

3.4 COMMERCIAL MID-BLOCKS

OVERVIEW

GENERAL

Mid-block connections are public pedestrian routes on privately owned parcels that provide a safe, activated, and pleasant connection to cut through large streetscape blocks. They should be located in accordance with the *Plaza & Pedestrian Map* and the Downtown Open Spaces Plan (Official Community Plan – Bylaw 2500,2017). Commercial Mid-block locations typically align with property lines resulting in a 3 m setback on each property to achieve the total (6 m/19.68 ft). Reducing the 3 m setback is discouraged as this distance strategically allows for more window openings between buildings in the BC Building Code supporting more activation potential of the mid-block. Mid-blocks should be secured during Development Permit or Rezoning process with a public right of way secured by latest Servicing Agreement.

USE

The primary use of the commercial Mid-block design is focused on pedestrian movement and commercial activation with at least one primary pedestrian and accessible pathway (minimum 2 m) and space for commercial focused streetscape seating and patio commercial activation.

LANDSCAPING

Planting in Commercial Mid-blocks should consider the narrow and shaded context, with mid-blocks typically located east-west. Mid-block Trees should be columnar and shade tolerant with clumping or larger trees located at mid-blocks road and laneway ends where space allows. Planters and raingardens can be used to include a variety of landscaping options in mid-blocks. See Street Tree and Planting Guidelines for more details.

COMMERCIAL MID-BLOCKS

OVERVIEW

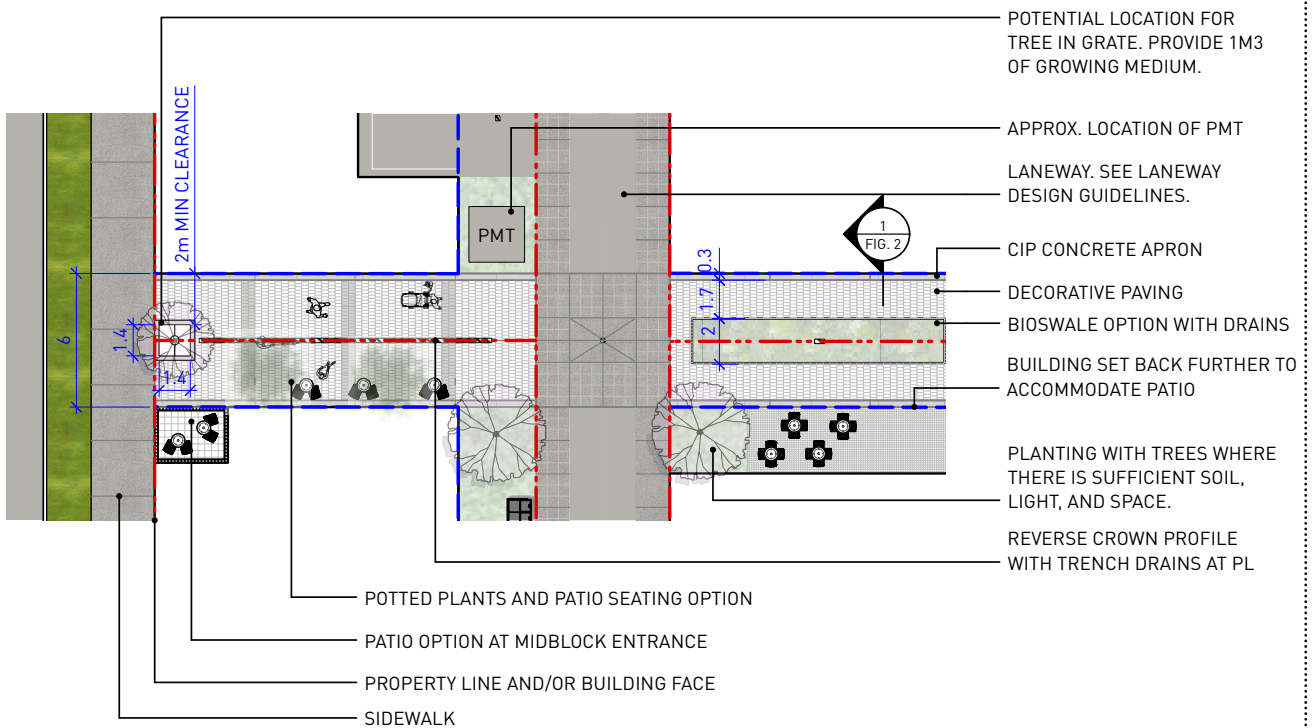


FIG. 1 COMMERCIAL CONDITION MIDBLOCK - OVERVIEW
Scale: 1:300



COMMERCIAL MID-BLOCKS

GROWING MEDIUM SECTION

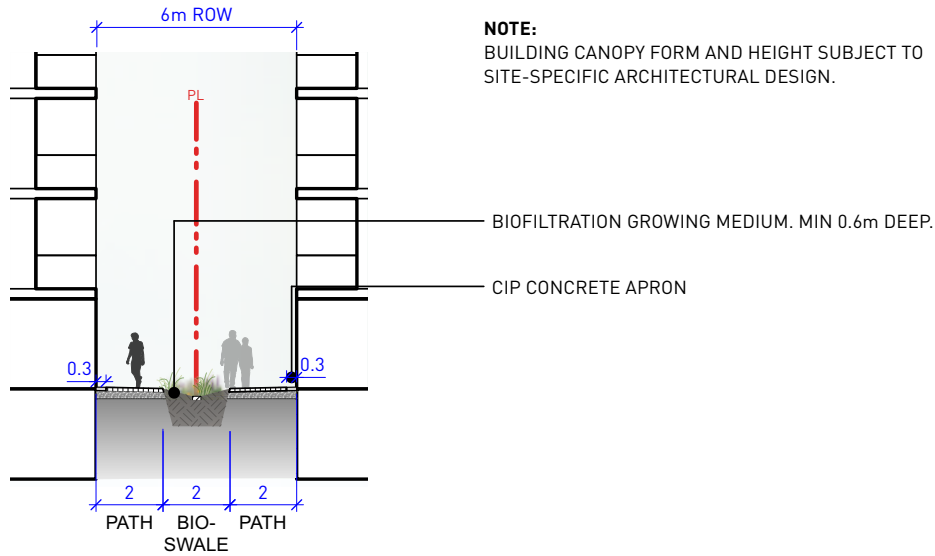


FIG. 2 SECTION 1 - BIOSWALE WITH DRAIN
Scale: 1:200



COMMERCIAL MID-BLOCKS

CONSIDERATIONS AND PRECEDENTS – URBAN CONDITION

Images on the following pages are shown for reference only.

PAVING



Ex. Concrete banding



Ex. Pavers

- Minimum main path width: 2m
- Maximum path width: None
- Secondary paths can accompany primary paths. Primary paths have high standards of accessibility, whereas secondary paths can have lower standards of accessibility.
- Materials: CIP concrete with charcoal banding, durable unit pavers

LIGHTING



Ex. Catenary lighting



Ex. Public art lighting

- Light levels: 2700k
- Form can be variable but should be vandal resistant (bollards, wall lights, light columns, etc.)
- Festive lighting encouraged (catenary, lanterns, etc).
- Flashing lights discouraged.
- Public art lights supported.
- Flashing lights discouraged.

CANOPY



Ex. Partial canopy



Ex. Full canopy

- Partial canopy for shade or rain protection is encouraged.
- Complete weatherproof coverage acceptable only for large development projects with minimum 5m heights and maximum 20m length.

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CONSIDERATIONS AND PRECEDENTS – URBAN CONDITION

PLANTING



- Strongly encouraged where appropriate.
- Trees can be planted only if spatial requirements are met, requiring 20 cubic metres per tree. This volume can be achieved with soil cells or structural soil under paving. Example locations include expanded passageways at intersections where there are additional building setbacks and at midblock entrances/exits.
- Shrubs and groundcovers can be used at grade, in rain gardens, and in planters.
- Hanging planting baskets are encouraged where appropriate.
- Irrigation is recommended.

GRADE CHANGES



- Grade changes must accommodate universal access along the main path (2m minimum) and meet building code standards.
- Planting, art, seating, walls, and other public amenities can be used to direct users around grade changes.

DRAINAGE

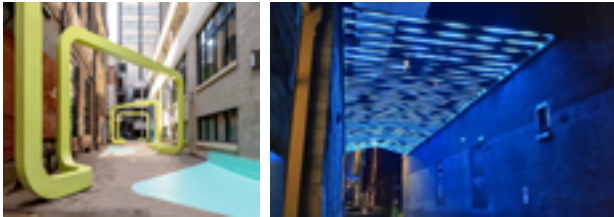


- Drainage must be collected by onsite mechanical systems.
- Rain gardens are encouraged. If used, they must have overflow drainage systems.
- Water must completely drain from main path. Secondary path can accommodate creative temporary water storage.

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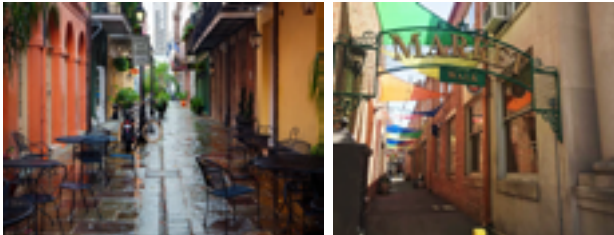
CONSIDERATIONS AND PRECEDENTS – URBAN CONDITION

PUBLIC ART



- Public art is encouraged, provided it does not interfere with the main path's accessibility.
- Public art proposals shall follow the District's Public Art approval process.

SIGNAGE, ACCESS, ACTIVATION, AND FURNISHINGS



- Midblocks should be named
- Commercial entrances with signs are encouraged along midblocks to encourage pedestrian activation of space.
- Cafe seating and exterior vendor space are encouraged, provided the minimum clear path width is maintained.
- Signage relative to site history and/or geography are encouraged.

ARCHITECTURAL FACADE



- Uniform facades with no windows at eye level or doors must be shorter than 5 metres in length to avoid overwhelming the pedestrian scale. Murals or other public art may be used to visually break up the building facade.