

# Mid-Rise Performance Standards

## PG 11.3 Planning & Growth Management Committee

Harold Madi  
Director, Urban Design  
*April 6, 2016*



## Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study



- In 2010, Council approved 36 Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards
- Council also requested City staff monitor the Standards

## 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.
- 5E. 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 sidewalls should be designed as an architecturally finished surface and large expanses of blank sidewalls 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 Area**  
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**

Brook McCreary Planning + Urban Design/Pace Architects  
with  
LURA Architects  
Quadrangle Architects Limited  
Urban Marketing Collaborative

May 2010



# Mid-Rise Monitoring: What's New?

**Toronto** 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
Word:	10

## August 28, 2015 Monitoring Report

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 uses, maximum height in Character Areas with narrow right-of-ways, and more clarity and elaboration regarding the maximum 5 stories of mixed and setbacks 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.

Staff report for action – Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring 1

**Toronto** 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

## October 27, 2015 Supplementary Report

**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 departments at the October 8, 2015 Planning and Growth Management Committee meeting, as

Staff report for action on Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring 1

**Toronto** STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED  
Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring

Date:	March 11, 2016
To:	Planning and Growth Management Committee
From:	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division

## March 11, 2016 Monitoring Report

Ensure that the feedback and recommendations from the monitoring period, stakeholder consultation and recent Committee and Council meetings are considered together with the 2010 approved Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards when City staff review mid-rise development applications or prepare area studies and policies involving mid-rise buildings, as well as during the development of draft urban design policies for public consultation as part of the Five Year Official Plan Review.

Updated Mid-Rise Building Design Guidelines will be prepared for consideration by Planning and Growth Management Committee in late 2017. The updated Guidelines will consolidate the 2010 approved Performance Standards and the Addendum, and will include stakeholder consultation, as well as relevant outcomes of the Five Year Official Plan Review and Ontario Municipal Board appeals of Zoning By-Law 569-2013.

Staff report for action on Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring 1

**PG10.9**  
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## February 24, 2016 PG10.9 Mid-Rise Presentation & Consultation

**Toronto**

February 9, 2016

Dear Colleagues,

I am reaching out to you in regards to the Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring Report (PG7.1) and Council's decision (November 3, 6) to refer this item back to the Planning





PG11.3a



STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED

Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring

Date:	March 11, 2016
To:	Planning and Growth Management Committee

**March 11, 2016  
Monitoring Report**

Standards - Presentation and Consultation, as well as the deputations and previous motions of Committee and Council as summarized in the minutes for PG11.3 Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring  
<http://www.toronto.ca/news/5/councilagendaitem/2016/P32.3>

City Council's approval of the Addendum is recommended as an interim approach to ensure that the feedback and recommendations from the monitoring period, stakeholder consultations and recent Committee and Council meetings are considered together with the 2010 approved Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards when City staff review mid-rise development applications or prepare area studies and policies involving mid-rise buildings, as well as during the development of draft urban design policies for public consultation as part of the Five Year Official Plan Review.

Updated Mid-Rise Building Design Guidelines will be prepared for consideration by Planning and Growth Management Committee in late 2017. The updated Guidelines will consider the 2010 approved Performance Standards and the Addendum, and will include stakeholder consultation, as well as relevant outcomes of the Five Year Official Plan Review and Ontario Municipal Board appeals of Zoning By-law 569-2013.

Staff report for action on Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring 1

**Attachment 1: REVISED "Addendum"**

**Attachments 2 to 6: no changes**

**Attachment 7: issues summary in Oct. 27 Supplementary Report**

**Attachment 8: NEW summary of Feb. 24 Councillor consultation**



## Attachment 1:

## Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Addendum

### Attachment 1: Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Addendum

The following chart is a revised version of the "Chart of Comments and Recommended Actions" included as Attachment 1 in the August 28, 2015 Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring report. This revised chart incorporates the recommendations of the October 27, 2015 Supplementary Report, as well as Councillor input from the February 24, 2016 Planning and Growth Management Committee meeting item PG10.9 Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards – Presentation and Consultation, and the deputations and previous motions of Committee and Council on the Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Monitoring.

Underlined text is used to identify each addition or revision to the chart.

u003Cp></p>
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<div data-bbox="80 476 598 528" data-label="Text">
<p>The Addendum is intended to be used by City staff together with the 2010 approved Mid-Rise Buildings Performance Standards where the Performance Standards are deemed applicable to the review of mid-rise developments or preparation of area studies and policies involving mid-rise buildings.</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Comments</th>
<th>Feedback from Public/Stakeholders/Staff/Council</th>
<th>Recommended Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><b>Clarity</b></td>
<td>
<ul>
<li>There is a need for clarity about the role of the Performance Standards as a tool to implement the Official Plan, and how to deal with exceptions. There is also a need to understand how the Performance Standards are to be used in their entirety, not selectively.</li>
</ul>
</td>
<td>
<ul>
<li>The Performance Standards will be reorganized to follow more directly the organization of Built Form Policies in the Official Plan, and add introductory text for clarification as contained in Staff Report.</li>
</ul>
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><b>Flexibility</b></td>
<td>
<ul>
<li>Opinions were expressed that the Performance Standards should be ranked in order of priority, and that they should be used on a site specific basis with greater flexibility given to variances that breach the Performance Standards, but not their intent.</li>
</ul>
</td>
<td>
<ul>
<li>The Performance Standards are flexible, their importance varies by site. The measure of the effectiveness of the guideline is whether it achieves the goals and principles in the Official Plan.</li>
<li>See additional criteria added to Performance Standards #4B: Pedestrian Perception <del>Stepback</del>, #8A: Side Property Line: Continuous Street Walls and #10: At-Grade Uses: Residential.</li>
</ul>
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><b>Consistency</b></td>
<td>
<ul>
<li>Concerns were expressed regarding the consistency of Staff development reviews between Districts.</li>
</ul>
</td>
<td>
<ul>
<li>Performance Standards should be revised and reformatted according to this report for use as part of a city-wide Urban Design Handbook for Building Typologies (Tall, Mid, Low)</li>
<li>A new requirement is recommended in the submission packages showing how new development applications compare to the building envelope created by the Performance Standards.</li>
</ul>
</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<div data-bbox="687 304 979 539" data-label="Text">
<p><i>Chart revised from August 28, 2015 Monitoring Report.</i></p>
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<p>Attachment 1: Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Addendum</p>
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## Attachment 1:

## Mid-Rise Building Performance Standards Addendum

General Comments	Feedback from Public/Stakeholders/Staff/Council	Recommended Actions
<b>Definitions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to clarify the upper and lower thresholds for the Performance Standards, as well as the language of the definitions, i.e. 4-11 storeys vs. 20-36 metres in height</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Official Plan Built Form policies in section 3.1.2, and include new statements for what defines a mid-rise building.</li> </ul>
<b>Applicability of Performance Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was confusion about whether the Performance Standards applied to all <i>Mixed Use</i> sites, including those that are not on <i>Avenues</i></li> <li>There were objections raised to the Performance Standards being applied to <i>Mixed Use Areas, Employment Areas, Institutional Areas</i> or some <i>Apartment Neighbourhoods</i> beyond <i>Avenues</i> and in areas with <i>Secondary Plans</i> where the plan "may not be up-to-date"</li> <li>There were a number of requests to clarify the relationship between <i>Secondary Plan Areas</i> and use of the <i>Performance Standards</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommend that the Performance Standards should apply to sites that meet all three of these criteria:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In areas with existing land use designations for <i>Mixed Use Areas, Employment, Institutional</i> or some <i>Apartment Neighbourhoods</i> where existing built form context supports mid-rise development; AND</li> <li>Front onto Major Streets on Map 3 of the Official Plan; AND</li> <li>Have planned right-of-way 20 metres or wider.</li> </ul> </li> <li><u>Clarify that the Performance Standards may be a useful planning tool where a Secondary Plan supports mid-rise buildings, but does not regulate built form or does not fully address mid-rise building design, or when a Secondary Plan is under review. It is not, however, the intent that the Performance Standards be used on a site-by-site basis to challenge Council-approved Area-specific Plans, studies, by-laws or guidelines, particularly with respect to building heights or matters of transition.</u></li> <li>Until additional work can be done, it is recommended that the Mid-rise Building Performance Standards NOT apply to the following sites and conditions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portions of extra-deep and irregular lots that are beyond the Ideal Minimum Lots Depths as defined in Table 7 from the Study;</li> <li>Apartment Neighbourhoods where local context and character does not support a repeatable street wall buildings such as tower in the park areas; OR,</li> <li>Base or podium conditions to Tall Buildings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Introductory text should provide guidance about the appropriate density range for mid-rise buildings.</li> </ul>

Chart revised from August 28, 2015 Monitoring Report.

Changes shown with underlined text.



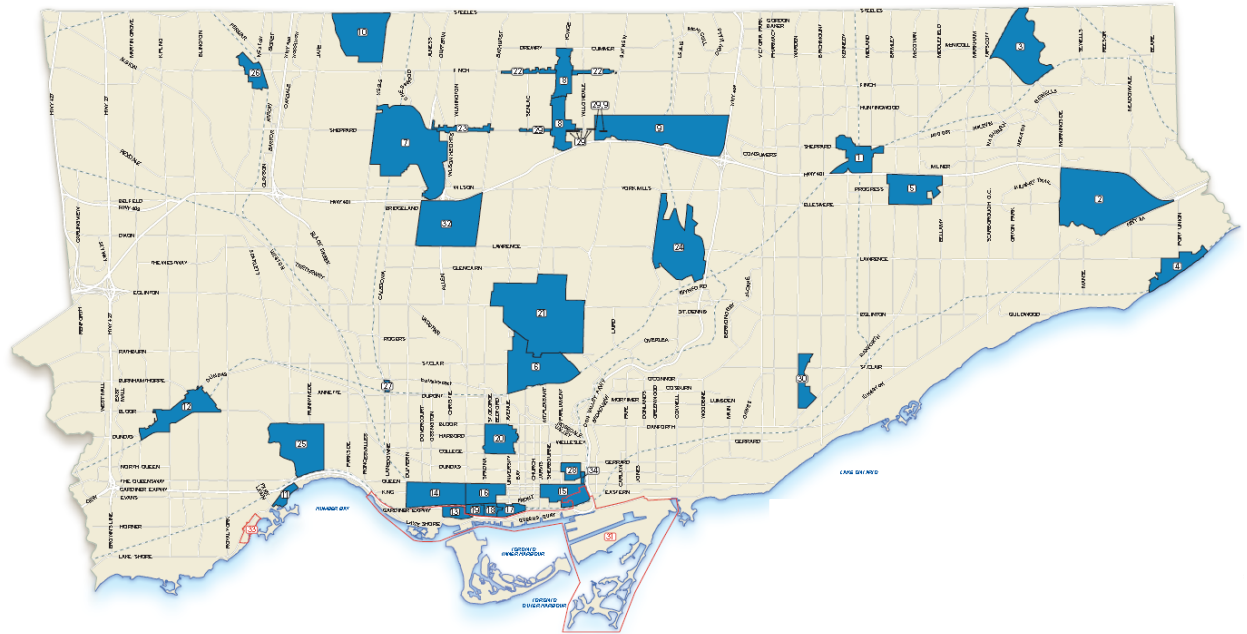
## KEY CHANGES in the ADDENDUM

## KEY CHANGES in the ADDENDUM:

# Applicability of Performance Standards

- Clarification about use in Secondary Plan Areas

- Removal of “not up-to-date” provision



Note: For information purposes only.



## KEY CHANGES in the ADDENDUM:

### General Comments:

### New Recommended Actions for

- Role of Guidelines
- Context
- Infrastructure
- Consultation



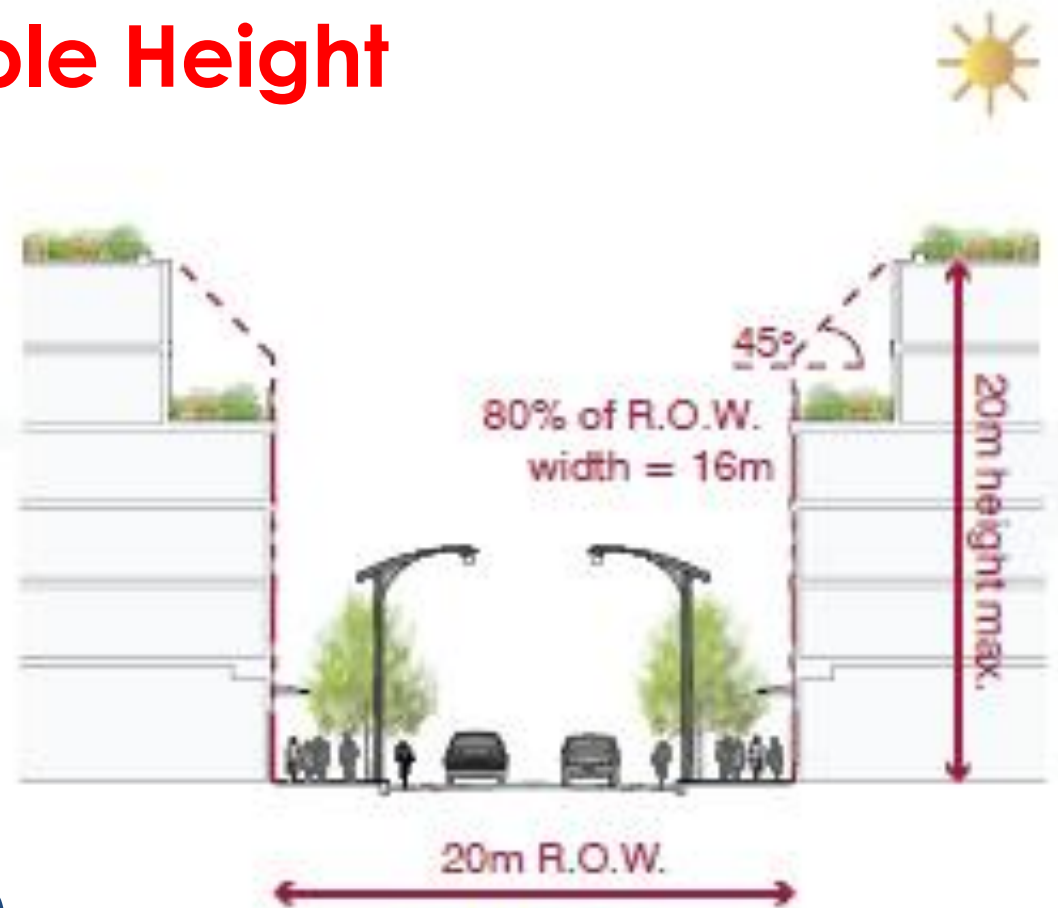
Official Plan Review Public Consultation  
– Urban Design Matters –

## KEY CHANGES in the ADDENDUM:

### Performance Standard #1

### Maximum Allowable Height

- Distinction between definition of mid-rise vs. permitted heights
- 1:1 not “as-of-right” (0.8:1 ratio)
- Multiple factors determine height (context, site geometry)



**KEY CHANGES in the ADDENDUM:**

**Performance Standard #4B**

**Pedestrian Perception Stepback**

- Streetwall height and upper floor stepbacks to reinforce character



**KEY CHANGES in the ADDENDUM:**

**Performance Standard #13**

**Roofs & Roofscapes**



- **Minimizing/eliminating rooftop mechanical**
- **Reinforcing fit within building height ratio**



## **Summary of Report Recommendations**

- 1) Approve “the Addendum” to be used together with the 2010 approved Performance Standards until such time as updated Mid-Rise Guidelines are considered by Council (2017)**
- 2) Request staff to consult further on mid-rise issues and propose new Official Plan policies for mid-rise buildings**



## **Mid-Rise Work Program**

**2016**

- **Official Plan Review:  
Urban Design Phase I Policy Development**
  - **New Draft Policies for Mid-Rise Buildings**

**2017**

- **Mid-Rise Building Guidelines:  
Update Project**
  - **City-wide Urban Design Guidelines for Mid-rise**