

5.10 BUILT FORM GUIDELINES

The following urban design guidelines are recommended guidelines for the study area. The urban design guidelines provide criteria to guide the evolution of new development within the study area, as well as for enhancements and additions to existing buildings. They should be included in the City's District or Area Based Guidelines or they could be attached as an appendix to the Secondary Plan to give them formal status as a guide to the review of future rezoning applications and Site Plan Control applications.



Precedent image highlighting mid-block green connections between buildings



Precedent image highlighting a street oriented development



Precedent image highlighting a mixed-use building with ground floor retail and residential above

5.10.1 MID-BLOCK CONNECTIONS AND COURTYARDS

The mid-block connection and the landscaped courtyard are built forms characteristic to existing development within the Secondary Plan area and strong place-making elements contributing to the unique image of the Secondary Plan area. As the Secondary Plan area develops opportunities for creating shared courtyards and mid-block connections between buildings will present themselves. Mid-block connections and courtyards should have a high quality of design and construction, and be visually and physically connected to the adjacent streets and open spaces. Their siting, organization and design will be key to creating complementary/co-ordinated relationships between adjacent buildings and developments.

Private open space, including courtyards and mid-block connections, should be designed to be publicly accessible and should provide well-defined and attractive public-private transition areas. Shared courtyards should have a coordinated design that is seamless between adjoining developments. Courtyards can be a combination of hard and soft landscaped areas and should include building entrances features as an important program element.

5.10.2 BUILDING ORIENTATION AND LAYOUT

The orientation and organization of buildings and overall site layout will support city-building objectives. Buildings will be located and organized to frame and support adjacent streets, parks and open spaces to improve safety, pedestrian interest and casual views into these spaces. This is achieved by locating building along edges of streets and open spaces, creating prominent built form features at corners and view terminus locations, locating main building entrances along sidewalks, and providing ground floor uses with views and access to adjacent streets, parks and open spaces.

Building setbacks should be set to align buildings consistently along streets and to create a continuous street wall allowing for direct relationships between sidewalks and ground floor uses. In locations where the street wall is deliberately disrupted, the setback will be designed to create memorable public space amenities such as gathering spaces, plazas, parkettes or recessed entranceways. Openings in the street wall will be publicly accessible and have high-quality urban design. Parking areas should not be located between the sidewalk and the building façade.

5.10.3 PARKING

Many design solutions are available to ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities without creating surface parking areas that are visible from the street, undermining the pedestrian character.

Structured Parking

- Below-grade parking structures are the recommended alternative to surface parking;
- All new below-grade or above-grade structured parking should locate vehicle entrance/exit access points on the least busy of the surrounding streets and/or off rear lanes to minimize curb cuts and reduce conflicts with pedestrians. Vehicular entrances should not be located directly off Keele Street, Steeles Avenue, The Pond Road or Ian MacDonald Boulevard. Pedestrian access to all new structured parking should be clearly demarcated, highly visible and be incorporated into the overall design of the building, and
- All above-grade parking structures associated with new development should be integrated into the buildings on-site, and form part of the overall development scheme to ‘blend-in’ with the surrounding buildings and not ‘read’ as a parking facility.

Surface Parking

- All new buildings and developments will locate all surface parking areas at the rear or sides of buildings to ensure the sidewalks/pathways and building façades effectively define the street edge. In situations where it is impossible to accommodate surface parking behind buildings, parking areas may be provided along the side(s) of buildings. In both scenarios, the parking areas should be appropriately screened from view;
- All new and existing buildings and developments at corner sites should not locate surface parking lots facing onto or visible from the street corner/ intersection and pedestrian routes; and
- Surface parking should never be located between a building and a street.

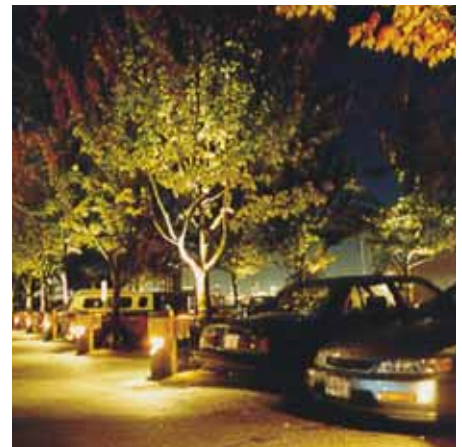
5.10.4 BUILT FORM & MASSING

A range of different building forms and massing are recommended throughout the study area. The form of the building should respond to its surrounding context and when taller buildings are proposed, their bulk should be minimized through setbacks, stepbacks, courtyards or other design elements. High quality building design, public realm and open space is encouraged.

- All new buildings and developments that occupy a corner site should acknowledge the corner condition through architectural expression and should feature fully developed façades along both frontages including glazing and entrances located at the corner of the building
- Buildings should not have blank façades. Where buildings are prohibited from incorporating windows, (e.g. where future adjacent development is anticipated, where OBC limiting distance applies) the side façades should still incorporate



Precedent image highlighting how structured parking garages can be designed to fit with surrounding development



Precedent image highlighting landscaping and naturalized paving in surface parking lots



Precedent image highlighting high quality building design and mixed-use development to generate an active public realm



Precedent image highlighting high quality building design and mixed-use development to generate an active public realm



Precedent image highlighting a transition in building heights from mid rise to low rise



Precedent images of potential high quality building materials

an acceptable level of detail and articulation. This may include detailed brick work, ornamentation, murals or similar architectural treatment.

5.10.5 BUILDING BASE DESIGN

A well designed building adds visual interest to a street and responds to the existing streetscape conditions through its architectural expression. It is recommended that a variety of building base conditions be created with clearly defined semi-private transition zones. Outlined below are guidelines that contribute to the creation of a vibrant public realm through a well designed building base.

- All building façades facing onto streets and public spaces should incorporate vestibules, frequent building entrances, covered walkways, canopies and awnings at the ground floor level to provide weather protection and to add life to adjacent pedestrian areas;
- All new buildings and developments should be designed with continuous street façades that incorporate well-designed articulations and ‘breaks’ featuring opportunities for public open space, mid-block pedestrian walkways and/or central entranceways;
- New buildings and developments should maximize opportunities to create new public pedestrian routes throughout the site to connect with the public sidewalk network and with transit stations and the proposed green space connections. These connections will help to achieve greater connectivity and encourage pedestrian activity throughout the area; and
- Windows should be provided at grade to promote the safe use of sidewalks, walkways and open spaces.

5.10.6 TALL BUILDINGS

Buildings whose height is greater than the width of the adjacent streets should address the City of Toronto Tall Building Guidelines.

5.10.7 BUILDING MATERIALS

The choice of building material is integral to the design of new buildings. The material selected should respond to the design and style of the proposed building. The use of high-quality and durable building materials for new developments will promote an image of permanence and quality construction. Wherever appropriate, new buildings should reflect the building materials used in the existing heritage buildings.

- All new buildings and developments should utilize building materials chosen for their functional and aesthetic qualities. All exterior building finishes should demonstrate a high-quality of workmanship, durability and ease of maintenance;
- Building materials and finishes/accents that are incorporated onto building

facades facing onto or visible from streets and public spaces should not include synthetic siding systems, mirrored/heavily tinted glass panels and/or unadorned concrete block;

- All new buildings and developments should have well-considered building materials at the ground floor that is of a pedestrian scale and responds to the existing surrounding buildings; and
- Wherever possible, locally sourced building materials, durable materials, environmentally –friendly construction technique and material manufacture should be used.

5.10.8 BUILDING SHADOWING AND SHADOW STUDIES

Shadows cast by taller buildings greatly influence the spaces that surround the building. Determining building heights based on predetermined shadowing goals will ensure the surrounding buildings get an adequate amount of sun exposure. The following conditions should be considered in the Precinct Plan when siting taller buildings within the precinct.

- Tall buildings should be oriented in a manner that minimizes cast shadows;
- Building mass should be located to avoid casting shadows on public open space and, where possible, sunlight should be maintained on open spaces between 10 am and 2 pm;
- All buildings should receive direct sunlight at some time during the day;
- The interior courtyards of buildings should be sited, organized and designed to receive the maximum amount of sun exposure possible; and
- The smallest possible floor plate for taller building should be used to allow more sunlight to reach the ground plane and the public realm.

5.10.9 PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST AMENITY

Easy and accessible pedestrian and cyclist circulation routes are a key recommendation and should be considered as a primary consideration in all new development. Within the study area there are multiple possible pedestrian zones. These include the sidewalks along main and minor streets, mid-block connections and potential trails through natural areas. The design and treatment of these sidewalks should be consistent with the adjacent uses. The creation of new pedestrian and cyclist-friendly connections throughout the area should be established to connect to the surrounding community.

5.10.10 LANDSCAPE

The central image for the Secondary Plan area is that of wide open green spaces and attractively designed pedestrian spaces that together create a park-like setting for both academic and non-academic buildings. Natural features such as the upland woodlots along Keele Street and the heavily treed Black Creek ravine along the west edge, as well as the hard and soft cultural landscape design features of the academic



Precedent image of an established local street design with street tree trees, planted boulevards and mid-rise buildings



Precedent image of a mid-block public open space



Precedent image of a mid-block public open space

campus, parks and streets support the image. The combination of large-scale landscaped open areas such as The Commons and recreational sports fields along with smaller intimate landscape spaces that include courtyards and squares create a strong landscaped image.

The Structure Plan identifies the essential landscape features both natural and cultural that define and give character to the study area. As the area develops, the essential landscape character will be enhanced through mindful consideration of scale, function, variety, cohesiveness and sustainability. Important landscape features, networks and systems will need to be maintained, and new landscapes will need to be created as this area develops.

Landscaping, both hard and soft, should contribute to broader environmental objectives such as heat island reduction, storm water management, naturalization, food production, wildlife habitat and corridors, soil enhancement, slope retention,, erosion control, for example, by contributing to physical improvements. New landscaping should be provided in ways that have the least impact on the environment by using environmentally sustainable construction methods, techniques and wherever possible local and durable materials (and labour).

The following planting strategies are recommended:

- Landscaping and plant material which maintains a desirable appearance throughout the year, such as evergreen trees and tall grasses should be encouraged;
- Plant material should be selected to minimize maintenance costs. Often, these results in the selection of native plant materials that are well-adapted to the local climate or species that are proven to withstand salt and other chemicals introduced through clearing of snow and ice;
- Ornamental plantings are also useful to signify main entrances, transition between different neighbourhoods or community areas and can be employed as wayfinding tools;
- Tree planting should vary in species, age and size to ensure a consistent tree canopy throughout the lifecycle of trees;
- Native species are encouraged and may be required to be used on particular portions of the site, especially near natural features such as woodlots, ravines and natural restoration areas; and
- Planting and landscape construction should be undertaken using environmentally responsible techniques, materials and be locally sourced, wherever possible.

5.10.11 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Sustainability, as an overarching principle for the planning of the study area, needs to be fundamental to all development, construction and operational decisions affecting the Secondary Plan area. The principles of sustainability will be integrated into the higher level Master Plans, Precinct Plans and Transportation Studies as well as the

detailed project implementation and construction plans for the development and management of buildings, parks, roads and other infrastructure. A sustainable approach for the Secondary Plan area maybe specifically supported by encouraging centralized district heating and cooling with geothermal, geo-exchange or solar technology, green roofs, bio-swales, surface storm water management features and permeable paving for all on-street and at-grade parking.

All new development and redevelopment should incorporate the highest standard of sustainable environmentally responsible design strategies, construction methods and operational performance measures. Regard should be had for the City of Toronto's policies and guidelines for sustainability, including the Green Development Standard.

The reconstruction of the remaining ring road should be a model of sustainability with innovated stormwater management design standards and high-quality plantings, similar to the portion of The Pond Road that is already completed.

To be effective, sustainable planning and construction approaches that integrate environmental sustainability principles from the early design phase through to implementation need to be included in all development. Key considerations for the design of new buildings include water quality, consumption and runoff, the preservation of natural and built features, the reduction of impermeable paving surfaces, and reduction of the building footprint to create public open spaces and landscaped areas. Other key considerations for achieving sustainable designs are outlined in the City's Green Development Standard and include:

- Building orientation;
- Sustainable landscape design and landscape management plans;
- Urban heat island mitigation;
- Alternate transportation options;
- Renewable energy;
- Green roofs;
- Building envelope design;
- Natural ventilation;
- Day light design;
- Dark sky design;
- Waste management; and
- Water use reduction and waste water technologies.



Precedent image highlighting potential sustainable building design practices



Precedent image highlighting potential sustainable parking lot design practices