



updated city-wide **Tall Building**
Design Guidelines

Report PG13024

Planning and Growth
Management Committee
April 11, 2013

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Director, Urban Design
City Planning

 **TORONTO**

2002

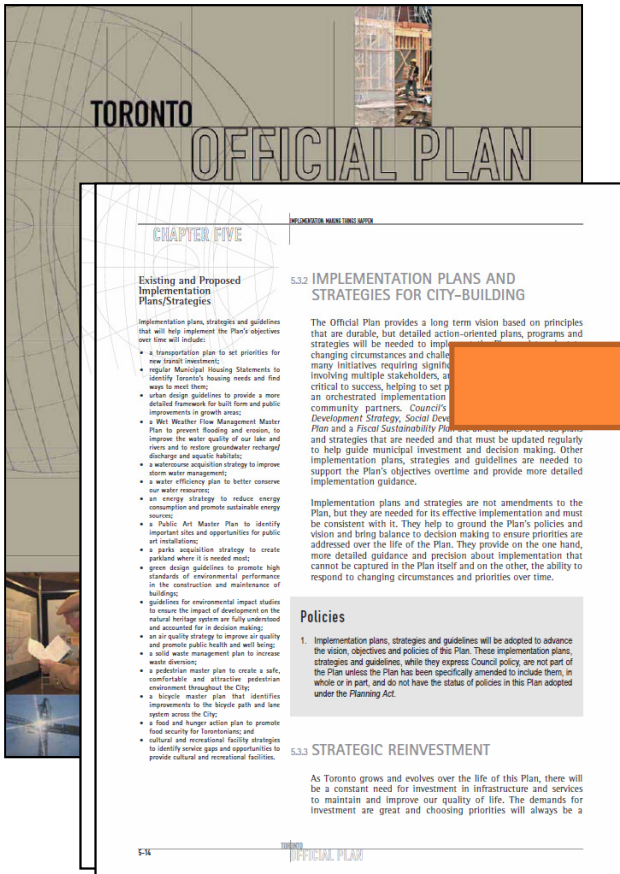


3.1.3 BUILT FORM – Tall Buildings

“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.”

2002

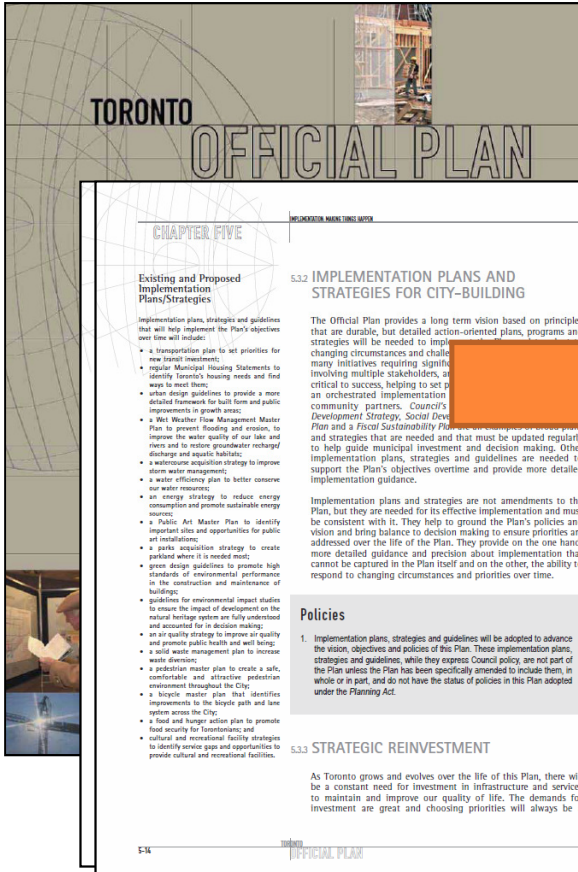


5.3.2 IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

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

◎ COUNCIL-ADOPTED URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

2002



2003-2006 HOK

The "HOW"?

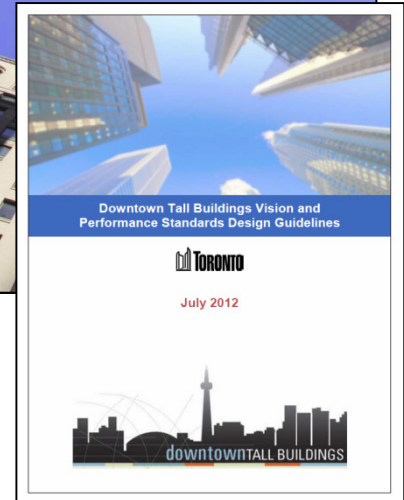
Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals

City of Toronto
June 2006



2007-2010 USI

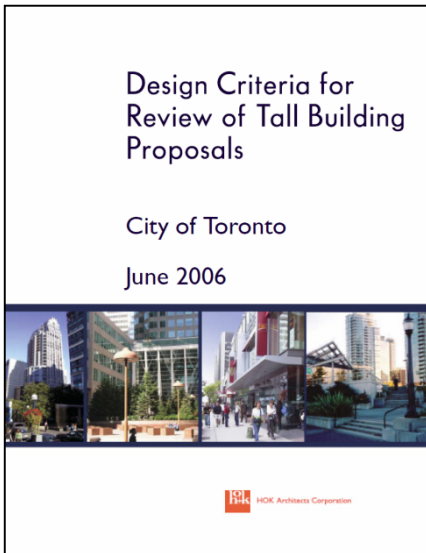
2012



5.3.2 IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

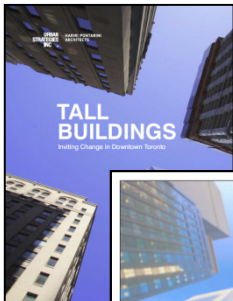
“...**guidelines** will be adopted to advance the vision, objectives, and policies of this plan.”

○ COUNCIL-ADOPTED URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES



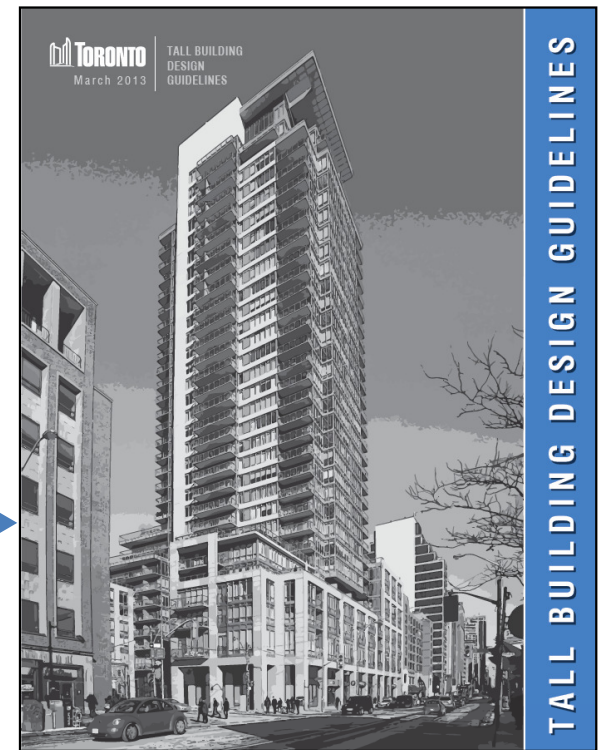
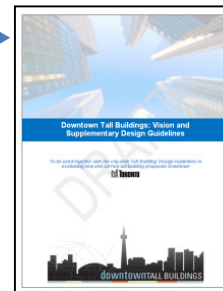
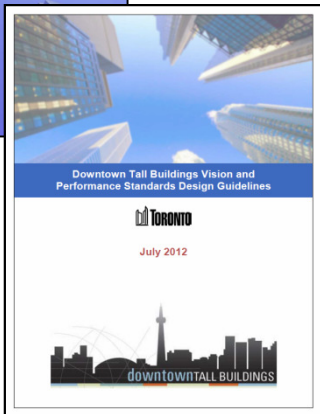
City-wide Guidelines

UPDATE



Downtown Performance Standards

CONSOLIDATE

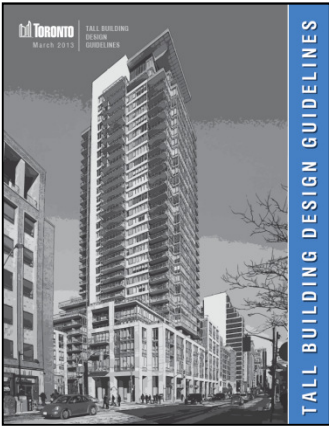


Updated City-wide Guidelines

apply to ALL tall building proposals

Downtown Supplementary Guidelines

apply Downtown ONLY together with city-wide Guidelines

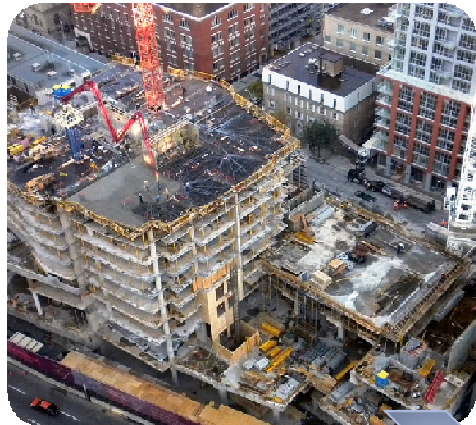


City-wide Guidelines **Organization**

- Progression in scale



CONTEXT



SITE



BUILDINGS



PEDESTRIAN REALM

CITY-WIDE GUIDELINES UPDATE SUMMARY

A brief overview of principle guideline statements contained in sections 1.0 through 4.0.

1.0 SITE CONTEXT

1.1 Context Analysis

Evaluate the existing and planned context and demonstrate how the proposed tall building responds to the patterns, opportunities, and challenges within the surrounding area.

1.2 Master Plan for Larger Sites

Coordinate the development of larger sites with potential for multiple tall buildings, new internal streets, or parks through a Master Plan.

1.3 Fit and Transition in Scale

Ensure tall buildings fit within the existing or planned context and provide an appropriate transition in scale down to lower-scaled buildings, parks, and open space.

1.4 Sunlight and Sky View

Locate and design tall buildings to protect access to sunlight and sky view within the surrounding context of streets, parks, public and private open space, and other shadow sensitive areas.

1.5 Prominent Sites and Views from the Public Realm

Provide an appropriate, high-quality design response for tall buildings on or adjacent to prominent sites, and when framing views from the public realm to prominent sites.

1.6 Heritage Properties and Heritage Conservation Districts

Locate and design tall buildings to respect and complement the scale, character, form and setting of on-site and adjacent heritage properties and Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs).

2.0 SITE ORGANIZATION

2.1 Building Placement

Locate the base of tall buildings to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open space, reinforce corners, and to fit harmoniously within the existing context.

2.2 Building Address and Entrances

Organize tall buildings to use existing or new public streets for address and building entrances.

Ensure primary building entrances front onto public streets, are well-defined, clearly visible, and universally accessible from the adjacent public sidewalk.

2.3 Site Servicing, Access and Parking

Locate "back of house" activities, such as loading, servicing, utilities, and vehicle parking, underground or within the building mass, away from the public realm and public view.

2.4 Publicly Accessible Open Space

Provide grade-related, publicly accessible open space within the tall building site to complement, connect, extend the existing network of public streets, parks, and open space.

2.5 Private Open Space

Provide a range of high-quality, comfortable private and shared outdoor amenity space throughout the tall building site.

2.6 Pedestrian and Cycling Connections

Provide comfortable, safe, and accessible pedestrian and cycling routes through and around the tall building site to connect with adjacent routes, streets, parks, open space, and other priority destinations, such as transit and underground concourses.

2.7 Public Art

Pursue public art opportunities and funding strategies for tall building sites, or adjacent public lands, to enhance the quality of the development, the public realm, and city.

3.0 TALL BUILDING DESIGN

- 3.1 Base Building
- 3.2 Middle (Tower)
- 3.3 Tower Top

3.1 BASE BUILDING

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, and public or private open space.

3.1.2 Street Animation

Line the base building with active, grade-related uses to promote a safe and animated public realm.

3.1.3 First Floor Height

Provide a minimum first floor height of 4.5 metres, measured floor-to-floor from average grade.

5 city-wide updates

3.2 MIDDLE (TOWER)

3.2.1 Floor Plate Size and Shape

Limit floor plate area to 750 square metres for all built area within the tower.

4 additions

3.2.3 Separation Distances

Setback tall building towers 12.5 metres or greater from the side and rear property lines or centre line of an abutting lane.

Provide separation distance between towers on the same site of 25 metres or greater, measured from the exterior wall of the buildings, excluding balconies.

Implementation of Tower Separation Distances: Small Sites

On small sites, apply the recommended minimum tower setbacks and setbacks to determine the resultant floor plate size and feasibility of the site dimensions to accommodate a tall building.

3.2.4 Tower Orientation and Articulation

Organize and articulate tall building towers to promote design excellence, innovation, and sustainability.

3.2.5 Balconies

Design balconies to maximize usability, comfort, and building performance, while minimizing negative impacts on the building mass, public realm, and natural environment.

3.3

3.3

21 overlaps

1 appropriate if the city

1 energy priority birds, etc.

4.0 THE PEDESTRIAN REALM

4.1 Streetscape and Landscape Design

Provide high-quality, sustainable streetscape and landscape design between the tall building and adjacent streets, parks, and open space.

4.2 Sidewalk Zone

Provide adequate space between the front of the building and adjacent street curbs to safely and comfortably accommodate pedestrian movement, streetscape elements, and activities related to the uses at grade.

4.3 Pedestrian Level Wind Effects

Locate, orient, and design tall buildings to promote air circulation and natural ventilation, yet minimize adverse wind conditions on adjacent streets, parks and open space, at building entrances, and in public and private outdoor amenity areas.

4.4 Pedestrian Weather Protection

Ensure weather protection elements, such as overhangs and canopies, are well-integrated into building design, carefully designed and scaled to support the street, and positioned to maximize function and pedestrian comfort.

30 Principle Guidelines

Design Guideline

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, and public or private open space.

with consistent height, align the new base building with the height of the streetwall (see also the height limit in 3.1.1b).

In the absence of a consistent streetwall height context, the maximum base building height between 10.5 metres* to the adjacent street right-of-way width (A) in height.

When the base building height may be appropriate with a setback of at least 3 metres, provided that the total height does not exceed 100% of the adjacent street right-of-way width (A), up to a limit of 24 metres* in height.

*Note: 24 metres equals approximately 7 storeys for a mixed-use building (assuming 4.5m first floor and 3m for all other floors) or 6 storeys for a commercial-only building (assuming 4.5m first floor and 3.6m for all other floors).

d. 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. Match at least a portion of the base immediately adjacent to the lower-scaled context with the scale and height of neighbouring buildings.

e. For sites including or adjacent to heritage properties, design the scale and height of the base building to respect and reinforce the streetwall height established by the historic context.

f. Within the tall building site, frame publically accessible and shared, private open spaces with a well-proportioned base building.

Aligned with scale and height of neighbouring streetwall buildings

Max 80% of A**

Min 10.5 metres

24 metres

Figure 1: The height and scale of the base building responds to the scale of neighbouring buildings and the street proportion.

Additional Guidelines

Supporting Illustrations and Images

Rationale

RATIONALE

The role of the base building is to help a tall building fit harmoniously within the existing or planned streetwall context, define the edges of adjacent streets, parks, and open space at good proportion, and maintain access to sunlight and sky view for pedestrians and neighbouring properties.


A base building that is 10.5 metres or around 3 storeys in height generally fits well with a lower-scale context to effectively frame the public realm.

Limiting the height of the base building to 80% of the right-of-way width provides consistency in street proportion and maintains access to at least 5 hours of sunlight opposite side of the street at the spring and fall equinox.

On wider streets (30 to 45 metres in width), limiting the height of the base building to a maximum 24 metre (6-7 storeys), ensures that the base does not overwhelm the pedestrian environment, compound tall building impacts on shadow and sky view, and contribute to disproportionate tall building composition, undermining the benefits of achieving a slender, point tower form.

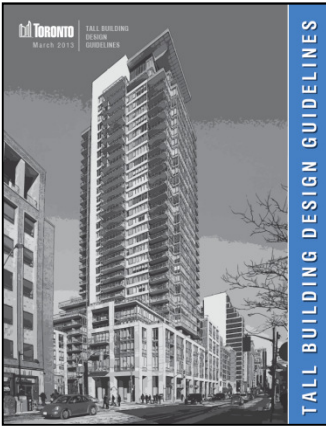
Many tall building sites, including corner sites, have multiple frontages facing streets, parks, and public or private open space. The scale, height, and form of the base building may need to vary in order to respond appropriately to differences in adjacent building height, built-form character, open space size, and street width for each facing condition.

The appropriate height for base buildings facing small open spaces within a site is often lower-scale than what may be appropriate for street frontages. Provide a smooth transition where a change in base building height, scale, and built-form character occurs.



References (Official Plan, Other Standards, Studies, Guidelines)

- Official Plan Reference:
 - Map 3 Right-of-Way Widths Associated with Existing Major Streets
 - 2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 2a to 2c
 - 3.1.1 Built Form: Policy 5
 - 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1a, 3a, 3c, 3e, 3f and 4
 - 3.1.3 Built Form – Tall Buildings: Policy 1a and 2c
 - 3.2.3 Parks and Open Space: Policy 3
- Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:
 - Downtown Tall Buildings: Vision and Supplementary Design Guidelines, #6 | Sun, Wind and Pedestrian Comfort: A Study of Toronto's Central Area



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**

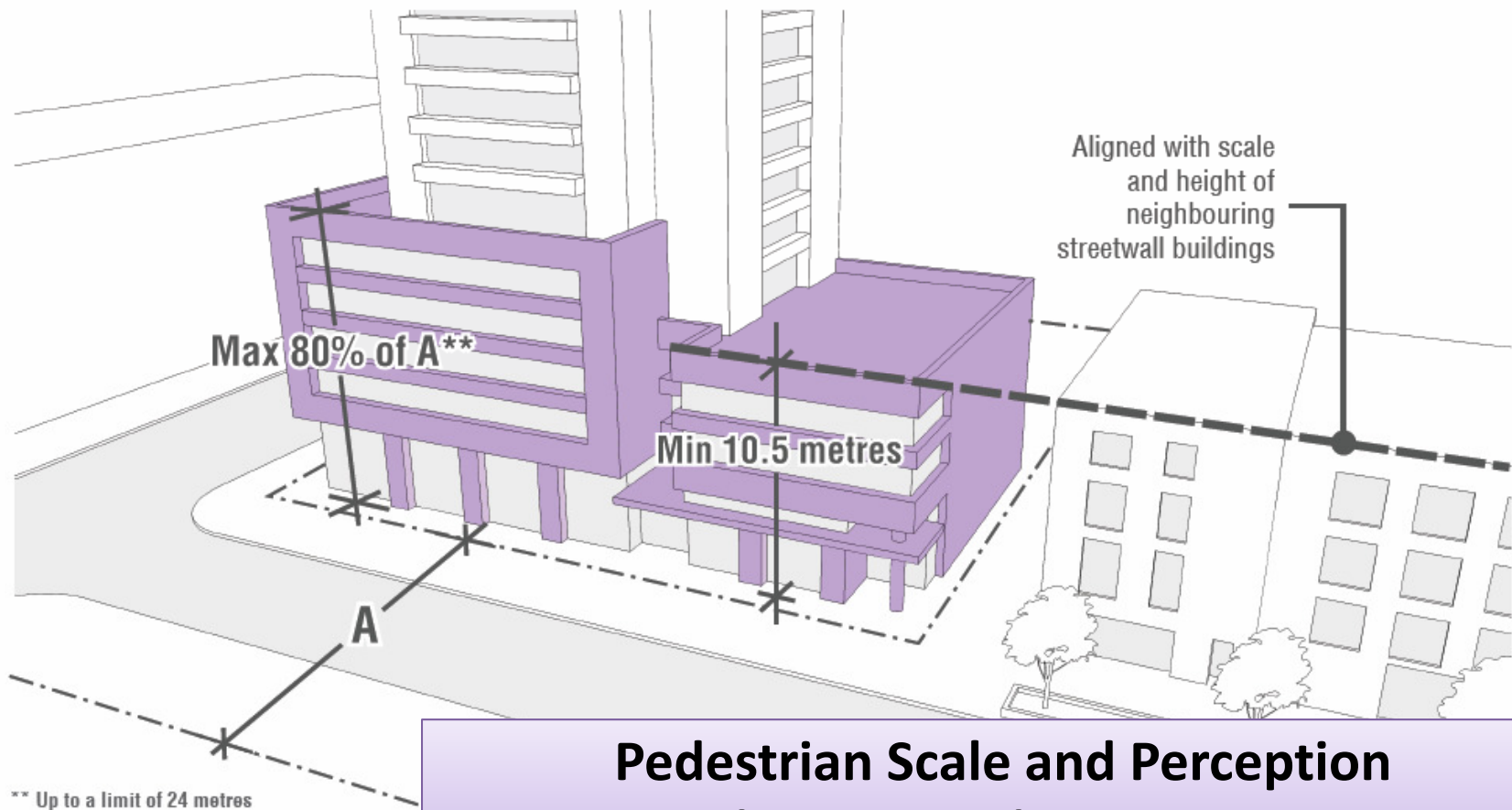
City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

📍 Importance of Context



City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

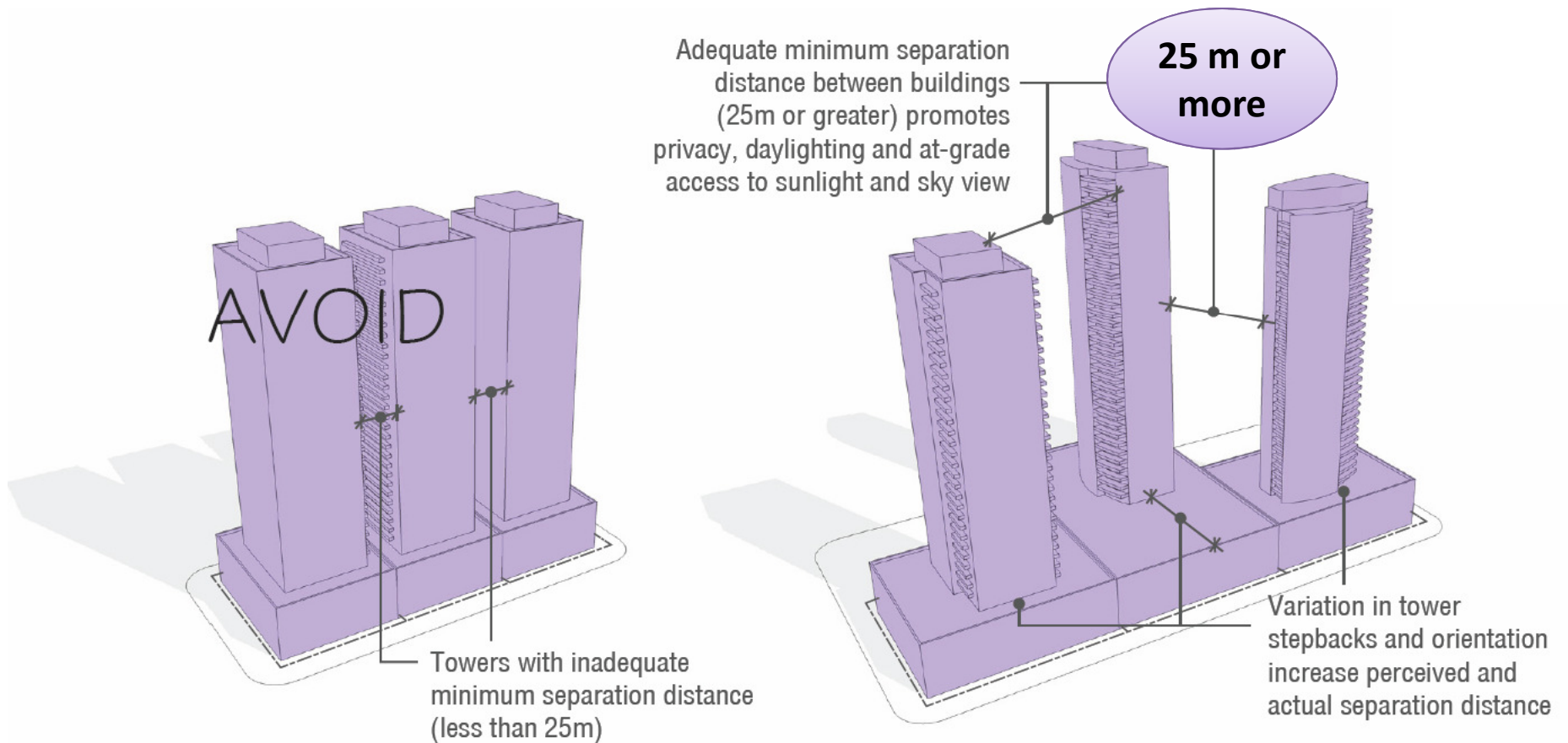
○ Base Building Height Limit



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

City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

◎ Tower Separation and Cumulative Effects

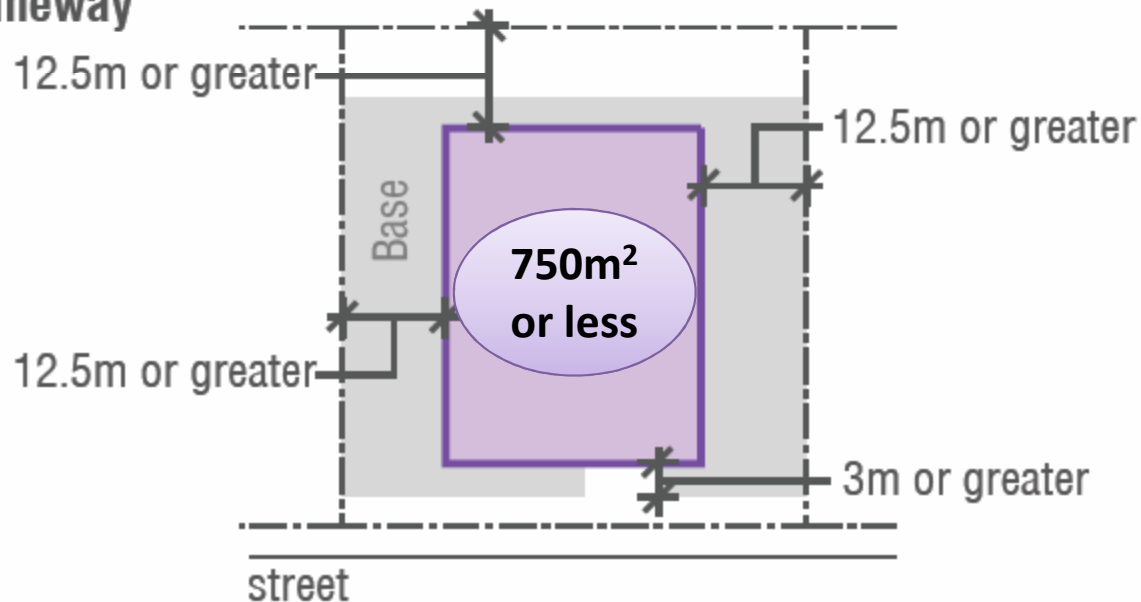


City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

○ **Small Sites**

Establish **tower setbacks/stepbacks first**
then floor plate size to gauge site viability

Mid-Block Site without Laneway



City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

On-site Open Space (publically accessible or private)

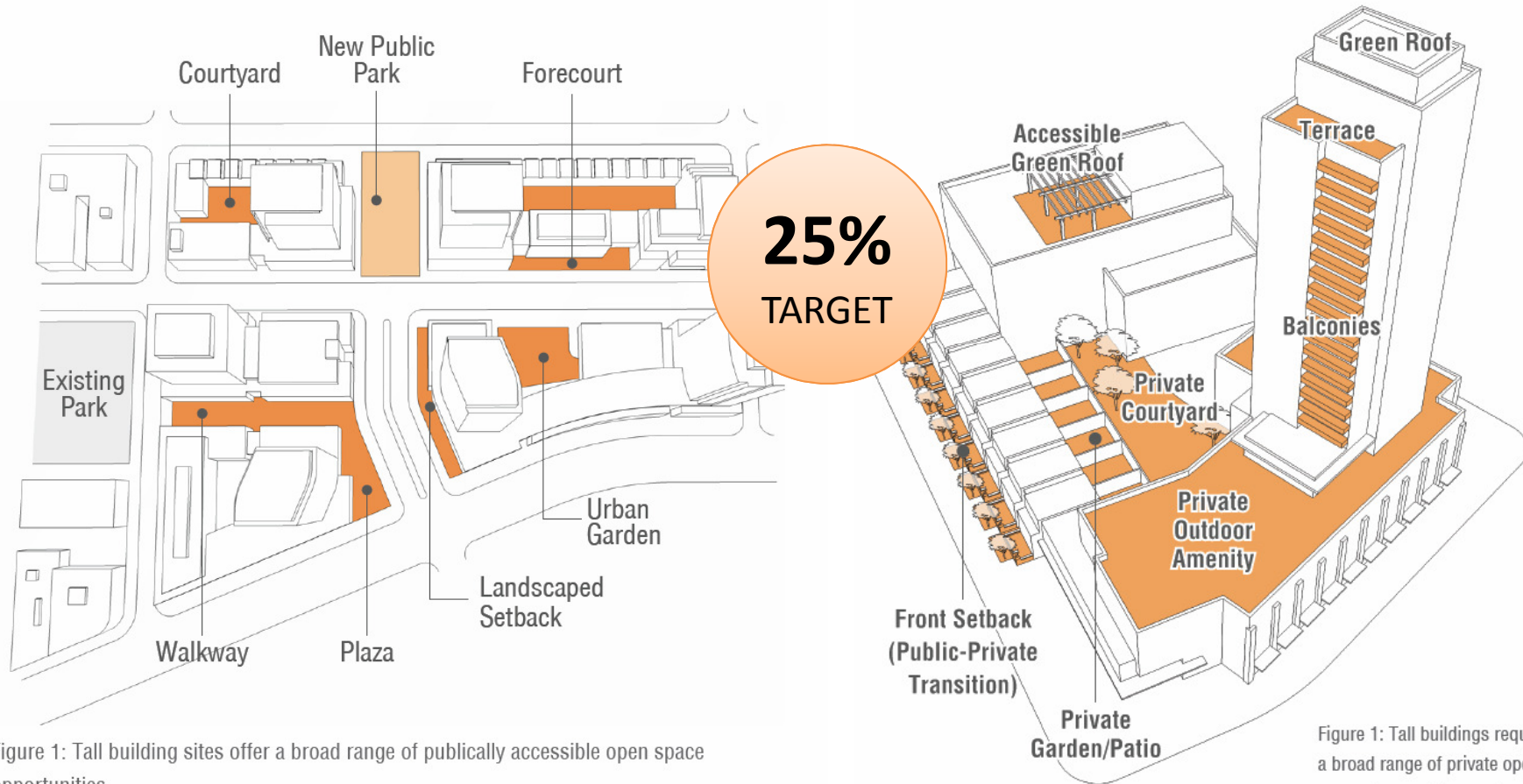
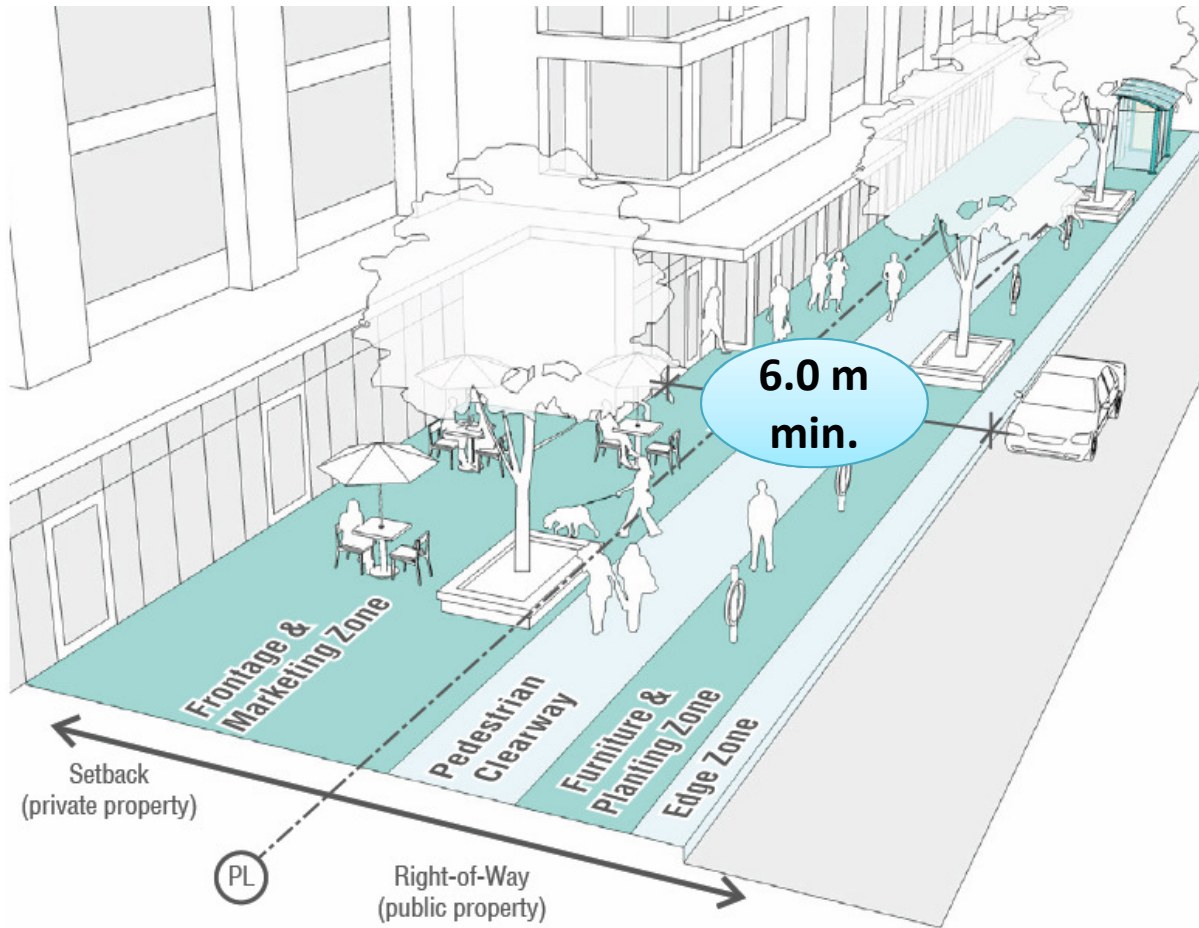


Figure 1: Tall building sites offer a broad range of publically accessible open space opportunities.

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

City-wide Guidelines **Highlights**

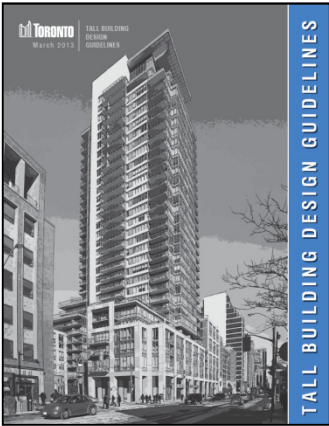
📍 **Wider Sidewalks**



space for “vibrant” streetscapes



creative solutions at-grade



City-wide Guidelines **Next Steps**

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