

Firebreak Lots & Plans

Building Services Information Sheet

Last Updated: March 31, 2026

This sheet provides guidance on where and how firebreak lots/blocks are determined, released and/or relocated and the process for updates and/or revisions.

The purpose of the firebreak in new construction is to provide a means of stopping or restricting the spread of fire throughout a new subdivision where several buildings could be in the process of being framed at the same time.

Definitions:

"Building" has the same meaning as in the Building Code Act, as it is amended from time to time;

"Chief Building Official" & "CBO" means the Chief Building Official appointed by the City under section 3 of the Act;

"City" means The Corporation of the City of Barrie.

"Owner" means the owner of the property or their approved agent.

Subdivision Agreement:

A subdivision agreement is a legal contract outlining the developer's responsibilities to the City of Barrie and serves as the City's authority to enforce the provisions related to firebreaks.

Firebreak Plan:

Where deemed necessary by the City, the Owner shall submit a Firebreak Plan showing the sequence of construction on individual lots and fire control measures. No construction of buildings or structures may commence until such a plan is approved by the City.



Lots are to be clearly delineated and designated as firebreak lots on the plan. Firebreak Plan shall show:

- The location of all designated firebreak lots.
- The legal description of the property.
- The location and orientation of all relevant property lines.
- The dimensions along the property lines and any part that is 11 meters (36 feet) or less.
- All relevant street names, lot numbers, legal address (if available) of each lot and any other relevant information.

Firebreak Plan(s) shall be submitted to Development Services during the development application process and will appear as a condition of draft subdivision requirements.

Process and Procedures:

A firebreak shall be a single house lot, a semi-detached house block, a townhouse block or a parcel(s) of land no less than 11 meters (36 feet) in width at any point that is vacant of all structures and buildings.

In the case of single dwelling lots and semi-detached dwelling blocks, a firebreak shall be provided not more than every:

- a. 7th single dwelling lot, and
- b. 4th semi-detached dwelling block.

Where building lots are less than 11 meters (36 feet) in width at any point, the City may require two (2) consecutive lots or blocks or combination thereof to be designated as fire break lots so as not to exceed 6 dwellings in a row without the occurrence of a firebreak.

A firebreak shall be provided immediately adjacent to each end of a townhouse block.

A partial building permit (foundation only) may be issued for firebreak lots.

Notwithstanding that a Building Permit may have been issued for lots designated as firebreak lots, no construction above the level of the top of the first floor assembly shall proceed until a full building permit has been issued.

A firebreak lot shall be maintained free of all construction material, equipment, and debris.

Notwithstanding any other provision in this Bulletin, the City's Chief Building Official and/or the Fire Chief may establish requirements and/or a Firebreak Plan to suit the site and/or building(s).



Release of Firebreak Lots/Issuance of Full Building Permit(s):

Single detached and semi-detached dwelling units abutting firebreak lots shall have exterior cladding, roofing, fascia, soffits, and windows completed and inspected on all sides of the building prior to the release of the firebreak lot(s).

Townhouse blocks abutting firebreak lots shall have exterior cladding, roofing, fascia, soffits, and windows completed and inspected on all sides of the two (2) units closest to the firebreak lot prior to the release of the firebreak lot(s).

The Owner must receive release of the firebreak lot prior to issuance of a full Building Permit for construction on a previously designated firebreak lot.

A building inspector will determine when the full building permit can be released for the firebreak lot(s). Once the adjacent buildings comply with requirement, the Owner must submit an inspection request and an inspection is required to verify compliance.

Where construction of a building or structure proceeds on any lot in contravention of the fire break requirements, the City may take any action necessary to enforce this Agreement and may use the deposits provided by the Owner for the purposes of associated administrative and legal cost recovery.

Model Homes and Sales Offices:

Where building permits have been issued to permit the construction of model homes or sales offices, access for firefighting and water supply availability shall be maintained at all times during construction and the Owner acknowledges and accepts that the City may have restricted ability to respond to a fire or emergency in the absence of full servicing of the area and the Owner indemnifies the City fully and completely in regard to any claim or liability associated with the occupation and use of the model homes and sales offices.

Amendments to Firebreak Plans:

A request may be made to amend the firebreak plan. The approval of any change is at the discretion of the City. All amendments to a previously approved firebreak plan are to be submitted to the plans examiner assigned to the file for circulation and review.

Notwithstanding above, the City's Chief Building Official and/or the Fire Chief may amend these requirements or the Firebreak Plan to suit the site and/or building(s).