

# STREETSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS (SCA) MANUAL



A Streetscape Character Analysis is required for development, or an addition in the front, side or corner side yard, or for a private approach, in the area covered by the Mature Neighbourhoods zoning overlay



In the Mature Neighbourhoods, “*Your street gives you your rules*”. In addition to the regular zoning that applies to your property, certain rules are based on your streetscape. To determine all your zoning requirements and permissions, a Streetscape Character Analysis is required.

A Streetscape Character Analysis (SCA) must be completed and confirmed prior to any development application review process in the Mature Neighbourhoods. Only those proposed developments, which are compatible with and reinforce the look along the street, are permitted.

The SCA determines certain zoning requirements for residential development of four storeys or less, for all of the following applications on properties located on lots in an **R1, R2, R3, or R4** zone within the Mature Neighbourhoods Overlay:

- Building Permit, for any development of, or additions to, a residential use building that is visible from the street
- Consent for severance, Minor Variance to the Committee of Adjustment
- Permission to expand or change a legal non-conforming use only if expansion includes alterations to the exterior of the dwelling that alters the front or corner side yard, the driveway, parking, or removing the front door from facing the street
- Site Plan Control
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Private Approach Permit, for a new or the widening of a curb cut leading to a driveway or parking space from a public street

It does not apply to:

- Mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, or non-residential buildings
- A dwelling that does not provide on-site parking AND has its front door directly facing the street
- Internal changes to a dwelling that do not result in exterior changes visible from the street
- Dwellings that front on a private way and not on a public street
- Additions that do not abut or extend into the front yard or corner side yard
- Accessory buildings to be located in the rear yard
- A lot in a Plan of Subdivision that faces a new public street

*If you are unsure as to whether your proposal requires a Streetscape Character Analysis, please contact staff at 311 or by leaving an email at [sca-apr@ottawa.ca](mailto:sca-apr@ottawa.ca).*

This manual has been prepared to assist any person who wishes to develop a new residential use building or make exterior changes that are visible from the street, and as such, has been written in plain language. For exact wording, please see Section 140 of *Zoning By-law 2008-250*. Where there may be any discrepancy, the By-law takes precedence.

# HOW TO COMPLETE A STREETSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS

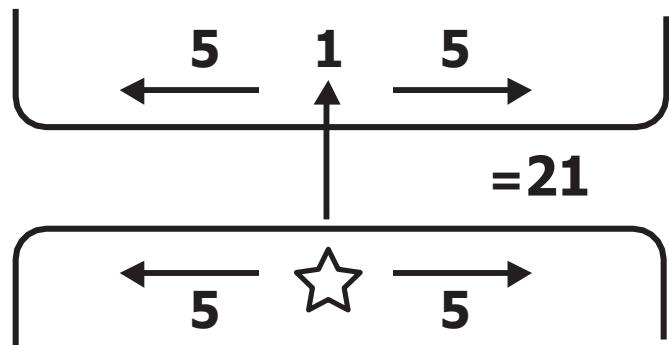
## STEP 1: Determine extent of your streetscape

- Tools you need: geoOttawa + properties layer (see page 7)

What is “a streetscape”? Ottawa’s zoning defines it as the 21 lots around your lot, along your street. To determine the streetscape that you have to document, use [maps.ottawa.ca/geoOttawa/](http://maps.ottawa.ca/geoOttawa/) to locate your property, then use the properties layer to see all the lots along your street.

On a basic level, the By-law says to count 5 lots to the right and 5 lots to the left of yours, then one across the street, then 5 to the right and 5 to the left of the lot across the street, all of which are located on the same block.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(b)*



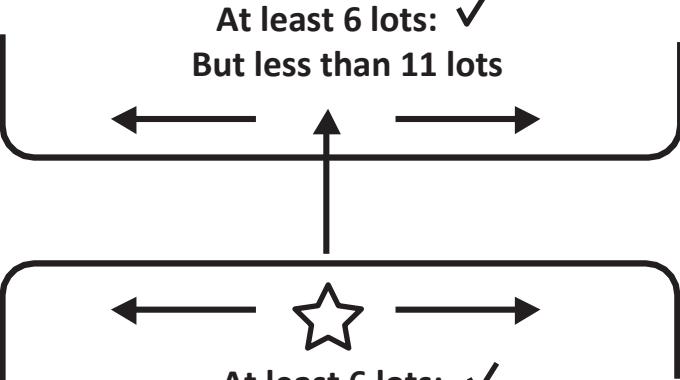
If your lot is closer to an intersection, the By-law says to stay within your block to get to 21 lots without crossing intersections. You might then have 2 to the left and 8 to the right of yours, and 3 to the left and 7 to the right of the lot across the street.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(b)*



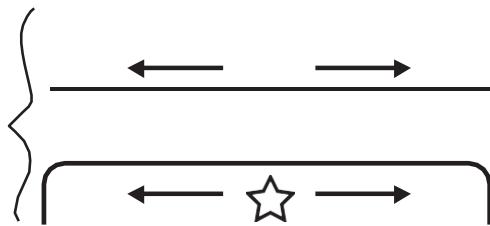
Where your lot is located on a block between two intersections where the total number of lots on both sides of the street is less than 21, but there are at least 6 lots (including yours) but less than 11 lots on your side of the street and at least 6 lots but less than 11 lots on the opposite side, the total is deemed to be sufficient.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(c)*



If your lot is on a block between two inter-sections where the total number of lots on both sides of the street is less than 21 but more than 11, documenting all lots on the block on both sides of the street is deemed to be sufficient.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(d)(i)*



Total number of lots on your block, on both sides of the street, is at least 12 lots but less than 21

If your lot is on a block [between two inter-sections] where there are at least 11 lots on your side of the street, and across the street there are no residential uses at all, then documenting all of the lots on your side of the street is deemed to be sufficient.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(d)(ii)*

Park / Vacant / River / Non-Residential



At Least 11 lots:

5 or fewer lots



5 or fewer lots

If there are 5 or fewer lots on your block, on your side of the street and/or across the street, and there are 5 or more lots on either side of the same street beyond either intersection, go beyond one intersection on either side to get to 21 lots.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(e)(f)*

Fewer than 21 lots on this block



DEAD END



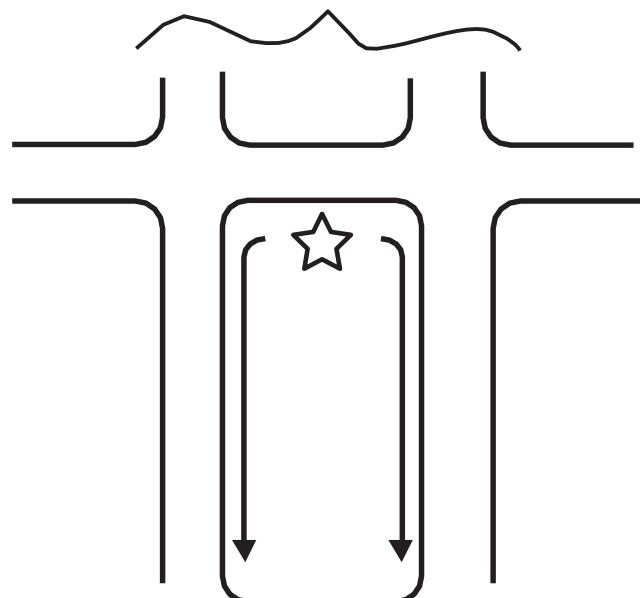
If your street dead-ends at the end of your block, but has one or more blocks in the other direction, and that block has more than 5 but less than 21 lots, you are required to go beyond the intersection to document lots to get to 21 lots.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(g)*

If your block has 5 or fewer lots, or contains lots with dwellings that face a street other than yours then stay within your block and get to 21 lots on the side streets.

*By-law reference: 140(6)(h)*

**Fewer than 5 lots or contains lots with dwellings that face a street other than yours**

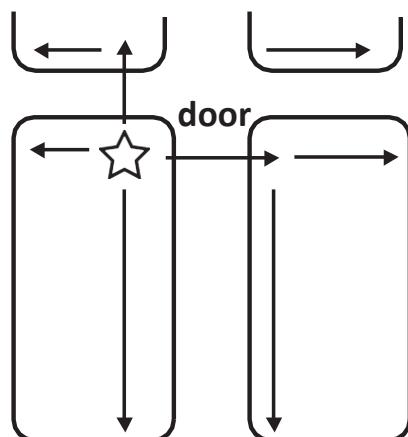


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If you are on a corner lot and are proposing a building with dwellings that front on each of the two streets, you must document both streetscapes using two separate Forms (21 lots fronting on the same street as the main door of your lot, and 11 lots fronting on the same street as your lot's corner side lot line).

*By-law reference: 140(6)(k)*

**11 lots on both sides**



# HOW TO DOCUMENT YOUR STREETSCAPE

On the reverse side of the **Streetscape Character Analysis Form** (at the end of this manual and also available at [www.ottawa.ca](http://www.ottawa.ca) and at Client Service Centres), there is a large rectangular space for you to draw the street and lot pattern of your streetscape that must show lot addresses. An example of such drawing is shown below, using a complex lot pattern. Only use lots that are facing the same street as yours.

On this drawn example:



- Identify your property with a star or similar mark
- Include all street names
- Write down the street address of all the properties (lots) that you document
- You may also wish to use a highlighter pen to identify the 21-lot area that you are documenting.

In the above example, the streetscape has a total of 17 lots: five to the right, five to the left, one across the street, four to the right and two to the left of the one across the street.

Where townhouses or stacked townhouses exist, you must look on [maps.ottawa.ca/geoOttawa/](http://maps.ottawa.ca/geoOttawa/) first to determine whether they are all located on one lot or whether they are severed and located on individual lots. Where they are located on one lot only, all of the townhouses count as one lot only, because the character to be documented is of the 21 (or fewer) lots.

# HOW TO USE GEOOTTAWA

To access the City of Ottawa online map, go to [maps.ottawa.ca/geoOttawa/](http://maps.ottawa.ca/geoOttawa/) and follow these steps:

1. Type your complete address including Street, Avenue, etc. into the search bar at the top where it states “Enter Address, street, intersection or place.”  

2. The pop-up information will show your zone code (e.g. R4V). The Zone Code will tell you what kind of dwelling you may build, the yard setbacks, and the maximum height permitted.
3. Go to the top Right and click on “More layers...”  

4. Click the box next to “Property Parcels”. This will show you the property lines and help determine which lots to include in the 21-lot SCA. See Pages 2-3 for variations where there are fewer than 21 lots adjacent to your site. Zoom in until you see addresses and mark down the address numbers on the SCA Form in your drawing of each lot that is to be documented in the SCA Form.
5. You are required to check three elements for each building in your streetscape to complete the SCA form:
  - a. Whether or not they contain an attached garage or carport facing the street;
  - b. Whether or not driveways exist, and the type of driveway (single-wide, double-wide, or shared); and
  - c. Whether or not they contain front doors facing the street.
6. You can use airphotos to assist you in determining the above. By toggling the “Base Maps/Aerial Maps” slider on the top-right of the screen (as shown in the picture above), it is possible to view airphotos of the street and properties. Make sure the “Property Parcels” layer is active (see Step 4) so that you can see property lines at the same time as the airphoto.
7. Note that geoOttawa also has access to Google Streetview, to provide a street-level view of properties along the streetscape, which can help you determine the presence or absence of the aforementioned features. To access Streetview, click on the Streetview logo on the left-hand side, and then click on the street you wish to review.
8. Note that you **must take photographs of each of the lots that you are documenting** in the Streetscape Character Analysis Form. Photographs are to be submitted with the SCA Form. Make sure to show the street sign name as part of your photos to confirm the location of the photos. Note that Google Streetview photos may be used, where taken within the previous two years.

# HOW TO FILL OUT THE SCA FORM

## STEP 2: Documenting the Character of the Streetscape

### “YOUR STREET GIVES YOU YOUR RULES”

The key idea is to look around you, on the street where you are proposing to build something new (either an infill house or an addition that is visible from the street). The first consideration, and the top job for your architect, is “how can I build something that fits into, respects and reinforces the established character of my street – even if the new house or addition ends up being architecturally unique, original, or creative?”

The Streetscape Character Analysis **does not** regulate the permitted architectural style of a building, nor does it affect features such as the materiality of the building. This process sets out three key streetscape attributes that the City regulates to ensure that streetscape character is maintained and strengthened in our Mature Neighbourhoods. Those are: front-facing attached garages, parking and driveways, and the location of the main entrance to the dwelling.

The dominant character, on your streetscape for each of (1) front facing attached garages, (2) parking and driveways, and (3) the main entrance to the house, **affects your zoning rules**. To find out what the zoning allows you to do, you must first establish what the dominant character is for each of the three attributes named above.

On the Streetscape Character Analysis Form, located at the end of this Manual and at the City’s Guide to Preparing Studies and Plans online at [www.ottawa.ca](http://www.ottawa.ca), you will have written the address of all the lots that make up the streetscape (the lots that correspond to the situations described in Step 1). Also write the address of your property, which is the one identified by a star. Where a street intersects, draw a thick line after the lot that ends the block (figure 6).

In the first section (Attached Garages and Carports), document whether or not each of the lots in your streetscape contain a front-facing garage or carport attached to the principal building. On Table 1 of the SCA Form, add up how many lots contain a front-facing attached garage and how many do not contain an attached garage, in accordance with Table 140A. The most prevalent Character Group (the one with the most occurrences) determines if an attached garage is permitted.

In the second section (Access and Parking Character), document the type of driveway (e.g. single, double, shared), if any found on each of the lots that make up your streetscape, using the types listed and illustrated below and as described in Table 140B of the Zoning By-law. In the Access and Parking Character Table, add up how many lots fall within each of the patterns from each of the Character Groups that are present on the streetscape. The most prevalent group (the one with the most occurrences) sets out the type of driveways permitted.

In the third section (Main Door Character), document the type of main entranceway to the houses found on each of the lots that make up your streetscape, using the types listed and illustrated below and as described in Table 140C of the Zoning By-law. In the Main Door Character Table, add up how many of the patterns from each of the Character Groups are present on the streetscape. The most prevalent group (the one with the most occurrences) is your main entranceway requirement.

# IDENTIFYING CHARACTER:

What elements of "character" does this regulate?

What are the Character Groups?

## Front-Facing Attached Garages

An attached garage may ONLY be provided where they shown to be a dominant Character Group on your streetscape. Where such is not permitted, an alternative parking configuration may be provided where consistent with the dominant Parking and Driveways Character Group (see Page 10). There are TWO Character Groups defined in the By-law for this category.

### GROUP A: No front-facing attached garage or carport



The building does not include an attached garage or carport facing the street. Parking, if provided, is in the side yard, rear yard, or within either a rear yard detached garage or attached garage that is not facing the street.

### GROUP B: Front-Facing Attached Garage or Carport



The building includes an attached garage or carport that faces the street.

# Parking and Driveways

The parking and driveway access you provide, whether by choice or to meet a requirement, may ONLY be provided if it is of a type consistent with the Character Group that is most prevalent on your streetscape. Parking is not required for residential buildings of up to 12 dwelling units. For buildings with more than 12 units, parking is required and calculated on the basis of the total number of units minus the first 12. There are FOUR Character Groups defined in the By-law:

## GROUP A: No driveways along lot lines abutting a street



There is no driveway within the front or corner side yard.

*Note: If Group A is the most commonly occurring, but the total number of Group B and Group C lots outnumber Group A, then Group B is deemed to be the dominant character.*

## GROUP B: Individual single-wide driveways and/or shared driveways



A driveway wide enough to accommodate a **single vehicle** may be provided, or a driveway **shared** between two abutting properties may be provided.

## GROUP C: Individual double-wide driveways



A driveway wide enough to accommodate two vehicles side-by-side may be provided.

## GROUP D: Legally-established front yard parking



A parking space may be provided within the front yard.

*Note: Front yard parking is prohibited. Group D will only be confirmed as dominant where legally established front yard parking spaces are demonstrated to be a dominant characteristic.*

## Driveways

If your property is on a streetscape in Character Group A, you are not allowed a driveway from the street. If your property is on a streetscape in Character Groups B, C or D, the following are the MAXIMUM permitted widths for driveways.

Note that despite the below driveway widths, no driveway access is permitted via a front yard in Character Group A. A double driveway is not permitted where in Character Group A or B.

If Character Group A is the most commonly occurring characteristic, but the total number of lots in Character Groups B and C combined outnumber those in Group A, then the dominant characteristic is deemed to be Character Group B and a single driveway is permitted.

For lot widths, or in the case of dwelling unit parcels that are not severed, for street frontage widths, of	Maximum width, shared driveway	Maximum width, single driveway	Maximum width, double driveway
6 m or less	3.0 m	Not permitted	Not permitted
Greater than 6 m to less than 7.5 m	3.0 m	2.6 m	Not permitted
7.5 to less than 8.25 m	3.0 m	2.75 m	Not permitted
8.25 to less than 15 m	3.0 m	3.0 m	Not permitted
15 m to less than 18 m	3.0 m	3.0 m	5.5 m
18 m and more	3.0 m	3.0 m	6.0 m

Where front yard parking is proposed (Character Group D), it must be demonstrated that the existing front yard parking spaces along the streetscape have been legally established. The onus is on the applicant to undertake the legal research, and pay any applicable fees, associated with establishing the legal status of a front yard parking space.

## Main door

The main entrance to your house should be visible from the street. However, where the dominant Character Group on your streetscape represents main entrances that do not face the street, then such is also permitted. There are TWO Character Groups defined in the By-law:

### GROUP A: Main door facing the street



The principal entranceway into the house either faces the front lot line, or is part of a “permitted projection” (such as a porch) but doesn’t face the front lot line.

### GROUP B: Main Door does not face the street



The principal entranceway into the house in the middle does not face the street.

# WHAT IS A “DOMINANT” CHARACTER?

The By-law defines “dominant” as being “the most frequently occurring”.

For example, in a 21-lot Streetscape Character Analysis,

- A Character Group that is present on 11 lots is the most frequently occurring;
- If there are 7 lots in Group B, 6 lots in Group C and 6 lots in Group D, then the dominant Character would be Group B.

In a Streetscape Character Analysis where there is a **tie between two Character Groups**, then both Groups are deemed to constitute the dominant character of that streetscape and any pattern from either is permitted, except in those instances where the pattern itself must be the most prominent.

In a Streetscape Character Analysis where there is a **three-way tie between three Character Groups**, then all three Groups are deemed to constitute the dominant character of that streetscape.

## CHECKLIST

- Fill in both sides of the SCA Form
- Take photographs of all lots analyzed
- Scan and submit completed Form and accompanying photographs:
  - via email to **sca-apr@ottawa.ca**, or
  - to Building Code Services staff at a Client Service Centre, or
  - at a development pre-consultation meeting with a Development Review planner.