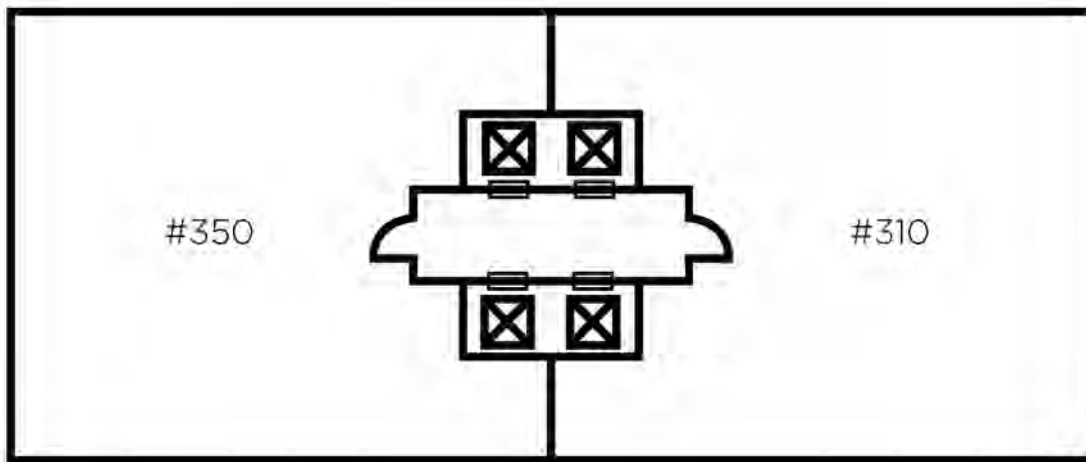
Commercial Building
Level 1



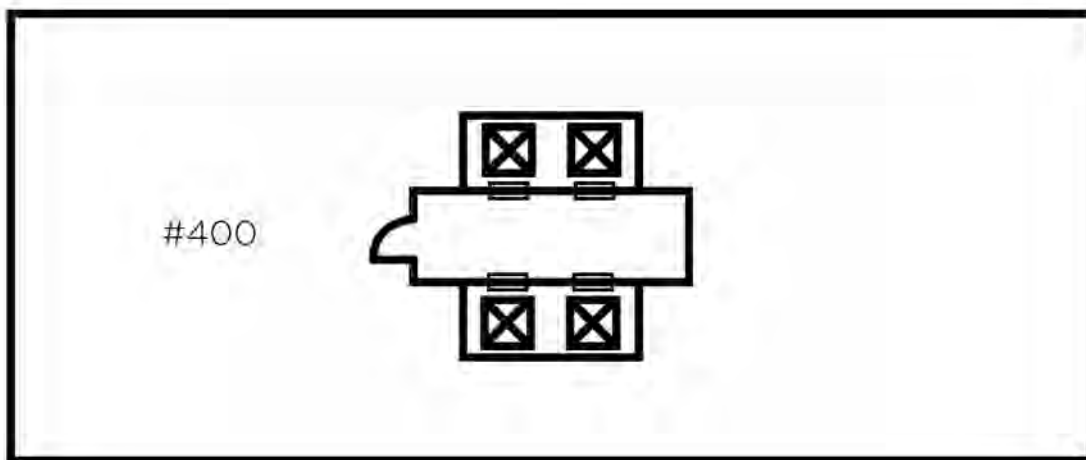
Commercial Building
Level 2

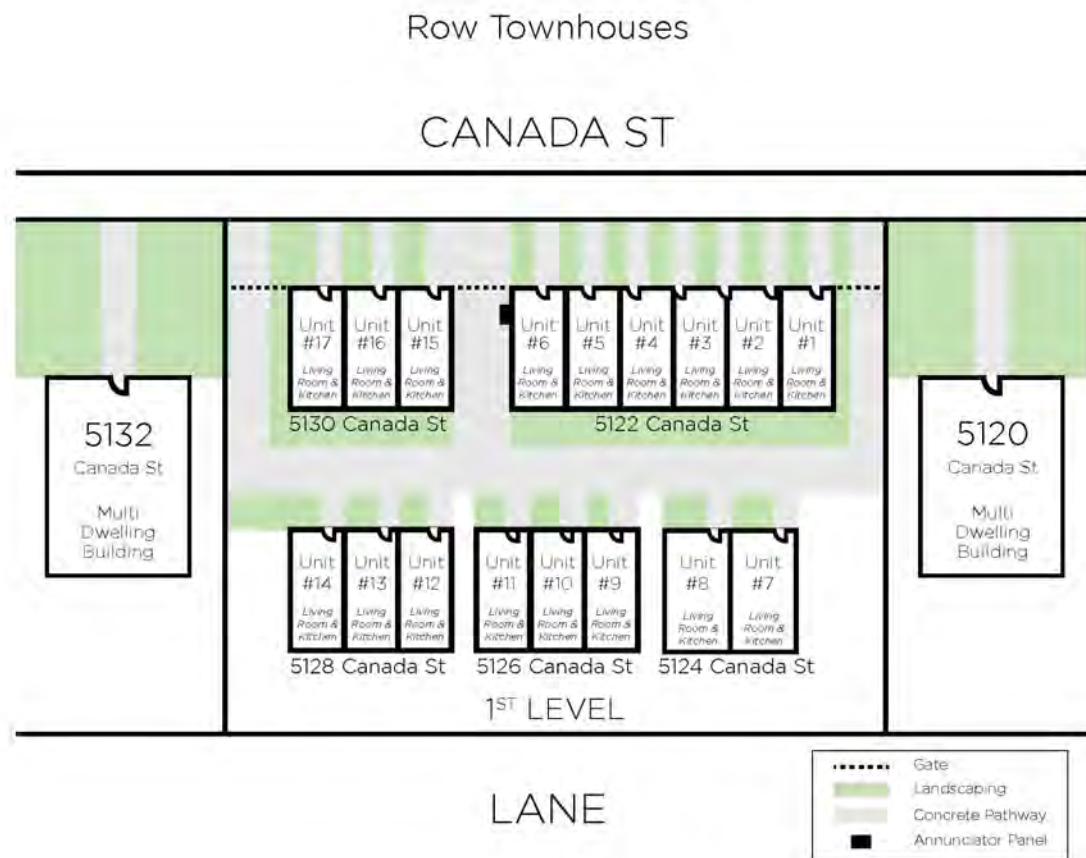
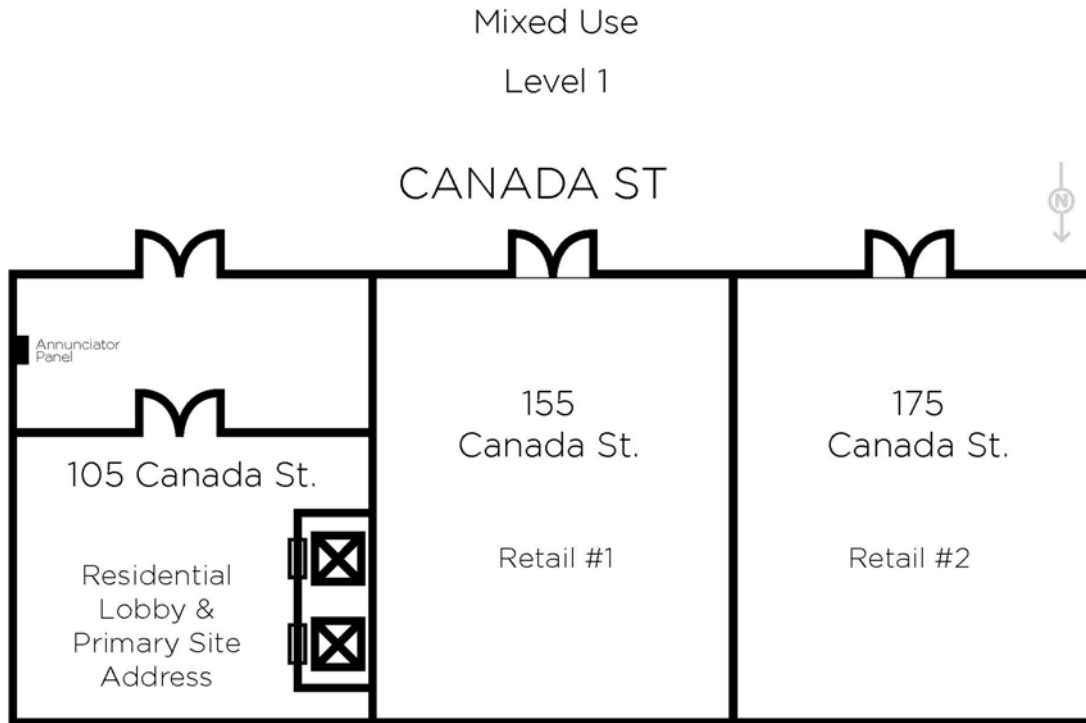


Commercial Building
Level 3



Commercial Building
Level 4





Row Townhouses

CANADA ST



5130 Canada St



5122 Canada St



5128 Canada St



5126 Canada St



5124 Canada St

2ND LEVEL

Row Townhouses

CANADA ST



5130 Canada St



5122 Canada St



5128 Canada St



5126 Canada St

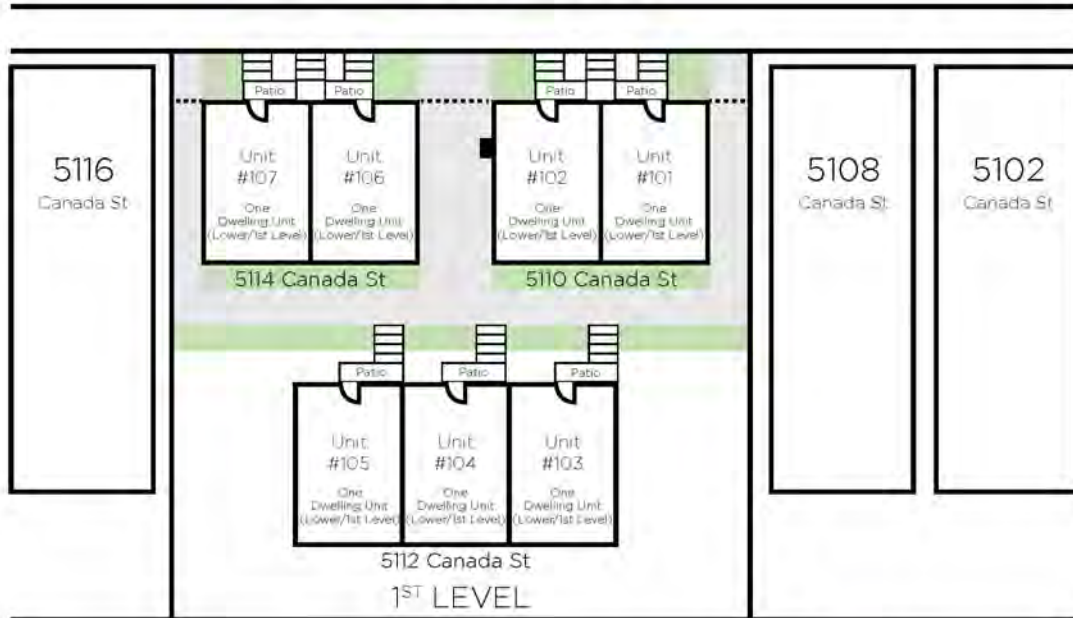


5124 Canada St

3RD LEVEL

Stacked Townhouses

CANADA ST

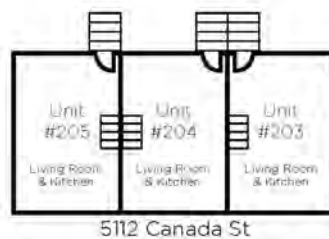


LANE



Stacked Townhouses

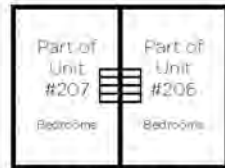
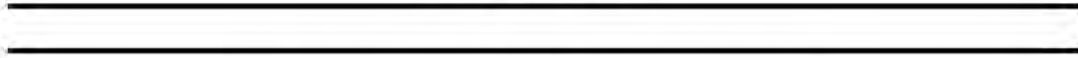
CANADA ST



2ND LEVEL

Stacked Townhouses

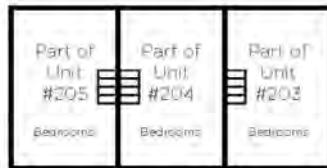
CANADA ST



5114 Canada St



5110 Canada St



5112 Canada St

3RD LEVEL