City of Richmond

Bulletin
Building Approvals
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Fire Access Plan for Townhouse Developments

No.: BUILDING-62
Date: 2026-11-06

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to explain the requirements of an acceptable Fire Access Plan submitted to the City of Richmond and provide sample Fire Access Plans for Townhouse Developments required to be submitted as part of a Rezoning, Development Permit, and Building Permit application.

Introduction

A Fire Access Plan is a detailed site map showing clear, unobstructed routes for fire trucks and firefighters to reach every single dwelling unit on site, ensuring emergency services can quickly access the site for effective firefighting and rescue. All townhouses must be designed to comply with the *BC Building Code* and demonstrate compliance with its fire department access provisions.

Implementation

All townhouse applications should have the following items on the plan:

- Existing and/or proposed fire hydrants locations (show spacing along public streets).
- Principal Response Point of the development and Response Point/truck staging location for each of the townhouse buildings/clusters.
- Primary/principal entrance of each dwelling unit and amenity building.
- Distance from fire hydrant to truck then to most remote primary/principal entrance.
- Access route measurements: width, length and turning radiuses (taken down centrelines).

Design Requirements

Hydrant Locations:

- Provide or identify a fire hydrant that enables a fire department pumper vehicle to be positioned in accordance with *BC Building Code, Division B, Article 3.2.5.5*. For Fire Access Plan purposes, the hydrant selected to serve the property must provide an unobstructed hose lay to the designated Principal Response Point. Hydrants located on the opposite side of a major roadway from the development must not be relied upon to demonstrate compliance, unless otherwise accepted by Richmond Fire-Rescue. Clear and unobstructed access to the selected fire hydrant must be maintained at all times.
- Onsite fire hydrant must be located along the access route. Minimum clearance: 1.0 m around, 2.0 m above, and 3.0 m in front of front port.
- Hydrants should be no more than 75.0 m apart.
- Fire hydrant shall not locate within 3.65 m of the building it is protecting.

Principal Response Point

- Provide a dedicated fire department staging area measuring a minimum of 6.0 m wide by 15.0 m long. Alternative designs or variations to the required staging area dimensions will be considered only where compliance is not feasible and equivalent fire department access, staging, and safety are maintained.
- For Part 3 buildings: Provide a fire department access route in accordance with *BC Building Code Articles 3.2.5.4*. and *3.2.5.5*. Locate the principal entrance and required fire department access openings between 3 m and 15 m from the closest portion of the fire department access route, measured horizontally from the face of the building.
- For Part 9 buildings: Provide fire department access to each building by means of a street, private roadway, or yard, in accordance with *BC Building Code Article 9.10.20.3*.

Access Route:

- Designed to support 80,000 lbs and surfaced preferably with asphalt or concrete (structural grass or pavers is acceptable but not gravel).
- Min 6.0 m wide, 5.0 m overhead clearance, and 12.0 m turning radii (centreline).
- Distance from the fire hydrant to fire truck not more than 45 m (running at right angles, along the centreline of the access route).
- Distance from fire truck to the furthest primary/principal unit entrance not more than 45 m (running at right angles).
- Total distance from fire hydrant to fire truck and from fire truck to the furthest primary/principal unit entrance must not exceed 90.0 m.
- Access route must be clear of locked gates, retaining walls, guard walls, landscaping, bike racks, etc.
- Turnaround facilities required when a dead-end portion of a required access route exceed 90.0 m. When an access route continues further than required for firefighting purposes, the extend of the required access may be required to be indicated on site with signage.

Addressing:

- All buildings must face a street or access route and must be addressed off the street the principal response point is accessed from. One street address for each townhouse complex.

Drawing Requirements

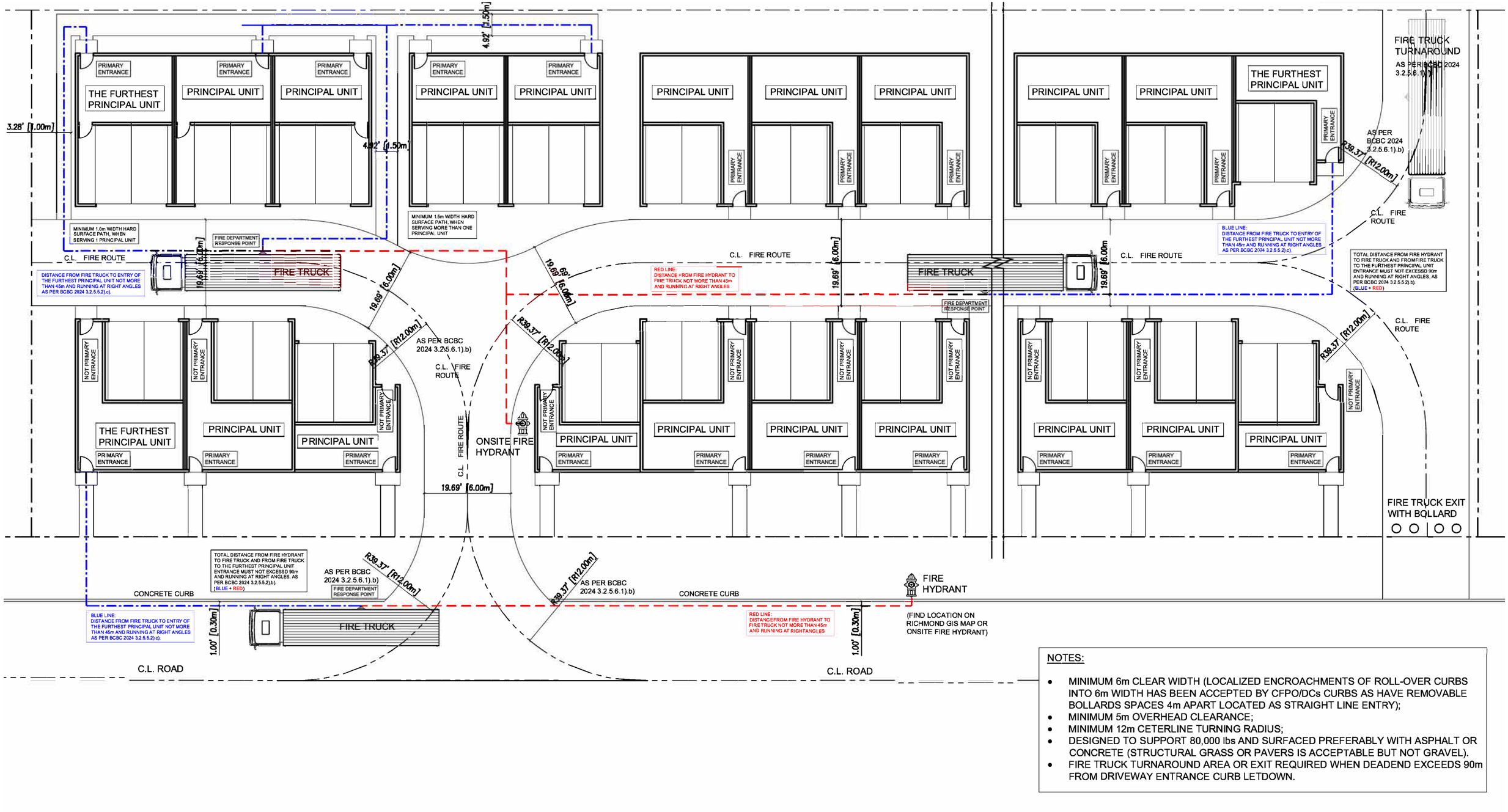
Drawing submissions must clearly show building outlines, driveways, parking areas, and fire truck access, with all elements fully dimensioned in metric, including setbacks and driveway widths, and must include street names, building addresses, and a north arrow. Sample Plan #1 and Sample Plan #2 are 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.

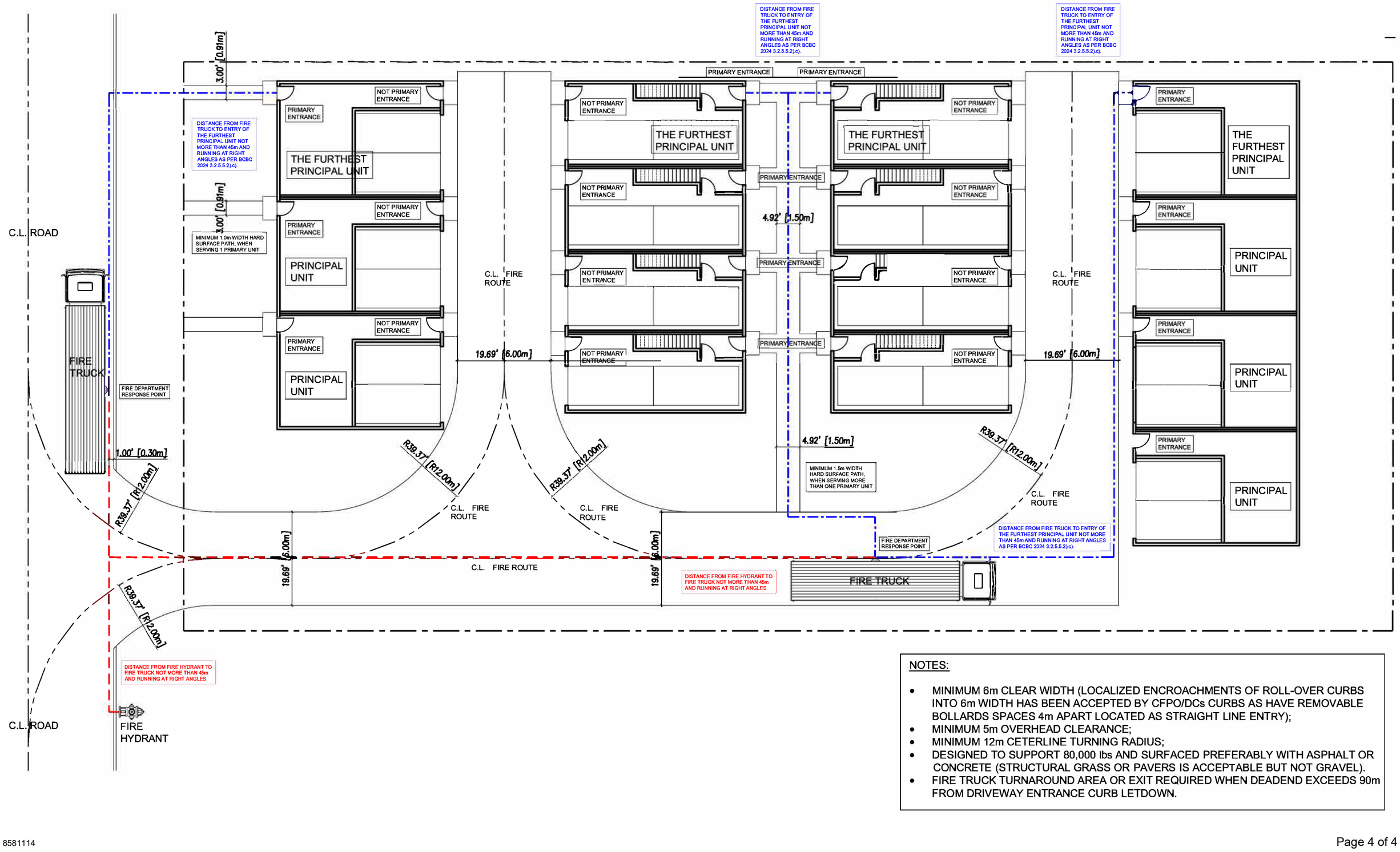
Sample Plan #1



NOTES:

- MINIMUM 6m CLEAR WIDTH (LOCALIZED ENCROACHMENTS OF ROLL-OVER CURBS INTO 6m WIDTH HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY CFPO/DCs CURBS AS HAVE REMOVABLE BOLLARDS SPACES 4m APART LOCATED AS STRAIGHT LINE ENTRY);
- MINIMUM 5m OVERHEAD CLEARANCE;
- MINIMUM 12m CETERLINE TURNING RADIUS;
- DESIGNED TO SUPPORT 80,000 lbs AND SURFACED PREFERABLY WITH ASPHALT OR CONCRETE (STRUCTURAL GRASS OR PAVERS IS ACCEPTABLE BUT NOT GRAVEL).
- FIRE TRUCK TURNAROUND AREA OR EXIT REQUIRED WHEN DEADEND EXCEEDS 90m FROM DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE CURB LETDOWN.

Sample Plan #2



NOTES:

- MINIMUM 6m CLEAR WIDTH (LOCALIZED ENCROACHMENTS OF ROLL-OVER CURBS INTO 6m WIDTH HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY CFPO/DCs CURBS AS HAVE REMOVABLE BOLLARDS SPACES 4m APART LOCATED AS STRAIGHT LINE ENTRY);
- MINIMUM 5m OVERHEAD CLEARANCE;
- MINIMUM 12m CETERLINE TURNING RADIUS;
- DESIGNED TO SUPPORT 80,000 lbs AND SURFACED PREFERABLY WITH ASPHALT OR CONCRETE (STRUCTURAL GRASS OR PAVERS IS ACCEPTABLE BUT NOT GRAVEL).
- FIRE TRUCK TURNAROUND AREA OR EXIT REQUIRED WHEN DEADEND EXCEEDS 90m FROM DRIVEWAY ENTRANCE CURB LETDOWN.