

RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY BUILDING GUIDE



MUNICIPALITY OF
STRATHROY-CARADOC

Date: October 14, 2025.

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF STRATHROY-CARADOC

PLEASE NOTE

This document is intended as a guideline only.

The information provided in this document is for reference only and does not supersede the Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law, the Ontario Building Code, The Building Code Act, or any other applicable law.

USEFUL RESOURCES

[Strathroy-Caradoc Zoning By-law](#)

To submit permit application: [Cloud Permit](#)

[Accessory Structure Zoning Information Form](#)

[Strathroy-Caradoc General Inquiries](#)

For further information, visit our website at www.strathroy-caradoc.ca

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MUNICIPALITY OF
STRATHROY-CARADOC

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1- What is a residential accessory building?

A residential accessory building is a structure that is incidental or subordinate to a main use. Accessory buildings could include any of these types of buildings / structures:

- Attached garage
- Detached garage
- Garden shed
- Carport
- Gazebo
- Pool cabana
- Detached deck
- Any other building or structure that is not connected to the house

2- When is a building permit required?

A building permit is required by the Building Code / Act for sheds larger 15 square metres (m²) and other buildings larger than 10 square metres (m²) or when plumbing is installed.

3- What do I need to know before building an accessory structure?

Accessory structures are regulated by the Zoning By-law, which restricts:

- Setbacks;
- Lot coverage;
- Maximum accessory building area, and;
- Height

These provisions are limited by the specific zoning of the property in question, and you should reach out to the [Strathroy-Caradoc Building and Planning Department](#) to confirm the zoning of your property.

4- What is lot coverage and how does it affect my residential accessory buildings?

Lot coverage is the percentage (or portion) of a lot that is covered by any part of a structure with a roof. Lot coverage is measured by calculating the total area of buildings with roofs, measured to the outside walls and posts, and dividing it by the area of the lot. Maximum lot coverage for a property is determined by the specific zoning of the property and can range anywhere from 20% to 45% in typical scenarios. The Strathroy-Caradoc Building and Planning Department can advise you to the maximum lot coverage for your property.

An example of a lot coverage calculation has been provided for your reference in [Figure 1](#).



5- What is the maximum residential accessory building area I can construct on my property?

The maximum accessory building area for your property is the more restrictive of 80% of the **ground floor area** of the dwelling or 15% of the lot coverage. The percentages above are measured as the **total cumulative area** of all accessory buildings on your property.

An example of the maximum accessory building area calculations have been provided for your reference in **Figure 2**.

6- What is the maximum height of a residential accessory building?

The maximum height of an accessory building is the lesser of 4.9m (metres)(14'-9"), which is measured in accordance with the details provided for your reference in **Figure 3**, or the height of the house.

7- What are the minimum setbacks from property lines for a residential accessory building?

Residential accessory buildings are not permitted to be constructed in the front yard or exterior side yard of your property. A diagram has been provided for your reference in **Figure 5** to help illustrate what a front yard and exterior side yard is defined as.

The two most common types of lots are corner lots and interior lots (see **Figure 4**). There are slightly different requirements for each:

7a) Interior lots:

- Require minimum 1m setbacks to interior side and rear property lines, measured to the nearest wall of the structure (see **Figure 5**).
- No construction is permitted within swales or easements.

7b) Corner lots:

- Require minimum 6m setbacks to exterior property lines (property lines abutting a street – public or private)(see **Figure 5**).
- Require minimum 1m setbacks to interior side and rear property lines, measured to the nearest wall of the structure.
- No construction is permitted within swales or easements.

Examples of the permitted locations and setbacks for residential accessory buildings have been provided for your reference in **Figure 5**.



8- What if my property is serviced by a septic system?

Septic systems are regulated by Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code and require specific setbacks to structures. An illustration of the minimum setbacks to a septic system has been provided for your reference in **Figure 6**.

9- What do I need to obtain a building permit?

To obtain a building permit for a residential accessory building, we require the following documents:

1. A site plan showing the location of the proposed accessory building on your property with dimensions to the property lines.
2. Structural drawings showing how you would like to construct the structure. Please include dimensions and as much information as you can.
3. A permit application. A permit application can be made online at: <https://ca.cloudpermit.com/login>

10- What if I need help?

The Strathroy-Caradoc Building and Planning Department is here to help. Please call or email us with any questions or concerns. You can also use the message board in Cloud permit which can be found at the top right of most pages in cloud. We can be reached at 519-245-1070 or by email at this link: [Strathroy-Caradoc General Inquiries](#).



Figure 1. Lot Coverage Example

Example in R1 Zone

Example Calculations:

Area of house:	180m ²
Area of Accessory Structures:	
Area of existing shed:	10 m ²
Area of existing pool cabana:	30 m ²
Area of proposed detached garage:	100 m ²
Total area of ALL accessory structures:	140 m ²
Area of Lot:	1,000 m ²

Maximum 40% of Total Lot Coverage

Total lot coverage:

= Area of ALL structures with a roof measured to the exterior walls and posts ÷ Area of Lot x 100

Total lot coverage:

= (180m² + 140m²) ÷ 1,000m² x 100

= 32.0% Coverage **OK**

Lot Coverage of less than 40% required in an R1 Zone.

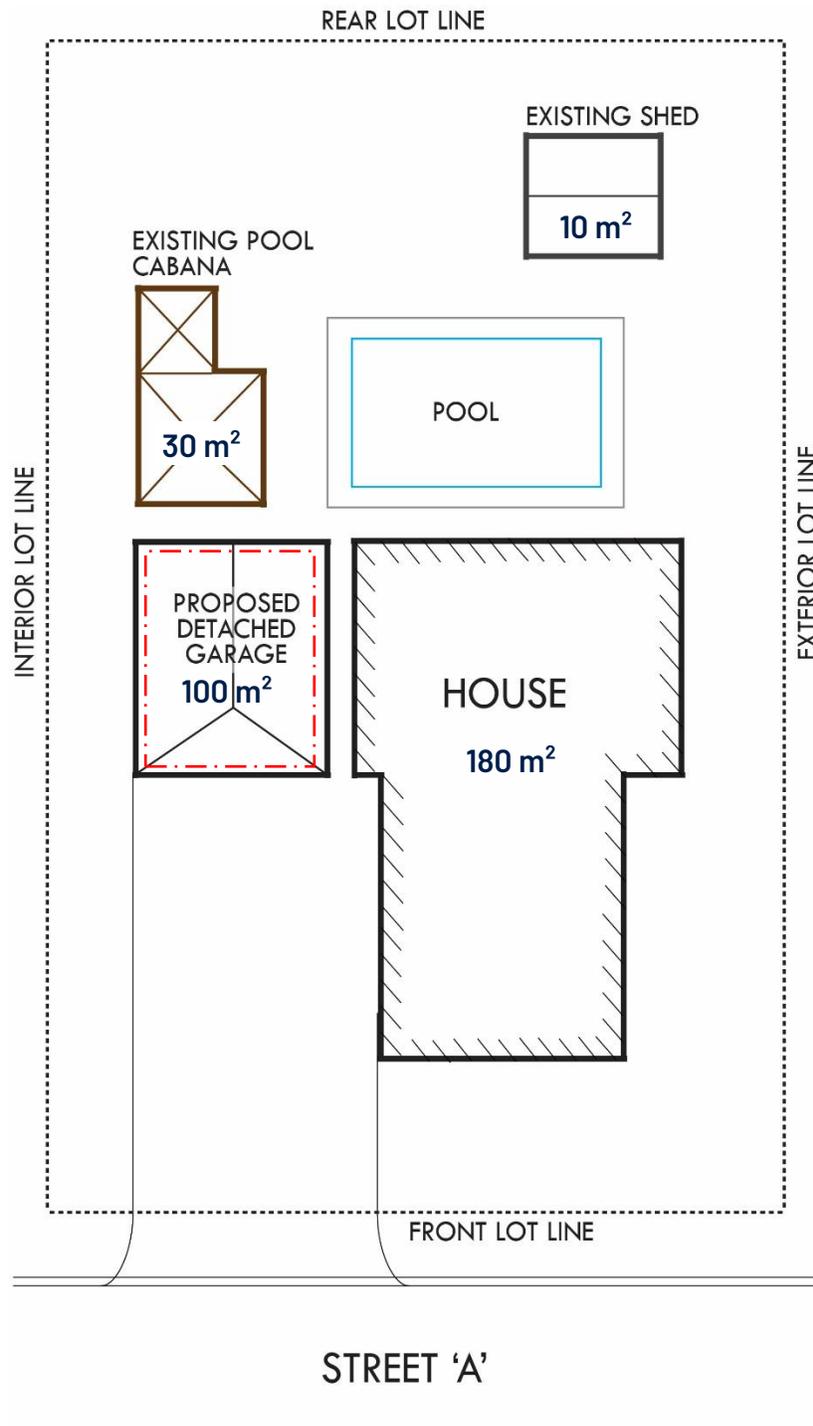


Figure 2. Maximum Area of Accessory Buildings Calculations

Example in R1 Zone

Example Calculations:

Area of house:	180m ²
Area of Accessory Structures:	
Area of existing shed:	10 m ²
Area of existing pool cabana:	30 m ²
Area of proposed detached garage:	100 m ²
Total area of ALL accessory structures:	140 m ²
Area of Lot:	1,000 m ²
Ground floor area of house:	180 m ²

Maximum 15% of Lot Coverage

Max. 15% of Lot coverage:
 = Area of **ALL** accessory structures ÷ Area of Lot x 100
 Max. 15% of Lot coverage:
 = 140m² ÷ 1,000m² x 100
 = 14.0% Coverage **OK**
 Lot Coverage does not exceed maximum 15%.

Maximum 80% of Ground Floor Area

Max. 80% of Ground Floor Area:
 = **Ground floor area** of house x 80%
 = 180 m² x 80%
 = 144 m² of max. Accessory Building Area
OK
 Proposed accessory building area (140 m²) does not exceed maximum accessory building area (144 m²).

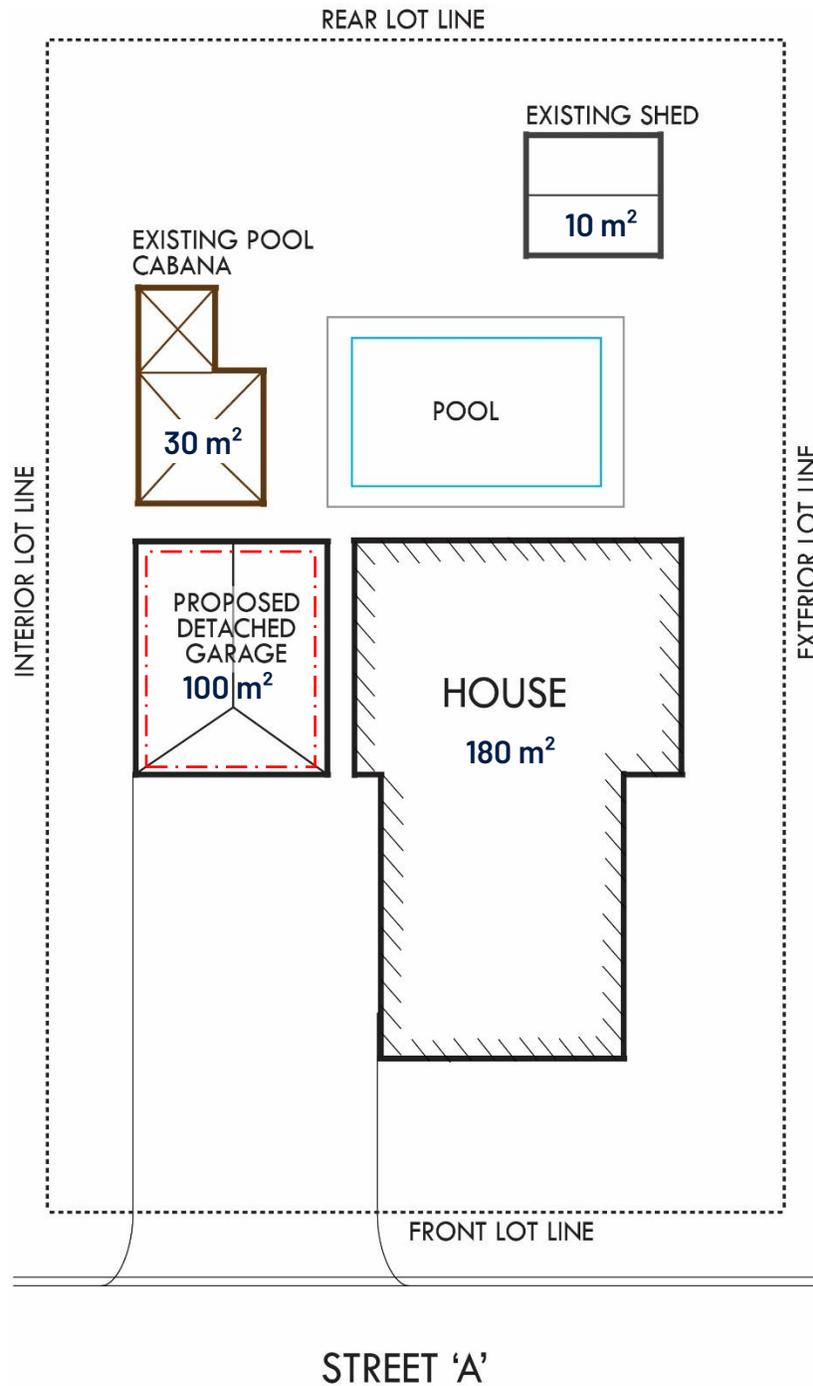


Figure 3. Examples of Height Definitions

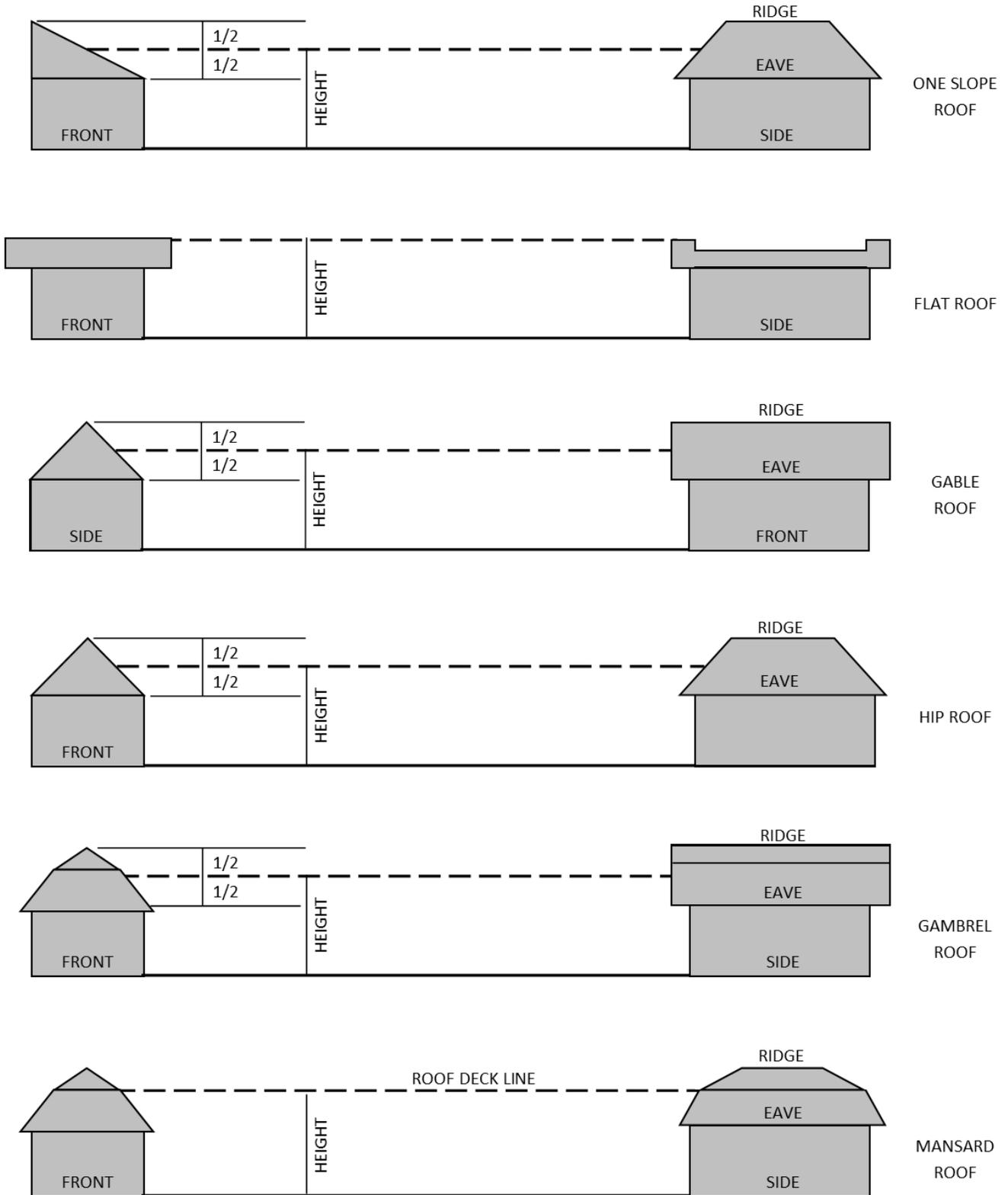


Figure 4. Required Yards Diagram

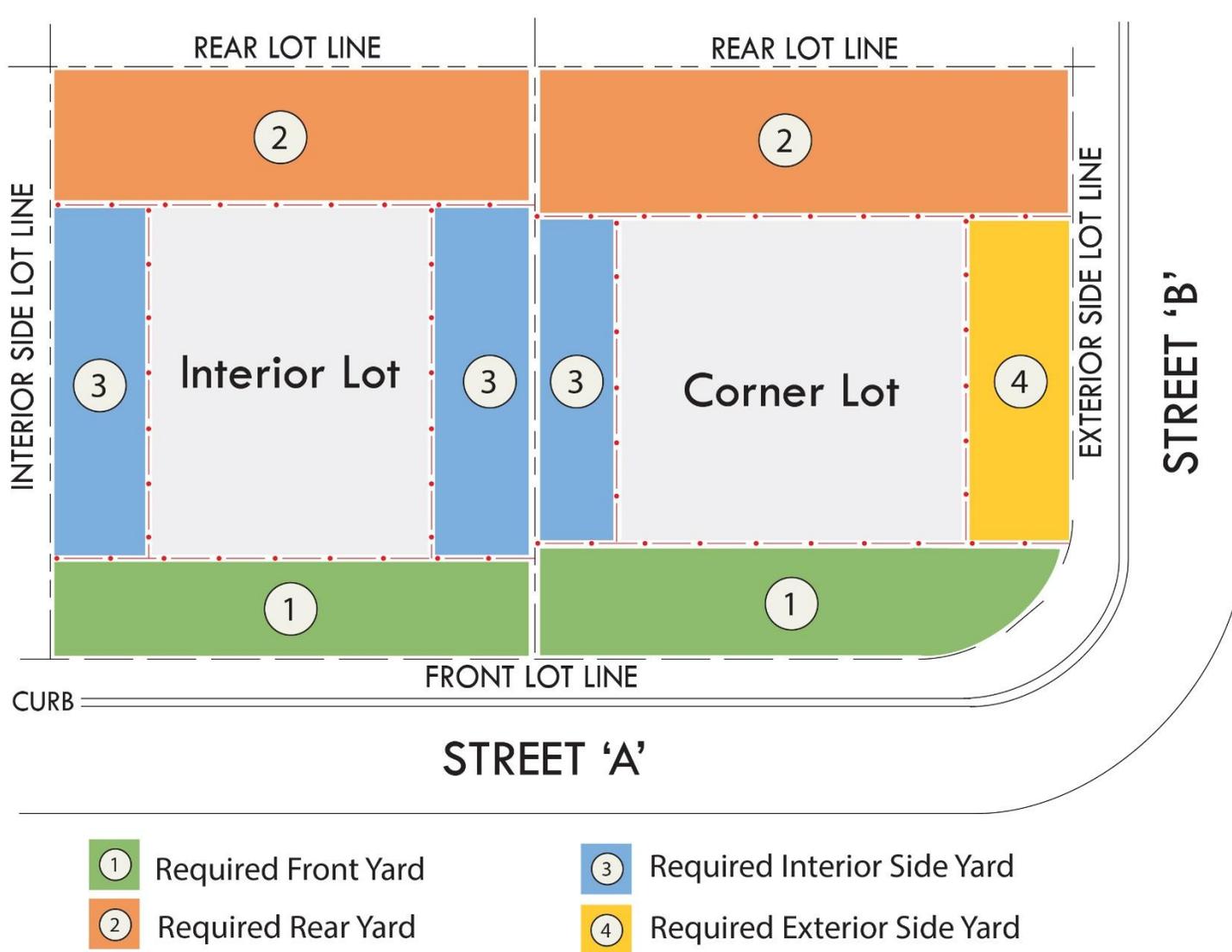
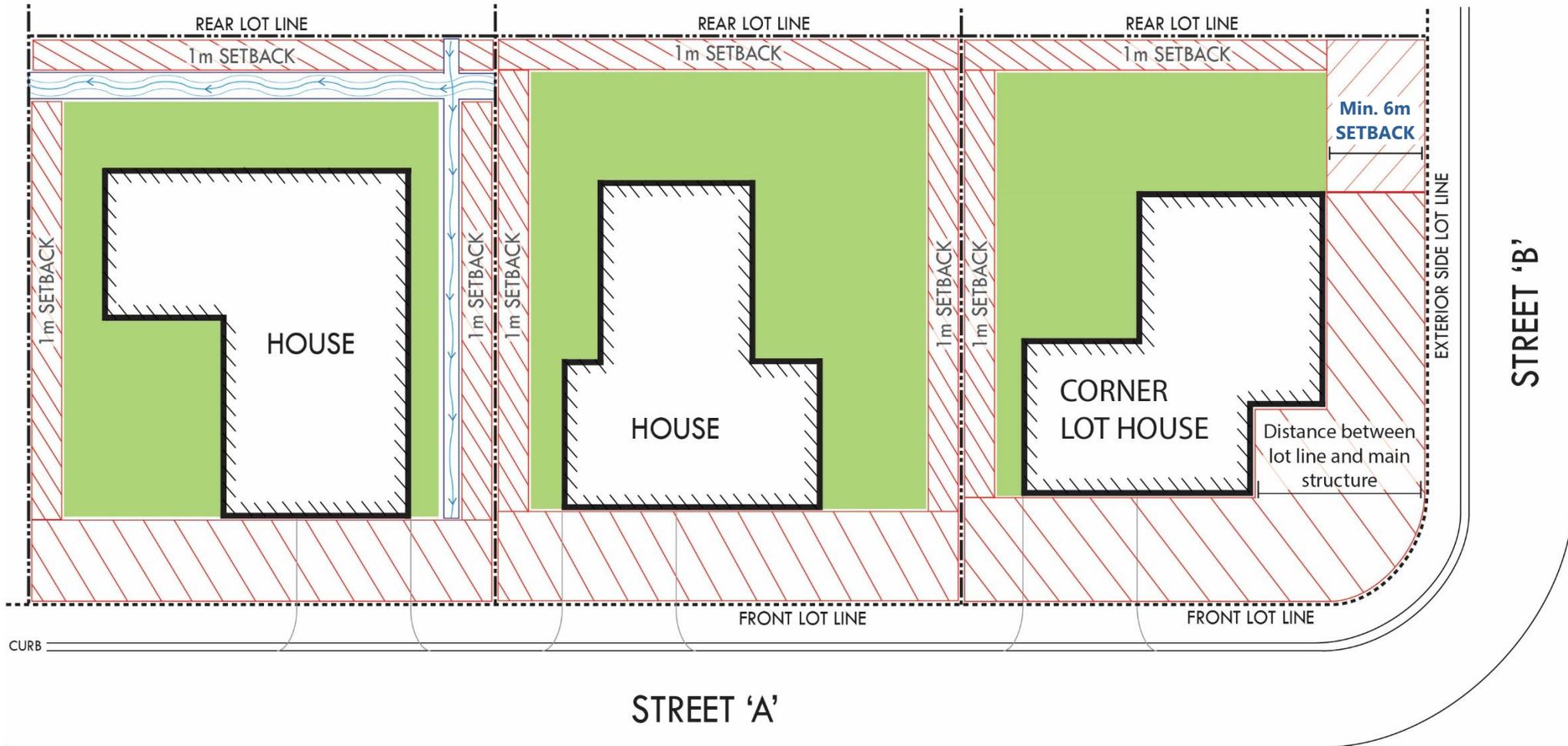


Figure 5. Setbacks for Accessory Building



 Permitted accessory building locations

 Easement or swale - NO accessory buildings permitted

 NO accessory building zone

*Encroachment into a SETBACK requires a minor variance approval



Figure 6. Septic System Clearances

Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code (OBC) requires minimum setbacks to septic tanks and distribution piping (septic beds). The minimum setbacks required by OBC 8.2.1.6 are provided in the adjacent illustration and the chart below. Ensuring that these requirements are met will lead to a longer-lasting and healthy system.

Minimum Clearances for Septic System(s)

REQUIRED Clearances	
OBJECT	MINIMUM CLEARANCE (m)
Structure (for septic tank)	1.5
Structure (for distribution piping and leaching chambers)	5
Open body of water/ watercourse (i.e. municipal drain, lake, pond, stream, river, reservoir, spring)	15
Well WITH a watertight casing to a depth of at least 6m	15
Any other well (WITHOUT a watertight casing to a depth of at least 6m) FROM in-ground leaching/filter bed	30
Property Line	3
Waterline FROM any location of septic system	2.44
RECOMMENDED Clearances	
OBJECT	MINIMUM CLEARANCE (m)
Garden	5
Tree	6

* Minimum clearances for treatment units/tanks, distribution piping, and leaching chambers.

