



Mid-Rise Performance Standards

PG 10.9 Planning & Growth Management Committee

Harold Madi
Director, Urban Design
February 24, 2016



High-Rise

- Taller than the width of the ROW
- Greater than 5-storeys



Mid-Rise

- No taller than the width of the ROW
- 5 to 11-storeys



Low-Rise

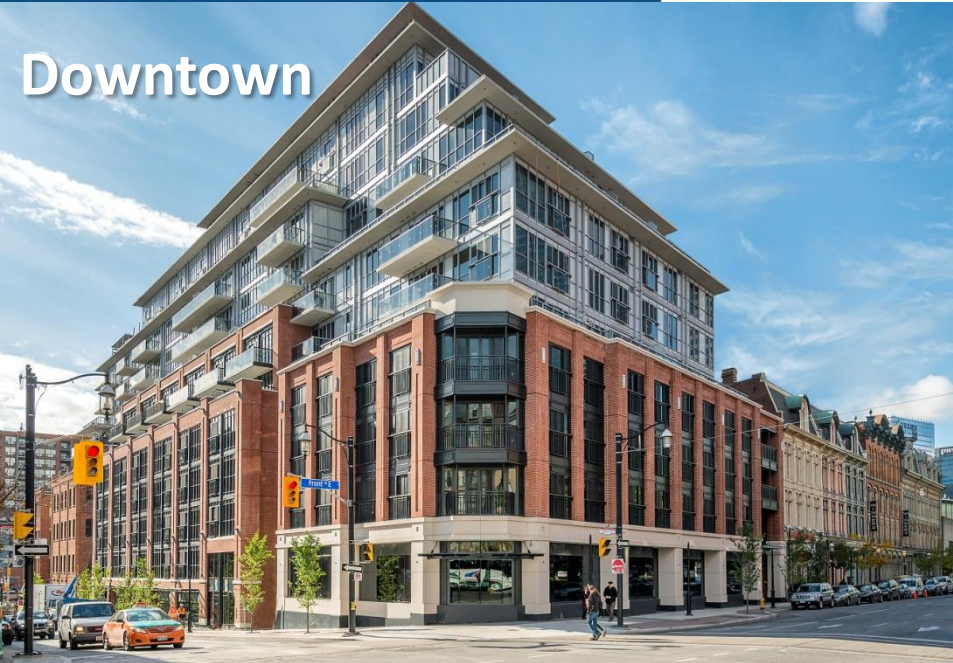
- 4-storeys or less



Toronto's History of Mid-Rise



Downtown



North York



Etobicoke



Scarborough



Enduring Mid-Rise Cities



Paris



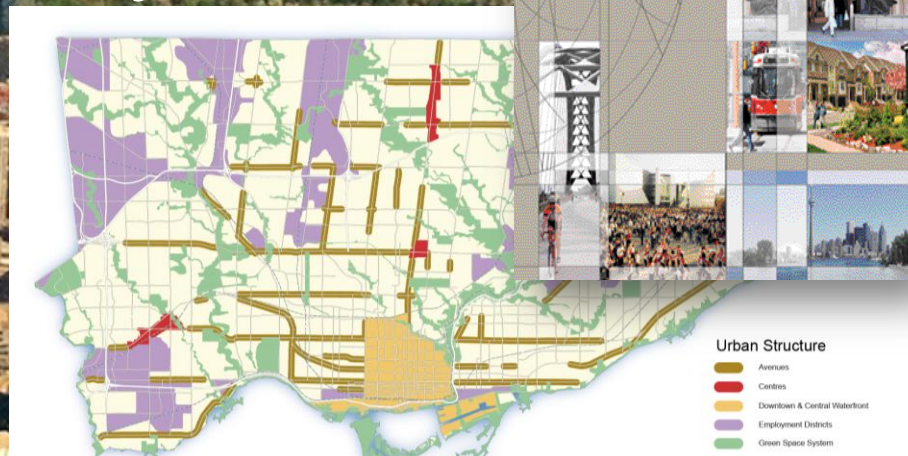
Boston

Multi-Centric, but mostly low-rise

Mid-Rise Provides A Means for Growing while Enhancing Our Main Streets & Complementing Neighbourhoods

- Accommodating growth with 'gentler' density
- Supporting local retail & amenities, walkability & transit
- Creating complete, life-long communities
- Opportunities for public benefits & public realm improvements

Opportunity of the Avenues





How to Make Mid-rise Happen?

2005

- Public Symposium
Mid-Rise Buildings: Urbanizing the *Avenues*

2007

- Council Direction
“Seek viable solutions **to promote the development of mid-rise buildings on the *Avenues***”
- Interdivisional team established

2010

- Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study Completed and Council Adopted



“Expedite and encourage the development of **more and better designed mid-rise buildings** on the Avenues”

36 Performance Standards

- 1. Maximum Allowable Height**
The maximum allowable height of buildings on the Avenues will be no taller than the width of the Avenue right-of-way, up to a maximum mid-rise height of 11 storeys (36 metres).
- 2. Minimum Building Height**
All new buildings on the Avenues must achieve a minimum height of 10.5 metres (up to 3 storeys) at the street frontage.
- 3. Minimum Ground Floor Height**
The minimum floor to floor height of the ground floor should be 4.5 metres to facilitate retail uses at grade.
- 4A. Front Façade: Angular Plane**
The building envelope should allow for a minimum of 5-hours of sunlight onto the Avenue sidewalks from March 21st - September 21st.
- 4B. Front Façade: Pedestrian Perception Step-back**
“Pedestrian Perception” step-backs may be required to mitigate the perception of height and create comfortable pedestrian conditions.
- 4C. Front Façade: Alignment**
The front street wall of mid-rise buildings should be built to the front property lines or applicable setback lines.
- 5A. Rear Transition to Neighbourhoods: Deep**
The transition between a deep Avenue property and areas designated Neighbourhoods, Parks and Open Space Areas, and Natural Areas to the rear should be created through setback and angular plane provisions.
- 5B. Rear Transition to Neighbourhoods: Shallow**
The transition between a shallow Avenue property and areas designated Neighbourhoods, Parks and Open Space Areas, and Natural Areas to the rear should be
- 5D. Rear Transition to Apartment Neighbourhoods**
The transition between an Avenue property and areas designated Apartment Neighbourhoods to the rear should be created through setbacks and other provisions.
- 6. Corner Sites: Heights & Angular Planes**
On corner sites, the front angular plane and heights that apply to the Avenue frontage will also apply to the secondary street frontage.
- 7A. Minimum Sidewalk Zones**
Mid-rise buildings may be required to be set back at grade to provide a minimum sidewalk zone.
- 7B. Streetscapes**
Avenue streetscapes should provide the highest level of urban design treatment to create beautiful pedestrian environments and great places to shop, work and live.
- 8A. Side Property Line: Continuous Street Walls**
Mid-rise buildings should be built to the side property lines.
- 8B. Side Property Line: Limiting Blank Side Walls**
Blank sidewalks should be designed as an architecturally finished surface and large expanses of blank sidewalks should be avoided.
- 8C. Side Property Line: Step-backs at Upper Storeys**
There should be breaks at upper storeys between new and existing mid-rise buildings that provide sky-views and increased sunlight access to the sidewalk. This can be achieved through side step-backs at the upper storeys.
- 8D. Side Property Line: Existing Side Windows**
Existing buildings with side wall windows should not be negatively impacted by
- 9. Building Width: Maximum Width**
Where mid-rise building frontages are more than 60 metres in width, building façades should be articulated or “broken up” to ensure that façades are not overly long.
- 10. At-Grade Uses: Residential**
Where retail at grade is not required, and residential uses are permitted, the design of ground floors should provide adequate public/private transition, through setbacks and other methods, and allow for future conversion to retail uses.
- 11. Setbacks for Civic Spaces**
In special circumstances where civic or public spaces are desired, additional setbacks may be encouraged.
- 12. Balconies & Projections**
Balconies and other projecting building elements should not negatively impact the public realm or prevent adherence to other Performance Standards.
- 13. Roofs & Roofscapes**
Mechanical penthouses may exceed the maximum height limit by up to 5 metres but may not penetrate any angular planes.
- 14. Exterior Building Materials**
Buildings should utilize high-quality materials selected for their permanence, durability and energy efficiency.
- 15. Façade Design & Articulation**
Mid-rise buildings will be designed to support the public and commercial function of the Avenue through well articulated and appropriately scaled façades.
- 16A. Vehicular Access**
Whenever possible, vehicular access should be provided via local streets and rear lanes, not the Avenue.
- 17. Loading & Servicing**
Loading, servicing, and other vehicular related functions should not detract from the use or attractiveness of the pedestrian realm.
- 18. Design Quality**
Mid-rise buildings will reflect design excellence and green building innovation, utilizing high-quality materials that acknowledge the public role of the Avenues.
- 19A. Heritage & Character Areas**
All mid-rise buildings on the Avenues should respect and be sensitively integrated with heritage buildings in the context of Heritage Conservation Districts.
- 19B. Development in a HCD**
The character and values of HCDs must be respected to ensure that the district is not diminished by incremental or sweeping change.
- 19C. Development Adjacent to a Heritage Property**
Development adjacent to heritage properties should be sensitive to, and not negatively impact, heritage properties.
- 19D. Character Area: Fine Grain Fabric**
New mid-rise buildings in Character Areas that have a fine grain, main street fabric should be designed to reflect a similar rhythm of entrances and multiple retail units.
- 19E. Character Area: Consistent Cornice Line**
Buildings in a Character Area should maintain a consistent cornice line for the first step-back by establishing a “datum line” or an average of the existing cornice line.
- 19F. Character Area: Vertical Additions**
Additions to existing buildings is an alternative to redevelopment projects on the Avenues, and should be encouraged in areas with an existing urban fabric.
- 19G. Character Area: Other Considerations**

4 Year Council-Directed Study

Extensive public engagement & stakeholder consultation



2010

- City Council adopted the **Performance Standards** (Section 3 of the Study)
- requested staff to use the Performance Standards “**in the evaluation of all new and current mid-rise development proposals on the Avenues**”
- requested the Chief Planner and Executive Director to “**monitor the effectiveness**” of the Mid-Rise Performance Standards and report back.

Guidelines = one part of the Planning Toolkit for Mid-Rises





Monitoring Report PG7.1



STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring

Date:	August 28, 2015
To:	Planning and Growth Management Committee
From:	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2015\Cluster B\PLN\PGMC\PG15098

SUMMARY

In July 2010, Council directed staff to use the Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards in the evaluation of mid-rise development proposals. Council also adopted a monitoring period to the end of 2014 in order to measure the effectiveness of the Standards.

This report represents the results of over five years of data analysis of mid-rise buildings through data analysis of mid-rise buildings by City staff, City Council and external stakeholders, architects, urban designers, planners, and the Ontario Municipal Board and advice from the public. The data analysis coupled with feedback received from the public and the Performance Standards set forth in this report.

This report recommends that the Planning and Growth Management Committee approve the proposed changes to the Performance Standards, and update the guidelines to be stylistically formatted into the City of Toronto urban design guideline template.

In general, the monitoring and consultations have indicated that the Performance Standards are working well, requiring only a few changes. The recommended changes include: additional guidelines for very deep lots, slight adjustments and guidance for grade related retail uses; maximum height in Character Areas with narrow right-of-ways; and more clarity and elaboration regarding the minimum 5 hours of sunlight and stepbacks requirements. Minor corrections to the Retail Priority and Character Area maps are also needed, and a few Performance Standards were deemed redundant and are suggested to be removed altogether. A summary of the feedback is documented in Attachment 1, while the data collected is presented in Attachment 2.

Supplementary Report



STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED

Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring – Supplementary Report

Date:	October 27, 2015
To:	City Council
From:	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2015\Cluster B\PLN\City Council\CC15134

SUMMARY

On October 8, 2015, the Planning and Growth Management Committee adopted the Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring report from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division. The report presents the results of over five years of data analysis of mid-rise building performance standards from various stakeholders. The report is presented to the Mid-Rise Buildings Performance Standards Committee for the updated guidelines to be used in the design guideline template to be used in the evaluation of development proposals where appropriate.

This Supplementary Report responds to concerns raised by the Planning and Growth Management Committee on October 8, 2015, that staff report to City Council with a supplementary report on ways to mitigate, or best address, rooftop mechanical and other concerns raised by the public speakers on mid-rise buildings.

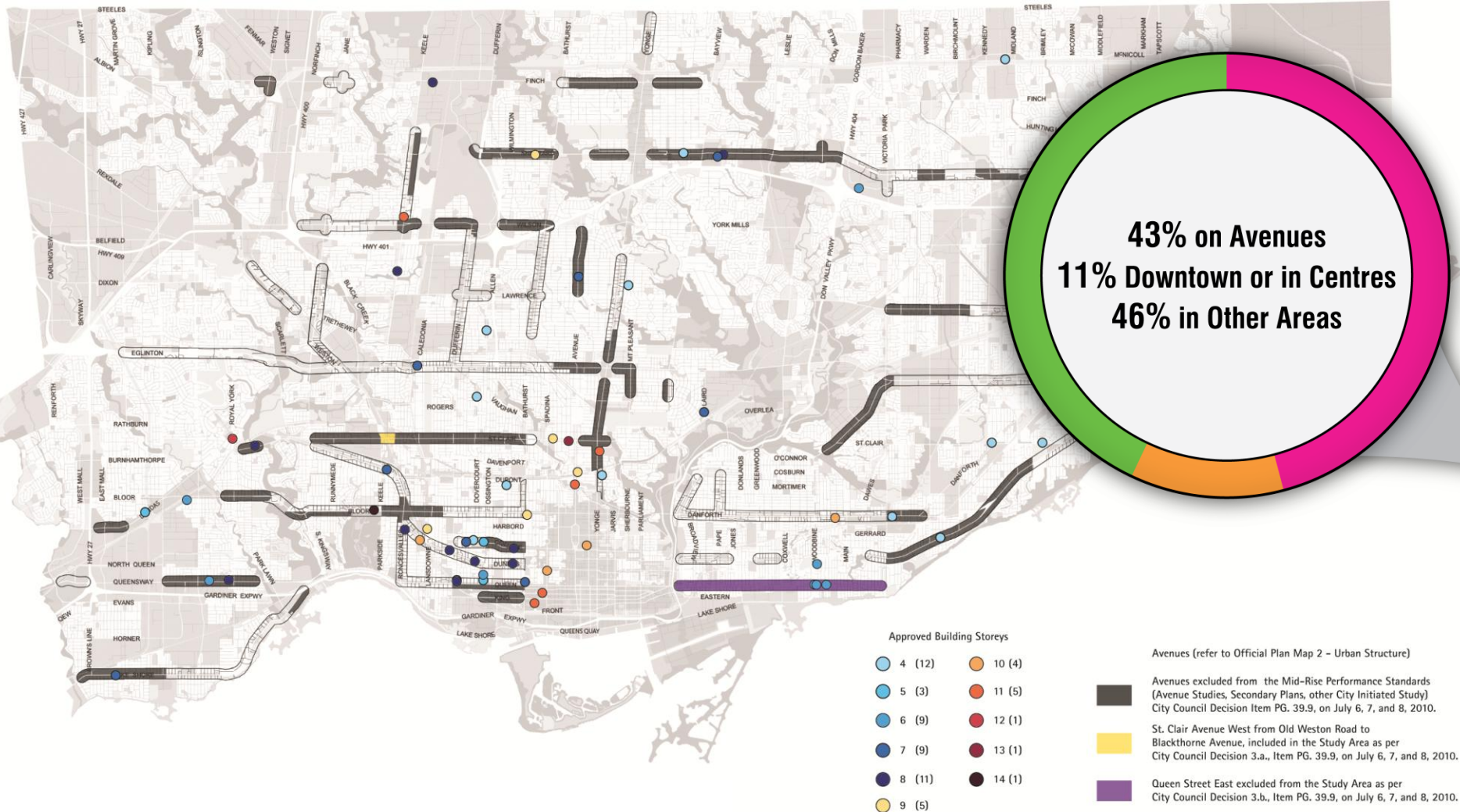
RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. Council direct City staff to reinforce the intent of Zoning By-Law 569-2013 provisions by stating in the Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards that habitable space is discouraged above the maximum allowable building height.
2. Council direct City staff to include the list of issues raised by deputants at the October 8, 2015 Planning and Growth Management Committee meeting, as

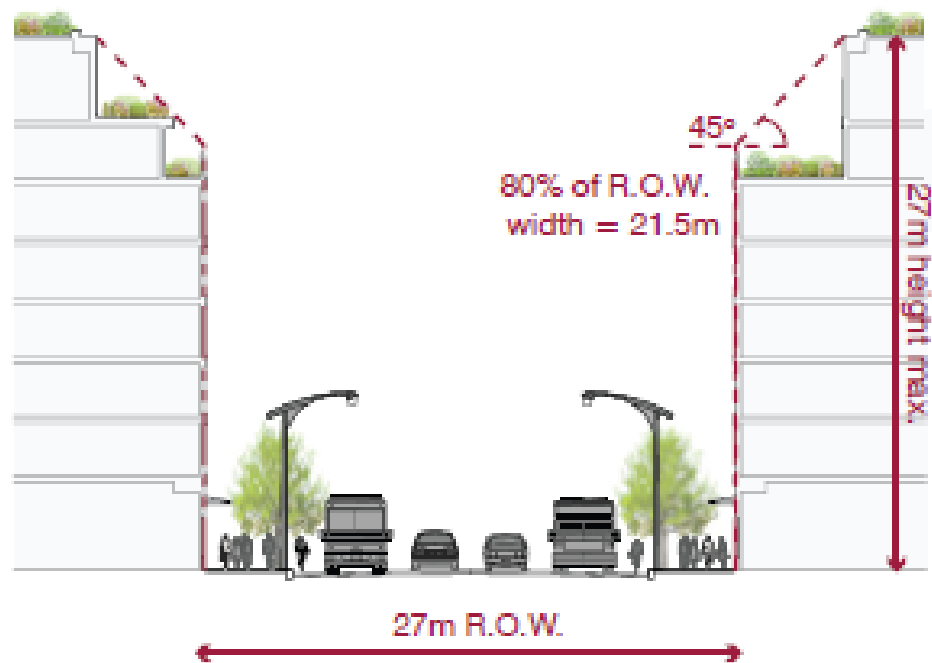
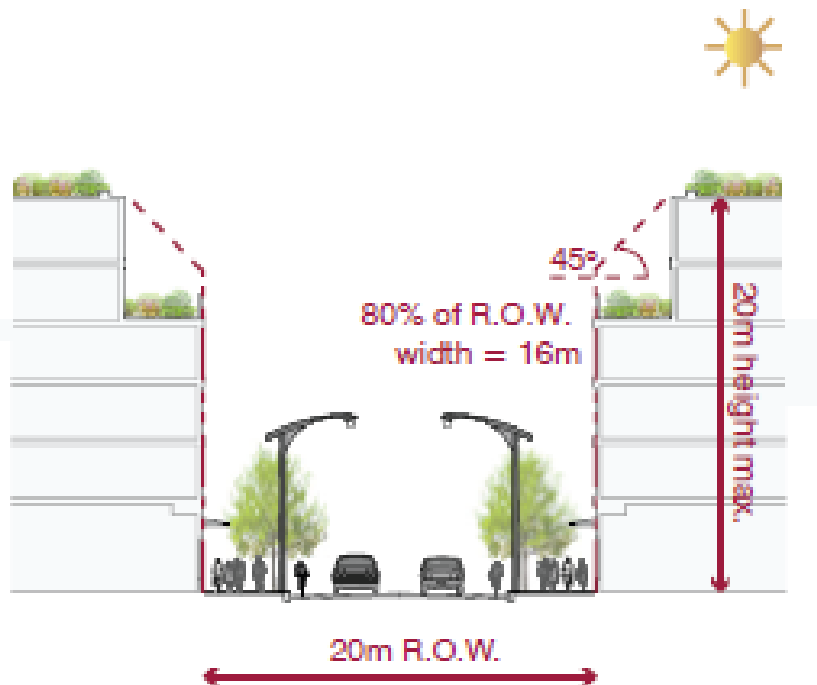
Referred to PGM by City Council at the November 3, 2015 meeting

What we have heard from Council & Deputants: Clarify how and where the Performance Standards Apply

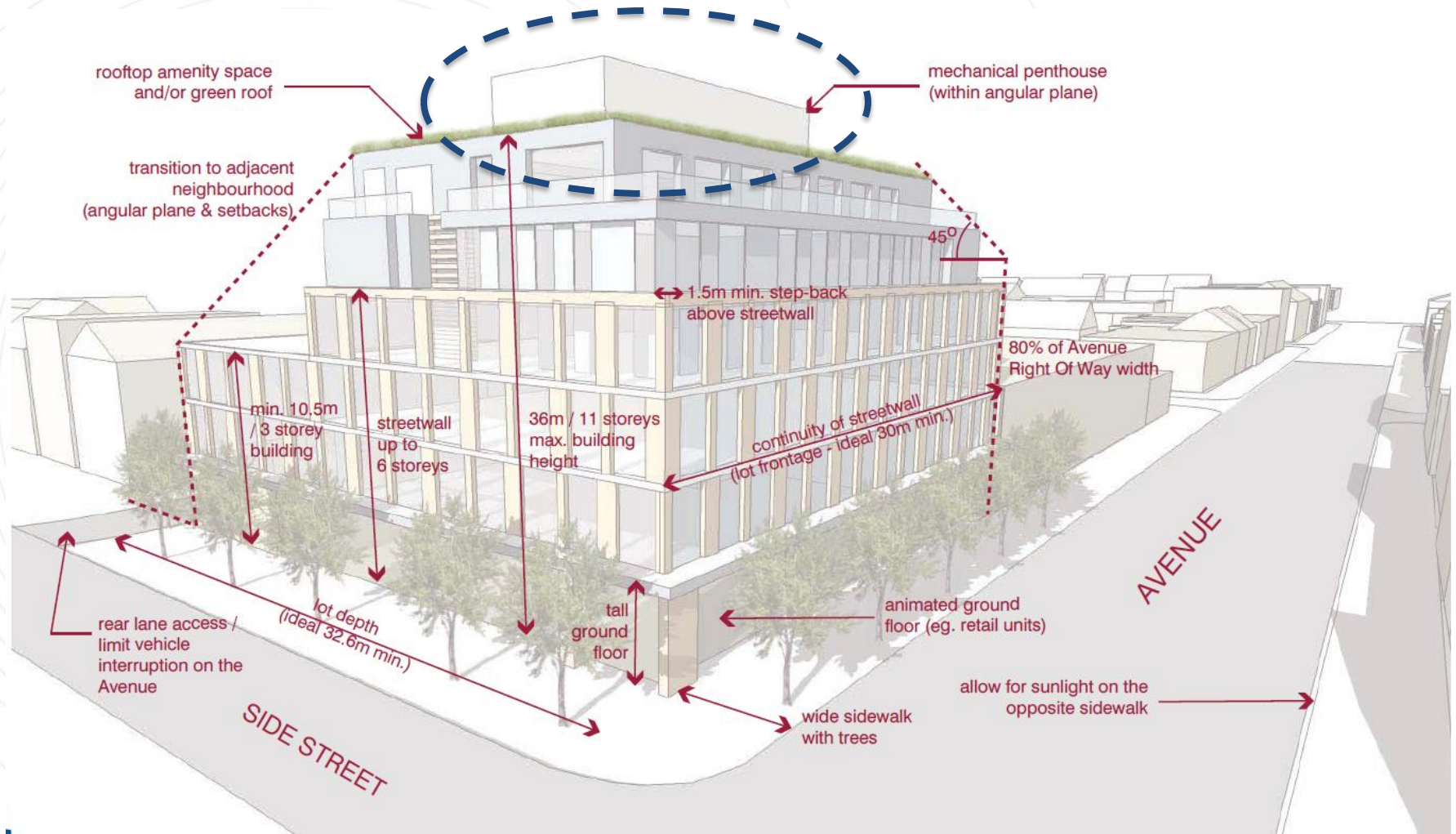


What we have heard from Council & Deputants: Refine Factors Determining Maximum Building Height

- Response to Local Context & Prevailing Character
- Compliance with all Angular Planes
- Maximum Height (1:1) is not the starting point



What we have heard from Council & Deputants: Restrict “Wrapped” Mechanical Penthouses above 1:1





What we have heard from Council & Deputants: Better Address Local Character and Pedestrian Scale

- **Street-wall Height & Stepbacks (Pedestrian Perception)**
- **Fine-Grain Retail**
- **Setback Patterns**



Example of a 3 storey street-wall



Example of a 3 storey building

TODAY'S CONSULTATION

Key Question:

What additional issues/matters are important in reviewing Mid-Rise Building Development in Toronto?

Next Steps

- ***Official Plan Review: Urban Design Policy Development***
- ***Mid-Rise Building Guidelines: Further Study & Updates***