

Bayside Urban Design Guidelines

February 13, 2014

In 2005, in compliance with the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (CWSP), the precinct planning process was begun for the East Bayfront to provide for its comprehensive and orderly development. The resulting Precinct Plan establishes general expectations for the organization of the public realm and the buildings that will frame new public spaces. It also provides the rationale for the implementing zoning by-law and a basis for the organization of the plan of subdivision.

However, the precinct planning process also requires the creation of urban design guidelines to be used during development review. The guidelines are to address a finer layer of detail suggested by the Precinct Plan but not captured by the zoning by-law to help ensure that individual developments *cumulatively* achieve the vision of the East Bayfront.

Bayside will be one of the East Bayfront's first mixed-use neighbourhoods. Waterfront Toronto and their Bayside development partner compiled guidelines which were used in the development of Bayside's plan of subdivision. The guidelines below distill and build upon these guidelines and will be used to ensure that the objectives of the broader planning framework are satisfied during the site plan review process.

The guidelines are organized into four groups that echo the Core Principles of the Secondary Plan as applied to the detailed design of the new community:

- A) Making Connections
- B) Building Spectacular Waterfront Public Spaces
- C) Promoting a Clean and Green Environment
- D) Creating Dynamic Communities

They expand upon the principles, policies and concepts of the CWSP and the East Bayfront Precinct Plan, and provide guidance as to how development within Bayside can satisfy their requirements and expectations.

A. Making Connections...

Both the CWSP and the East Bayfront Precinct Plan emphasize the importance of creating east /west, and north/south connections in order to reconnect the City with its waterfront. The scale and purpose of the connections are to vary. Connections southward are to provide views to the water, pedestrian access to the water's edge and are to underscore the public nature of the new communities. East/west connections are to link new communities to each other, to the public parks and other amenities they share, and will break down large blocks to sizes more typical of downtown Toronto and more appropriate for residential and commercial uses.

All connections must accommodate pedestrians, but not all connections will be similarly scaled or detailed. Different purposes require different guidance.

- The system of public open spaces should be supplemented with strategically located, publicly accessible, privately owned open spaces at grade.

1. A publicly accessible space will be located on the south side of Queens Quay approximately at a mid -point between Bonnycastle Street (south) and Small Street (south). This public space should provide views to Aitken Place Park and to Lake Ontario from Queens Quay. This publicly accessible space should be generously dimensioned:
 - to mimic the proportions of a public street,
 - to emphasize the importance of the space as a connector between Queens Quay, Aitken Place Park and Lake Ontario beyond,
 - to entice pedestrians to move southward into the Bayside neighbourhood, emphasizing its public character,
 - to encourage occupation of the space, and
 - to provide oblique views to Lake Ontario from Queens Quay.

2. An east/west, mid-block pedestrian route will be created across the full width of Bayside connecting Sherbourne Common South with the Water's Edge Promenade along Parliament Slip. It will align approximately with the east/west portion of Dockside Drive to the west and run adjacent to the Service Driveway on Block 2.

This pedestrian connection is obstructed sequentially by Blocks 3, 11 and 12. To complete the route robustly scaled pedestrian and visual connections should be made across these blocks. Connections could be made in one of two ways:

- a. Breaking the building massing with a publicly accessible space as anticipated between Blocks 1 and 10, and 10 and 11:
 - to emphasize the public nature of the connection, and
 - to break-up long blocks, such as Block 12. A larger break in Block 12 would also improve the visual connection between Small Street (south) and the Water's Edge Promenade adjacent to Parliament Slip.

- b. Creating a publicly accessible pedestrian passageway through an intervening building, two storeys high and of sufficient width:
 - to emphasize the public nature of the connection,
 - to create a strong visual connection,
 - to comfortably accommodate weather-protected pedestrian movement, and to provide an opportunity for seating.

This may be the most appropriate solution for Block 11, which is shorter. Such a passageway, approximately 9m wide, is anticipated for Block 3.

- Adjacent to Parliament Slip non-residential uses that animate the water's edge and provide visual interest are to be strongly encouraged. Residential units at grade (excluding lobbies) are to be discouraged.

- If residential units at grade were proposed adjacent to Parliament Slip, they should be setback 5m from the Water's Edge Promenade above grade:
 - to emphasize the public nature of the Promenade, and
 - in recognition of the need for privacy within residential units.

Residential units would front onto and not back onto the promenade:

- Landscaped setbacks should be treated as front yards leading to front doors, and
 - Fences and walls separating adjacent private outdoor space from the Promenade should not exceed 0.9m in height to ensure the adjacent building and not the fence is perceived the Promenade's edge or frame.
- On street parking should not be located on the Waterfront Street at the ends of Bonnycastle and Small Streets, or south of Aiken Place Park to limit obstructions to views of the Lake from the north.

B. Building Spectacular Waterfront Public Spaces...

Significant investment has already been made towards the creation of a spectacular public realm for East Bayfront. Sugar Beach, Sherbourne Common and the Water's Edge Promenade adjacent to Dockside are attracting visitors from across the City and beyond, and the reconstruction of Queens Quay, already underway to the west, will tie the East Bayfront to Toronto's Central Waterfront with what may be Toronto's most beautiful street.

These guidelines address the public realm within Bayside, providing guidance on issues not addressed by the plan of subdivision. More specifically, they seek to contribute to the high quality of Bayside's public spaces by providing guidance on details typically addressed during the site plan review process. These include the organization of elements within boulevards on streets, to encourage year-round use by pedestrians and cyclists, but also, importantly, the organization of building facades adjacent to public open spaces. The architectural frame around an open space is a significant determinant of its character and quality. And these spaces should be beautifully framed by handsome, sensitively configured buildings.

- All public streets should include:
 - minimum pedestrian clearways of 2.1m, and wider clearways where heavy pedestrian flows are anticipated,
 - street tree plantings with 30 cubic metres of soil for individual trees and 20 cubic metres of soil per tree within larger planting areas, and
 - on-street bike parking.
- Each publicly accessible open space should be wrapped with base buildings of one consistent height. Base building heights should be significant, and proportional to the width of the adjacent right-of-way. With the exception of facades adjacent to Queens Quay, base building heights within Bayside should not be more than 20 metres high.
- The facades of buildings that terminate visual corridors, including streets, walkways and passageways, should be carefully composed, of high architectural quality, and clad in high quality materials in response to the prominence of their location.
- Facades terminating visual corridors, and adjacent to Aitken Place Park should not include parking or service access points.

- Residential and commercial entrances should be located on public streets.
- Blocks adjacent to the Service Driveway should use it to access parking and service entrances so that such access does not interrupt sidewalks on public or private streets.
- Service and parking access points, even along the Service Driveway, should be combined wherever possible to minimize disruptions to and conflicts with pedestrian sidewalks.
- All garbage collection and servicing functions should be contained within building envelopes.
- Long, monolithic elevations should be broken visually and physically into sub-sections to create visual interest for those at grade, and those viewing the building from a distance. Potential approaches to achieving this could include:
 - architectural detailing
 - materiality, and
 - incorporating vertical breaks and step-backs.
- Separation distances between building facades with primary windows should ensure adequate light and privacy within units, and improved views from units. Separation distances will exceed minimum zoning requirements where appropriate.
- Roof-top mechanical penthouses should be fully integrated into overall building design.

C. Promoting a Clean and Green Environment...

The CWSP and the East Bayfront Precinct Plan encourage the provision of high quality pedestrian environments with comfortable microclimates, and the use of sustainable building practices including the provision of green roofs. Beyond this both the City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto have green development standards to which development within Bayside will be subject.

The developer will be required to meet Tier One of Toronto's Green Standards, performance measures with supporting guidelines related to sustainable site and building design. Beyond this, development contracts with Waterfront Toronto, including the one applicable to Bayside, obligate developers:

- to comply with Waterfront Toronto's Minimum Green Building Requirements which build upon the Canada Green Building Council's LEED® rating system,
- to achieve LEED® Gold (LEED Canada NC 2009), and
- to achieve five LEED® certification credits that are normally optional.

As a result these guidelines are quite focused. They were developed to help ensure that developments have a positive effect on the micro-climate within adjacent open spaces and to encourage the creation of durable roof-top plantings.

- The height and massing restrictions for Bayside guarantee a specific amount of sunlight on streets, parks, and open spaces in all seasons, and ample sky views. Proposed development should preserve this supply of sunlight.
- Building massing should be demonstrated to provide consistently comfortable wind conditions within all adjacent publicly accessible spaces throughout the year.
- Wind studies should demonstrate that there will be no unsafe wind conditions on the Water's Edge Promenade throughout the year resulting from built form massing.
- Green roofs should be easily accessible for the purpose of regular maintenance to promote their long term sustainability. Access through residential units will not be acceptable.
- All green roofs should have a minimum 10 centimetres of planting medium exclusive of drainage course for long term sustainability.

D. Creating Dynamic Communities...

The CWSP encourages the comfortable co-existence of a wide range of uses as a means of creating interesting and vibrant communities. Development is to be of "sufficient scale to establish a 'critical mass' of people both living and working in a neighbourhood setting". But it is also to "maintain Toronto's successful tradition of city building at a compact scale". The question of what constitutes a "critical mass" has been addressed by the zoning by-law. A response to the direction to maintain Toronto's compact scale can best be addressed during the site plan process when detailed design is reviewed.

The vivacity and activity of Toronto's highly successful main streets can be introduced to Bayside through the careful design and organization of buildings adjacent to public open spaces. In locations which are anticipated to immediately accommodate retail uses, this will mean ensuring that buildings are designed to accommodate a fine grained pattern of retail frontages reflective of Toronto's main streets. In other locations, including Bonnycastle Street (south) and Small Street (south), buildings adjacent to the street should be designed so that they would be able to accommodate different purposes as the community matures.

- The lower portions of buildings in Bayside's *Animation Areas* should be designed in response to their prominent locations adjacent to Queens Quay, Sherbourne Common South and the Water's Edge Promenade. They should encourage and support pedestrian activity along the waterfront, and be configured to accommodate a wide variety of evolving services suitable for both local residents and visitors.

Building facades and ground floors adjacent to the public sidewalk should be designed as follows;

- Facades should be broken into smaller bays suggestive of a main street rhythm adjacent to the sidewalk. This finer grained architectural detailing

at the level of pedestrians will lend character and intimacy to the public realm.

- Pedestrian oriented portions of building facades should feature numerous building entrances, and display windows.
- Large stores should be organized:
 - to limit their presence at the street edge,
 - to locate the majority of their floor space behind smaller, street oriented retail shops or on upper levels, or
 - to place their boutique functions (coffee shops, news agents, florists, etc) adjacent to and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.

- Buildings should be clad in high quality materials in response to the prominence of their location.

- Building facades containing residential units at grade should be setback 3m from the adjacent property line.

- At grade residential setbacks should be designed as front yards that visually enrich the adjacent public realm while providing privacy for residents within their units. Front yard setback designs should include:
 - a minimum 1m wide planting area adjacent to the sidewalk,
 - a modest increase in the elevation of the building's ground floor and front decks, perhaps 3 or 4 steps, where conversion to commercial uses is not anticipated, to provide a visual barrier between the interior of the residential unit and the sidewalk, and
 - a maximum height for fences of 0.9m.

- Bonnycastle and Small Streets are not identified as *Animation Areas* in the zoning by-law; however, they will be important connecting routes between Queens Quay and the Waterfront Street, the Promenade and Lake Ontario. Accordingly, great attention should be paid to the design of buildings that front onto these streets.
 - They should be designed to be attractive, visually interesting and be clad with high quality materials.
 - Facades should be broken into smaller bays suggestive of a treatment appropriate along *Animation Areas*.
 - Residential uses (excluding lobbies) at grade on these streets should be discouraged.



Bayside Concept Plan, January 24, 2012 with development blocks of approved Draft Plan of Subdivision, January 28, 2013