



City of Toronto

Townhouse and Low-rise Apartment Guidelines Core Team

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Townhouse and Low-rise Apartment Guidelines online:

www.toronto.ca/lowriseguidelines

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MEADOWS

James
HEAVEN AND EARTH
2014

Credit: Quadrangle Architects Limited

Introduction

To assist with the implementation of Official Plan policies and provide specific design direction, the City of Toronto has developed city-wide "Townhouse and Low-rise Apartment Guidelines". The purpose of the guidelines is to assist in achieving the appropriate design of low-rise (primarily residential) buildings for a range of building types from townhouses, through to stacked and back-to-back townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings up to 4 storeys in height. The Guidelines will build upon and replace the "Infill Townhouse Guidelines" (2003) which have been in use by the City of Toronto for over 10 years. They will address infill townhouse developments as well as developments on larger sites and the more complex and intense types of low-rise, multi-unit housing in terms of: site context; site organization; building massing; detailed design, and the semi-private and public realms.



Cabbage Town Townhouse

BACKGROUND – EVOLUTION OF THE TOWNHOUSE IN TORONTO

The City of Toronto has a long, rich history of townhouse or row house development. Traditional Toronto townhouses are generally 2 ½ to 3 ½ storeys high and are typically of a Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian or Arts and Crafts character. Townhouses of this nature have been a common and successful form of residential development since the mid-1800's.

In the post-war period, townhouses were developed in new lot and block configurations of grade-related housing, promoted by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) as good for families. Typically these were laid out on large blocks near higher density forms of housing, schools and shopping centres. They were often rental housing with the site remaining in private ownership. This type of townhouse was organized around private streets or pedestrian mews. Vehicle parking was accommodated in small parking lots at the edges of the site or integral to the townhouse with access gained from a private street.

Over time, new types of housing units emerged within the townhouse form that introduced new relationships between the individual unit, vertical circulation and grade.

In the early years of amalgamation, the City of Toronto introduced the "Infill Townhouse Guidelines" (2003) to help assess the large and growing volume of townhouse development applications on small, infill sites. The infill guidelines responded to, among other things, the decline in the quality of streetscapes by the erosion of areas for landscaping and street trees created by the market for narrow frontage towns with integral front parking and garages.

The City's Official Plan, which was approved by Council in 2002, requires new developments to take their address and access from public streets. To support this policy goal, Council adopted, in 2005, the Development Infrastructure Policy & Standards (DIPS). The DIPS standards place limits on the creation and design of private residential streets and establish clear directions for the layout and design of new public residential streets.



Example of low-rise buildings in the form of garden apartments/courtyard walk-ups.

Since the adoption of these earlier standards, the demand for low-rise grade related housing has remained strong. Over the past ten years, land and construction prices have risen. Increasingly, townhouses and low-rise multi-unit residential buildings are now being constructed on large sites with underground parking garages. These larger sites are often found at the edges of "tower in the park" apartment areas and on lands being converted from employment and institutional uses. As well, low-rise residential intensification continues to take place on smaller infill sites. There has evolved, along with the conventional townhouse, a variety of taller, denser and more complex forms of multi-unit, low-rise housing. (see below for a description of types).

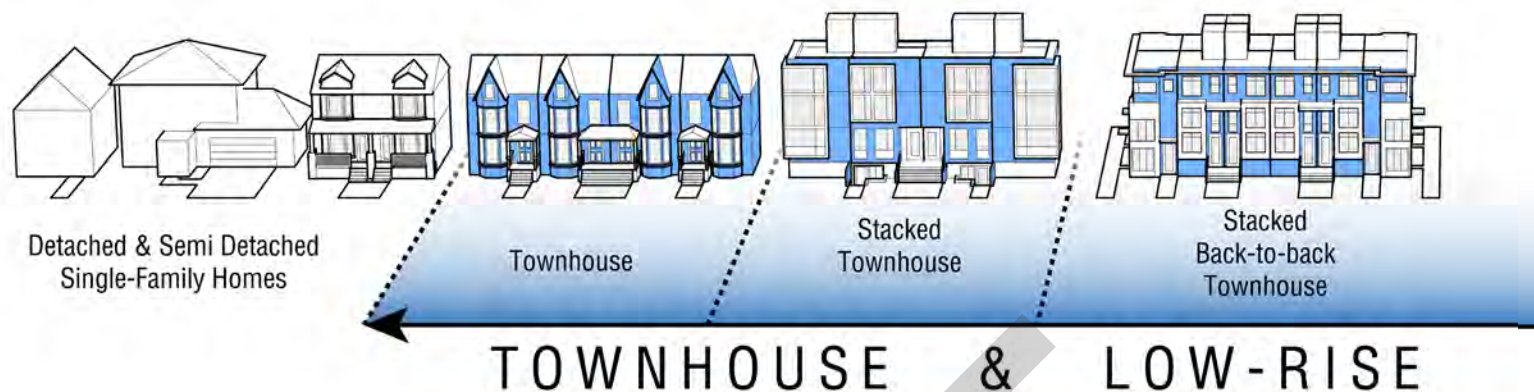


Townhouses and low-rise buildings are common in many parts of the City.

The "Infill Townhouse Guidelines" (2003), which speak to townhouse developments on public streets and short private mews, and the DIPS (2005) standards for new residential streets fail to cover some of the more pressing questions of organization and fit that arise in many of today's development applications. The Guidelines in this document have been developed to ensure that the wider range of planning considerations presented by the current forms of low-rise residential intensification are fully addressed. The objectives of the Guidelines are to produce building designs and development layouts that reflect the broader land use planning goals of the Official Plan and which, in the process, create an attractive public realm and comfortable private living spaces of the highest achievable quality.



Spruce Court Apartments (completed in the 1920s), is one of the earliest examples of publically supported, affordable, Low-Rise Multi Unit Housing in Toronto. The "Garden City" influence is prevalent through the use of large grassy, sunlit, courtyards and play areas which were accessible to all units. (Photo Credit: Spruce Court c1920, City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 43.)



DEFINITIONS

Low-rise, multi-unit residential buildings take many forms:

Townhouses are generally 2 to 3 1/2-storey structures that share a sidewall with a neighbouring unit and have at least three housing bays. They typically have a front and a back.

Stacked Townhouses share a sidewall and have units stacked vertically (typically two or three). Like the townhouse type they have a front and a back.

Back to Back Townhouses share a rear wall as well as a sidewall and have two fronts. Each unit has its own entrance to grade.

Stacked, Back to Back Townhouses share a rear wall as well as a sidewall and have units stacked vertically. This can include three units located on top of each other, two-level units stacked on top of one-level units, or two-level units stacked on top of two-level units. Other layout solutions may be possible. Each unit has its own entrance to grade.

Low-rise Apartment Buildings are less than 4 storeys high and share interior corridors, vertical circulation and entrances, and have multiple units stacked vertically. Typically units are located on both sides of a corridor (double-loaded) and, sometimes, only on one side of a corridor (single-loaded).

Hybrid Buildings combine lower units with direct access to grade as well as upper units that gain access from a shared corridor, vertical circulation and entrance.

The types of residential units described above are typically constructed in rows or blocks. The Official Plan allows these residential forms in lands with Mixed Use, Regeneration and

Apartment Neighbourhoods designations. They often fit under the four-storey height limit for residential development in designated Neighbourhood areas but policies regarding neighbourhood fit may impose restrictions. It is important that the more intensive forms of low-rise, multi-unit residential development fit harmoniously within the existing neighbourhood context. (See Section 5 – Bringing It All Together for more detail on the various types of low-rise, multi-unit residential buildings).

Zoning By-law 569-2013

Townhouse and Low-rise Apartment buildings take many forms, but can generally be understood as predominantly residential buildings, up to four storeys tall.

The City-wide Comprehensive Zoning By-law 569-2013, as amended, defines and regulates residential building types within zone categories. Residential building types set out in the By-law that relate to the scope of these Guidelines mainly include Townhouse and Apartment Buildings and to a lesser degree Triplexes and Fouxplexes

"Back-to-Back" and "Stacked Townhouses" are not defined residential building types in Zoning By-law 569-2013. However, these popular design and marketing terms are commonly used when reviewing development applications to better describe the types of units and building configurations seen within the low-rise "Apartment Building" typology.



PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

The purpose of the “Townhouse and Low-rise Apartment Guidelines” is to replace the “Infill Townhouse Guidelines” (2003) and to illustrate how the public realm and built form policy objectives of the Official Plan can be addressed by:

- Identifying strategies to enhance the quality of the living environment through improved spatial relationships, design and materials
- Establishing a balance between the protection of stable residential neighbourhoods and heritage features while allowing for appropriate infill development and intensification.
- Providing best practices for use by stakeholders, particularly land developers, architects, and landscape architects, and to provide guidance to municipal planners in effectively evaluating the acceptability of an application

HOW AND WHERE THE GUIDELINES APPLY

The City of Toronto Official Plan seeks to direct and manage growth city-wide and managing change is different in different parts of the City. While the Official Plan directs major and sustained incremental growth to the City’s Centres, Avenues, Employment Districts and the Downtown, fully three-quarters of the City’s land area is taken up by watercourses, ravines, parks and neighbourhoods where little growth is intended to take place. As they evolve and change, these stable residential neighbourhoods will continue to experience modest physical change. Low-rise, multi-unit buildings will often be located

adjacent to and sometimes within stable residential areas and as such, it is important to ensure that new development will enhance and fit within the local area context.

The “Townhouse and Low-rise Apartment Guidelines” apply to the design, review, and approval of new low-rise, multi-unit building developments that are 4 storeys or less. The Guidelines will normally be applied through the evaluation of development proposals and design alternatives in Official Plan Amendments, Zoning By-law Amendments, Plans of Subdivision, and Site Plan Control applications. The Guidelines are intended to be read together with the relevant Official Plan policies, applicable Zoning By-laws, Secondary Plans, Heritage Conservation District Plans, the Toronto Green Standard, the Toronto Development Guide, as well as any other applicable regulations, policies and guidelines.

The Guidelines are intended to provide a degree of certainty and clarity of common interpretation. Each guideline requirement should be weighed across the board with the other guidelines and “work together” to determine whether a development application has successfully met the overall intent of these Guidelines and the Official Plan. However, when implementing the Guidelines, it is important to recognize that exceptions may sometimes be warranted and that at times a project that strives for excellence in design can demonstrate that a particular guideline is not appropriate in that instance. It is the responsibility of the designer/developer/builder to demonstrate to the City where such an exception exists and it is at the discretion of the City to support or not support a justification. In cases where the City requires further review of applications, the City’s Design Review Panel may assist in the process.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guidelines are based on the following guiding principles which build on and will help implement policies and directions from the City's Official Plan:

1. Protect and enhance significant natural and man-made features such as mature vegetation, topography, heritage structures and open spaces.
2. Create high quality public and private realm on sites that connect with local streets, parks and open spaces, community and retail services.
3. Encourage active living with a safe, comfortable, accessible, vibrant and attractive public realm.
4. Promote harmonious fit and compatibility with the existing and planned context through appropriate scale, placement, setbacks and visual relationships.
5. Ensure a high quality living environment through excellent architecture, landscape and urban design.
6. Ensure good living conditions, including access to public and private open space, sunlight, natural ventilation and privacy for building occupants.
7. Minimize the impact of service areas and elements on the public realm.

The substance of the Guidelines was informed by an inventory of relevant past planning applications, site tours, selected case studies and a review of best practices. This brought to light a number of key issues that require particular attention when considering development applications for townhouses and low-rise apartments, including:

- improving the “fit” and transition with existing neighbourhoods and, at a smaller scale, the transition from the public realm (streets, parks and other open spaces) to the private realm (front yards, private amenity spaces and entrances)
- ensuring more generous separation distances between facing units to allow for adequate access to sunlight and sky view and an appropriate level of privacy
- avoiding situations where front yards face back yards or where backyards face the street
- imposing adequate setback requirements to enable suitable areas for soft landscaping and to provide sufficient soil for trees to be planted and flourish
- ensuring the adequate provision of safe and attractive parks, accessible open space and walkways as community

focal points and, where appropriate, integrating these spaces into a larger network of streets, parks and other community spaces such as school yards

- maximizing the usability, comfort and appearance of front yards and building entrances (porches and stoops) and private outdoor amenity spaces (balconies and terraces) while minimizing the negative impacts of overlook on public and private realms
- improving the overall quality of design in terms of site layout, architecture and landscaping, with the accompanying use of higher quality materials
- ensuring servicing activities (such as vehicle parking, garbage storage and collection, loading, utility meters and drop-off areas) are located underground, internally or to the rear of the building away from the public realm and public view
- relating developments directly to the existing or “natural” grade and avoiding the creation of artificial grades.

QUALITY OF LIFE AND LIVABILITY

Many aspects of urban design and approaches to city form are based on the concept of livability. These approaches recognize that design and structure can be very influential in the life of a town or city and the building of community. Part of what makes Toronto livable is access to a wide array of amenities and attractions, including natural areas in the city, cultural and social events, urban parks, the urban tree canopy, vibrant districts and unique, thriving neighborhoods. As our City grows and matures, we need to create a more beautiful environment, healthy and vibrant communities and greater prosperity by making choices that improve our quality of life. This includes a focus on neighborhoods and main streets, so that everyone has access within biking or walking distance of the basic services and amenities offered in the City's most livable neighborhoods.

DESIGN EXCELLENCE

Low-rise, multi-unit buildings have an important role in defining the image of Toronto and should embody design excellence and innovation. Urban design excellence in the spaces and quality of shared public spaces, landscape and architectural design includes the effective use of resources, high-quality materials, innovative building and landscape design and construction, as well as a sensitive and thoughtful response to context and the impacts of the development.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Sustainable design is an approach to developing sites and buildings to be less resource intensive and to improve the economic, social, and natural environment we live in. Low-rise, multi-unit developments should demonstrate a heightened awareness of green innovation and accomplish sustainable linkages between good urban design, architecture, and landscape.

There are technical aspects relating to building performance, materials and construction methods, water management, landscaping, and the quality of the internal environment. There are also site and building design measures, including organizing buildings for maximum passive solar gain, which can be applied to improve the sustainability and energy performance of buildings. Sustainable design should be identified at the project's initial or site planning stage when fundamental design decisions are being made. By following an integrated design process and ensuring that all design and construction disciplines are involved from the beginning, low-rise, multi-unit buildings can achieve better overall performance results.

The City of Toronto both requires and encourages sustainable design through the Official Plan and the Toronto Green Standard (TGS). The TGS sets out performance measures for buildings and sites and specifies strategies that can be used to achieve cost effective, environmentally and socially responsible end results. Planning applications submitted since January 2014 in the City of Toronto must meet Tier 1 of the Toronto Green Standard (TGS) performance measures.

Applicants are also required to adhere to the City of Toronto Wet Weather Flow Management Policy which provides direction on how to manage wet weather flow on a watershed basis.

HERITAGE CONSERVATION

The City of Toronto values its heritage properties and requires that they be protected and that new development conserve the integrity of their cultural heritage value, attributes, and character, consistent with accepted principles of good heritage conservation.

Low-rise buildings must be compatible with conserving heritage properties on or adjacent to a development site or within a Heritage Conservation District (HCD). HCDs are special



Sustainable design solutions are integrated into the landscape design. Credit: PWL Partnership Landscape Architect Inc.

areas with a concentration of heritage properties and distinct historic character. The character and values of HCDs will be conserved to ensure that their significance is not diminished by incremental or sweeping change.

There are heritage properties that can work in harmony with new development. In these cases, development should strive for the long term protection, integration, and re-use of heritage properties. Heritage properties should be used to inform the scale and contextual treatment of the new development. If well-designed and sited in appropriate locations, low-rise, multi-unit buildings can make a positive contribution within historical settings.

ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The Townhouse and Low-rise Building Guidelines are organized into the following sections:

-  Introduction
-  1.0 Site Context
-  2.0 Site Organization
-  3.0 Building Massing and Design
-  4.0 Pedestrian Realm – Creating Pride in Place
-  5.0 Bringing It All Together - Building Types and Development Scenarios
-  6.0 Appendices + Case Studies
-  7.0 Glossary

Appendix A – Case Studies

Individual design guidelines with supporting illustrations, photos, rationales, and selected related references, such as Official Plan policies and TGS performance measures, are provided for each aspect of developments identified within sections 1.0 through 4.0.

Section 5.0 provides descriptions of the building types covered by these Guidelines as well as demonstrations of how the various building types come together on sites with different conditions.

Section 6.0 Case Studies provides some recent examples of mostly built projects across the City.

Section 7.0 Glossary provides definitions to the terminology used within the Guidelines.



1.0 Site Context

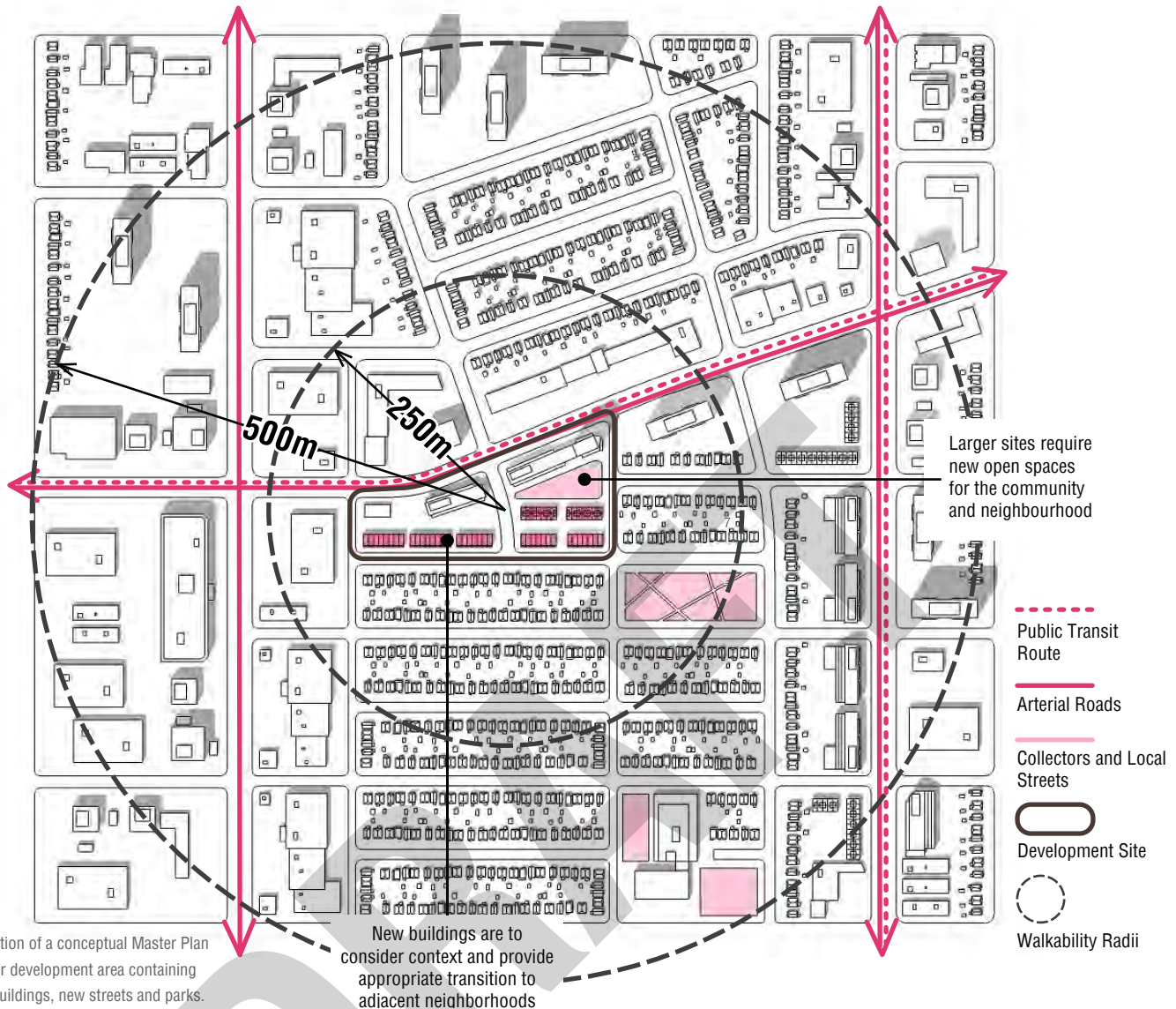
- 1.1 Context Analysis and Planning for Larger Sites
- 1.2 Public Realm Framework
 - 1.2.1 Street and Block Patterns
 - 1.2.2 Public Parks and Open Spaces
- 1.3 Heritage

1.1 CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING FOR LARGER SITES

Evaluate the existing and planned context and demonstrate how the proposed development responds to this context. For larger sites with multiple buildings and the potential for new public realm elements, coordinate development through a Master Plan.

- a. Include a “Walkable” context analysis, showing the building proposal, and illustrating through text and graphics at an appropriate scale:
 - Official Plan land use designations and zoning permissions
 - 250m and 500m “walkability” radii from the site
 - major streets and blocks (patterns, size, location)
 - open space networks (parks, open space, natural features)
 - pedestrian/cycling routes and connections
 - transit routes, stations, and stops (including distance to rapid transit nodes)
 - area amenities and destinations (community centres, trails, libraries, schools, retail areas, etc.)
 - Diagrams of movement network(s) that give priority consideration to pedestrians
- b. Include in the Planning Rationale or application a “Block” context analysis, showing the proposal and illustrating through text and graphics at an appropriate scale:
 - size of blocks and arrangement of parcels or lots
 - location, size and organization of public streets, laneways, sidewalks, transit stops, and other pedestrian or cycling routes and connections
 - location and size of parks and open space if applicable
 - adjacent and on-site heritage properties and identified heritage views from the public realm if applicable
 - adjacent and on-site mature trees
 - existing topography and proposed grading on site and its relationship to adjacent sites and features
 - important or identified views from the public realm
 - existing and planned building footprints
 - ground floor uses, setbacks and general location of building entrances, street trees and site circulation/ servicing on the development site and on adjacent sites
- proposed building heights and separation distances and their relationship to the height of existing context buildings within the same block and/or across the street, as well as the relationship to open spaces
 - planned location and orientation of buildings, parks, and open space to maximize sunlight access, sky view, and energy efficiency
 - approach to providing building types with a range of housing options
 - approach to site and building environmental sustainability
 - for small infill developments, a “Block” context analysis may be sufficient
- c. For sites covering an area of one hectare or more, provide a Master Plan identifying the following aspects in addition to 1.1(a) and (b) above:
 - a phasing plan, schedule and interim landscape plan where appropriate
 - a hierarchy of street and open space types with different characteristics based on their importance regarding their role as a place and as part of the movement network
 - a community focal point(s) within the development that is easy to walk to for residents and which is integrated with other open spaces as part of a network
 - location of site servicing, vehicular circulation and major utility connections including shared systems such as vehicular circulation and district/community energy systems
- d. Development proposals on sites where the minimum building setbacks and stepbacks cannot be achieved and/ or where the development cannot be successfully integrated into its context will require a redesign of the proposal to meet the minimum requirements contained in these guidelines.

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RATIONALE

Context refers to the development site and the setting for that development, including both the existing physical surroundings and the planned vision for the future of the area. The planned context includes planning regulations that apply to the site, most notably the Official Plan land use designation(s) and zoning controls. The intent of the context analysis is to identify patterns, opportunities, and challenges and to demonstrate how the layout and design of the proposed development will fit with and respond appropriately to its context.

The context analysis should inform many key design decisions:

- Is the site one which will use existing street frontage to provide access and address for new buildings? Or is it a larger site which needs opening up by the addition of such public realm features as streets and open space?
- Is the site adjacent to a park or open space which could be extended into the site and become an integral and supportive part of the new development?
- Is the site adjacent to a rail corridor where a pedestrian and cycling trail could be provided within the setback area from the rail corridor. Or is it adjacent to a ravine or hydro corridor to which pedestrian/cycling connections can be made?
- What are the appropriate building types for the context?
- How should buildings be placed and organized to define and support the existing and proposed streets, and provide appropriate relationships to neighbouring properties?
- What is the appropriate height and character of buildings?

- Are there heritage resources on or adjacent to the site which will influence the layout, scale and character of the development?
- Are there mature trees and existing topographical features which should be incorporated into the site design?
- Are at-grade non-residential uses appropriate on certain frontages?

In addition to the above, important contextual considerations may include existing uses such as public open space, community centres, schools, grocers, other retail and active commercial uses. Significant infrastructure elements to be considered include transit, cycling and pedestrian connections, sidewalks and community energy systems.

The 250 and 500 metre radii are generally accepted measures for “walkability” and are roughly equivalent to a 5 and 10 minute walk. The intent of the context analysis at a “walkable” scale is to develop an understanding of how the proposed development will fit with and reinforce existing or planned built form patterns and respond appropriately to changes in land use and scale. Connectivity to important area amenities, such as transit, public open space, and living and working destinations is also a key design consideration.

The block scale analysis allows for a closer examination of the immediate existing and planned context. This analysis informs site organization including: open space allocation; building massing and placement; ground floor uses, and the design and character of the proposed development and the public realm.

A Master Plan provides a planning and design framework to guide the incremental development of large or complex areas with multiple buildings, new streets, parks and open spaces. The Plan should provide a vision for the development of the entire site area, including how new streets, pedestrian and cycling routes, parks, and publicly accessible and private open spaces will be organized. These Guidelines should be applied to ensure that building blocks are appropriately located on the site and of a size suited to accommodate building types that will fit within the existing and planned context of buildings and uses.

A Master Plan may not be required if there is a Secondary Plan that applies to the site, with associated Context or Precinct Plans that include comparable information and detail.



Context analysis should identify gateways and important public spaces.



Identify important community, cultural, and places of significance.



Official Plan Reference

- 2.2 Structuring Growth in the City: Policy 1 and 2
- 2.2.1 Downtown: The Heart of Toronto: Policy 4
- 2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 1, 2, 3 and 6
- 2.4 Bringing the City Together: Policy 2 and 8
- 3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 1c, 1d, 1e, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20
- 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1 and 2 | 3.1.4
- 3.1.5 Heritage Resources: Policy 3, 4 and 17
- 3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods: Policy 1, 2 and 3
- 3.4 The Natural Environment: Policy 3
- 4.1 Neighbourhoods: Policy 5, 6, 7 and 9
- 4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods: Policy 2 and 3
- 4.5 Mixed Use Areas: Policy 2
- 5.1.3 Site Plan Control: Policy 2 and 3



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard | Toronto Walking Strategy | Standard Construction for Roads

1.2 PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

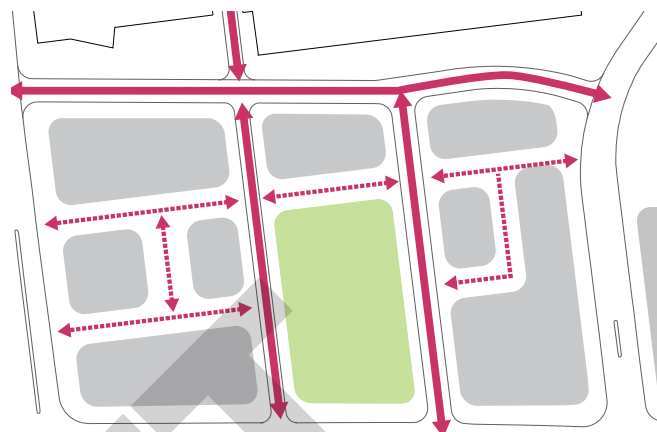
Create connections through developments to enhance public access to transit, parks, open spaces, amenities and other neighbourhood destinations.

1.2.1 STREET AND BLOCK PATTERNS

- Provide safe, direct, universally accessible pedestrian and cycling links through new development to destinations such as parks, schools, transit, community facilities, local retail areas, and utilizing areas alongside rail/hydro corridors and ravines to extend the network of connections.
- Use existing public streets where possible, for address and access to new buildings.
- Extend and connect public streets, sidewalks, and public realm to integrate new development into the surroundings.
- Provide new public streets in accordance with the City's Development Infrastructure Policy and Standards (DIPS) for access and address to buildings which cannot be accessed from existing streets.
- Where public streets are deemed by staff to not be possible, private streets will only be permitted where:
 - the site is under 1 hectare in size
 - the site does not have the potential to be connected to adjacent properties through a new vehicular access
 - parking is provided underground for all development that takes its access from the private street(s)
 - small sites which cannot accommodate a public street, with underground garages may use a vehicular mews or pedestrian mews as alternatives
 - townhouses on small sites and which cannot accommodate the scale of a public street with a turn-around may use a vehicular mews street
- Incorporate traffic calming features, such as on-street parking, bulb-outs, textured materials and crosswalks to create a pedestrian friendly environment.

RATIONALE

Streets are a significant part of the City's open space system, delineating development blocks providing mobility as well as creating linear open spaces within the City. They provide a setting for social interaction and neighbourhood activities.



Conceptual diagram of access and connection through development area.

They provide street address for individual buildings or units and grade related uses. Streets also allow for sunlight and daylight to reach buildings and outdoor amenity spaces. The layout of the new public realm consisting of streets, mews, parks and open spaces is the structure upon which a walkable community is organized and must not be a secondary consideration after laying out building blocks and servicing functions efficiently.

When sites are large and new buildings and individual grade related apartment units cannot take their address from existing streets, new streets and walkways will be needed. In general, the pattern of existing local streets should be extended into the new site. New streets should be laid out to reduce the impact of additional traffic on surrounding neighbourhoods.

New streets should be public and conform to the City's standards of quality. Standard public street right-of-way widths accommodate space needs for essential municipal services and utilities above and below grade, sidewalks, street lighting, landscaping and trees. They must accommodate space for the maintenance of this infrastructure and for snow, storage and garbage collection.

Please refer to City of Toronto "Development Infrastructure Policy and Standards" (DIPS) for Public Local Residential Streets and Private Mews. Also, where it is necessary for a medium-sized site to be bisected by a street, it may prove acceptable to create a private street(s) to enable underground parking to be provided. (See also Section 2.1).

1.2.2 PUBLIC PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Locate parks and open spaces to provide focal points for the development and integrate well into a larger network of streets, parks and open spaces.



Townhouse units are oriented facing open space to frame and strengthen the public realm.

- a. Locate and design new parks and open spaces to be visible and easily accessible.
 - b. Design and provide high quality parks and open space that provide for safety, user comfort, accessibility and year-round use.
 - c. Enhance the experience of "place", providing experiential and educational opportunities to interact with the natural world.
 - d. Protect access to existing parks and open spaces, as well as expanding the system of open spaces and developing open space linkages.
 - e. Promote the inclusion of recreational facilities, including areas suitable for community or allotment gardens, to supplement the City's parks, facilities and amenities.
 - f. The City's Park, Forestry and Recreation Division will determine whether new or expanded parks are needed through the development approval process. Using the tools of the Official Plan, new parks, where appropriate, will be sited, secured and designed for public use.
 - g. Extend parks and open space networks into new development areas to expand the scale and function of these spaces, where possible.
 - h. Co-locate parks and open spaces with other public amenities, community buildings, schools, and shops.
- The requirement for new park area will be determined by local need, and opportunities for new park area will be sought which:
- enhances the function of an existing park by adding new contiguous park lands
 - improves the visibility and access to a park by increasing street frontage
 - provides opportunities for movement through a block between streets or gives further access to ravines, school yards and other accessible open spaces

RATIONALE

With new development and growth, additional parks and publicly accessible open spaces will be necessary to provide

Continued on next page...



Pedestrian walkways through park lead to children play around and direct visitors to prominent views.

community gathering spaces for walking, meeting, recreation and other aspects of public life. On smaller infill sites, these will be provided within the existing framework of parks and open spaces. Larger sites will be reviewed to consider the opportunities to provide new appropriately sized, located and designed parks and open spaces. Smaller sites over a certain size threshold and development type will be reviewed to explore opportunities for shared amenity spaces.

Each development application should be reviewed with the goal of enhancing the community's network of parks and open spaces. The review should look at opportunities to increase the visibility and accessibility to parks and open spaces. Where appropriate, opportunities to enlarge or create new parks and open spaces should be pursued. Adding to variety, in terms of the character, function and range of experiences offered by the local network of parks and open spaces, should be another important consideration. Good quality parks and open spaces, which are attractive, inviting, safe and well-maintained, are key elements of the character of the community and play an important role in enhancing the quality of life for new and existing residents. Parks and open spaces can also define the identity of an area, establish a sense of place and set the tone for the entire community.

The structure of streets, parks and open spaces, along with appropriately located, sized and detailed buildings, and their ground floor uses will, in part, determine the safety, enjoyment and the quality of these open spaces.



Parks are the focal points of communities and should be located centrally to provide ease of access and visibility.



Official Plan Reference

2.3.2 Toronto's Green Space System and Waterfront: Policy 1b and 3b | 3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 19 and 20 | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 | 3.2.3 Parks and Open Spaces: Policy 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

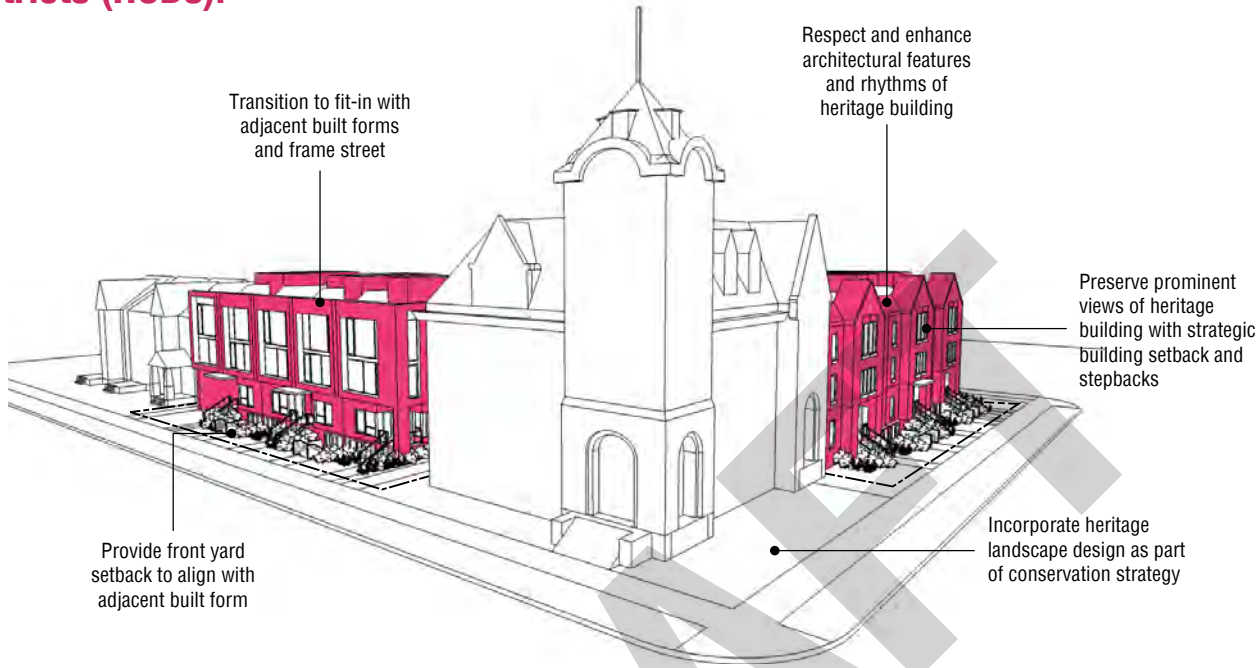


Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard

1.3 HERITAGE

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



- a. Conserve and integrate heritage properties into developments in a manner that is consistent with accepted principles of good heritage conservation. Building proposals with adjacent or on-site heritage properties or within an HCD are required to provide a Heritage Impact Assessment as part of a complete application.
- b. Conserve the integrity of the cultural heritage values, attributes, character, and three-dimensional form of an on-site heritage building or structure or property within an HCD. Façade retention alone is not an acceptable method of heritage preservation.
- c. When a proposed building is adjacent to a lower-scale heritage property:
 - design new buildings to respect the urban grain, scale, setbacks, proportions, visual relationships, topography, and materials of the historic context
 - integrate the existing heritage character into the building through high-quality, contemporary design cues
 - ensure consistency with applicable HCD Plan requirements
- d. Ensure that Low-rise, multi-unit buildings do not visually impede the setting of properties on the heritage register inventory. The objective for the long-term preservation, integration, and re-use of heritage properties may mean that not all sites with or adjacent to heritage properties are appropriate for this form of development.



Heritage building carefully transformed into townhouse development.



Adaptive re-use of heritage building for grade related low-rise apartments.

RATIONALE

The City of Toronto values its heritage properties and Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) and requires that they be protected and, where appropriate, integrated into new development in a manner that is consistent with accepted principles of good heritage conservation.

There may be instances where conservation principles outweigh the goals of intensification and redevelopment, and may limit the construction of buildings or require additional “breathing space” to preserve the integrity of an HCD, heritage property, or specific attributes. In locations where proposed developments are considered appropriate, heritage properties should be referenced to inform the scale and contextual treatment of the new

development. If well designed and appropriately sited, new development buildings can make a positive contribution to an historical setting.

Low-rise, multi-unit building development proposals containing heritage properties on or adjacent to the development site are required to provide a Heritage Impact Assessment as part of the application review process. The impact of the proposed development or site alteration on the heritage property will be evaluated and an overall approach recommended for conservation of these resources that mitigates the negative impacts a development may have on the heritage asset.



Official Plan Reference

- 2.2.1 Downtown: The Heart of Toronto: Policy 5 and 6
- 2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 1 and 2
- 3.1.5 Heritage Resources: Policy 1, 2, 4, 10b, 10c, 11, 12, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 43



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies

- Guidelines, #4 | Parks Canada: Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada

DRAFT

2.0 Site Organization

- 2.1 Streets, Mews and Walkways
- 2.2 Shared Outdoor Amenity Space
- 2.3 Building Placement
- 2.4 Building Address
- 2.5 Site Servicing, Access and Parking
 - 2.5.1 Site Servicing, Access and Parking for Smaller Street-Related Townhouse Sites

2.1 STREETS, MEWS AND WALKWAYS

Provide new streets, mews and walkways for safe, comfortable and direct access and address for all new buildings.



Appropriately scaled buildings help to frame streets and provide a comfortable pedestrian environment. Credit: Tact Architecture Inc.

- a. Locate and design public streets, private streets, private vehicular mews, pedestrian mews and walkways to:
 - provide safe, direct, universally accessible, landscaped pedestrian and cycling connections to destinations within and through the new development including links to schools, transit, community facilities, and retail areas
 - extend and connect to the local street network with multiple access points to avoid dead-end routes
 - provide through-lanes (public or private) to minimize vehicle turnarounds.
 - be publicly accessible and designed to invite public access
 - locate access on secondary streets and consolidate access points when possible to minimize curb cuts.
 - coordinate and consolidate servicing, parking access and utilities to maximize efficiency and minimize negative impacts on neighbouring properties and interruptions to the public realm
 - create attractive and comfortable, year-round pedestrian environments with landscaping including canopy trees, pedestrian scale lighting and other amenities
 - provide and connect pedestrian and cycling pathways alongside ravines, open spaces, and rail corridors where the opportunities exist

RATIONALE

Streets, mews and walkways form the fundamental site organizational element in low-rise developments. Locate buildings and design sites to encourage walking and cycling as viable transportation options for building occupants. Encouraging these forms of active transportation will promote a healthier citizenry. High-quality pedestrian and cycling routes should be well-connected to existing infrastructure, such as transit, bicycle lanes, parking facilities, and the sidewalk network.

More than just circulation routes, streets, mews and walkways are place-making opportunities that can provide a sense of place and allow communities to connect with each other. These routes have the potential to be attractive and enjoyable publicly accessible environments to enhance the experience and quality of life.



Official Plan Reference

3.1.1 Public Realm: Policy 5, 6, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18 | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 5 | 3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods: Policy 1a, 2b and 3a | 5.1.3 Site Plan Control: Policy 3a



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard | Standard Construction Drawings for Roads | Streetscape Manual | Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space Design Guidelines

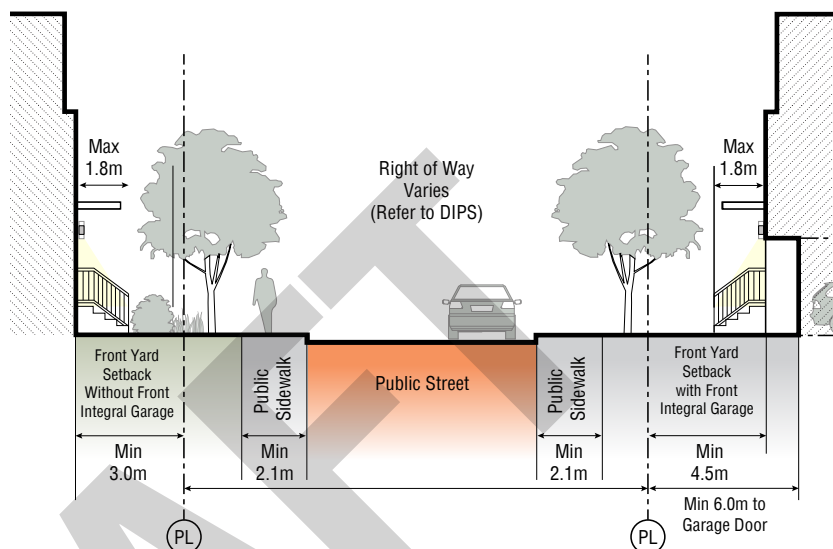
2.1 STREETS, MEWS AND WALKWAYS CONT.

The following public/private street, private vehicular and pedestrian mews, lane/driveway, and walkway sections with associated setbacks and permitted encroachments are typical access elements for townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings. (See also Section 1.2 Public Realm Framework)

Public Street - the design standards are specified in Development Infrastructure Policy and Standards (DIPS). Where front integral garage parking is provided, the minimum front yard setback is 4.5m from the property line (with the garage portion of the building setback 6.0m); where parking is underground or at the rear, the minimum setback is 3.0m.



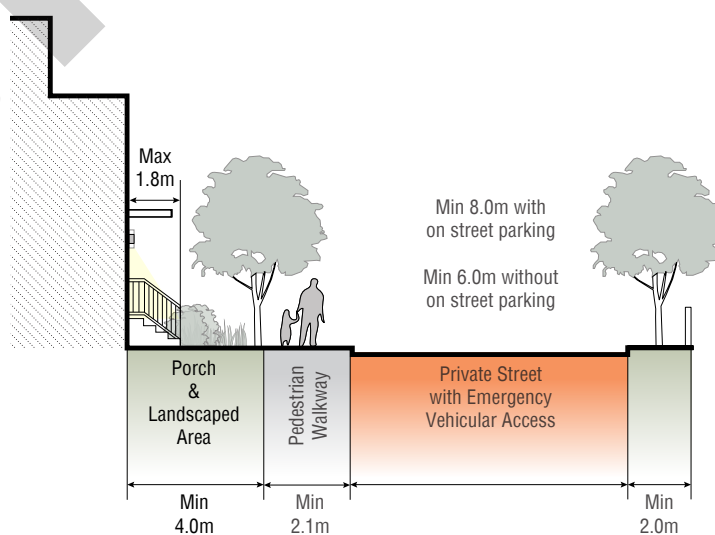
Well-proportioned public streets create framework for attractive neighbourhoods and streetscapes.



Private Street - a privately owned and maintained street, where the required parking must be located underground, the minimum front yard setback is 4.0m as measured from the inside of the adjacent sidewalk. (See Section 1.2.1 e. Access and Connection for the conditions under which a Private Street would be permitted)

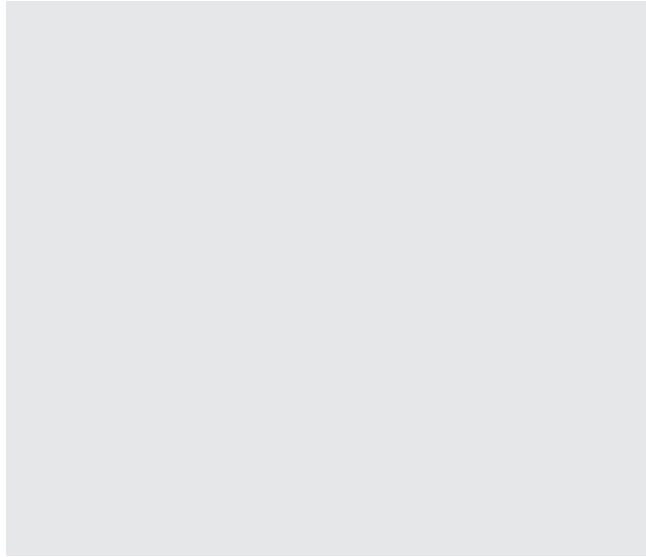


Private street dominated by large stairway encroachments into insufficient setbacks affecting otherwise good streetscape design.

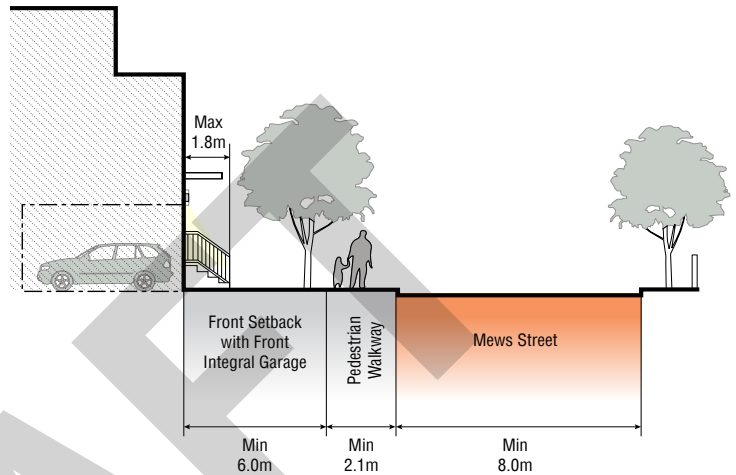


2.1 STREETS, MEWS AND WALKWAYS CONT.

Private Vehicular Mews - the design standards are specified in DIPS. A private vehicular mews is a privately owned and maintained street where front integral parking is provided and where the maximum length of the private mews is 45.0m from the curb of the existing public street and contains a maximum of 10 units (not counting units that front onto an existing public street). The minimum front yard setback is 6.0m as measured from the inside of the adjacent sidewalk.



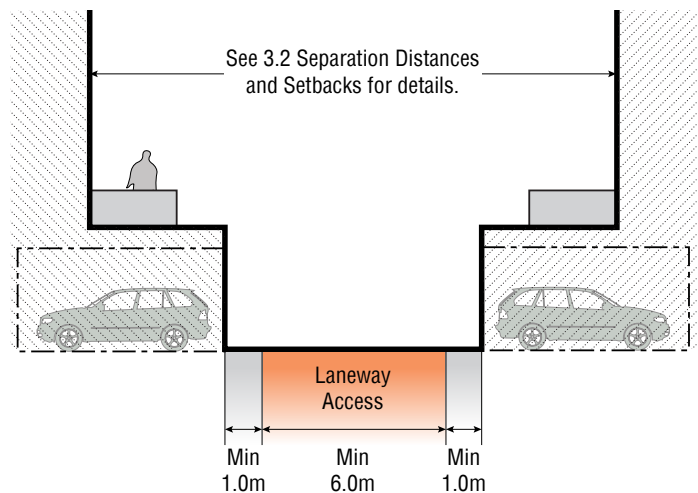
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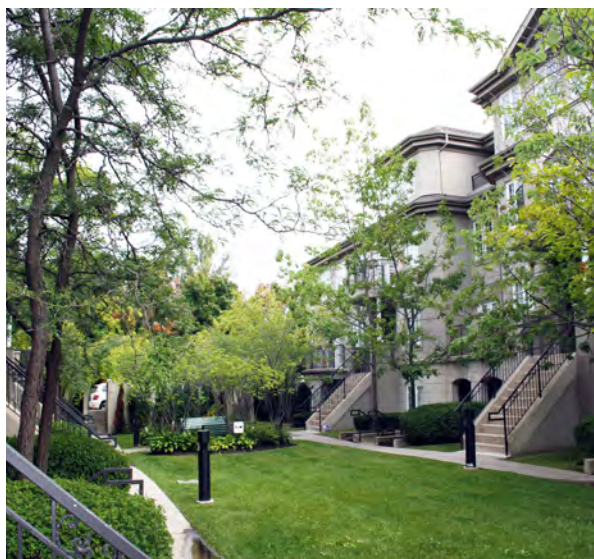
Lane/Driveway – a road surface that provides vehicular access to a parking garage/area and/or service area, and which does not provide pedestrian access to or address for buildings. Where vehicles can enter and exit a site travelling in one direction the lane/driveway may be a minimum of 4.5m in width.



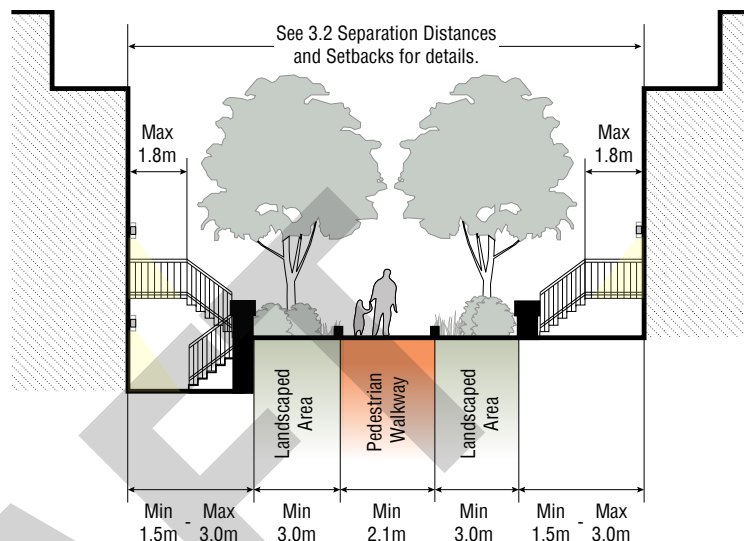
Units and associated terraces overlook a well-designed laneway with landscaped areas and carefully located utilities.



Pedestrian Mews - a privately owned and maintained pedestrian route visible from the street which provides public access and address to individual buildings and units within a larger development site. (For separation distances between buildings see Section 3.2 Separation Distances, Setbacks and Orientation)



Pedestrian mews with central green space and pedestrian walkways framing the shared area.



Walkway - a privately owned and maintained pedestrian path.

Employ minimum walkway dimensions as follows:

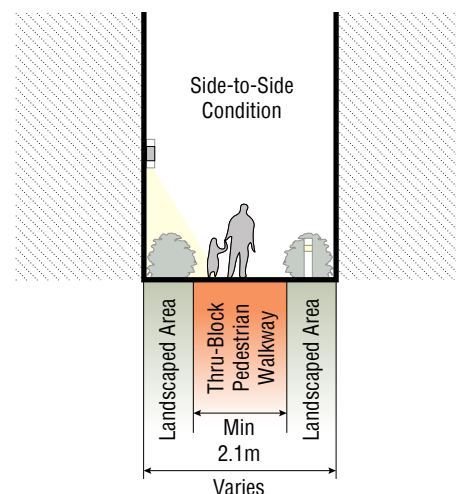
- when the walkway is the primary access to units, provide a minimum building separation of 6.0m and a clear path width of at least 2.1m landscaping and pedestrian scale lighting.
- for a walkway providing a mid-block connection between two streets or to site features, provide a minimum building separation of 4.5m and a clear path of at least 2.1m landscaping and pedestrian scale lighting.
- for a walkway that does not provide direct access to a unit or is not a mid-block connection, but provides access to a parking or service area, provide a minimum building separation of 3.0m and a clear path width of at least 1.5m landscaping and pedestrian scale lighting.



Generous walkway through the building massing frames views and creates a gateway.



Narrow walkway between building blocks with landscaped area.



2.2 SHARED OUTDOOR AMENITY AREAS

Design open spaces and shared outdoor amenity areas to be publicly accessible community focus areas.



High quality, centrally located, and sun filled amenity spaces are focal points of communities. Credit: David Peterson Architect Inc. Triumph Developments. Photo by: Ben Rahn, A-Frame.

- a. Maximize and create high-quality landscaped open space on the site. Opportunities may include hard and soft landscaped features such as courtyards and children's play space.
- b. Integrate existing natural attributes and topography within the development site and, where appropriate, make a public feature of these elements.
- c. Preserve and protect existing healthy trees.
- d. Animate and frame open spaces with appropriate building massing, elements and uses. (Eg. Entrances, windows, and active uses at-grade).
- e. Locate open space to maximize frontages on streets, mews and walkways to provide prominence, visibility and access.
- f. Complement and connect with open space on neighbouring properties, where possible.
- g. Locate children's playgrounds overlooked by residents to enhance informal supervision.
- h. Provide direct visual and easily accessible physical connections to streets, mews and walkways and create attractive views and community focal points.
- i. Locate and design amenity spaces for maximum access to sunlight.
- j. When required by the Zoning By-law, locate interior amenity facilities adjacent to shared outdoor amenity areas and provide windows and doors for direct physical and visual access between these spaces.
- k. Provide shared play space for children in developments with 20 or more units if no backyards are provided and in developments on sites of 1.0 hectare or more.
- l. Meet safety and universally accessible standards in the public realm.
- m. Locate parking, mechanical equipment and servicing areas away from amenity areas.
- n. Avoid locating shared amenity areas in isolated, irregularly shaped, inaccessible, and/or residual areas.

Types of shared amenity area may include:

Courtyards - landscaped open space, located in the centre of a single or consolidated block with no direct street frontage with potential for children's play space.

Forecourts - landscaped open space between the public sidewalk and the main entrance of a building.

Plazas - animated gathering place with predominantly hard surfaced landscape features flanking a public street.

Urban Gardens - landscaped space, usually of intimate scale, open to a public street, located and oriented to provide maximum sunlight during midday with potential for children's play space.

RATIONALE

Residential developments zoned as apartments (primarily stacked and back-to-back townhouses and low-rise apartments) are required to provide a shared outdoor amenity area for developments with 20 or more units. Although this type of amenity space is typically privately-owned and maintained, it is to be designed as publicly accessible and appropriate for year-round use, particularly when part of its function is a pedestrian connection through the site.

On-site shared outdoor amenity areas complement the public park system and provide additional gathering space to support community life. Townhouses and low-rise, multi-unit buildings are popular with families with children and pets owners. Developments with well-designed and located shared amenity areas with children's play space, facilities for pets and other shared elements allow residents to experience and share their collective property.

The location of open spaces on a site, along with the type, size, and intended use of the space, may vary depending upon building use, the nature of the planned community, site characteristics and the range of existing open spaces within an easy walk. Providing well located, appropriately scaled, open space within a building site can help the new development fit with the existing context. These considerations are particularly important in areas when there is a shortage of public park space.

The design should also create a micro-climate that supports pedestrian comfort, biodiversity, and meet or exceed public standards for universal accessibility, sunlight, sustainability and safety.



Official Plan Reference

2.3.2 Toronto's Green Space System and Waterfront: Policy 1b and 3b | 3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 13a, 14, 15, 19 and 20 | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1d, 3f, 5b, 5d and 6 | 3.2.3 Parks and Open Space: Policy 1a, 1c and 1d | 3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods: Policy 2a and 2d | 3.4 The Natural Environment: Policy 18a and 18f | 5.1.3 Site Plan Control: Policy 3b and 3e

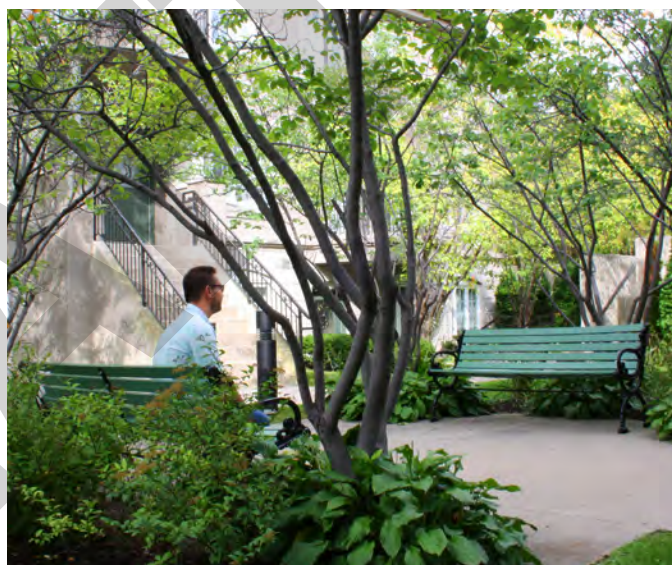


Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard | Toronto Green Roof By-law | Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines



A formal garden with good access to sunlight and sky view provides a place for pause.



A courtyard with seating areas, mature shade trees and planting.



A shared amenity space along the rail corridor.

2.3 BUILDING PLACEMENT

Locate the buildings to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open space, to fit harmoniously with the existing context, and to provide opportunities for high-quality landscaped open space on-site.

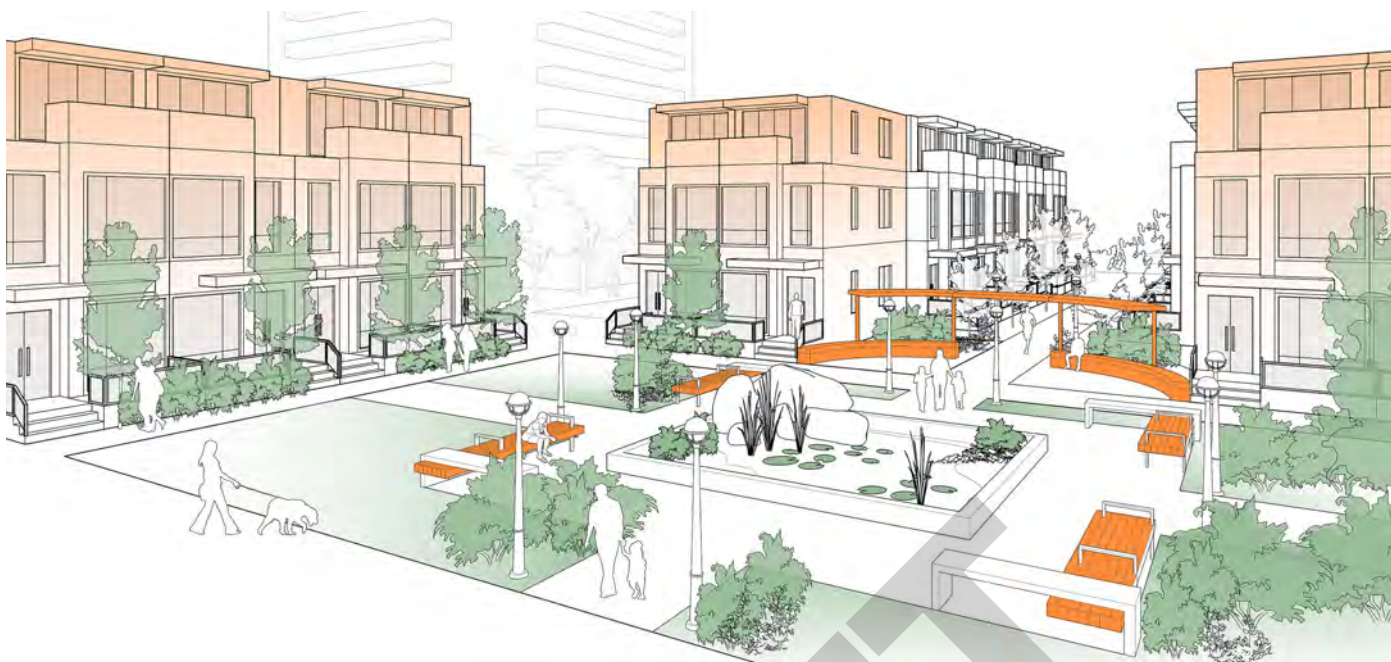
- a. In general, build parallel to the street and extend the building the length of the site along the edges of streets, parks, and open space with front doors on the primary facade facing these areas.
- b. Under certain circumstances, it may be appropriate to define the edge of a street with the ends of building blocks provided that these "fingers" contribute to forming a street wall of primary façades with front doors.
- c. On larger sites, consider a combination of "parallel" and "fingers" orientations to provide variation along the street and within the site, while ensuring visibility and accessibility to the interior building blocks from the street(s).
- d. On larger sites where a new pattern of public realm is created, organize buildings to provide definition and support existing and new edges of streets, parks, and open spaces.
- e. Locate unit entrances so that they are directly visible and accessible from the public sidewalk.
- f. Where the existing setback pattern is consistent and not planned to change, align new buildings with neighbouring building frontages to allow new development to fit within the context.
- g. When existing setbacks are well-established, but vary on either side of a proposed development, locate and design the building setback to resolve the differences.
- h. Provide upgraded side elevations with windows and details consistent with front elevations when the side elevation is facing or visible to a street, mews, pedestrian mews, park or open space.
- i. On blocks where a consistent setback pattern does not exist or is planned to change, locate the building at the required setback line (see also 2.1 Streets, Mews, Pedestrian mews and Walkways, 4.1 Streetscape).
- j. On corner sites, align the building to the setback pattern of neighbouring buildings on both streets.



Buildings placed parallel to street provide definition to street edge and help to reinforce the public realm. Credit: Tact Architecture Inc.

- k. Generally, provide breaks between buildings every 6-8 units.
- l. Provide greater building setbacks at strategic points or along the entire frontage, as appropriate, for architectural interest and to improve pedestrian amenity, including more space for tree planting, wider sidewalks, forecourts, plazas, and other publicly accessible open spaces.
- m. Maintain the character of existing soft landscaped streetscapes by providing generous setbacks for trees and plantings.
- n. On deep sites, setback buildings from side and rear yards of neighbouring properties to reduce the impact of shadow and overlook.
- o. On these deeper sites, organize buildings to define and support the new public realm in a manner that eliminates back-to-front facing relationships (such as front doors facing rear yards on the site or on neighbouring properties).
- p. Also on these deeper sites, where back to back units result in one side of the building facing an area that cannot be seen from a street, locate all entrances facing the street or use a through unit type instead.

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Buildings frame the public realm.

RATIONALE

Toronto's traditional urban pattern is of buildings aligned parallel to the street with a consistent setback from the front property line. Well-placed buildings can create a coherent streetscape and fit with existing neighbours. Where the setback pattern is not consistent or planned to change, the placement of buildings at the required setback line, parallel to the street, helps establish a pedestrian-oriented context for the future. Where the required setback line is at or very close to the property line, greater building setbacks at strategic points or along the entire frontage may be encouraged to expand the public realm and improve pedestrian comfort and amenity. On deeper sites where buildings deeper in the site are considered, they need to be setback appropriately from the neighbouring buildings to fit within existing and planned patterns avoiding overlook, shadows and inappropriate relationships to neighbouring properties. At the same time these buildings should be sited to provide appropriate definition for the new public realm layout in the site.



Placement of townhouse units reference the neighbourhood character.



Official Plan Reference

2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 1 and 2 | 3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 1d and 9 | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1, 2, 3, 5a, 5b and 5c | 3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods: Policy 3b | 4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods: Policy 2b, 2c and 3e | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas: Policy 2e | 5.1.3 Site Plan Control: Policy 3c



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Accessibility Design Guidelines

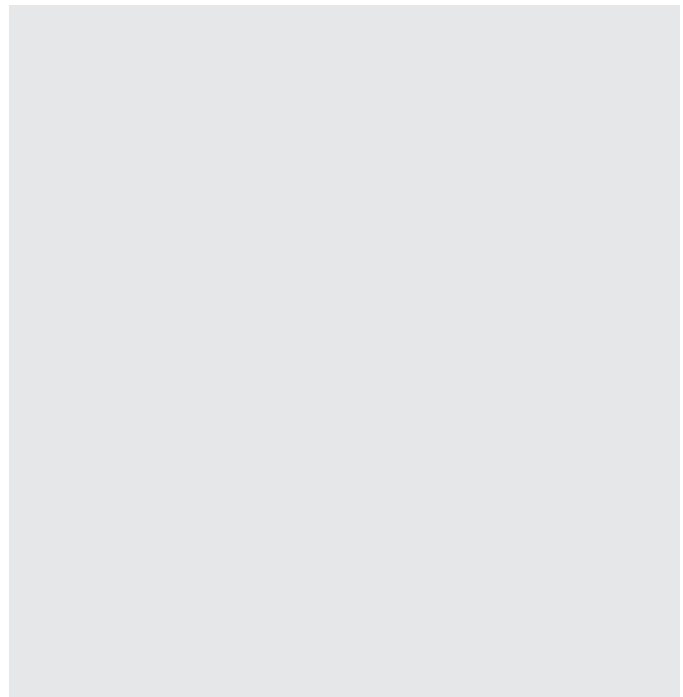
2.4 BUILDING ADDRESS

Locate and organize buildings to frame and support existing or new streets, mews, pedestrian mews, parks and open spaces. Ensure front entrances are clearly visible and directly accessible from these spaces.

- a. Provide appropriate setbacks from the streets to allow for transition from the public realm to private development.
- b. Provide soft landscaping, walkways and projecting elements such as porches and canopies within the setback area.
- c. Depending on the type of the street and the elements within the setback area, the minimum setback may need to be increased to allow for sufficient soil volume to support large growing shade trees, respect the existing context, enhance the public realm/streetscape or provide privacy to units. (See Section 2.1 Streets, Mews and Walkways for minimum building setbacks from streets)
- d. Buildings on public/private streets, mews and accessible open spaces with residential uses at grade should have:
 - a primary entrance to the unit(s) with a front door clearly visible and directly accessible from the sidewalk via a walkway
 - primary windows facing the street or walkway
 - a prominent entrance with a well-detailed front entry porch or stoop (see Section 3.4 Building Entrances and Front Yard)
 - front yard landscaping including high branching deciduous trees and foundation planting
- h. Where building entrances are located within a pedestrian mews or courtyard, maintain high visibility and direct, generous, universal access from the public sidewalk.
- i. On corner or double-fronting sites, locate building fronts and entrances facing both streets. Buildings on corner sites require additional attention to building's corner treatment.
- n. Where building entrances take their address from courtyards and pedestrian mews rather than streets, a way-finding system additional to the street address system needs to be provided.
- o. Where retail uses are part of the development, provide a separate entrance to each ground floor retail unit that is identifiable and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.



Good example of corner expression on building addressing both the public street and pedestrian walkway.



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RATIONALE

Streets, urban parks and accessible open spaces are like public living rooms. Appropriately located, sized and detailed buildings, and their ground floor uses, define the edges and help to determine the safety, use and quality of these spaces. Aspects that need to be considered include:

- Setbacks
- Height
- Transition
- Building relationship to grade
- Window and entrance details
- Façade elements and materials
- Landscaping

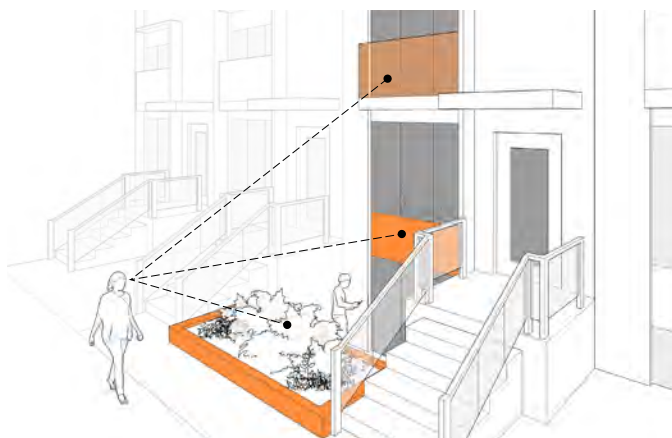
The space between the building facade and the public boulevard is an important part of the image and character of the public realm. The setback and related elements provide the connection between the public realm of the sidewalk and the private realm within the buildings. Well-designed entrances, facades and landscaping, create an arrival experience and identity for the building. Typically, the most vibrant and interesting streets are lined with active, street-related uses where access is gained by a series of entrances connected to the public sidewalk. Clear, visible entries and views from building interiors to the street provide security for building occupants and pedestrians. Well-designed landscaping, and moderate level changes can create an interesting and comfortable sidewalk and privacy within the residential unit. Further, in order to fully function as a front entrance, the interior of a residential unit at grade should have a foyer and a coat closet at the entrance.

Setbacks allow for projecting elements such as porches, canopies, and landings. These elements add visual interest to the front façade, enhance the prominence of the entrances, provide transition in scale from the sidewalk to the main wall of the building, and often help the new development fit better with the existing neighbourhood context.

A “back yard” condition between the building and the street shall be avoided. Below-grade and at-grade terraces and exterior basement stairwells often have a negative impact on the public realm by preventing adequate landscaping in setback areas as well as reducing privacy for the resident in the lower unit (particularly with the minimal setback areas associated with the more intense forms of low-rise development).



A series of street-related entrances promote interaction between the building interior and adjacent public realm.



Consider landscape and architectural treatments to the transitional space between the walkway, private outdoor amenity space, and building interior to provide privacy between residences and adjacent public realm.



Official Plan Reference

- 3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 1d, 1e, 6, 12, 13, 14, 16 and 17 |
- 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1a, 1b, 1c, 4 and 5c | 4.1 Neighbourhoods: Policy 5e and 9c |
- 4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods: Policy 2g and 3f



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

- Accessibility Design Guidelines |
- Toronto Green Standard

2.5 SITE SERVICING, ACCESS, AND PARKING

Locate “back of house” activities, such as loading, servicing, utilities, and vehicle parking, underground, internally or in the rear, away from the public realm and public view.

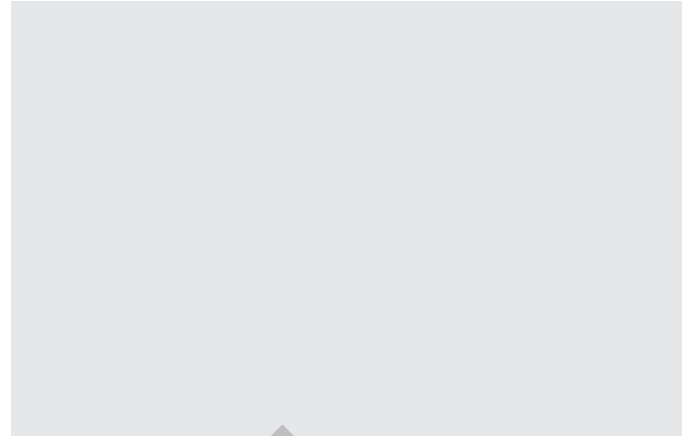


Public realm can be vastly improved when underground garage ramps and garbage storage areas are internalized into the building. Credit: Audax Architecture. Photo: Joy von Tiedemann.

- a. Incorporate parking garage ramps and access stairs, garbage collection areas and loading areas into the building.
- b. Provide access to site servicing and parking at the rear of the building or site, from a lane or from a shared driveway, if possible.
- c. Minimize the extent of site area dedicated to servicing and vehicular access through the use of shared infrastructure and efficient layouts.
- d. Minimize surface parking and drop off areas:
 - provide sufficient and convenient visitor parking underground and/or dispersed on site on streets via parallel parking
 - with the exception of front integral garage driveways, avoid locating parking between the building and public sidewalk or street (front yard areas)
- e. Provide pedestrian and cyclist access to and from parking access/areas that is clearly visible, well-lit, convenient, and easily accessible from the street.
- f. Where long-term bicycle parking is located above grade, provide a visible and weather-protected parking areas.
- g. Locate short-term and long-term bicycle parking with direct access from the public street and near entrances to buildings and other pedestrian infrastructure. Design bicycle parking in accordance with the Toronto Green Standard and Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities.
- h. Recess, screen, and minimize the size of garage doors and service openings visible from public streets and public or private open space. Use high-quality doors and finishes.
- i. Encroachment of below-grade parking structures beyond the front face of the building and/or into the front yard setback is not permitted.
- j. Where below-grade parking structures encroach beyond the footprint of the building elsewhere on the site, provide high quality un-compacted soil for a minimum 1.5 metre depth below grade to support opportunities for tree planting and other soft landscaping.
- k. For surface parking lots refer to Design Guidelines for 'Greening' Surface Parking Lots.
- l. For laneways providing access to parking, provide landscaping and lighting.
- m. Offset access from the street rather than centred on the property in order to consolidate space for landscaping, where applicable.

2.5.1 SITE SERVICING, ACCESS AND PARKING FOR SMALLER STREET-RELATED TOWNHOUSE SITES

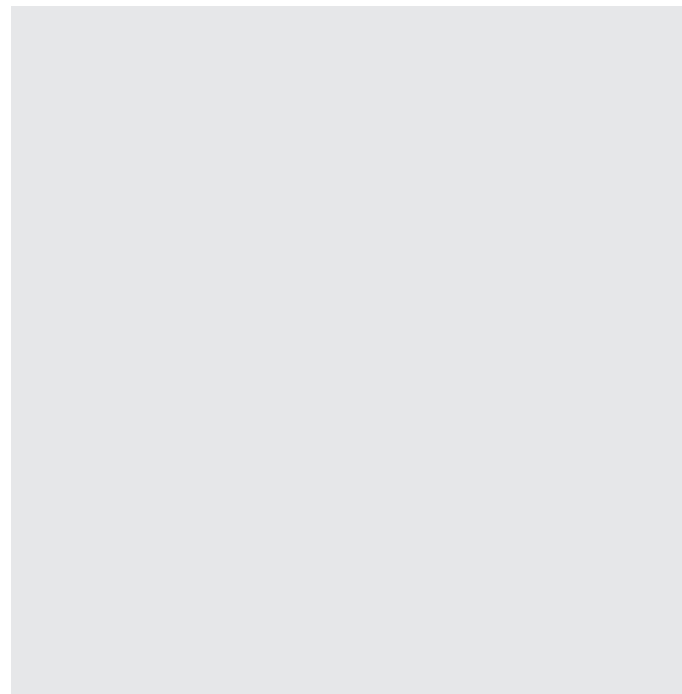
- a. Eliminate front driveways and garages in street-related townhouses generally and consider only when a unit is 6.0m or wider.
- b. In these cases:
 - the driveway width (including a walkway leading to the front door) is to be a maximum width of 3.0m for access to a single car garage in the front wall of the unit.
 - Ensure a minimum soil volume of 30m³ to support mature tree growth in the soft landscaped portion of the front yard. (Depending on the type of the street and the setback elements within the setback area, the minimum setback may need to be increased to allow for sufficient soil volume to support street trees.)
 - Locate the garage door face a minimum of 6.0m from the inside edge of the sidewalk on a vehicular mews and from the property line on a public street
 - Recess the garage door face from the front wall plane
- c. Provide a minimum of 6.0m between individual driveways to accommodate on-street parking.
- d. Ensure that 50% of the lot frontage along the street comprises landscaping.
- e. Construct driveways with permeable paving and/or high albedo surface materials.
- f. Where possible, provide for garbage and recycling bin storage in the parking garage or in surface garages.
- g. Garbage pick-up on public streets will be provided in accordance to "The City of Toronto Requirements for Garbage, Recycling and Organics Collection Services for New Developments and Redevelopments" (Revised 05/2012).
- h. Where garbage pickup occurs on streets for individual units, provide garbage bin storage screening that hides the bins from view from the sidewalk.
- i. Public garbage pick-up for individual units from a lane is preferred when possible.



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Well designed garbage screening at the front of a unit facing the street.



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RATIONALE

Multi-unit, low-rise, buildings accommodate two types of activities at grade:

“Front of house” activities, such as front entrances, primary rooms and landscaping, and “back of house” activities, such as parking, loading, and servicing.

“Back of house” activities include, but are not limited to:

- vehicle access, parking, parking ramps and access stairs
- drop-off areas
- garbage storage and collection
- vents, utility meters, transformers, and other site utilities and servicing infrastructure

“Back of house” activities are essential to the efficient functioning of new development. When these activities are concealed within and behind buildings, it promotes a safer, more comfortable and attractive public realm and pedestrian environment.

Using the building or high-quality architectural elements and landscape design to screen vehicular access and site servicing, can help to mitigate noise, air quality concerns, and unattractive views within the building site and on adjacent streets, public or private open spaces, and neighbouring properties.

Parking for low-rise, multi-unit buildings should not dominate the streetscape, but instead be located in underground shared garages or to the rear of buildings. Each curb-cut and driveway for service, parking and pedestrian drop-off creates a potential conflict with pedestrians. Multiple curb-cuts and driveways jeopardize landscaping opportunities and safety and comfort for pedestrians and reduce space for curbside parking. Buildings with front integral garages, which occupy the majority of the ground floor create an undesirable condition.



Incorporate garage entrance into building.



Avoid laneways like above without accommodation for utilities, landscaping and quality design, especially when amenity spaces overlook the area.



Avoid freestanding underground garage ramps and access stairs.



Official Plan Reference

2.2 Structuring Growth in the City: Policy 3c | 2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 2d | 2.4 Bringing the City Together: Policy 2c, 7b and 8b
3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 1d, 1e, 2 and 6b | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1d, 2, and 5 | 3.4 The Natural Environment: Policy 18a, 18f and 20 |
4.1 Neighbourhoods: Policy 9d | 4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods: Policy 2d, 2e, 3d, 3g, and 3i | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas: Policy 2i and 2j | 5.1.3
Site Plan Control: Policy 3a, 3b and 3h



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard | Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities | Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines |
Design Guidelines for 'Greening' Surface Parking Lots



3.0 Building Design

- 3.1 Fit and Transition in Scale
- 3.2 Separation Distances, Stepbacks and Orientation
- 3.3 Building Relationship to Grade and Street
- 3.4 Building Entrance and Front Yard
- 3.5 Private Outdoor Amenity Space

3.1 FIT AND TRANSITION IN SCALE

Ensure buildings fit within the existing or planned context and provide appropriate downward transitions in scale to lower-scaled buildings, parks, and open space.



Figure 1: Transition downward in height and scale to lower-scale area.

- a. For new buildings where the adjacent context is lower in scale and not anticipated to change, provide a transition in the building height down to the lower-scale neighbours. Match at least the first building, unit or bay immediately adjacent to the lower-scaled context to the scale and height of neighbouring buildings.
- b. At the site scale, promote fit and transition in scale by:
 - accommodating all aspects of fit and transition within the development site
 - including buildings that relate directly to the height and typology of the existing or planned streetwall context
 - ensuring that new buildings respect the planned and existing building wall height for parks and open spaces
- c. For sites including or adjacent to heritage properties, design the scale and height of the building to respect and reinforce the height established by the historic context.



 Avoid abrupt transitions in scale.

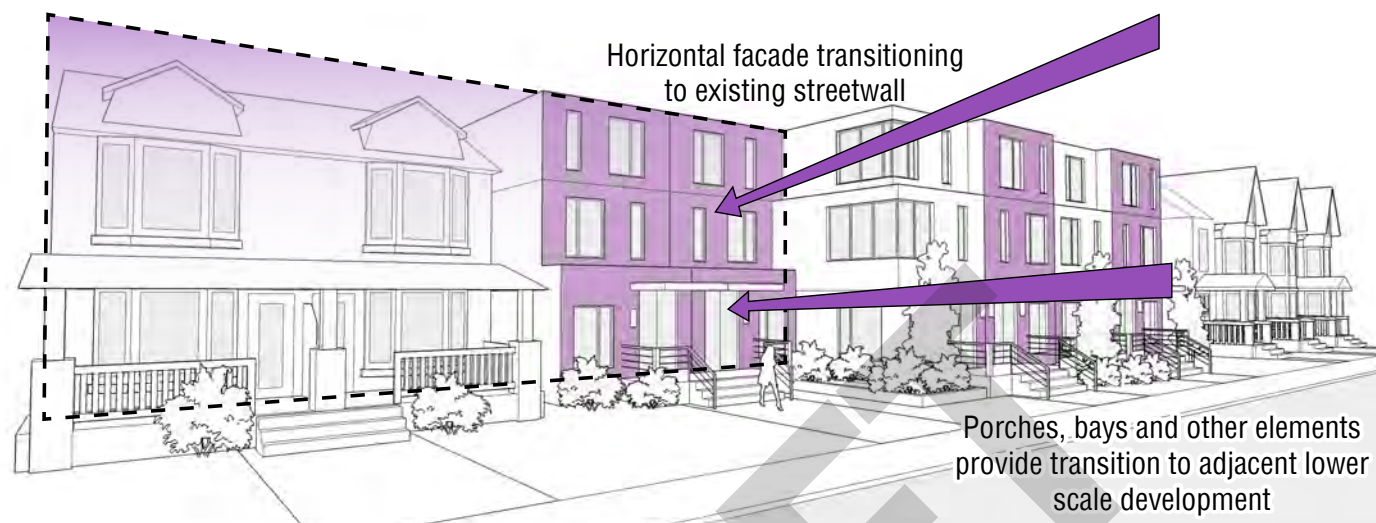


Figure 2: Step building massing or add porches, bays and other elements to provide transition to adjacent lower scale development.

RATIONALE

Appropriate fit and transition is achieved when new buildings are integrated with the height, scale and character of neighbouring buildings and reinforce the city structure. Considerations of fit and transition should also take into account the impact of a development on adjacent parks, open spaces and streets in terms of maintaining a consistent base building wall height and access to sunlight and sky view.

On sites that are adjacent to or across the street from lower buildings, the massing of new low-rise buildings should step down or include lower scaled building elements that respond to the building height and mass of the neighbouring buildings. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate typical scenarios of building fit and transition. The actual design approach and methods used to achieve appropriate fit and transition will be determined on a site-by-site basis and may vary according to the:

- planned intensity of use and scale of development
- proximity and scale of adjacent built form
- location or size of adjacent streets, parks and open space
- potential impact on privacy, daylight, sky view, sunlight/shadow for the public realm and neighbouring properties
- potential impact on heritage properties and/or Heritage Conservation Districts
- potential impact on identified important views from the public realm
- environmental sensitivity of adjacent natural features (woodlots, ravines.)

- regulatory framework (e.g. Secondary Plans)
- existing and planned context
- size of the development site

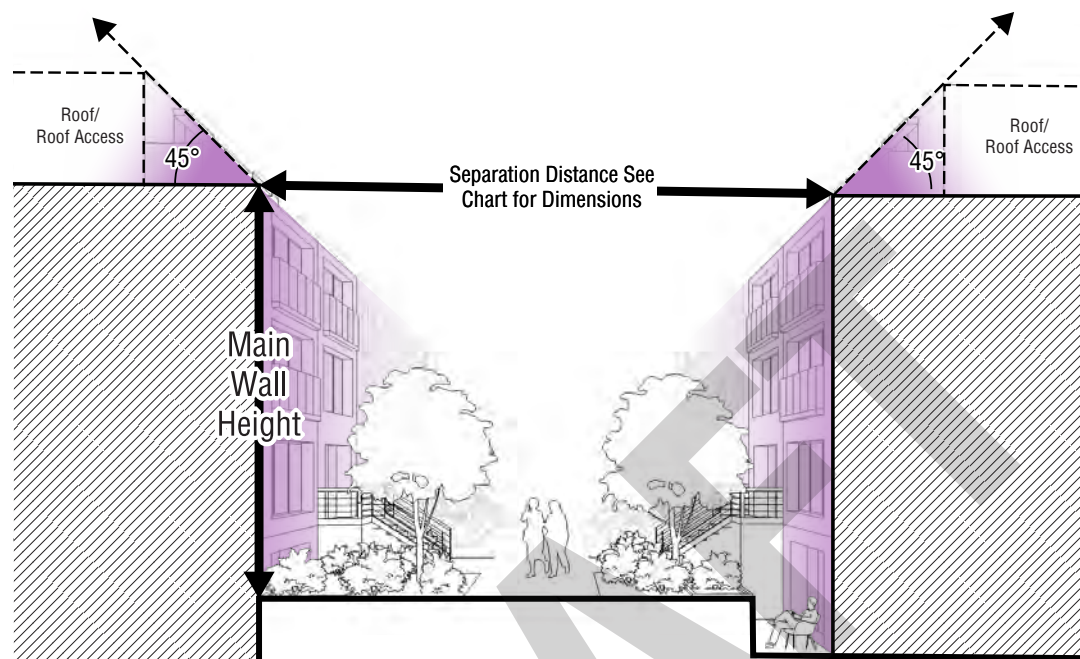


Official Plan Reference

2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 1, 2a, 2b, 2c 3, and 8a | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1, 3 and 4 | 3.1.5 Heritage Resources: Policy 2 and 5 | 3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods: Policy 3b | 4.1 Neighbourhoods: Policy 5 and 9 | 4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods: Policy 2a, 2b and 3d | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas: Policy 2c and 2d

3.2 SEPARATION DISTANCES AND SETBACKS

Locate and design buildings to ensure sunlight and sky views and reduce overlook conditions between buildings and neighbouring properties

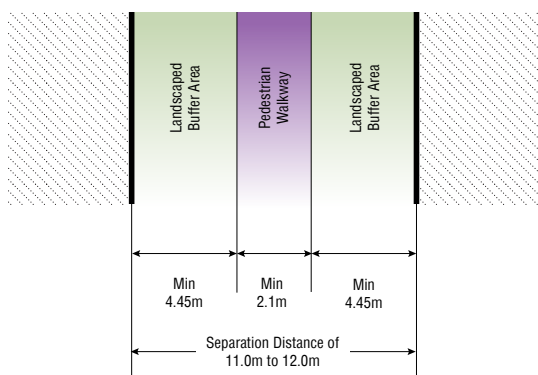


- For front to front and back to back building blocks, generally provide a separation distance of 15.0m or in accordance with the chart on this page.
- In order to ensure sunlight into lower units, additional separation distance is required for below-grade entrances and/or private outdoor amenity spaces.
- Setbacks and setbacks between buildings assist in achieving the above objectives and in creating desirable public/private amenity spaces on the development site and appropriate relationships to adjacent properties:
 - For front to front and back to back building blocks, fit buildings within a 45 degree angular plane originated from the top of the main wall of the building. (The main wall height is measured from the average grade of the building frontage at the walkway abutting unit entrances to the top of the main wall)
 - Provide a minimum 7.5m rear yard setback from the property line
 - Provide a 45 degree angular plane measured both from the rear property line of an adjacent residence and/or lands designated Neighbourhoods and/or Parks and Open Space Area

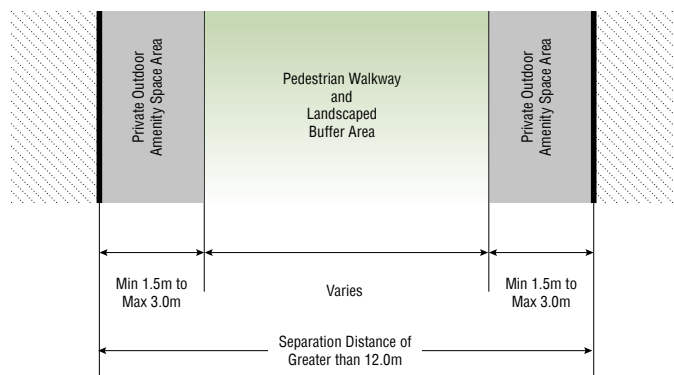
Main Wall Height	Approx. no. of Storeys	Required Minimum Separation Distance
9.0m or less	2.5	11.0m*
9.0-10.5m	3-3.5	13.0m*
12.0m	3.5-4.0	15.0m*
*Additional separation distance is required when below-grade entrances and/or below-grade private outdoor amenity spaces are provided adjacent to units.		
On one (1) side of the pedestrian mews		1.0m
On both sides of the pedestrian mews		2.0m

Separation Distances between Front to Front and Back to Back Buildings

Continued on next page...



Separation Distance between 11.0 - 12.0m in a Pedestrian Mews

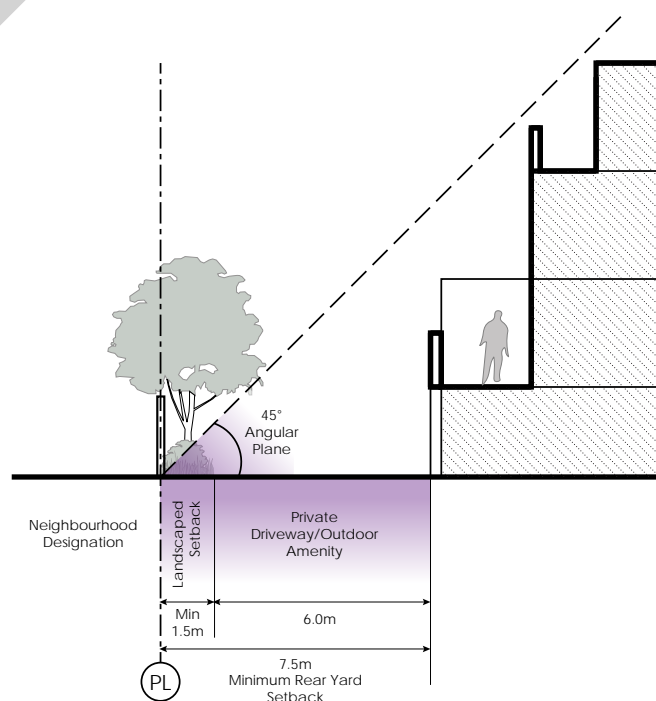


Separation Distance Greater than 12.0m in a Pedestrian Mews

- Where a public laneway abuts a site, the laneway may be included for the purposes of establishing the setback and angular plane
 - Provide a minimum of 7.5m between the faces of a building containing primary living spaces such as living and dining and the side of another building or side property line
 - When integrating new single unit townhouses into an existing context, use the same side yard setbacks as the neighbouring properties
- Locate and orient windows, decks and balconies to limit overlook into nearby windows and amenity spaces of adjacent properties while enabling "eyes on the street" for common public areas.
 - Ensure visual privacy between residential units including balconies, porches, terraces and private amenity spaces. This can be accomplished through the design of units (such as off-setting the location of windows in facing walls) and by the use of landscaping or screening devices.
 - Avoid building element projections, such as balconies, into setback areas, streets, mews, and amenity areas to protect access to light and sky view.



Sufficient separation distance allows for attractive landscaping between buildings, good access to sunlight and sky views. Avoid more than 3-5 steps up or 8-9 steps down to the units to further improve the shared spaces between buildings.



Appropriate spaces and landscaping between buildings provides adequate light, view and privacy conditions.

3.2 SEPARATION DISTANCES, SETBACKS AND ORIENTATION CONT.

RATIONALE

The former City of Toronto and the CMHC guidelines for Light, View and Privacy prescribe a minimum 15m facing distance or separation. Experience and analysis of employing the 15.0m separation standard through the City's Infill Townhouse Guidelines (2003) confirm the appropriateness of upholding the application of this performance measure. However, the formula to determine the recommended separation distance is tied to the building height which will typically generate separation distances from 11.0 to 15.0m. These Guidelines establish minimum separation distances between buildings to ensure that three critical aspects of design are adequately addressed - sunlight inside a dwelling and to open spaces, reasonable view from a unit, and privacy.

When the appropriate separation distance is combined with good building orientation and effective angular planes, buildings that face east, west, and south, five hours of direct sunlight during the solstices can be achieved within the units. The minimum separation distances contained in the chart on page 40, were created by multiplying 1.25 times the main wall height. The main wall height plus the remainder of the building height under the 45° angular plane generally achieves a 1:1 ratio of building height to separation distance. This ratio is the same as that used for mid-rise buildings to achieve five hours of sunlight on south facing sidewalks on the opposite side of the street. Direct sunlight, can penetrate into the lowest units and trees and vegetation have the opportunity to thrive, improving the usability and enjoyment of outdoors.

Angular planes are a commonly applied measure to achieve acceptable transitions in scale between taller and lower buildings or areas. By applying an angular plane, adverse shadowing effects and the intrusion of overlook from a building can be limited. In the absence of other applicable in-force planning regulations, a 45 degree angular plane, measured from the relevant property line(s) at grade, is typically used to achieve a transition in scale between taller and lower buildings or areas (such as stable residential Neighbourhoods).



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Limit projections into the open space to ensure that natural light is not restricted to areas below. Narrow facing distances between buildings and stacked private amenity spaces create poor light, view + privacy conditions as in the example above.



Official Plan Reference

3.1.1 Public Realm: Policies 1d, 1e and 2 | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 3d, 3e, 3f, and 4 | 3.2.3 Parks and Open Space: Policy 3 | 4.1 Neighbourhoods: Policy 5e, 5f and 9b | 4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods: Policy 2a, 2b, 3d and 3e | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas: Policy 2d and 2e

3.3 BUILDING RELATIONSHIP TO GRADE AND STREET

Developments should relate directly to the existing or ‘natural’ grade and blend in with the context of the neighbourhood.

- a. Maintain the existing natural grade at property lines.
- b. Avoid artificially raised or lowered grades and drainage swales, or low-lying areas where water collects. (These may have an adverse affect on adjacent properties, open spaces or use of amenity areas, and may require retaining walls.)
- c. To avoid a long barrier-like flight of stairs up to the porch or stoop, raise the front entrance to the first floor no more than approximately 3 to 5 steps above the grade of the sidewalk directly at the front of the entrance. (See also Section 2.2 Building Relationship to the Public Realm and Section 3.4 Building Entrance, Front Yard and Private Outdoor Amenity Space).
- d. If there is a significant grade difference across a site, step buildings or segments of buildings in order to maintain the appropriate relationship to grade.
- e. Avoid significant changes in grade (greater than 4% slope) between the public sidewalk and pedestrian access and circulation routes. Ensure that routes across grade changes are universally accessible.
- f. Limit the maximum grades on landscaped areas to 33% (3:1) or less to ensure that grassed slopes can be maintained.
- g. Limit the use of retaining walls, particularly along street frontages, parks, ravines and other areas of the public realm.
- h. Where retaining walls cannot be avoided, provide them in the form of low terraces with the total height not to exceed 1.0 metre. Incorporate intensive soft landscaping in these low terraces and construct with durable and attractive materials.
- i. When appropriate, use the existing site topography to enhance the screening of service areas.
- j. Provide a site grading plan compatible with the stormwater management approach selected for the site (see also 4.2.1 Stormwater Management).



Good Example of Building relationship to Grade.



 Grade alterations create negative impact on adjacent properties.

RATIONALE

Raising development above the level of natural grade or the grade of abutting properties creates problematic conditions for adjacent properties, abutting streets and open spaces. These problems relate to issues of drainage, pedestrian access, and the quality of the public realm. Where it is necessary to resolve grade differences, stepped terraces are the preferred solution. To the extent possible, new developments should establish a conventional relationship to grade with a moderate grade change to differentiate the public and private realms. Any additional steps required to gain access to the first floor level should be within the unit.



Official Plan Reference

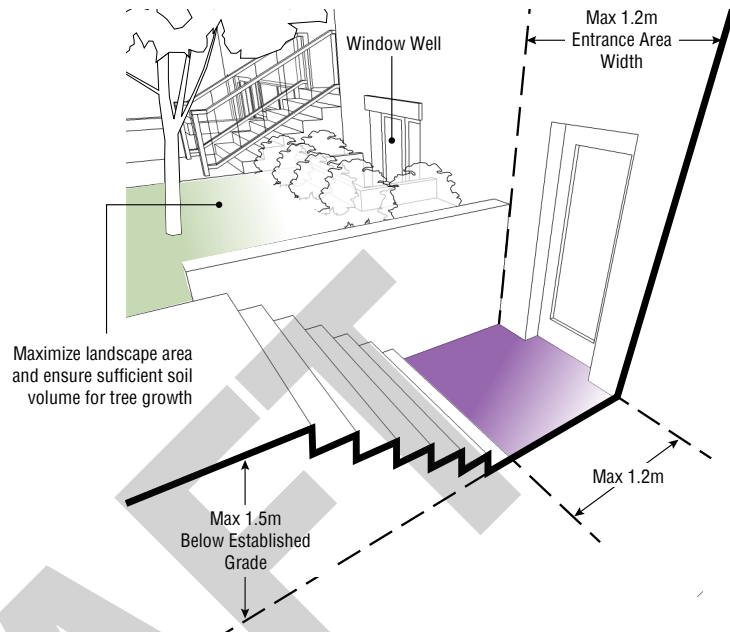
2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods: Policy 1 | 3.1.1 The Public Realm: Policy 13 | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1c

3.4 BUILDING ENTRANCE AND FRONT YARD

Ensure well-designed front entrances and front yards.



Limit the number of below-grade entrances to reduce impact to the public realm.



- a. Provide a transition from the public realm to private space with visual cues such as a change in materials, grade, landscaping, and architectural elements.
- b. Design building entrances and private outdoor amenity spaces to:
 - be integrated with the building massing/design, landscape features, and surrounding neighbourhood characteristics
 - maximize usability and comfort by enhancing quality of space with attention to building detail
- c. Allow encroachment of stoop or porch into minimum front yard setback to a maximum of 1.8m from main building face and up to a maximum of 50% of the front yard setback area.
- d. Finish canopy soffits and floors with durable and attractive materials to avoid exposing building structure (eg. unfinished concrete floor slabs).
- e. Provide prominent, well-designed and integrated building entrances such as porches, porticos or canopies along the building frontage.
- f. Avoid multiple entrances to units completely recessed into the building and consider only in areas where minimal setbacks are appropriate and only when a very high level of architectural and landscape detail is applied.
- g. Maintain high visibility and direct, generous, universal access from the public sidewalk to entrances located within a pedestrian mews or courtyard.
- h. On corner or double-fronting sites, locate building fronts and entrances facing both streets. Buildings on corner sites require additional attention to detail in order to enhance the corner.
- i. Where building entrances take their address from courtyards and pedestrian mews rather than streets, provide a way-finding system additional to the street address system.
- j. Where retail uses are part of the development, provide a separate entrance to each ground floor retail unit that is identifiable and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.

Porch - a raised platform projected from the building face at the level of the entrance that may be open or covered

- a. Design porches to:
 - be a maximum height above grade of 0.9m
 - allow encroachment of stoop or porch into front setback to a maximum of 1.8m from main building face and up to a maximum of 50% of the minimum front yard setback
 - be open or covered with opaque or translucent railings with hedges and foundation planting

Stoop - a small landing and/or steps in front of and at the level of the building entrance

a. Design stoops to:

- be a maximum height above grade of 0.9m
- have railings, where required and foundation planting
- have an awning or other weather protecting feature over the entrance

Below-grade Entrance - an entrance to a below-grade unit with stairs

a. Design below-grade entrance to:

- have a maximum horizontal width and depth of 1.2m including the stair access and landing area.
- have a maximum vertical depth of 1.5m from the grade of the adjacent sidewalk.

b. Below-grade entrances are permitted along public and private streets provided that the soft landscaped area within the required building setback area has adequate soil volume to support mature public and private street trees and other plantings.

RATIONALE

The design of a building's front entrance and front yard is important due to its function and as a point of focus, transition, and entry for each visitor. The design, location, materiality, and scale of the entrance is also important in establishing the character for the building.

Well-designed entrances and front yards maintain a level of formality and provide transition between the public and private realm.

Limiting the size, location and encroachment of entrances and stairs and terraces will help to ensure that sufficient soil volume is available to support trees growth and other planting within the front yard setback.

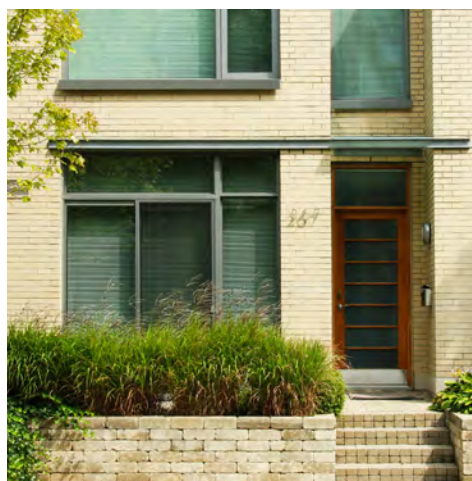
Limiting the number of stairs and the height of the porch or stoop is important to ensure that the front yard area is not overwhelmed by these elements and there is sufficient space for landscaping.



Well-designed building entrance with raised porch, landscaped area, and canopy.



Avoid excessive protruding architectural elements such as balconies, roof lines, canopies, stairs, and below-grade terraces create an unpleasant pedestrian environment between buildings and over shadow amenity spaces below.



Carefully composed and detailed facade, entrance, and fenestration design combined with high quality materials create a positive impression on the public realm.



Official Plan Reference

3.1.1 Public Realm: Policies 1d and 1e | 3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1b, 3a, 3b, 5b, 5c and 6 |



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies

Toronto Green Standard |

Continued on next page...

3.5 PRIVATE OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

Maximize and enhance the usability, comfort and appearance of front entrances and private outdoor amenity spaces.

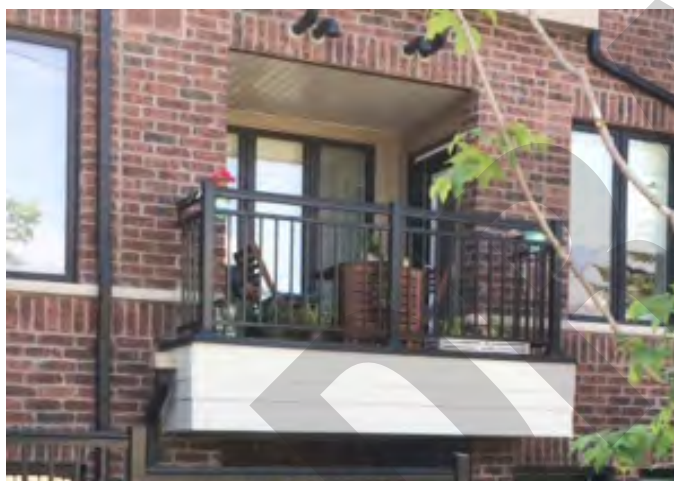
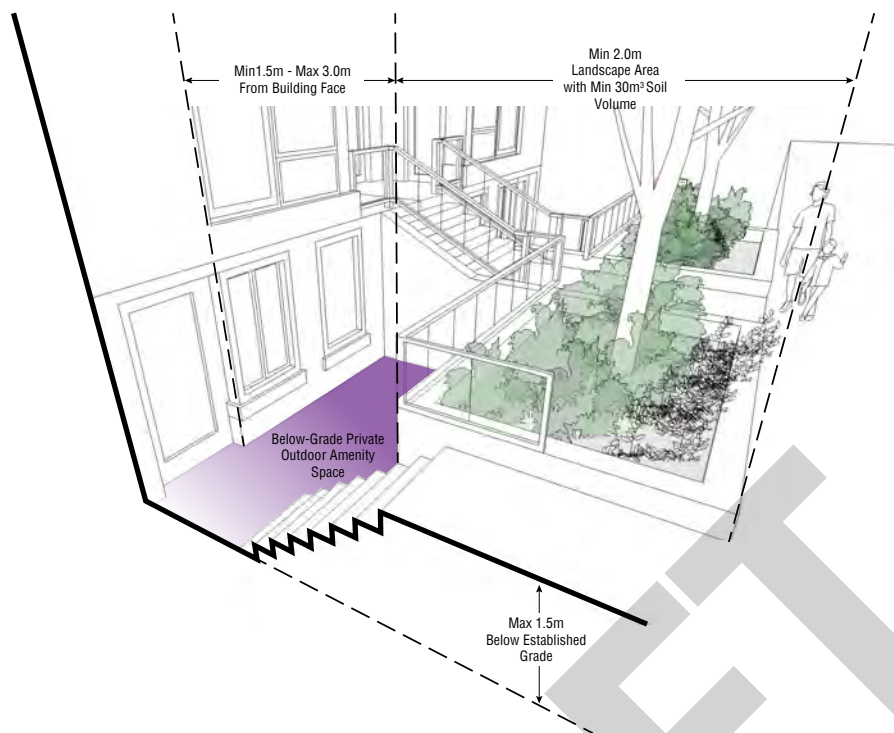


- a. Design private outdoor amenity spaces to:
 - provide an entrance to only one unit
 - have access to sunlight
 - provide functional outdoor space with greater than 1.5m in horizontal depth
 - design family-sized units to have views and access onto outdoor play area where possible
 - mitigate impacts on the public realm and neighbours - increased separation distances between buildings may be required to reduce impacts
- b. No private outdoor amenity space for dwelling units may be located below-grade or at-grade in the setback area adjacent to a public or private street.
- c. Private outdoor amenity space may be provided on an existing or new residential public street (as shown on the Official Plan Land Use maps and as defined by DIPS) or a private street, when raised above-grade as part of the porch.

Private outdoor amenity spaces in low-rise, multi-unit buildings typically take the following forms:

Balcony - an outdoor elevated platform projected from or integrated into a building which extends the interior living space and is enclosed by a parapet or railing (French/Juliette balcony while a useful attribute does not constitute private outdoor amenity space)

- a. Inset or partially inset to offer greater privacy and shelter from wind, reduce the building bulk and minimize the impact of shadow on other amenity spaces below.
- b. Project no more than 0.75m beyond the face of the building (eg. in the form of a French or Juliette balcony) when there is private outdoor amenity space below and/or within a pedestrian mews and walkway.
- c. Provide railings that are solid or translucent glass to increase privacy and reduce bird strikes.



Inset balcony reduces impact of the overhang for terrace below.



Landscaping at the level of the terrace and the sidewalk provide privacy for occupants of the outdoor amenity area.

Terrace - an outdoor area adjacent to a unit located above-grade, at-grade, below-grade, or on a portion of the roof area on a building

Above-Grade Terrace

- May be located adjacent to a public/private street or mews.
- Raise terrace a minimum of 0.6m and a maximum of 0.9m above grade.
- Provide transitional landscape area with planting and landscape features.

At-Grade and Below-Grade Terrace

- May be located internal to development site in pedestrian mews and not along public/private street, mews, and lane frontage.
- Limit the vertical depth of the below-grade terrace to a maximum of 1.5m from grade.
- Provide a minimum horizontal depth of 1.5m and a maximum of 3.0m from the main building face to the below-grade terrace wall.
- Provide railings and hedging at the level of the walkway in order to provide visual privacy between pedestrians and occupants on the terrace.

Roof Top Terrace

- Setback roof top terrace a minimum of 1.0m from the building face.
- Provide railings or walls that are translucent or solid to reduce overlook onto neighbouring properties.
- Program a shared terrace to accommodate outdoor activities such as seating and barbequing in a well-landscaped environment.

RATIONALE

For townhouses and low-rise, multi-unit residential developments, private outdoor amenity space is required in the Zoning By-law and/or desired as part of the development.

Balconies and terraces can provide an important extension to the livable space of a dwelling unit. Under limited circumstances, terraces can act as an entrance into a unit as well. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the privacy of the occupants as well as those in nearby properties is maintained and public/private open space is not compromised.

The placement and design of balconies and terraces can have a major impact on the real and perceived bulk of a building and, if poorly located and designed, may overly clutter the face of the building and add to the impact of shadowing, reduced privacy and loss of sky view.

Private outdoor amenity space, such as balconies, gardens and roof terraces, should have access to sunlight, be comfortable and designed to afford a level of privacy. The needs of families with children and pet owners must also be considered.

Energy efficiency considerations should factor into the design of balconies in terms of their location and the materials used in their construction. Furthermore, transparent glass balconies are generally discouraged, since they can pose a collision risk for migratory birds and do little to hide the household items often stored on them.

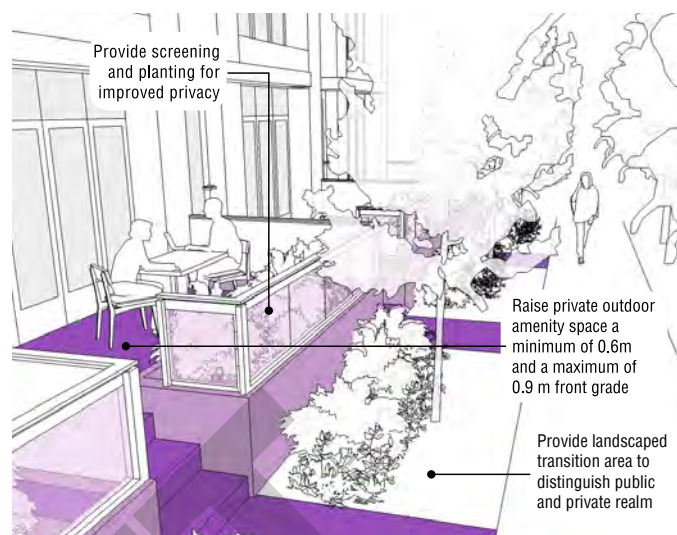


Diagram showing appropriate relationship between private outdoor amenity space and the public realm.

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Official Plan Reference

3.1.2 Built Form: Policy 1b, 3a, 3b, 5b, 5c and 6 | 3.4 The Natural Environment: Policy 18f | 3.2.3 Parks and Open Space: Policy 1d
3.3 Building New Neighbourhoods: Policy 2e | 5.1.3 Site Plan Control: Policy 3



Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies

Toronto Green Standard | Toronto Green Roof By-law