

# Performance Standard #6: Corner Sites: Heights & Angular Planes

On corner sites, the front angular plane and heights that apply to the Avenue frontage will also apply to the secondary street frontage.

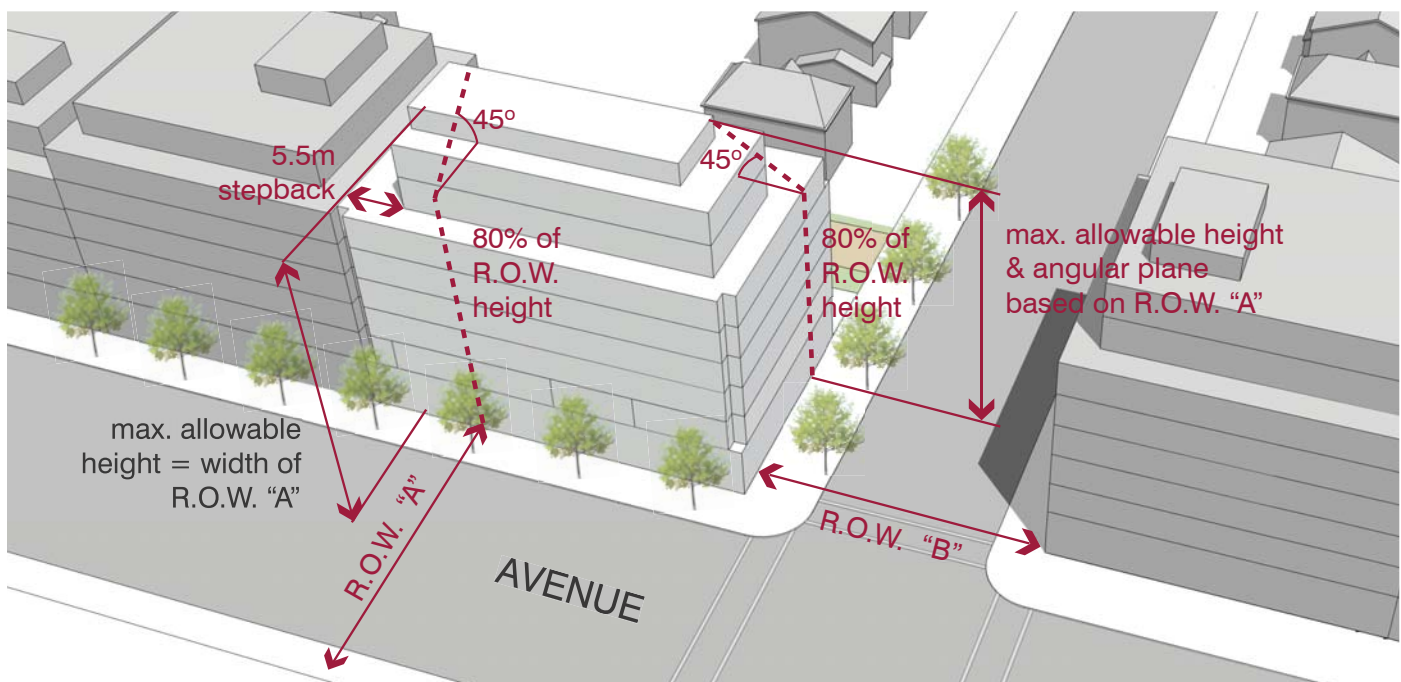
Exceptions to this condition may include key locations (e.g. where two major Avenues intersect) where design features should give prominence to the corner.

Where two Avenues intersect, the widest right-of-way will be used to determine the step-backs and heights that will apply to both frontages. Where this occurs, rear transition angular planes will continue to apply.

## Rationale

The front angular plane and heights should apply to the side street in order to:

- Prevent awkward transitions around corners where the right-of-way is a different width;
- Ensure that building height and massing has a minimal visual impact on adjacent streets; and,
- Taper buildings on their taller floors to ensure sun penetration.



Example of corner site conditions.

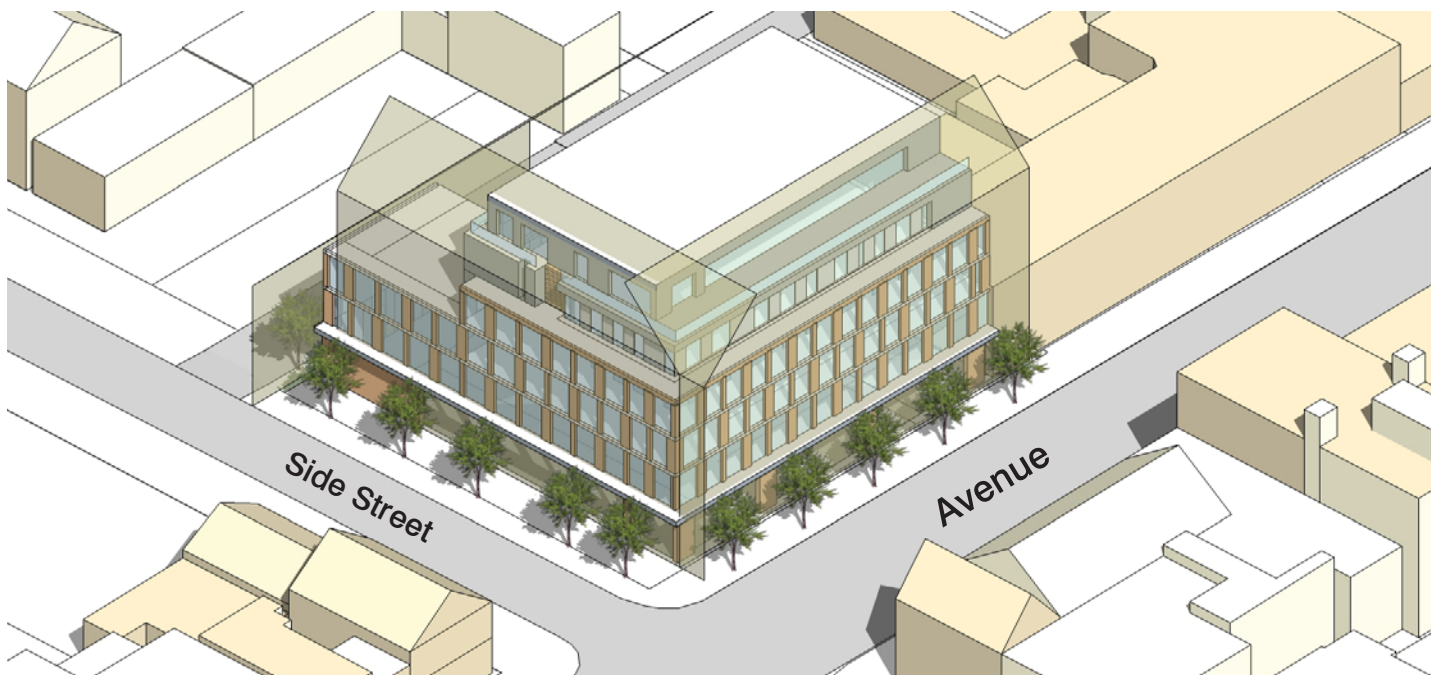
## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1 a)

### 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

Policies: 2 c)



Angular planes applied to a 20 metre tall building.

# Performance Standard #7A: Minimum Sidewalk Zones

Mid-rise buildings may be required to be set back at grade to provide a minimum sidewalk zone.

- Right-of-ways of 20 to 30 metres inclusive should provide a minimum sidewalk dimension of 4.8 metres.
- Right-of-ways greater than 30 metres should provide a minimum sidewalk dimension of 6.0 metres.
- Sites on Avenues that are Transit City routes may be required to have additional setbacks from the property line to building face at intersections to accommodate transit infrastructure - this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

## Rationale

The Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings study is as much about creating an attractive, welcoming and safe pedestrian realm as it is about creating mid-rise buildings for people to live and work in. The Official Plan identifies Avenues as “important corridors along major streets where reurbanization is anticipated and encouraged to create new housing and job opportunities while improving the pedestrian environment, the look of the street, shopping opportunities and transit service for community residents.” (Official Plan p. 2-15). All of the City’s sixteen completed Avenue Studies contain recommendations regarding minimum standards for the functional and aesthetic characteristics of Avenue sidewalks.

Many Avenues are facing competing demands for space to accommodate a range of uses within the public right-of-way. These include sidewalks, street trees, marketing areas, vehicular lanes, on-street and dedicated transit lanes, platforms for LRTs along Transit City routes, bike lanes, on-street parking and utilities. To accommodate all of these uses in certain instances requires a much wider right-of-way than exists.

New development provides an opportunity to achieve minimum standards for Avenue sidewalks through setbacks. A 4.8 metre minimum dimension is

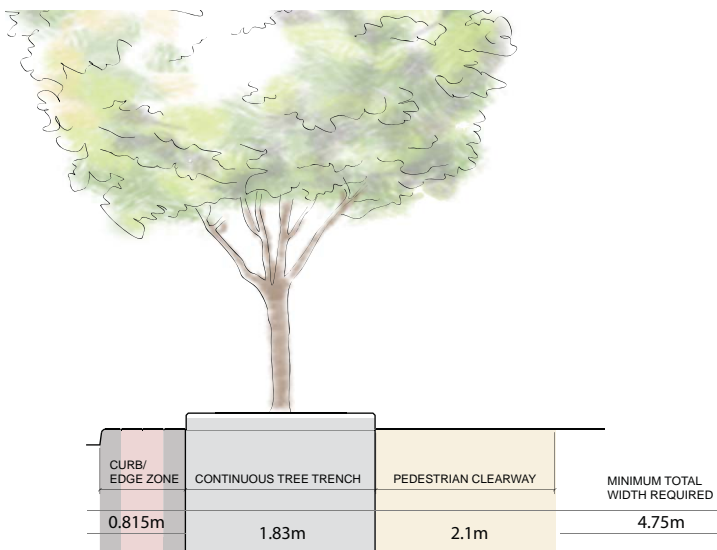


Illustration from the City of Toronto’s “Vibrant Streets: Toronto’s Coordinated Street Furniture Program” showing street tree planting details. <sup>5</sup>

consistent with the standards from the City’s Vibrant Streets Manual, which outlines the requirements for Typical Main Streets and allows for an Edge Zone, Continuous Tree Trench, and the Pedestrian Clearway. The 4.8 metre width does not take into account additional space that may be desired for cafés, marketing spaces, etc. Portions of building frontages may require greater setbacks to accommodate this.

For right-of-ways up to 30 metres, the 4.8 metre minimum width is adequate for the Avenues. Right-of-ways greater than 30 metres – which may develop with taller buildings and are likely to carry higher volumes of traffic – require wider sidewalks of at least 6.0 metres to provide for pedestrian comfort.

Setbacks should be coordinated with other City initiatives, in particular Transit City, where the existing curb may be moved. The width of the sidewalk should be determined based on proposed, or future, curb locations.

Below-grade parking structures may not protrude into the public realm, but may extend as far as the front property line, or in line with the setbacks.

### Official Plan Reference

#### 2.2 Structuring Growth in the City: Integrating Land Use and Transportation

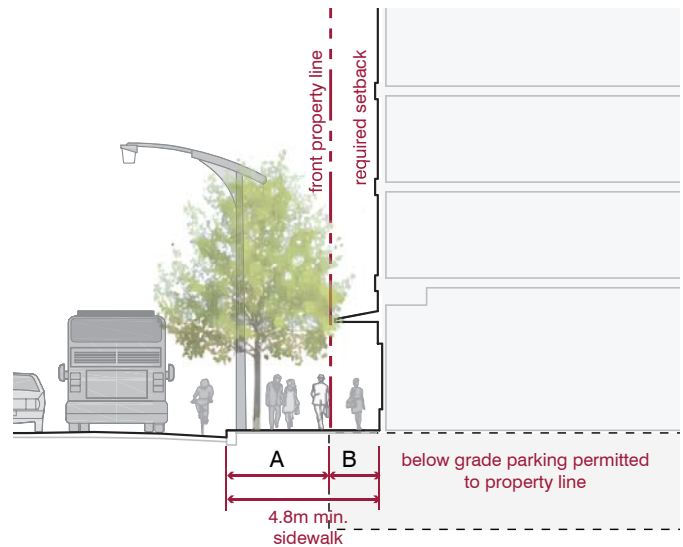
Policies: 3 b)

#### 2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods

Policies: 7 b)

#### 3.1.1 The Public Realm

Policies: 6 a), 6 b) and 11 a)



Example of minimum sidewalk width on right-of-ways that are 30m or less.



Example of minimum sidewalk width on right-of-ways greater than 30m.

A = Existing sidewalk  
B = Setback required

# Performance Standard #7B: Streetscapes

**Avenue streetscapes should provide the highest level of urban design treatment to create beautiful, safe and accessible pedestrian environments and great places to shop, work and live.**

- The design of Avenue streetscapes should follow the classifications, placement guidelines, and design details in the Toronto Urban Design Streetscape Manual (for more information see [www.toronto.ca/planning/urbdesign/streetscape/index.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/urbdesign/streetscape/index.htm) or contact [streetscapemanual@toronto.ca](mailto:streetscapemanual@toronto.ca)).
- Tree planting strategies should ensure sustainable conditions for the growth of mature trees on the Avenues.

## Rationale

Streetscape design plays as important a role as the design of buildings in enhancing the Avenues and promoting strong pedestrian-oriented streets. Elements such as trees, lighting, street furniture, pavement materials and public art should all be used to animate the street, define sidewalk zones, and provide visual interest. The arrangement and location of streetscape amenities, should allow for comfortable and easy circulation and navigation for all persons including persons with disabilities.

Street trees provide beauty and create improved microclimate conditions on the Avenues. The minimum sidewalk of 4.8 metres recommended in Performance Standard 7A will allow for tree planting as well as other pedestrian amenities. On some wider right-of-ways, typically on more suburban Avenues, the 6.0 metre sidewalk zone could potentially allow for a second row of trees to be planted within private properties.

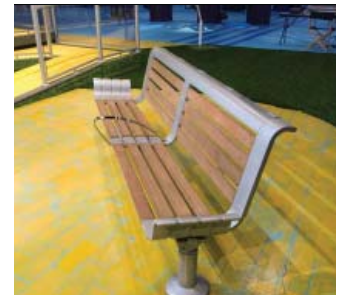
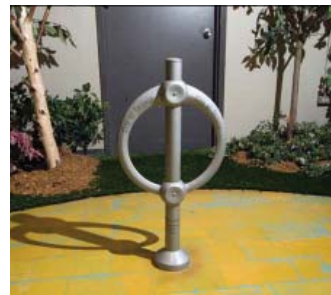


*Avenues streetscapes should be designed to include pedestrian amenities, including trees, benches, transit shelters and public art.*

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.1 The Public Realm

Policies: 6 a), 6 b), and 10 e)

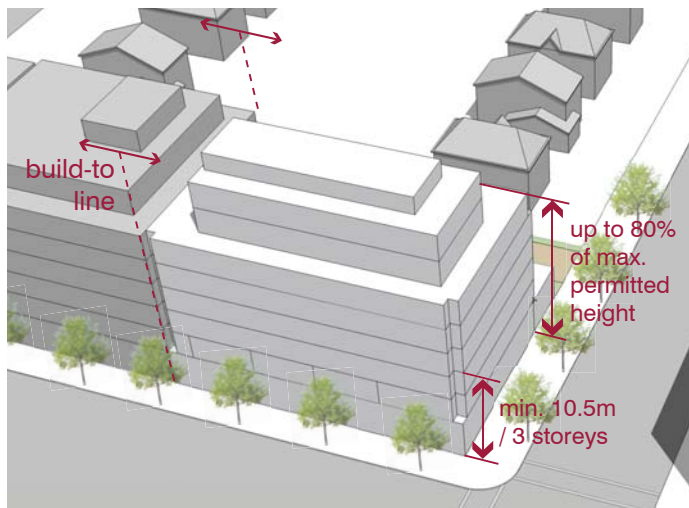


"Toronto's New Street Furniture" program will be part of the Avenues streetscapes. <sup>6</sup>

# Performance Standard #8A: Side Property Line: Continuous Street Walls

**Mid-rise buildings should be built to the side property lines, to create continuous façades along the Avenues and avoid blank side walls.**

- Mid-rise buildings should be built to the side property lines for no less than 10.5 metres of building height and up to 6 storeys (see Performance Standard 4B).
- The portion of the building above the street wall may step back from the side property lines to provide side walls incorporating windows.
- The construction process used to build a sidewall next to the sidewall of an adjacent building should result in a minimal gap to avoid unsightly areas that are unusable and collect refuse.



Example of zero side yard setbacks.

## Rationale

The vision for the Avenues is based on the evolution of a generally continuous street wall lined with shops, restaurants, cafés and other community and commercial services. A break in the continuity of the street wall and building fabric is disruptive to the success of the public function of the Avenue. For this reason, front yard parking, automotive uses and buildings with large setbacks are detrimental to the evolution of the Avenues in mixed-use and commercial areas. The “street wall” portion of a building’s front façade is defined as a minimum of 10.5 metres (3 storeys) and up to the 80% height. The streetwall should therefore generally be built to the side property line.

The post-war Avenues have large parcels (very deep and very wide lots) which lend themselves to the design of four-sided buildings, as opposed to the continuous street walls proposed in this Performance Standard. In this condition, this Performance Standard would not apply. See Performance Standard 8B for additional information.

See Performance Standards 8B - 8E for more detail.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1 a)



*Continuous street wall.*



*A street wall of five floors with upper floors stepped back (40 Bond Street in Manhattan designed by Herzog & de Meuron).<sup>7</sup>*



*Three and four storey street wall.<sup>8</sup>*



# Performance Standard #8B:

## Side Property Line: Limiting Blank Side Walls

**Blank sidewalls should be designed as an architecturally finished surface and large expanses of blank sidewalls should be avoided.**

- Blank side wall conditions may be acceptable up to a height of 6 storeys if treated properly.
- Required side step-back walls should be a minimum of 5.5 metres from the property line to allow for sufficient glazing.
- To mitigate the impact of blank side walls they should be designed with a material finish that complements the architectural character of the main building façade(s).

### Rationale

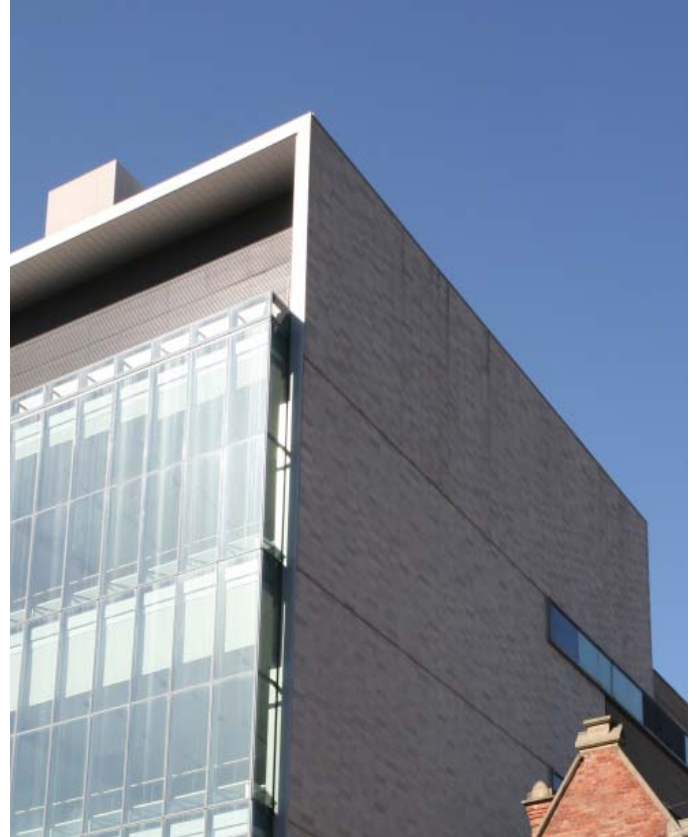
As the Avenues reurbanize with mid-rise buildings, some buildings will be taller than existing structures or new structures that are not built to the full height limit. The extent of these blank walls is a result of both the height of adjacent buildings and whether the upper storeys of the new building step back at the sides. While exposed blank sidewalls are to be expected during this period of transition, design standards are required to mitigate the appearance and height of blank walls.

Development sites on the post-war Avenues are less likely to be adjacent to existing properties with buildings built to side property lines. Many of these sites also tend to have larger lot sizes and wider frontages. The development model that has emerged to-date for these larger sites demonstrates a preference for four-sided buildings that are fully glazed and employ large side property setbacks. In some instances where lots are deep, the length of the building is positioned perpendicular to the Avenue. In these cases, blank walls are generally not an issue except on the lower levels of the building that may extend closer to the side property lines. For these Avenues a more porous street wall condition should be expected.

See Performance 8A: Continuous Street Walls.



Example of a side step-back at upper storeys.



Example of a blank side wall with appropriate materials and architectural detailing.



Example of corner site conditions.

# Performance Standard #8C: Side Property Line: Step-backs at Upper Storeys

There should be breaks at upper storeys between new and existing, or multiple new mid-rise buildings, providing sky-views and increased sunlight access to the sidewalk. This can be achieved through side step-backs at the upper storeys.

- Side property step-backs of 5.5 metres should be provided above the 80% height to increase sky views and sunlight access to the sidewalk.
- Where more “porous” street walls are desirable, side step-backs are encouraged above the minimum building height of 3 storeys.
- Buildings that are 20 metres or (6 storeys) in height or less, are not required to have upper storey side step-backs.

## Rationale

As the Avenues develop, it will be important to maintain sky-views and sunlight access to the public realm. On larger right-of-ways, this will be particularly important, because the maximum building heights will be taller.

By requiring side property step-backs at upper storeys, the potential for a “canyon effect” on the Avenues will be avoided.

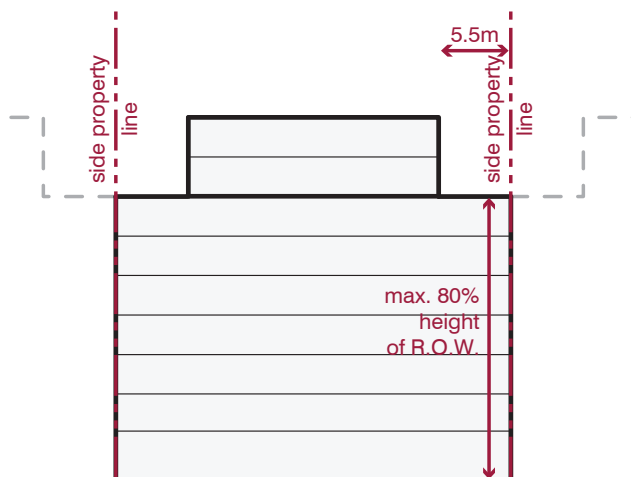
Where properties have a wider frontage, the uppermost storeys of the building can step back on the sides to allow for side glazing, reducing the extent of blank sidewalks. Side step-backs of upper storeys will reduce the height of blank sidewalls and provide both greater light penetration and varied rooflines.

Narrow sites will have trouble meeting these side property step-backs and may not be able to achieve the maximum allowable heights.

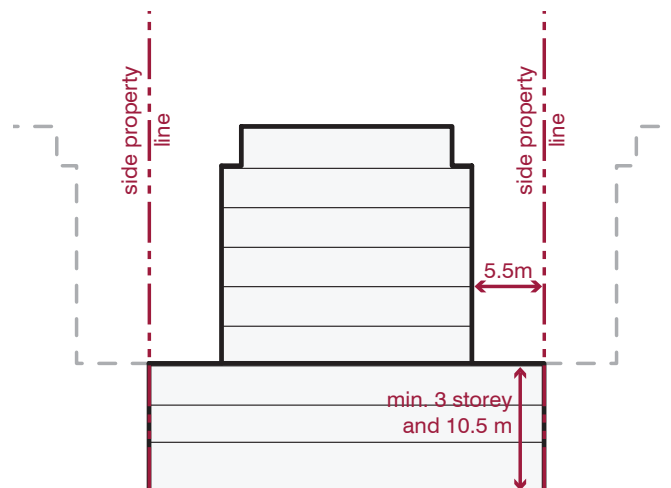
## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 3 a), 3 b), 3 c), 3 d), and 4



Example where a tall street wall is desirable.



Example where a more porous street wall is desirable, side step-backs are encouraged.

# Performance Standard #8D: Side Property Line: Existing Side Windows

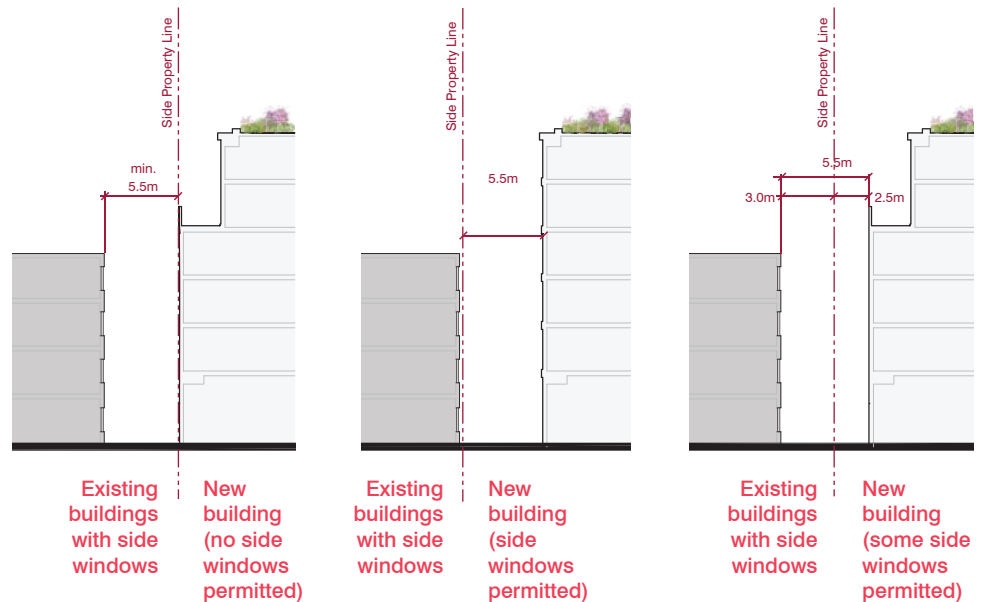
Existing buildings with side wall windows should not be negatively impacted by new developments.

- Where adjacent sites have walls with windows, new buildings must ensure a minimum of 5.5 metres from the existing building wall.
- Side walls of new buildings that are set back a minimum of 5.5 metres from the property line should incorporate glazing where possible.
- Some conditions will require additional setbacks (e.g. where the existing building has primary windows on the side wall). Setbacks in this case will be determined on a site-by-site basis.

## Rationale

Performance Standard 8A addresses a condition where there is a desire for the creation of a continuous street wall by minimizing or eliminating “gaps” between buildings. This fabric will likely be desirable in areas that have a typical main street fabric (e.g. parts of Queen Street East and West). This will also be dependent on the width of a building site, and where it is necessary for development to maximize density and build to a zero lot line.

However, there are some locations on the Avenues where this condition is not appropriate, and sometimes occurs where Mixed Use Areas of an Avenue abut an Apartment Neighbourhood on the Avenue. A visual survey of the City’s Avenues indicated that there are sites where existing buildings have windows on side walls that are close to or follow the side yard property line. It will be important that new development on adjacent sites does not negatively impact these existing buildings.



# Performance Standard #8E: Side Property Line: Side Street Setbacks

**Buildings should be set back along the side streets to provide transitions to adjacent residential properties with front yard setbacks.**

- Applies where adjacent side street properties are low-scale residential form with front yard setbacks.
- This setback should extend for 15% of the side street lot frontage (lot depth) and range from a minimum of 2.0 metres to a maximum of 5.0 metres.

## Rationale

Side setbacks along side streets will create a transition between single family homes in adjacent Neighbourhoods and the new mid-rise buildings envisioned along the Avenues. This will help to maintain views from the neighbourhood and will create a gradual transition from the Neighbourhoods street to the Avenue.

## Official Plan Reference

2.3.1 *Healthy Neighbourhoods*  
Policies: 2 b)

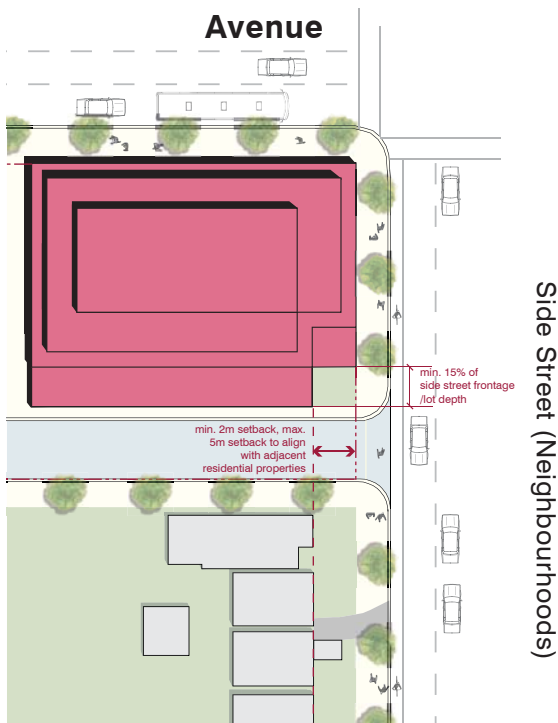


Diagram illustrating the side street setback.



Visualization of the side street setback.

# Performance Standard #9: Building Width: Maximum Width

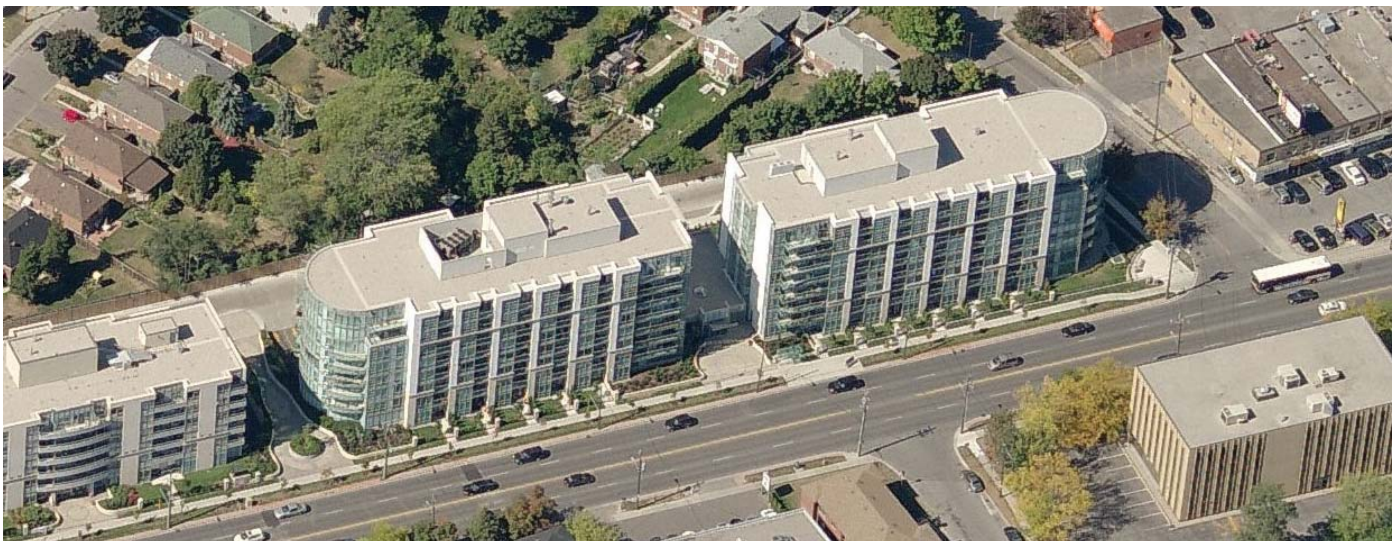
Where mid-rise building frontages are more than 60 metres in width, building massing should be articulated or “broken up” to ensure that façades are not overly long.

- Create multiple buildings on wide sites.
- Break up the façades through the use of vertical breaks and step-backs.

## Rationale

There are a number of examples throughout the city of buildings that are exceedingly long. These long, uninterrupted façades have a negative impact on the pedestrian realm for a number of reasons. Long façades at grade provide less interest and variation at the pedestrian level. At upper storeys, long, continuous façades prevent sunlight access and skyviews to the street (see also Performance Standard 8C - Side Property Line: Step-backs at Upper Storeys).

Building façades should be broken up both physically and visually. Breaks in long building façades provide mid-block connections for pedestrians and allow for the creation of additional “corners”.



Example of a long building - buildings are broken up to create relief along the Avenue. <sup>9</sup>

# Performance Standard #10: At-Grade Uses: Residential

Where retail at grade is not required, and residential uses are permitted, the design of ground floors should provide adequate public/private transition and allow for future conversion to retail uses.

## Rationale - Flexible Uses At Grade

On certain Avenues, it is expected that retail may not be feasible in the immediate term, but may be feasible in the future.

Where residential uses are permitted at grade facing the Avenue, the design of the ground floor should allow for adequate separation from the sidewalk to provide transition from the public sidewalk to private residences. The design should also allow for the potential to convert these residential areas to commercial uses in the future.

Flexible Standard A: a minimum setback of 4.5 metres is required beyond the sidewalk zone and should contain a raised planter, low fencing and/or landscape

buffers. The ground floor of the residential units may have individual entrances and can be level with the sidewalk. The minimum floor-to-floor height is 4.5 metres.

These setback zones and floor-to-floor height allows for future conversion to commercial uses.

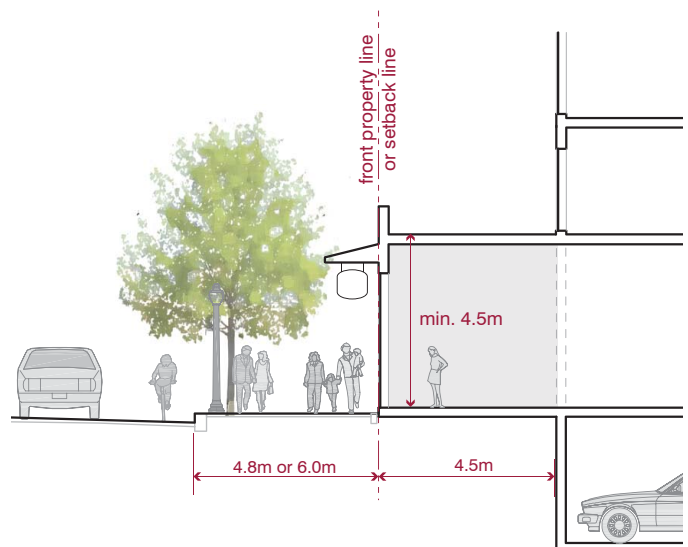
## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1 b), 1 c)



Flexible Standard A - Before: illustrates a ground floor residential use facing the Avenue.



Flexible Standard A - After: illustrates the conversion to commercial use.

## Rationale - Residential At Grade

On certain Avenues, it is expected that limited portions of the Avenues may include residential uses at grade for the long-term. This is only appropriate where commercial uses are not likely to be viable.

Townhomes are not an appropriate use on the Avenues, and should not be permitted on the Avenues. The townhouse form creates a privatized frontage along the Avenues, which is difficult to convert to commercial uses in the future and townhouses do not provide the minimal level of intensification desired for the Avenues.

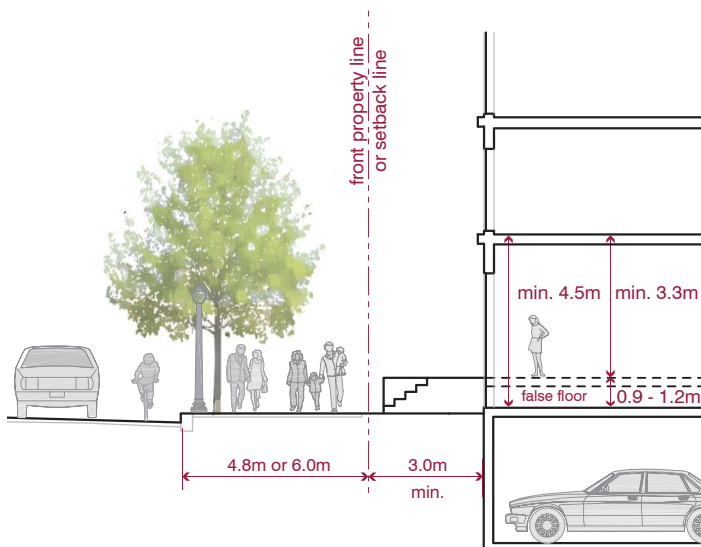
Where ground floor residential uses are acceptable, they should avoid creating conditions along the Avenues that detract from the role of the sidewalk as an inviting and attractive public space. The interface between private uses and the public sidewalk can create awkward conditions if not mitigated through a series of design measures that create adequate separation and animated frontages. Special design standards will be applied to ground floor residential uses to ensure that:

- there is a suitable transition from the public sidewalk to private residential units;
- that landscaping and other design features are used to augment this transition zone; and
- active entrances to residential uses assist in animating the frontage.

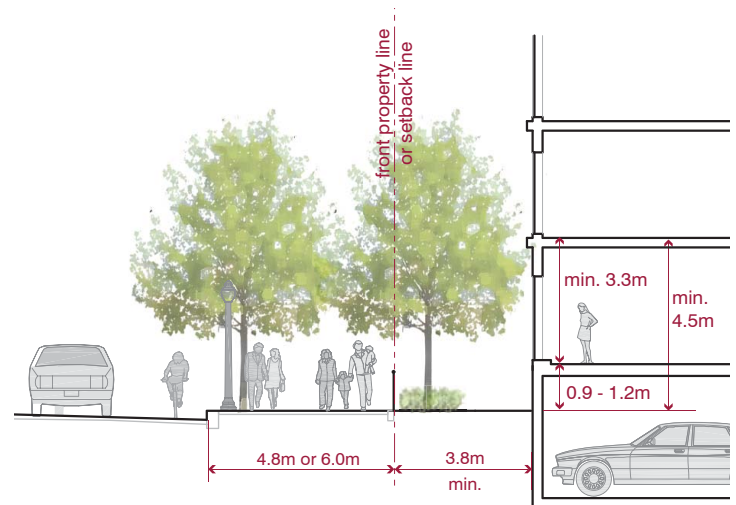
Residential Standard B: is the preferred design solution that incorporates individual unit entrances accessed from the Avenue sidewalk. A minimum setback of 3.0 metres is required beyond the 4.8 or 6.0 metre sidewalk zone that contains front steps, a raised planter and porch/terrace area. The ground floor of the residential units should be raised between a minimum of 0.9 metres to a maximum of 1.2 metres above the sidewalk level as measured from the base of the front steps. The minimum floor-to-floor height (ground floor to second floor) is 3.6 metres. The change in grade could also be achieved through a false floor.

Residential Standard C: applies to special circumstances where future retail is not expected (See Section 2.3.2: Recommendations for Retail at grade, and Appendix B: Retail Study), or individual unit entrances cannot be provided. A minimum setback of 3.8 metres is required beyond the sidewalk zone that contains a row of trees and a landscape buffer. The ground floor of the residential units should be raised a minimum of 0.9 metres to a maximum of 1.2 metres above the adjacent sidewalk level. The minimum height from the sidewalk level to the second floor is 4.5 metres.

Indoor amenity spaces are discouraged along the Avenue frontage at grade as well, as they also tend to become privatized and less animated spaces.



Residential Standard B



Residential Standard C



# Performance Standard #11: Setbacks for Civic Spaces

In special circumstances where civic or public spaces are desired, additional setbacks may be encouraged.

## Rationale

Special corners or major intersections may be appropriate locations for civic plazas or open spaces. Where this is appropriate, new mid-rise buildings may be set back at the corners.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 3 a) and 4



An example of a civic plaza framed by mid-rise buildings set back from the corner - Tivoli Square, Washington DC. <sup>10,11</sup>

# Performance Standard #12: Balconies & Projections

**Balconies and other projecting building elements should not negatively impact the public realm or prevent adherence to other Performance Standards.**

- Balconies on the front façade (projecting or inset) should not be located within the first 3 storeys.
- Balconies on the street-facing façade should be inset behind the street wall within the Pedestrian Perception Step-back zone (between 3 - 6 storeys).
- Balconies on the rear façade should be setback a minimum of 10 metres from the rear property line.
- Balconies or other permanent building elements should not encroach into the public right of way or setback.
- Balconies and other projections (e.g. railings) should be contained within all angular planes.

## Rationale

The Performance Standards in this document have been developed to promote appropriately-scaled and massed mid-rise buildings through angular plane and height recommendations. The intent of these Performance Standards is to allow mid-rise buildings to frame the street while avoiding negative impacts on the public realm or neighbouring properties, including excessive shadowing or overlook. Therefore, any architectural features that project from the building face (horizontally or vertically) should be contained within the building envelope as defined by all angular planes.

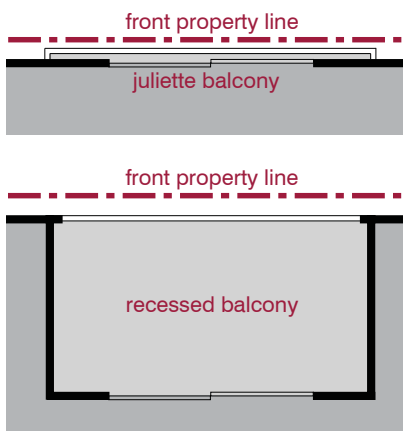
Projecting balconies should not be located within the Pedestrian Perception Zone, or below the first step-back. Within this portion of the building, recessed balconies, Juliette balconies and terraces (as part of a step-back) are acceptable. See Performance Standard 4C.

Full floor height screens or louvers are sometimes utilized on balconies for noise or sun protection. The two considerations for the design and use of these screens include their material and their percentage of the total façade area. Generally, these should not form more than 50% of the Avenue-facing façade.

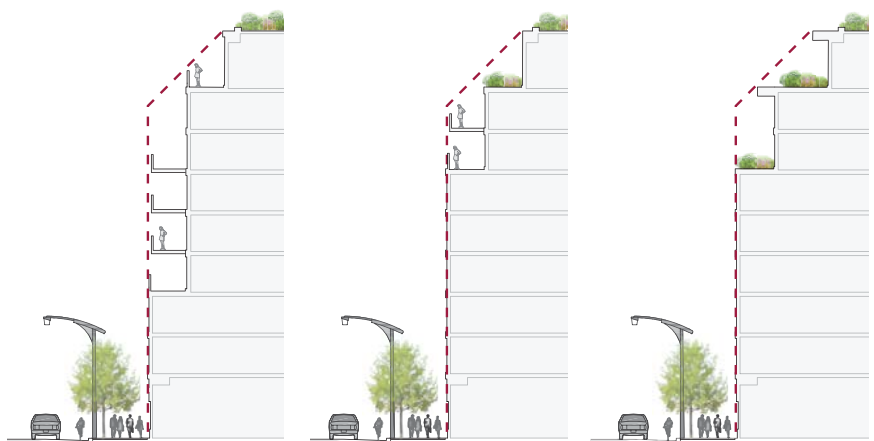
## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1, 3 b), 3 c), 3 d), and 6



Plan view of appropriate balcony types below the first step-back location.



Projection, balconies, railings and overhangs should fit within all angular planes.

# Performance Standard #13: Roofs & Roofscapes

**Mechanical penthouses may exceed the maximum height limit by up to 5 metres but may not penetrate any angular planes.**

- All mechanical penthouses should be clad with materials and designed to complement the building façades.
- The portion of the roof not utilized as mechanical penthouses should be developed as green roofs and/or usable outdoor amenity space. Green roofs should be compliant with the City's Green Roof By-law.

## Rationale

Mechanical penthouses above maximum allowable heights are already permitted through City zoning by-laws. Mechanical penthouses that extend above the height limit, but fall within the angular planes, will not impact shadowing, will generally not be visible

from the adjacent Avenue sidewalks and are minimally visible from the opposite sidewalk. By keeping penthouses within the angular planes it will position the penthouse to the centre of the roof. However, as mechanical penthouses will be visible from adjacent properties, including neighbourhoods, they must be designed with materials that are complementary to the architecture of the building. Methods for reducing the height and size of mechanical penthouses should be explored or integrated into the top floor of the building.

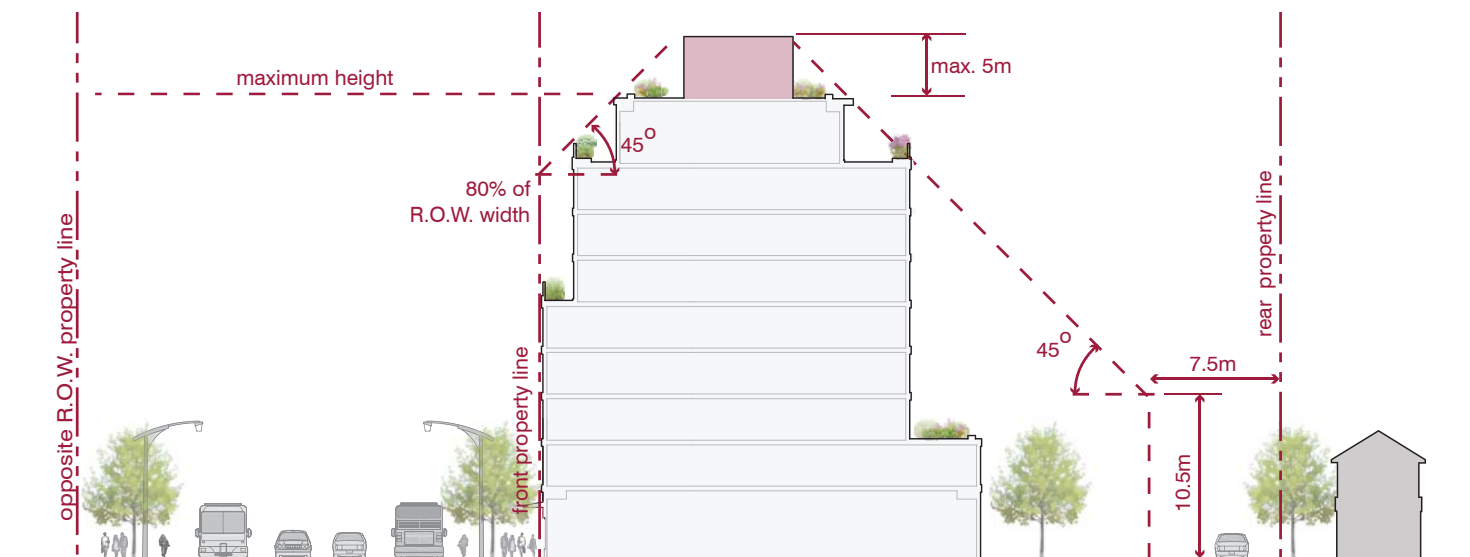
Where it is not possible to achieve a mechanical penthouse within these guidelines, the optimal building height may not be achieved or the mechanical penthouse will need to be located within the uppermost storey of a building.

Sustainable technologies, such as photovoltaic panels, should be encouraged for the roofs of mid-rise buildings. These technologies may take up more space than a typical rooftop mechanical penthouse, but should still be contained within the angular planes.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1, 3 b), 3 c), 3 d) and 6



Example of mechanical penthouse placement within all angular planes.

# Performance Standard #14: Exterior Building Materials

**Buildings should utilize high-quality materials selected for their permanence, durability and energy efficiency.**

## Rationale

Official Plan Amendment 66 provides the City of Toronto with new powers over the exterior design of buildings as well as the inclusion of sustainable building features under paragraphs 2(iv) and (v) of Section 114(5). These new provisions will help the City to achieve the recommendations in this performance standard, and the study as a whole.

Building materials are a key component of exterior building design, and the choice of appropriate materials is integral to the process of creating new buildings that will positively influence the character of the Avenue streetscape.

The use of appropriate exterior building materials at grade, particularly at the street wall and areas which are visible from the public realm, is an important design consideration to help new development support the public realm and fit with the existing and/or planned context.

Certain materials should be discouraged on façades visible from the public realm, however innovative use of materials is encouraged.

Through the City's Site Plan control review process, new development will provide drawings depicting the exterior design, including materials (see page 6 of the following document: [www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/dev\\_approval\\_form.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/dev_approval_form.pdf) for required drawings for Site Plan Application submission). In reviewing a project through Site Plan Control, the City can consider and secure the exterior design including exterior architectural details, including its doors,

roofs, windows and decorative elements, such as cornices and belt-courses, as well as general façade materials, which influence a project's character, scale, appearance and how it relates to adjacent buildings.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.1 The Public Realm

Policies: 5

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 2 c) and 3 c)



*An example of context sensitive façade design and material selection.*

# Performance Standard #15: Façade Design & Articulation

**Mid-rise buildings will be designed to support the public and commercial function of the Avenue through well articulated and appropriately scaled façades.**

- **The street wall of buildings on the Avenues should be designed to create a comfortable, yet highly animated, pedestrian environment through a rhythm of multiple retail frontages, architectural articulation, numerous entrances, display windows, canopies and signage.**
- **The ground floor of all buildings should be articulated and highly transparent, with a minimum 60% of this frontage to be glazed and transparent.**
- **Building materials will be high quality and contribute to a human-scaled public realm.**
- **Blank walls should be avoided.**
- **Utilities, vents and other undesirable elements should be avoided on the lower levels of façades adjacent to the public realm or should be integrated into the architectural composition.**
- **Permanent opaque covering on windows and doors that prevent views into buildings should be discouraged.**

## Rationale

Official Plan Amendment 66 provides the City of Toronto with new powers over the exterior design of buildings as well as the inclusion of sustainable building features under paragraphs 2(iv) and (v) of Section 114(5). These new provisions will help the City to achieve the recommendations in this Performance Standard, and the study as a whole.

The façade is the exterior of a building visible to the public, and its exterior design contributes to a more beautiful and engaging Toronto. The exterior design of a façade includes the form, scale, proportion, pattern and materials of building elements, including doors, roofs, windows and decorative elements. It is important to consider the exterior design of a façade at grade as it relates to the general layout and organization of interior spaces closest to the pedestrian environment. In particular, the placement of doors and unobstructed clear glass windows, with little or no tint, play an important role in supporting a safe, accessible and vibrant public realm, provided that the design is also bird friendly. These design measures are necessary to help new development support the public realm and fit with the existing and/or planned context.

A harmonious relationship between a new façade and its context can be achieved through contemporary expression, provided that the existing context, proportions, forms, size and scale are fully respected and appropriate materials are used. In particular, the placement of doors and unobstructed clear glass windows, with little or no tint, play an

important role in supporting a safe, accessible and vibrant public realm. Entrance canopies or awnings, for example, create a vibrant public realm and should be encouraged. A new façade need not be a simple replication of adjacent building façades.

Building articulation is equally important in a building’s contribution to human-scale at the street level. The application of sensitive building massing, high quality materials and design excellence will ensure that all new buildings on the Avenues contribute to a great public realm.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.1 The Public Realm

Policies: 5

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 2 c) and 3 c)



Examples of modern and historic buildings with façades that have a fine grain character.

# Performance Standard #16A: Vehicular Access

**Wherever possible, vehicular access to on-site parking, loading, and servicing facilities should be provided from local streets and rear lanes, not from the Avenue.**

## Rationale

Avenues strategies mandate a pedestrian-focus for the Avenues. All of the previously completed Avenues Studies reviewed have recommended an uninterrupted pedestrian realm by locating driveways and vehicular access points to the rear or side of buildings.

Any new development along the City's Avenues should reiterate the importance of removing vehicular access from Avenues (whether they are currently utilized as main streets or not) with the following guidance:

- Side street access should generally be considered the primary solution
- Narrow sites and mid-block sites should first seek laneway access

If the only point of access available is from the Avenue, then a series of guidelines should be applied to its design, location and width. Examples of key guideline recommendations include a maximum dimension for the entrance; no double height access points; width of entrance should be as narrow as possible and a maximum percentage of the building frontage to be located at the setback or property line. See Performance Standard 16B for mid-block vehicular access guidelines.

To improve on existing laneway systems along the Avenues, the City should seek to acquire land to extend laneways to full block length. The Performance Standards for rear transitions (see Performance Standards 5A - 5C) require a minimum 7.5 metre setback from the rear property line which would allow for two-way lane access.



*Illustration of a vehicular access point located off of a side streets.*

Requirements for loading spaces (both type and size) are set out in the zoning by-law and are dependent on use and gross floor area. Refer to the new draft zoning by-law: [www.toronto.ca/zoning/bylaw/ZBL\\_NewProvision\\_Chapter220.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/zoning/bylaw/ZBL_NewProvision_Chapter220.htm)

### Official Plan Reference

#### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 2 a) and 2 b)

#### 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

Policies: 2 i)



*Vehicular access points should be located off of laneways or side streets wherever possible.*



# Performance Standard #16B: Mid-Block Vehicular Access for Constrained Sites

Mid-block vehicular access should be avoided wherever possible. However, there are instances where this is the only point of access for certain Avenue sites. For mid-block sites without rear lane access, a front driveway may be permitted, provided established criteria are met, including:

- The driveway is located as far from the adjacent intersection as possible or a minimum of 30 metres from the centre of the driveway to the centre of the nearest side street;
- Appropriate spacing between adjacent driveways is maintained resulting in no more than one driveway every 30 metres;
- A 6.0 metre public lane is provided at the rear of the property which will form part of a continuous laneway system within the block as adjacent properties redevelop;
- As redevelopment occurs, approved mid-block driveways to the Avenue should be designated for shared access to serve adjacent properties in lieu of, and until a rear public laneway is established; and,
- Where front driveways are permitted, they should be contained within the building massing with additional floors built above the driveway.

## Rationale

Mid-block vehicular access should be avoided wherever possible as it conflicts with pedestrian movement. However, mid-block access should be considered where no alternatives are available. Where front lane entrances are permitted, they should also facilitate improved access for neighbouring Avenue mid-block sites through shared driveways and rear lane dedication.

On some of the more suburban Avenues, if side street or laneway access is not possible, new development sites that amalgamate several lots with multiple existing curb cuts can potentially retain one entrance on the Avenues in an appropriate location.



*Where front driveway access is permitted, it should be incorporated into the definition of the street wall.*

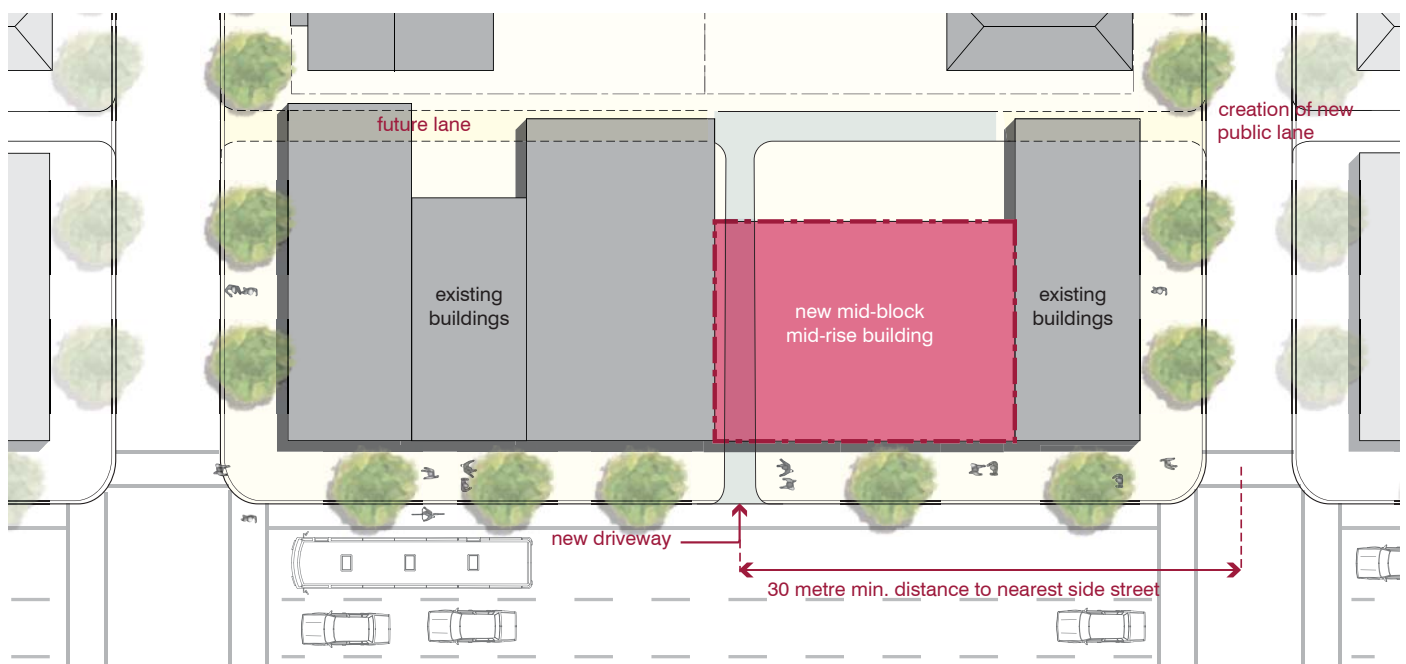
## Official Plan Reference

### 2.2 Structuring Growth in the City: Integrating Land Use and Transportation

Policies: 3 c)

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 2 a) and 2 b)



Where a development is permitted to include front lane access, the project should result in improved access for neighbouring mid-block Avenue properties through shared driveway and rear lane dedication.

# Performance Standard #17: Loading & Servicing

**Loading, servicing and other vehicular related functions should not detract from the use or attractiveness of the pedestrian realm.**

- **Ideally, garbage, loading, servicing and utility functions should be integrated within the interior of a building at the rear whenever possible, with access from a rear lane or side street.**
- **Rear lanes should always exit onto adjacent side streets.**

## Rationale

Parking, loading and servicing are all necessary functions of a mid-rise building. Loading, servicing and other vehicular related functions should be located away from the pedestrian realm in order to create a safe, functional and attractive pedestrian environment. Ideally, mid-rise buildings should provide for public pick-up.

The creation of a minimum ground floor height of 4.5 metres, as recommended in Performance Standard 3, provides better clearance for garbage and loading functions. However, overhead loading for bulk garbage collection requires a minimum clearance of 6.1 metres.

On constrained properties (very narrow or very shallow), loading and servicing facilities should consider alternative solutions.

Buildings with less than 31 units do not require Type G loading and pick-up space is not required. The standards for loading and servicing are set out in the Zoning By-law and vary by use and floor area.

## Official Plan Reference

### **3.1.2 Built Form**

Policies: 2 a) and 2 b)

### **4.5 Mixed Use Areas**

Policies: 2 i) and 2 j)



*Vehicular access for loading and servicing should be integrated into the overall building design and located off of secondary streets or laneways.*

# Performance Standard #18:

## Design Quality

**Mid-rise buildings will reflect design excellence and green building innovation utilizing high-quality materials that acknowledge the public role of the Avenues.**

### Rationale

Great design invested in a mid-rise building will promote reinvestment in adjacent properties. In turn, the role of the Avenue as a neighbourhood centre and destination will be strengthened and the market conditions for retail will be enhanced.

The Performance Standards recommended in this document are intended to set a framework for as-of-right zoning permissions for mid-rise buildings on Avenues. They are based on minimum Performance Standards as zoning by-laws or Urban Design Guidelines and will not in themselves result in design excellence. Rather, they will assist in preventing unacceptable forms of development. Recognizing that creative solutions will emerge, which may not match all of the requirements of the Performance Standards, it is recommended that the City appoint a design review panel to review mid-rise building applications located on the Avenues.

Buildings that meet these Performance Standards should move quickly through the approvals process, avoiding the need for rezonings and Official Plan amendments, lengthy processes that have deterred redevelopment of the Avenues in the past.

With new development rights comes an obligation from the development industry to invest in high quality design and materials, green building strategies and to assist the City in creating a spectacular public realm embodied in wide tree-lined sidewalks, parks, open spaces and public art. To encourage a high level of environmental performance, the City offers a 20% refund on development charges for development that meets both Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the Toronto Green Standard.

Through the Site Plan Control process, applicants will be expected to demonstrate how a project embodies design excellence through:

- The use of high quality materials
- Sustainable performance measures of Tier 1 of the Toronto Green Standard are required
- High quality streetscape treatments of the adjacent public realm
- Façade articulation
- Sensitive and creative massing of the building to create appropriate microclimate conditions for pedestrian comfort
- Appropriately scaled and attractive signage
- Transparency at the ground floor level (should be in keeping with the Bird Friendly Performance Measures within the Toronto Green Standard)
- Multiple entranceways facing the street
- Landscaping elements that assist in buffering mid-rise buildings from adjacent low-rise residential buildings
- Screening of utilities and loading areas
- Design of mechanical areas and penthouses that use materials that complement the architecture of the building

## Official Plan Reference

### **1.5.1 Supporting the Foundations of Competitiveness**

Policies: 1 c)

#### **3.1.1 The Public Realm**

Policies: 1 a), 1 b), 1 c), and 1 d)



(Top) Octavia Gateway Building in San Francisco, CA. <sup>13</sup>  
(Above) ROAR 1 Building in Vancouver, BC. <sup>14</sup>



# Performance Standard #19A: Heritage & Character Areas

**All mid-rise buildings on the Avenues should respect and be sensitively integrated with heritage buildings and in the context of Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs).**

## Rationale

The Avenues that have built or cultural character (including those that may or may not include listed or designated buildings) have been studied to provide guidance for the City and developers regarding building design and architectural character - see Appendix A: Character Area Study.

The City of Toronto has policies in place that demonstrate the value placed on its heritage properties and heritage conservation districts (HCDs), including requirements for how individual buildings should be protected and integrated into new developments, and this study recognizes these guidelines. Where they are in place, HCDs shall prevail if there is a conflict.

In general, where new mid-rise buildings are developed in Character Areas, building design should be sympathetic to context and certain heritage characteristics. This may include, but is not limited to, building step-backs and cornice lines, façade articulation, and building materials. Where applicable, all of these design elements should be appropriate to their heritage context. For further guidance on specific sites, see Appendix A: Character Area Study.

The following Guidelines will outline the requirements/guidelines for new development:

- in Heritage Conservation Districts
- adjacent to heritage buildings
- in Character Areas
- on heritage buildings (Part IV)

## Official Plan Reference

### *2.2.3 Avenues: Reurbanizing Arterial Corridors*

Policies: 3 c) v)

### *3.1.2 Built Form*

Policies: 3 a)

### *3.1.5 Heritage Resources*

Policies: 1 a), 1 b), and 2



*Many buildings on Queen Street West have heritage character.*

# Performance Standard #19B: Development in a Heritage Conservation District

**The character and values of HCDs must be respected to ensure that the district is not diminished by incremental or sweeping change.**

- Development within an HCD must adhere to the guidelines of the district (see City's guidelines: [www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage\\_districts.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation/heritage_districts.htm))
- New mid-rise development will be permitted in HCDs, as per the allowances in the individual HCD plans.
- Where they are in place, HCDs shall prevail if there is a conflict.

## Official Plan Reference

### *3.1.5 Heritage Resources*

Policies: 1 a), 1 b), and 2



# Performance Standard #19C: Development Adjacent to Heritage Properties

**Development adjacent to heritage properties should be sensitive to, and not negatively impact, heritage properties.**

- **Mitigation measures must be taken to ensure the heritage properties are respected and not negatively impacted.**
- **New developments must not diminish the cultural heritage values or physical materials and identified attributes of the heritage property.**
- **Impacts to the perception of the heritage properties or its prominence within an existing context should be minimized.**
- **Sight lines and views to identified landmarks should not be encroached upon by new developments.**

## Rationale

Individual Avenue Character Area Maps in Appendix A identify the designated heritage properties along the Avenues. Certain Avenues have a higher concentrations of these properties than others, but all heritage properties must be considered where redevelopment is adjacent to these properties.

Most areas within the City have not been subject to a systematic survey of heritage resources and the City's heritage inventory is continually being updated. For the most recent heritage properties, the City's Heritage Preservation Services should be contacted.

This guideline will ensure that existing heritage properties are protected and considered through redevelopment of the Avenues.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.5 Heritage Resources

Policies: 1 a), 1 b), and 2



*Example of a listed heritage property on an Avenue: 614 Eglinton Avenue West: Forest Hill Fire Hall and Police Station, 1932; G.A. Bachman and A. Wilson, architects; two storey eastern wing, Forsey Page and Steele, architects, 1937; two storey eastern addition, J.G. Sutherland.*

# Performance Standard #19D: Character Area: Fine Grain Fabric

**New mid-rise buildings in Character Areas that have a fine grain, main street fabric should be designed to reflect a similar rhythm of entrances and multiple retail units.**

- Vertical articulation should generally be consistent with the rhythm of adjacent main street buildings or façades.
- The street wall of buildings on the Avenues should be designed to create a comfortable yet highly animated pedestrian environment utilizing a rhythm of multiple retail frontages architecturally articulated through materials, numerous entrances, display windows, canopies and signage.

## Rationale

The fine grain fabric found on these Avenues is a result of narrow lot patterns, generally not wider than 6 metres. The fabric of Toronto's main streets is part of what makes the Avenues so special. New buildings within a Character Area must seek to maintain this rhythm and fabric at grade and within the lower storeys that impact the public realm.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1 a), 3 a), and 4



*Typical main street fabric in Toronto's Old City.*



*Examples of new mid-rise buildings that create a fine grain ground floor façade.*

# Performance Standard #19E: Character Area: Consistent Cornice Line

Buildings in a Character Area should maintain a consistent cornice line for the first step-back by establishing a “datum line” or an average of the existing cornice line.

- This front step-back for mid-block conditions should be a minimum of 1.5 metres and reference the average cornice line.
- This front step-back for corner conditions should be a minimum of 1.5 metres and continue the adjacent cornice line.

## Rationale

New buildings that maintain and reference the existing cornice line of a predominant main street fabric will be better integrated into their Character Area context.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 1 a) and 3 a)



Examples of mid-rise buildings that have maintained a consistent cornice line with the surrounding built form context.



# Performance Standard #19F:

## Character Area: Vertical Additions

**Additions to existing buildings are an alternative to redevelopment projects on the Avenues, and should be encouraged in areas with an existing urban fabric.**

- Additions will not exceed the overall maximum height for the site.
- Additions should fit within the permitted envelope (i.e. will meet all angular plane provisions outlined in the Performance Standards).
- Vertical additions should adhere to the Performance Standards that address façade articulation.
- Additions should not be more than 50% of the existing building height.

### Rationale

Avenues that are within Character Areas may be appropriate places for alternative forms of reurbanization or intensification, such as reuse of existing buildings, small scale infill and building additions.

By designing appropriate vertical additions, the existing fabric of the street is maintained and a more modest scale of intensification is achieved.

Where vertical additions are located on top of heritage buildings, their visual impact should be minimized through angular planes and the use of compatible and/or complementary materials.

### Official Plan Reference

#### 3.1.5 Heritage Resources

Policies: 8 b), and 8 f)



*Reurbanization and intensification may be accommodated through vertical additions to existing buildings on the Avenues.*

# Performance Standard #19G: Character Area: Other Considerations

**Additional “context sensitive” design and massing guidelines should be considered for development in Character Areas, including:**

- Use of compatible building materials
- Consider the character & placement of existing signage
- Use of front and side step-backs to mitigate different building heights
- Minimize the height of blank walls
- Ground floor heights/characteristics of character or heritage buildings should also inform new development to enhance the pedestrian realm

## Rationale

The Character Area descriptions contained in Appendix A provide a general summary of the individual Character Areas and some of their important characteristics. Key context sensitive design opportunities should be considered within Character Areas.

City Staff will work closely with developers to ensure that mid-rise building design in Character Areas is appropriate to the context.

## Official Plan Reference

### 3.1.2 Built Form

Policies: 3 a) and 4



*Example of complementary materials used in a modern building adjacent to a historic building.* <sup>15,16</sup>

