updated city-wide Tall Building Design Guidelines

Report PG13024

Planning and Growth Management Committee
April 11, 2013

Robert Freedman
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City Planning
“Tall buildings are desirable in the right places but they don’t belong everywhere.”

“Tall buildings come with larger civic responsibilities and obligations than other buildings.”
5.3.2 IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

“...guidelines will be adopted to advance the vision, objectives, and policies of this plan.”

- COUNCIL-ADOPTED URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES
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City-wide Guidelines

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Updated City-wide Guidelines
apply to **ALL** tall building proposals

Downtown Performance Standards

Downtown Supplementary Guidelines
apply Downtown **ONLY** together with city-wide Guidelines
City-wide Guidelines Organization

Progression in scale
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Design Guideline

Rationale

Additional Guidelines

Supporting Illustrations and Images

City-wide Guidelines Layout

3.1.1 BASE BUILDING SCALE AND HEIGHT

Design the base building to fit harmoniously within the existing context of neighbouring building heights at the street and to respect the scale and proportion of adjacent streets, parks, or public or private open space.

- With consistent height, align the new base building with the height of the streetwall (seealso the height limit in 3.1.1).

In the presence of a consistent streetwall height context, assume base building height between 10.5 to 18 meters (25 to 46 feet) high.

- Base building height may be appropriate with a single or at least 3 meters, provided that the total height does not exceed 100% of the adjacent street right-of-way width (A) up to a limit of 24 meters (80 feet) in height.

- For sites where the adjacent context is lower-scale and not anticipated to change, provide a transition in the base building height down to the lower-scale neighbours. Maintain at least a portion of the base immediately adjacent to the lower-scale context with the scale and height of the building's context.

- For sites including or adjacent to heritage properties, design the scale and height of the base building to respect and maintain the downtown context established by the historic context.

- Within the tall building site, frame publicly accessible and shared, private open spaces with large-portioned base building.

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City-wide Guidelines Consultation

- 2006 to 2012
  - Guideline testing and monitoring approx. 290 “tall building” applications
- August 2012 to February 2013
  - External stakeholders e.g. BILD, ratepayer associations
- December 2012 and February 2013
  - Design Review Panel
City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

- Importance of Context

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City-wide Guidelines Highlights

- Base Building Height Limit

Pedestrian Scale and Perception
up to 24 m (6-7 storeys) = a comfortable limit

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City-wide Guidelines Highlights

Tower Separation and Cumulative Effects

Adequate minimum separation distance between buildings (25m or greater) promotes privacy, daylighting and at-grade access to sunlight and sky view.

25 m or more

Avoid

Towers with inadequate minimum separation distance (less than 25m)

Variation in tower stepbacks and orientation increase perceived and actual separation distance.

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City-wide Guidelines Highlights

Small Sites

Establish **tower setbacks/stepbacks first**
then floor plate size to gauge site viability
City-wide Guidelines \textbf{Highlights}

\textbf{On-site Open Space} (publically accessible or private)

\begin{itemize}
  \item Courtyard
  \item New Public Park
  \item Forecourt
  \item Existing Park
  \item Walkway
  \item Plaza
  \item Urban Garden
  \item Landscaped Setback
  \item Accessible Green Roof
  \item Front Setback (Public-Private Transition)
  \item Private Courtyard
  \item Private Outdoor Amenity
  \item Private Garden/Patio
  \item Green Roof
  \item Terrace
  \item Balconies
\end{itemize}

\textbf{Figure 1:} Tall building sites offer a broad range of publically accessible open space opportunities.

\textbf{Figure 1:} Tall buildings require a broad range of private open spaces to meet the needs of building occupants.

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City-wide Guidelines Highlights

- Wider Sidewalks

6.0 m min.

space for “vibrant” streetscapes

Creative solutions at-grade

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City-wide Guidelines **Next Steps**

- Internal and External Training
- Ongoing Monitoring
- Future Studies and Refinements