

Authority: Planning and Housing Committee Item PH11.4,
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on December 17 and
18, 2019

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW 84-2020

To adopt Amendment 480 to the Official Plan of the City of Toronto respecting the Built Form and Built Form - Building Types Policies.

Whereas authority is given to Council under the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13, as amended, to pass this By-law; and

Whereas Council of the City of Toronto has provided information to the public, held a public meeting in accordance with Section 17 of the Planning Act and held a special public meeting in accordance with the requirements of Section 26 of the Planning Act;

The Council of the City of Toronto enacts:

1. The attached Amendment 480 to the Official Plan of the City of Toronto is hereby adopted.

Enacted and passed on January 29, 2020.

Frances Nunziata,
Speaker

Ulli S. Watkiss,
City Clerk

(Seal of the City)

**AMENDMENT 480 TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN
OF THE CITY OF TORONTO**

The following text constitutes Amendment 480 to the Official Plan of the City of Toronto:

Section 3.1.2 Built Form, is amended by:

1. Deleting the non-policy preamble text and replacing it with the following:

"Our quality of life and personal enjoyment of the public realm depend in part on the buildings that define and support the edges of our streets, parks and open spaces. The scale and massing of buildings define the edges of, and give shape to, the public realm. The ground floor uses, entrances, doors, windows, materiality and quality of these building edges help to determine the visual quality, activity, comfortable environment and perception of safety in those public spaces. Individual building façades that are visible from, and form the edges of streets, parks or open spaces are read together as the walls that define and support the public realm. They should be conceived not only in terms of individual building sites and programs, but also in terms of how sites, buildings and their interface with the public realm fit within the existing and/or planned context of the neighbourhood and the city. Each new development should be designed to make a contribution to the overall quality of urban design in the city.

Most of Toronto is already built with at least one generation of buildings. Future development will be built on infill and redevelopment sites and will need to fit in, respecting and improving the character of the surrounding area. Over the next several decades the majority of growth will take place in areas of the city where intensification is planned – in the *Downtown*, the *Centres*, and along the *Avenues*. On large sites, and in other areas where the existing physical context is no longer appropriate, new planning contexts will be created to ensure that each new development expands the public realm and that buildings in these areas work together and add up to more than the sum of their parts. This is an extraordinary opportunity to build the next generation of development that will fit into, reinforce and strengthen the many diverse contexts and character areas in Toronto, enhancing liveability and quality of life for existing and new residents, workers and visitors.

The built form policies provide principles on key relationships of the location and organization of development, its massing and appropriate amenity within the existing and planned context to inform the built form and ensure each new building will promote and achieve the overall objectives of this Plan."

2. Deleting the two sidebar paragraphs beginning with "Street proportion is..." and "Good street proportion...".
3. Adding the following new subheading before Policy 1:

"SITE ORGANIZATION & LOCATION"

4. Deleting Policy 1 and replacing it with the following new Policy 1:

"Development will be located and organized to fit with its existing and planned context. It will frame and support adjacent streets, lanes, parks and open spaces to promote civic life and the use of the public realm, and to improve the safety, pedestrian comfort, interest and experience, and casual views to these spaces from the development by:

- a. generally locating buildings parallel to the street or along the edge of a park or open space with consistent front yard setbacks;
- b. providing additional setbacks or open spaces at the following locations, where appropriate:
 - i. street intersections;
 - ii. prominent destinations;
 - iii. parks and open spaces;
 - iv. transit stops;
 - v. natural areas;
 - vi. sites that end a street corridor; and
 - vii. areas with high pedestrian volumes.
- c. locating main building entrances on the prominent building facades so that they front onto a public street, park or open space, are clearly visible and directly accessible from a public street;
- d. providing ground floor uses, clear windows and entrances that allow views from and, where possible access to, adjacent streets, parks and open spaces;
- e. preserving existing mature trees wherever possible and incorporating them into the development site; and
- f. providing comfortable wind conditions and air circulation at the street and adjacent open spaces to preserve the utility and intended use of the public realm, including sitting and standing.

5. Adding the following policy as a new Policy 2:

"Development will provide accessible open space, where appropriate. On blocks that have access to direct sunlight and daylight, development will prioritize the provision of accessible open space in those locations."

6. Adding the following policy as a new Policy 3:

"Development will protect privacy within adjacent buildings by providing setbacks and separation distances from neighbouring properties and adjacent building walls containing windows."

7. Renumbering existing Policy 2 as new Policy 4 and amending it as follows:

- a. Deleting the first sentence and replacing it with the following:

" Development will locate and organize vehicle parking, vehicular access and ramps, loading, servicing, storage areas, and utilities to minimize their impact and improve the safety and attractiveness of the public realm, the site and surrounding properties by:"

- b. Replacing the word "block(s)" with the word "blocks,";
- c. Deleting the words "and private" from sub-policy (a);
- d. Adding the words "shared private" before the word "driveways" in sub-policy (a);
- e. Adding a comma after the word "driveways" in sub-policy (a);
- f. Adding a comma after the word "buildings" in sub-policy (c);
- g. Replacing the word "possible" with the word "appropriate" in sub-policy (c);
- h. Adding a comma after the word "parking" in sub-policy (d);
- i. Adding the words "new, and removing existing," after the word "limiting" in sub-policy (e);
- j. Adding the words "and vehicular access" after the words "surface parking" in sub-policy (e); and
- k. Deleting sub-policy (f) and replacing it with the following:
- (f) limiting above-ground parking structures, integrating them within buildings, and providing active uses and attractive building facades along adjacent streets, parks and open spaces."

8. Adding the following new subheading after new Policy 4:

"BUILDING SHAPE, SCALE & MASSING"

9. Deleting existing Policies 3 and 4.

10. Adding the following policy as new Policy 5:

"Development will be located and massed to fit within the existing and planned context, define and frame the edges of the public realm with good street proportion, fit with the character, and ensure access to direct sunlight and daylight on the public realm by:

- a. providing streetwall heights and setbacks that fit harmoniously with the existing and/or planned context; and
- b. stepping back building mass and reducing building footprints above the streetwall height."

11. Adding the following policy as new Policy 6:

"Development will be required to provide good transition in scale between areas of different building heights and/or intensity of use in consideration of both the existing and planned contexts of neighbouring properties and the public realm."

12. Adding the following policy as new Policy 7:

"Transition in scale will be provided within the development site(s), and measured from the shared and adjacent property line(s)."

13. Adding the following policy as new Policy 8:

"Where development includes, or is adjacent to, a park or open space, the building(s) should be designed to provide good transition in scale to the parks or open spaces to provide access to direct sunlight and daylight and minimize uncomfortable wind conditions."

14. Adding the following new sidebar adjacent to Policy 5:

"Street Proportion

Street proportion is the ratio of the height of buildings along the edges of the street and the distance between buildings across the street. Street proportion is a fundamental determinant in the character of the street and provides a measure of certain qualities of the street and the buildings that front onto it, including its access to direct sunlight and daylight. Street proportion ranges from wide streets with low buildings, which receive a lot of direct sunlight and daylight throughout the seasons, to canyon-like streets with tall buildings and little access to direct sunlight or daylight.

Street proportion is contextual and varies across the city. It is not expected to change in areas where growth is not planned. Good street proportion will be used to guide the massing of development in growth areas. It will be determined by considering the existing conditions and determining the appropriate setbacks, scale and massing of buildings to provide a street proportion that will provide good sunlight and daylight conditions, considering the planned intensity of development and expectations for the character and quality of the street in the future.

Good street proportion will be implemented through a number of measures including setbacks, building heights, pedestrian perception zones, streetwall heights, base building heights and step-backs."

15. Adding the following new sidebar adjacent to Policy 6:

"Transition in Scale

Transition in scale is the geometric relationship between areas of low-scale development, parks or open spaces and taller, more intense development. It provides a measure of the impacts, including shadows and privacy, of larger-scale development on low-scale neighbourhoods and the public realm. It can be achieved using a variety of measures – individually or in different combinations – including angular planes, stepping height limits, location and orientation of buildings, the use of setbacks and step-backs of building mass, and separation distances. Good transition in scale is contextual and will be determined by considering the planned level of growth in relation to adjacent sites and the public realm. It should balance growth with the impacts of intensification in a way that is both repeatable and predictable in its impacts."

16. Adding the following new subheading after new Policy 8:

"IMPROVING THE PUBLIC REALM THROUGH BUILDING DESIGN"

17. Adding the following policy as new Policy 9:

"The design of new building facades visible from the public realm will consider the scale, proportion, materiality and rhythm of the façade to:

- a. ensure fit with adjacent building facades;
- b. contribute to a pedestrian scale by providing a high quality of design on building floors adjacent to and visible from the public realm;
- c. break up long facades in a manner that respects and reinforces the existing and planned context; and
- d. ensure grade relationships that provide direct access and views into and from the public realm."

18. Deleting existing Policy 5 and replacing it with the following new Policy 10:

"Development will promote civic life and provide amenity for pedestrians in the public realm to make areas adjacent to streets, parks and open spaces attractive, interesting, comfortable and functional by providing:

- a. improvements to adjacent boulevards and sidewalks respecting including sustainable design elements, which prioritize street trees and may include one or more of the following: trees, shrubs, hedges, plantings or other ground cover, permeable paving materials, bio-retention swales, street furniture including

seating in various forms, curb ramps, waste and recycling containers, energy efficient lighting and bicycle parking facilities;

- b. co-ordinated landscape improvements in setbacks to create enhance local character, fit with public streetscapes, and provide attractive, safe transitions from between the private to and public realms;
 - c. weather protection such as canopies, and awnings;
 - d. landscaped open space within the development site;
 - e. landscaped edges of surface parking lots along streets, parks and open spaces to define the street edge and visually screen the parked autosparking lots from the public realm;
 - f. safe, direct pedestrian routes and tree plantings throughout the site and within surface parking lots, where possible; and
 - g. public art, where the developer agrees to provide this, to make the building and its open spaces more attractive and interesting.
19. Adding the following new subheading after new Policy 10:
- "PRIVATE & SHARED AMENITY SPACES"**
20. Adding the following new Policy 11:
- "New indoor and outdoor shared amenity spaces provided as part of multi-unit residential developments should be high quality, well designed, and consider the needs of residents of all ages and abilities over time and throughout the year."
21. Adding the following new Policy 12:
- "Non-residential development is encouraged to provide high-quality and well-designed indoor and outdoor amenity space."
22. Adding the following new Policy 13:
- "Outdoor amenity spaces should:
- a. be located at or above grade;
 - b. have access to daylight;
 - c. have access to direct sunlight, where possible;
 - d. provide comfortable wind, shadow and noise conditions;
 - e. be located away from and physically separated from loading and servicing areas;

- f. have generous and well-designed landscaped areas to offer privacy and an attractive interface with the public realm;
- g. accommodate existing and mature tree growth; and
- h. promote use in all seasons."

Section 3.1.3 Built Form – Tall Buildings, is amended by:

- 23. Deleting the section in its entirety and replacing it with the following non-policy text and new policies:

3.1.3 Built Form – Building Types

"Toronto is a complex city built over many decades with a diversity of uses, block, lot and building type patterns. These patterns vary street by street, block by block and neighbourhood by neighbourhood.

Three scales of building types – Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartments, Mid-Rise, and Tall – for residential, office and mixed-use intensification have emerged in the recent period of development. These building types are defined by their scale and physical characteristics including site and building organization, relationship to the public street, and building massing and height. The built form relationships and design of these building types is informed by citywide urban design guidelines that help to ensure the proper form and fit with the existing and planned context.

The building types listed in this section are not exhaustive but can help inform innovations in building design. Other building types, including institutional buildings, shopping centres and some employment buildings, as well as public infrastructure, generally have unique built form relationships and should be informed by the General Built Form policies in Section 3.1.2.

Policies

- 1. A mix of building types is encouraged on sites that can accommodate more than one building. Where a development includes more than one building, the site will be designed to ensure appropriate site organization and building locations that:
 - a. provide parcels of appropriate size and shape for the mix of building types;
 - b. define and support existing and proposed streets, lanes, parks and open spaces at appropriate scales;
 - c. ensure appropriate spacing of buildings; and
 - d. ensure appropriate transition in scale between buildings of different scales and types and other lower-scaled uses.

TOWNHOUSE & LOW-RISE APARTMENT BUILDINGS

Townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings provide desirable, grade-related housing in a form that is more intensive than single and semi-detached houses. They assist in providing a mix of housing options, defining and supporting streets, parks and open spaces, at a lower scale – generally no taller than four storeys in height – and can be designed to be compatible with and provide transition to existing streetscapes of lower-scaled areas.

These low-rise types may be designed as infill buildings on small sites or included as part of large sites to increase the range of building types.

2. Townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings are generally no taller than four storeys in height.
3. Townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings will be designed to:
 - a. provide unit and building entrances that have direct access to and are visible from public streets, pedestrian mews and walkways;
 - b. integrate with existing grades at the property line; and
 - c. allow for daylight and privacy on occupied ground floor units by providing appropriate facing distances, building heights, angular planes and step-backs.

MID-RISE BUILDINGS

Mid-rise buildings are a transit-supportive form of development that provides a level of intensification at a scale between low-rise and tall building forms. Mid-rise building heights are contextual and are informed by the width of the right-of-way onto which they front. In Toronto, where streets vary in width from 16.5 metres to over 40 metres, mid-rise buildings may vary in height between four and 11 storeys for residential uses, or fewer for office uses, dependent on the adjacent right-of-way width.

Mid-rise buildings help establish and reinforce an urban environment through a development form that is repeatable, moderate in scale, has good, predictable street proportion, allows for access to midday sunlight in the spring and autumn, has open views to the sky from the street, and that can support high-quality, usable open spaces in the block. Mid-rise buildings provide good transition in scale that has predictable impacts on adjacent low-scale uses.

4. Mid-rise buildings will be designed to:
 - a. have heights generally no greater than the width of the right-of-way that it fronts onto;

- b. maintain street proportion and open views of the sky from the public realm by stepping back building massing generally at a height equivalent to 80% of the adjacent right-of-way width; and
 - c. allow for daylight and privacy on occupied ground floor units by providing appropriate facing distances, building heights, angular planes and step-backs.
- 5. Mid-rise buildings on corner sites with different right-of-way widths will have building heights along each street edge that relate to their corresponding right-of-way width.
 - 6. Mid-rise buildings on deep sites should be designed to provide and frame accessible and well-proportioned open spaces that have access to sunlight and daylight.

TALL BUILDINGS

Tall buildings are the most intensive form of growth that come with both opportunities and challenges. When the quality of architecture and site design is emphasized, tall buildings can become important city landmarks, help to make the city's structure visible, and contribute positively to the skyline. By concentrating development on a small part of the site, they can also provide high quality publicly accessible open spaces and areas for community services and amenity.

Tall buildings play a role in achieving residential and office growth ambitions in parts of the *Downtown and Central Waterfront* and the *Centres*, as well as other areas across the city. However, not every site is appropriate for a tall building. Tall buildings should only be considered where they can fit into the existing or planned context, and where the site's size, configuration and context allows for the appropriate design criteria to be met.

- 7. Tall buildings are generally greater in height than the width of the adjacent right-of-way.
- 8. Tall buildings should typically be designed to consist of three parts – a base, a tower and a top – carefully integrated into a single whole.
- 9. The base portion of tall buildings should:
 - a. respect and reinforce good street proportion and pedestrian scale; and
 - b. be lined with active, grade-related uses.
- 10. The tower portion of a tall building should be designed to:
 - a. reduce the physical and visual impacts of the tower onto the public realm;

- b. limit shadow impacts on the public realm and surrounding properties;
 - c. maximize access to sunlight and open views of the sky from the public realm;
 - d. limit and mitigate pedestrian level wind impacts; and
 - e. provide access to daylight and protect privacy in interior spaces within the tower.
11. Policies 3.1.3.10 a) through 3.1.3.10 e) should be achieved by:
- a. stepping back the tower from the base building;
 - b. generally aligning the tower with, and parallel to, the street;
 - c. limiting and shaping the size of tower floorplates above base buildings;
 - d. providing appropriate separation distances from side and rear lot lines as well as other towers; and
 - e. locating and shaping balconies to limit shadow impacts.
12. The top portion of a tall building should be designed to:
- a. integrate roof top mechanical systems into the building design;
 - b. contribute to the surrounding skyline identity and character; and
 - c. avoid up-lighting and excessive lighting."