City of Richmond

Bulletin
Building Approvals
6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

richmond.ca building@richmond.ca

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Fire Access Plan for Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing Development

No.: BUILDING-61
Date: 2026-11-06

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to explain the requirements for an acceptable Fire Access Plan for Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) developments.

A Fire Access Plan is required to demonstrate that emergency response access is available for the proposed development and must be submitted as part of a Building Permit application.

Introduction

The Fire Access Plan must demonstrate compliance with the emergency response requirements of Richmond Fire-Rescue. The plan must clearly identify access routes, fire department response points, dwelling unit entrances, hydrant locations, and applicable travel distances.

Sprinklered buildings may be eligible for expedited plan review by Building Approvals.

Implementation

The Fire Access Plan must be prepared on a site plan and include the following:

- the address and unit number of each proposed building on the lot(s);
- the location of the fire department response point;
- the location of the dwelling unit exterior entrance door;
- the location of the nearest hydrant, municipal or private;
- the pathways provided to access the dwelling unit exterior entrance door;
- the travel distance from the hydrant to the fire department response point;
- the travel distance from the fire department response point to the dwelling unit exterior entrance door.
- notes indicating whether the building will be sprinklered.

NOTE: Travel distances must be measured at right angles along an unobstructed route.

Design Requirements

Sprinklered Buildings:

- Sprinklered buildings may be permitted longer travel distances where permitted by the B*C Building Code* but must still meet all applicable egress and fire department access requirements.
- Sprinklered buildings may be eligible for expedited plan review by Building Approvals.

Unsprinklered Buildings – More Than Two Primary Dwelling Units:

For unsprinklered SSMUH developments, containing more than two primary dwelling units, with or without secondary suites:

- The maximum travel distance from the fire department response point to the furthest dwelling unit exterior entrance door is **45 m**.
- The maximum travel distance from the hydrant to the furthest dwelling unit exterior entrance door is **90 m**.

Unsprinklered Buildings – Two Primary Dwelling Units:

For unsprinklered SSMUH developments containing only two primary dwelling units, with or without secondary suites:

- The maximum travel distance from the fire department response point to the furthest dwelling unit exterior entrance door is **45 m**.
- The maximum travel distance from the hydrant to the furthest dwelling unit exterior entrance door is **105 m**.

Drawing Requirements

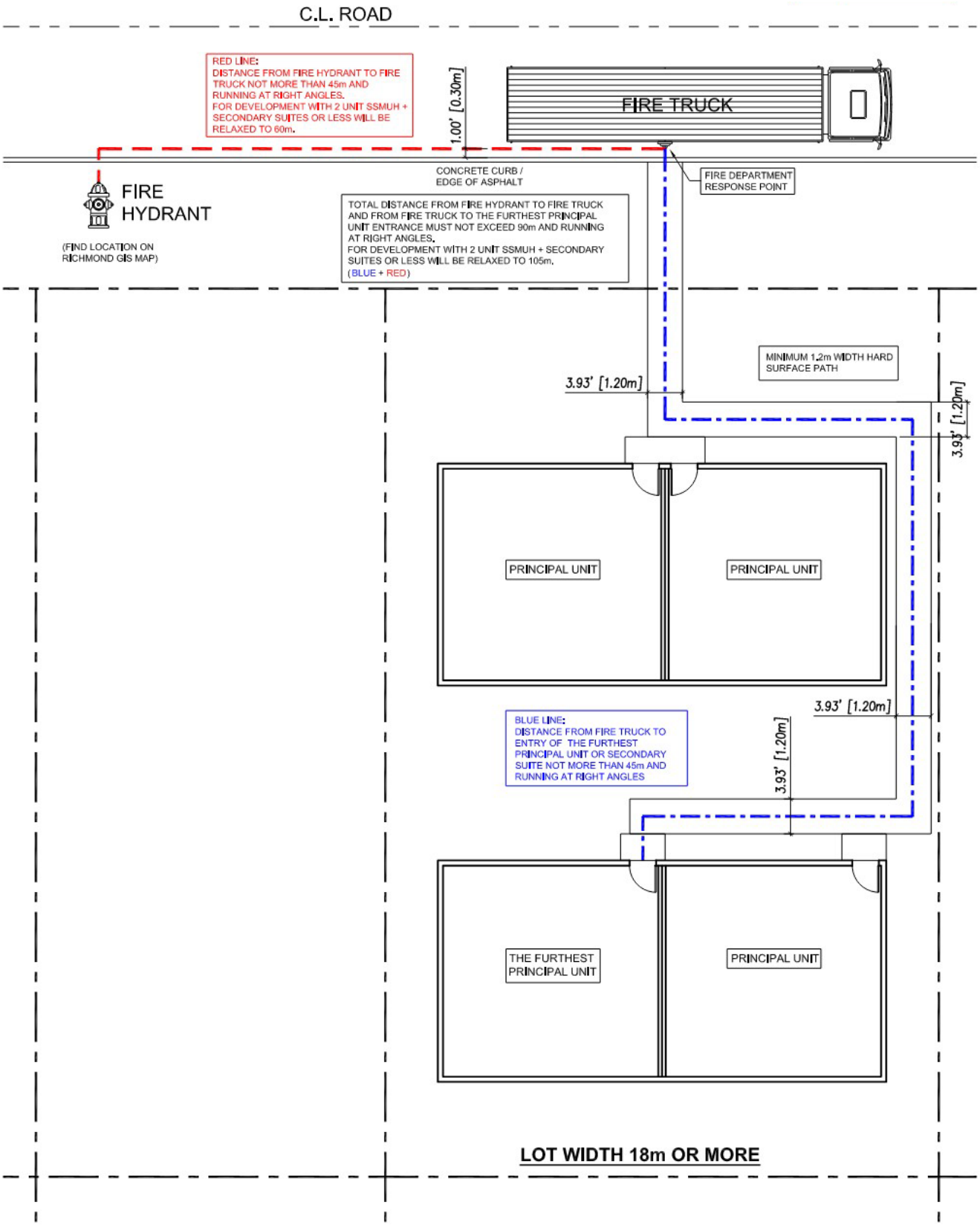
The Fire Access Plan must be submitted as a legible, scaled site plan showing property lines, street name(s), municipal address, north arrow, drawing scale, drawing date, and the footprint and location of each proposed building. The plan must also show driveways, vehicle access routes, parking areas, and pedestrian walkways, where applicable; relevant dimensions, including setbacks and distances between buildings; directional arrows identifying the unobstructed route used to measure travel distances; and all measurements in metric units. Sample Plan #1 to #4 are provided for reference.

All architectural drawing sets submitted for development and building permit review have to incorporate a fully detailed fire truck access plan to comply with local fire safety bylaws and the *British Columbia Building Code*.

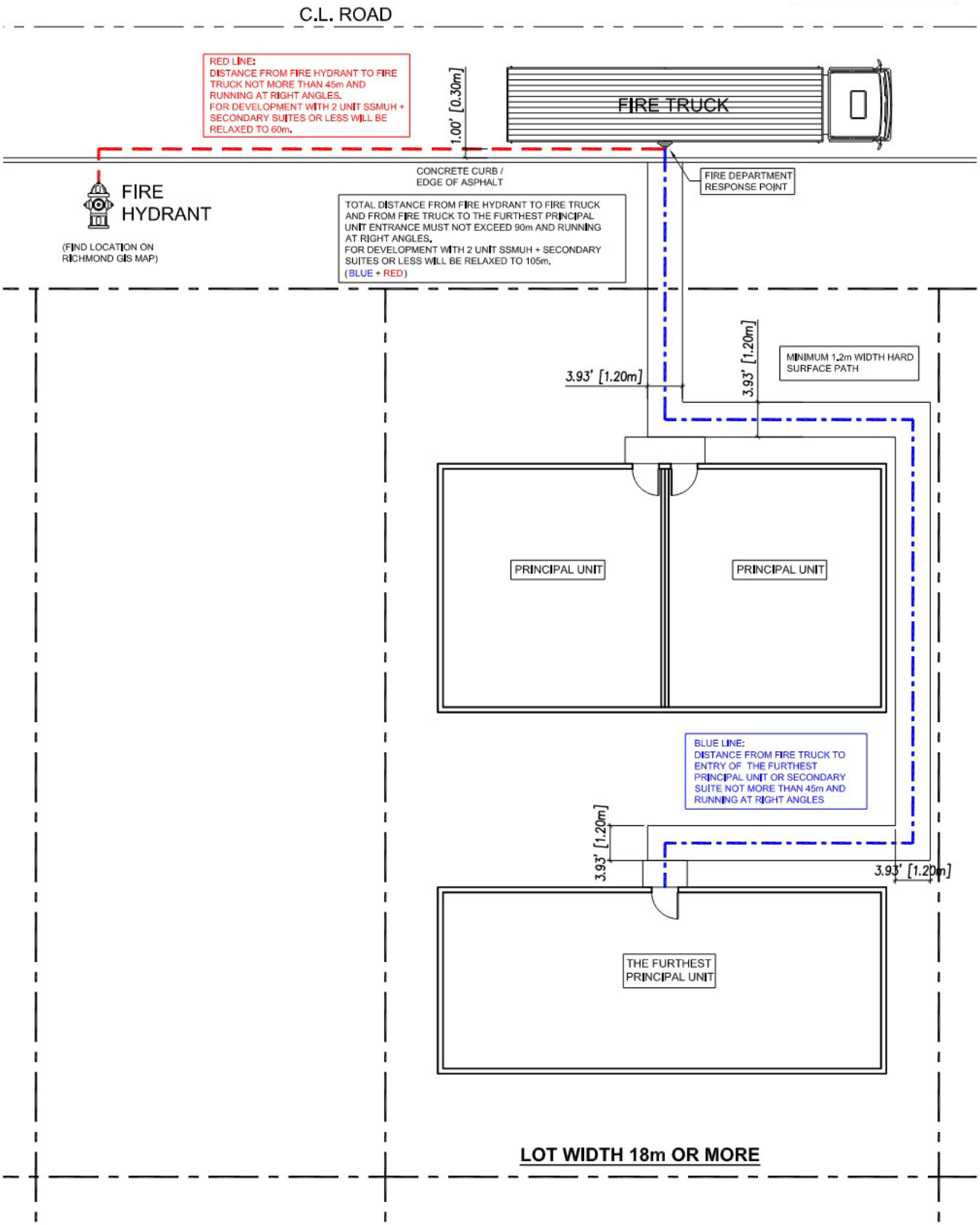
References

- *BC Building Code*, Section 9.10 and Subsection 3.2.5.

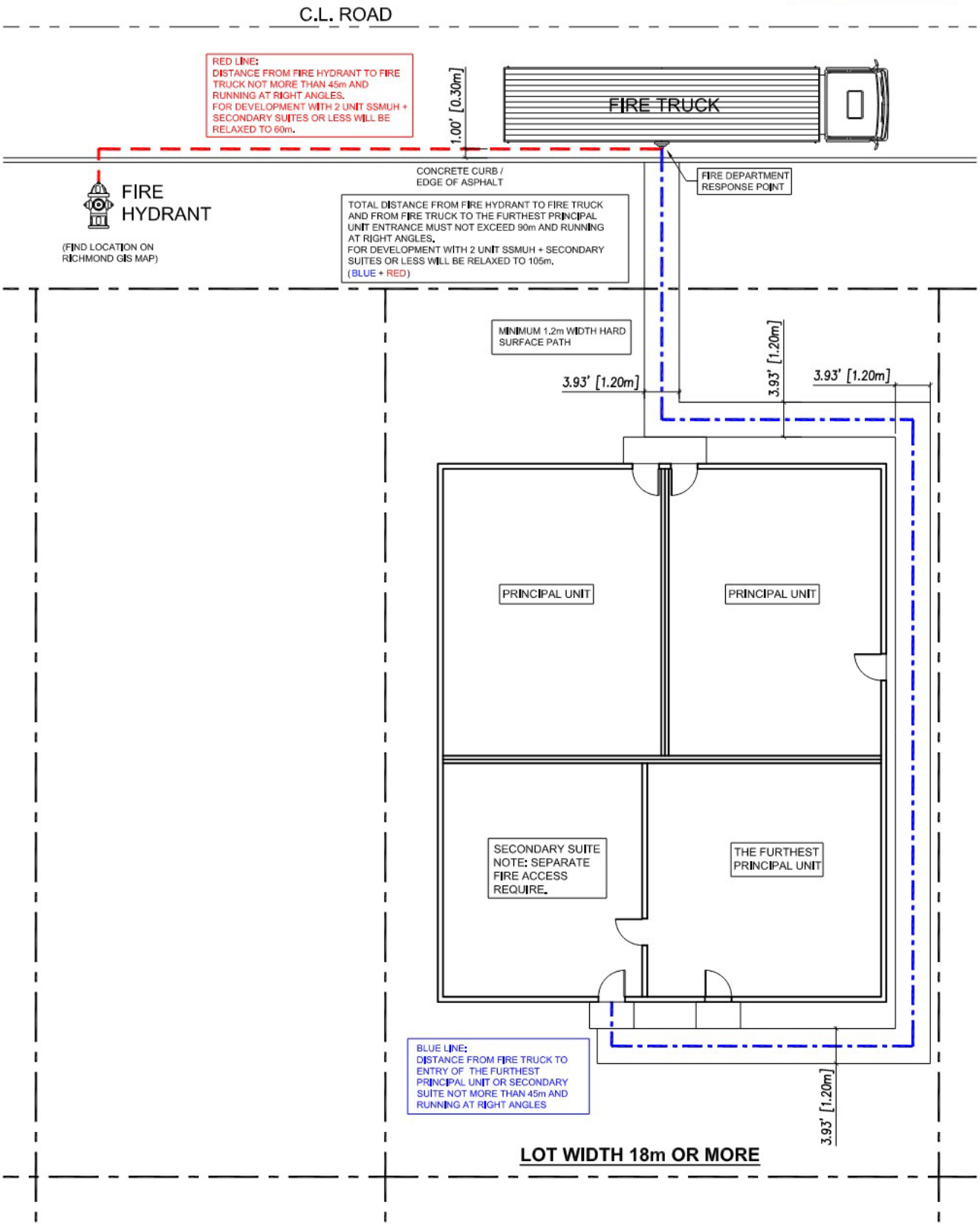
Sample Plan #1



Sample Plan #2



Sample Plan #3



Sample Plan #4

