



YARDS AND SETBACKS FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONES

1. WHAT IS A REQUIRED YARD?

A required yard is the area that lies between a property line or right-of-way and an object required to be set back, such as a structure (see Figure 1.). A yard is more commonly known as a setback.

(a) **Front Yard:** A yard extending across the full width and lying adjacent to the front lot line.

(b) **Side Yard:** A yard extending from the front yard to the rear yard except in the case of a corner lot when the side yard on the flanking street shall extend to the rear property line.

(c) **Rear Yard:** A yard which extends across the full width and lying adjacent to, the rear property line except as provided above in the side yard definition.

2. WHAT ARE THE REQUIRED SETBACKS?

Unless more stringent setbacks have been delineated upon a plat as part of an approval requirement, the following setbacks shall be required for main buildings: (See Figures 1&2) consistent with BMC 20.30.040.

3. HOW DO I GET THE REQUIRED SETBACKS REDUCED?

The required setbacks may be reduced when 40% or more, on a front foot basis, of all lots or parcels on one side of a street between two intersecting streets has been built up with buildings of less depth than is required, then the average depth of the front yards may be the required yard for that side of the block. For the purpose of calculating the average depth, buildings that exceed the front yard setback shall be calculated to the standard minimum front yard setback. This front yard setback option is not applicable to garages and carports, which shall comply with the standard front yard setback requirement.

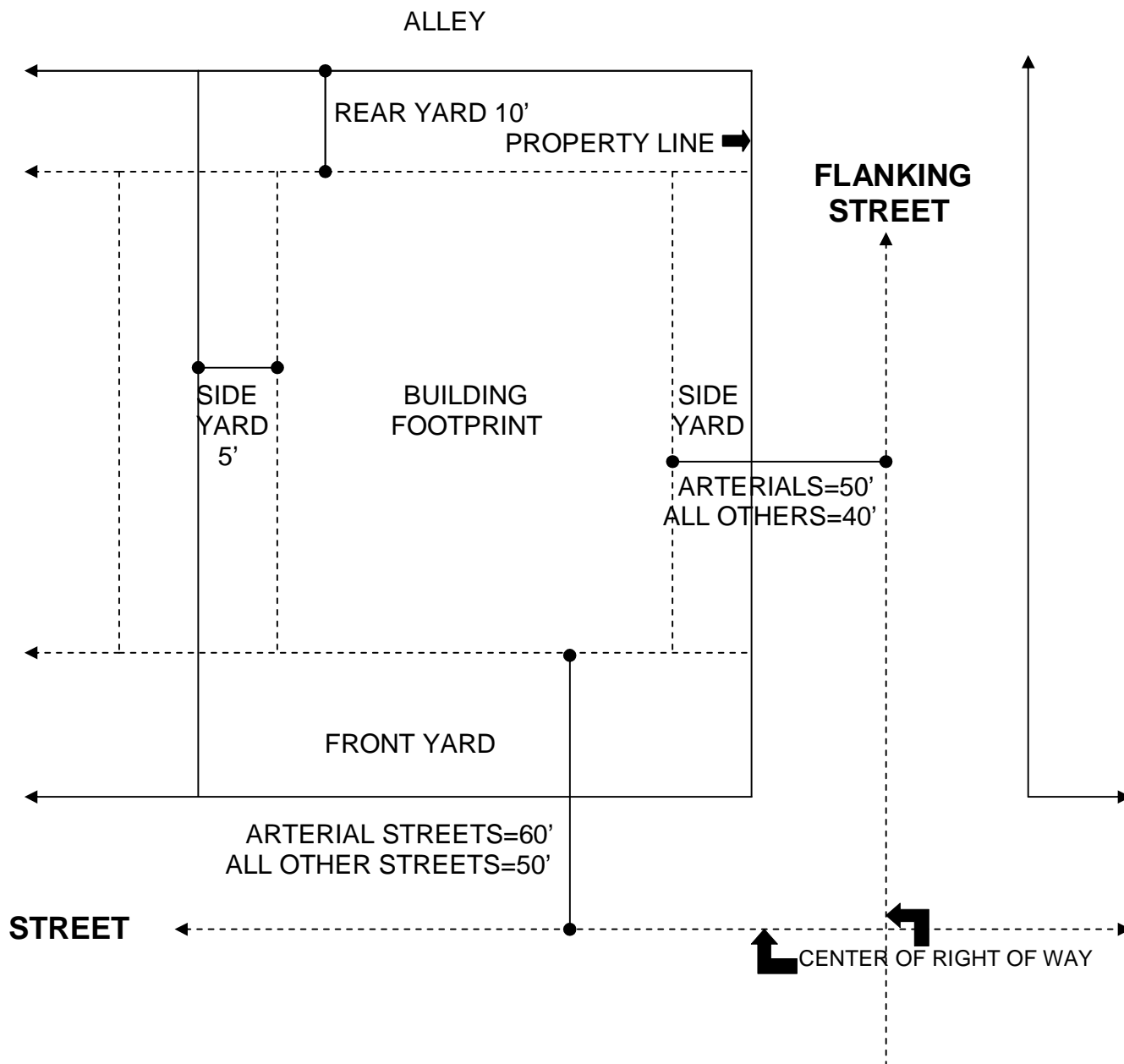
If the above mentioned option does not meet your needs consult with Planning Division Staff to determine whether there are other options through variance or appeal.

4. PERMITTED YARD ENCROACHMENTS

Certain architectural features, mechanical equipment, and landscaped structures may extend into a standard required yard, provided that the encroachments meet the adopted building codes and minimum vision clearance triangle on a corner lot.

Reference BMC20.10.080B - Table A for a list of permitted yard encroachments.

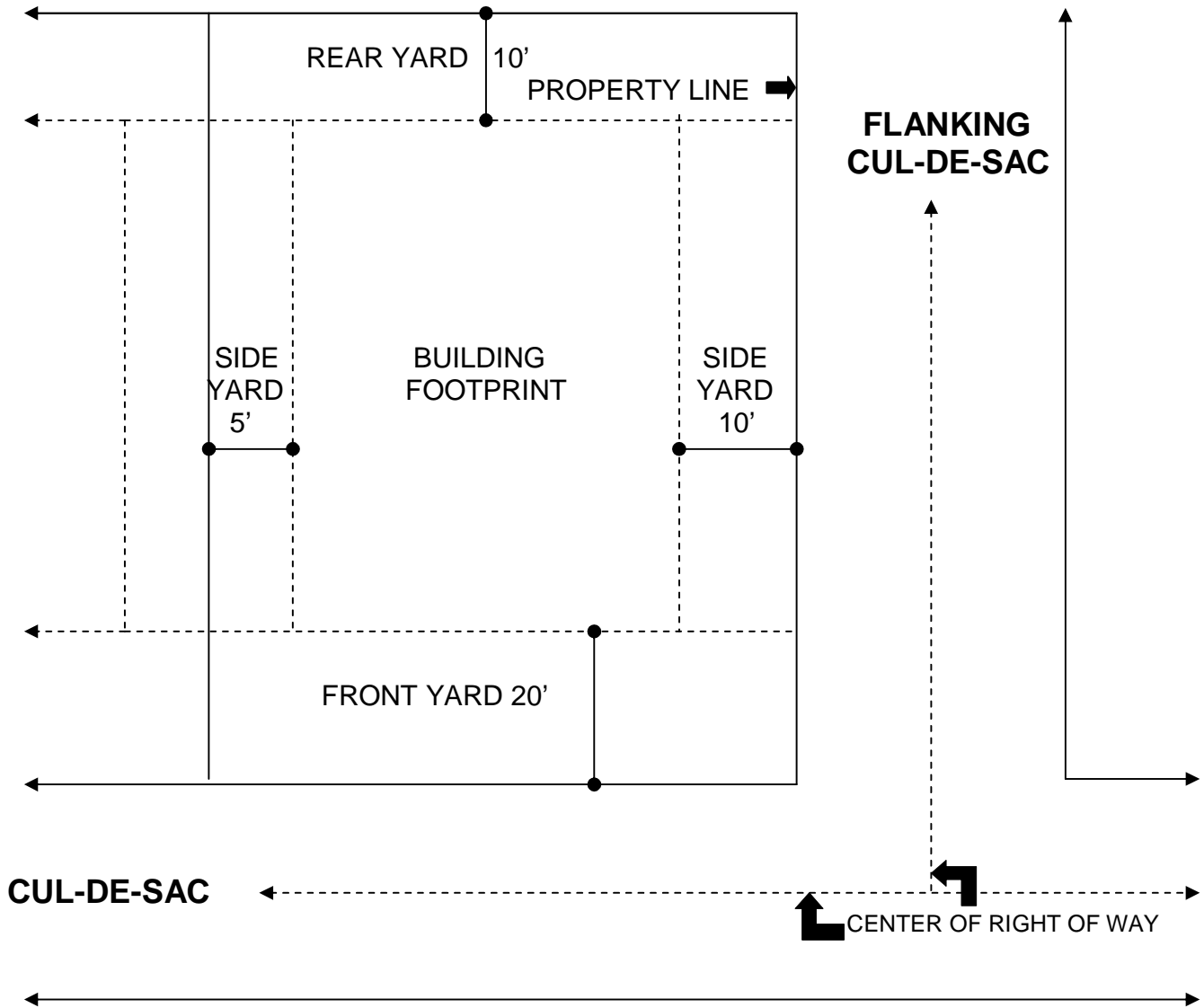
Figure 1. Setbacks and Required Yards for Single Family Residences-All Streets Except Cul-De-Sacs.
 (Single Family Residential Zoning)



Please note:

- Properties within the Lake Whatcom Watershed are subject to a different front yard setback
- Corner lots may choose which street is considered their “front yard” for setback purposes, unless located on an arterial. When a corner lot abuts a designated arterial, that arterial is always considered the “front yard for setback purposes.

Figure 2. Setbacks and Required Yards for Single Family Residences
On Cul-De-Sacs.
 (Single Family Residential Zoning)



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