

3.1.2 BUILT FORM

Toronto is a great city and is repeatedly recognized in international studies and surveys as a world leader in terms of quality of life. A quality of life that cannot be taken for granted. A quality of life that relies upon good planning and infrastructure to maintain Toronto's status as one of the best places in the world to live.

Our quality of life and personal enjoyment of our streets, parks and open spaces depends largely on the buildings that define the edges of the public realm. The size and character of the streetwalls that shape the spaces between those buildings, together with the ground floor uses, determine the visual quality, activity, comfortable environment, and perception of safety in those spaces. ~~Most~~ Many of the qualities are influenced directly by the built form of adjacent buildings. Individual buildings that are visible from, and that form the edge of, a street or a park are read together as a common wall that defines the public realm and are part of the physical expression of Toronto's collective vision, identity and history.

Toronto is growing, with each new development making a contribution to the overall urban design of the City. Over the next several decades the majority of new growth will take place in the areas of the City where intensification is planned and appropriate – in the Downtown, the Centres, and along the Avenues. This is an extraordinary opportunity to build the next generation of development and to reinforce and strengthen the City's special character to create an image of Toronto at the citywide and neighbourhood scale that matches its status as a global leader in liveability and quality of life.

Most of Toronto is already built with at least one generation of buildings. For the most part, future development will be built on infill and redevelopment sites and will need to fit in, respecting and improving the character of the surrounding area. On large sites, in redevelopment areas and in other areas whose physical contexts are no longer appropriate, new planning contexts will be created to ensure that each new development extends the public realm and that new buildings in these areas add up to more than the sum of their parts.

~~Over the next several decades the majority of the new growth will take place in the areas of the City where intensification is appropriate – in the Downtown, the Centres, and along the Avenues. This is an extraordinary opportunity to build the next generation of buildings and to create an image of Toronto that matches its status as one of the great cities of North America.~~

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~~Great cities are built one building at a time, with each new building making a contribution to the overall urban design of the City. Developers and architects have a civic responsibility to create buildings that not only meet the needs of the clients, tenants and customers, but also the needs of the people who live and work in the area who will encounter the building in their daily lives.~~

~~Toronto's streets, parks and open spaces are defined by the façades of many buildings. The façade presents the building to the public, telling people about the building, what it is, where to enter, and what the character and functions of interior uses are. The individual façades of buildings that form the edge of a street or a park are read together as a common wall that defines the public realm and are part of the physical expression of Toronto's collective vision, identity and history.~~ Developments must be conceived not only in terms of the individual building site and program, but also in terms of how that site, building and its ~~façades~~ interface with the public realm fit within the existing and/or planned context of the neighbourhood and the City. Each new building ~~should~~ will promote and achieve the overall objectives of the Plan.

Sidebar

~~Street proportion is the ratio of the height of buildings along the edges of the street and the width of the space between the buildings.~~ Street proportion ~~gives~~ is a fundamental determinant in the character of the street and provides a measure ~~to of~~ certain qualities of the street and the buildings that front onto it, including its access to sunlight and sky view.

Good street proportion is subject to study on a district and street basis. ~~Good street proportion, and~~ will be determined by studying the existing conditions, street and open space width, ~~existing~~ building heights, setbacks, step backs, angular planes, tower floor plates and placement, and the planned intensity of development and expectations for the character and quality of the streets and open spaces in the future.

~~Pedestrian amenity is provided by those architectural and landscape elements including, lighting, trees, decorative paving, seating, bicycle rings, water features, etc. that promote the safe and comfortable use of adjacent streets and open spaces.~~

Policies

1. ~~New~~ dDevelopment will be located and organized to fit with its existing and/or planned context. It will frame and support adjacent streets, parks and open spaces

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to promote civic life and the use of the public realm, and to improve the safety, pedestrian interest and casual views to these spaces from the development by:

a) generally locating buildings parallel to the street or along the edge of a park or open space with a consistent front yard setback. On a corner site, the development should be located along both adjacent street frontages and give prominence to the corner. If located at a site that ends a street corridor, development should acknowledge the prominence of that site;

b) providing additional setbacks or open spaces at street intersections or when adjacent to public buildings, parks or transit to support building articulation and create a variety of spatial experiences and space for pedestrians and landscaping;

~~b)c)~~ locating main building entrances on the prominent street-facing building façades so that they front onto a public street and are prominent, clearly visible and directly accessible from the public street or public sidewalk;

~~e)d)~~ providing ground floor uses and entrances that ~~have allow~~ views into and, where possible, access to, adjacent streets, parks and open spaces; and

~~e)e)~~ _____ preserving existing mature trees wherever possible and incorporating them into ~~landscaping~~ landscape designs.

2. ~~New d~~ Development will locate and organize vehicle parking, vehicular access and ramps, loading, serviceing and storage areas, and utilities to minimize their impact and improve the safety and attractiveness of ~~on~~ the public realm, the property and ~~on~~ surrounding properties ~~and to improve the safety and attractiveness of adjacent streets, parks and open spaces~~ by:

a) using shared service areas where possible within development block(s), including public ~~and private lanes, laneways, shared private~~ driveways, and service courts;

b) consolidating and minimizing the width of driveways and curb cuts across the public sidewalk;

c) integrating services and utility functions within buildings ~~where possible~~;

d) providing underground parking where appropriate;

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- e) limiting surface parking and vehicular driveways between the front face of a building and the public street or sidewalk; and
 - f) limiting above-ground parking structures, integrating them within buildings, and providing active uses and attractive building elevations along adjacent streets, parks and open spaces. ~~integrating above-ground parking structures, where permitted or appropriate, with building design, and have usable building space at grade facing adjacent streets, parks and open spaces.~~
3. Street proportion is the relationship between the height of buildings along the edges of the street and the adjacent right of way width. Development will be located and massed to define and frame the edges of the public realm with good street proportion, ensuring comfortable sun and wind conditions on the public realm and neighbouring properties by:
- a) ensuring that new buildings have a streetwall height that fits harmoniously with the existing or planned context;
 - b) stepping back building mass and/or limiting building footprints above the streetwall height to allow daylight and sunlight to penetrate to the street and lower building levels;
 - c) preserving the utility and intended use of the public realm, including sitting and standing; and
 - d) encouraging site and building design that promotes cross-ventilation along the street and adjacent open spaces.

~~New development will be massed and its exterior façade will be designed to fit harmoniously into its existing and/or planned context, and will limit its impact on neighbouring streets, parks, open spaces and properties by:~~

- ~~a) massing new buildings to frame adjacent streets and open spaces in a way that respects the existing and/or planned street proportion;~~
- ~~b) incorporating exterior design elements, their form, scale, proportion, pattern and materials, and their sustainable design, to influence the character, scale and appearance of the development;~~
- ~~c) creating appropriate transitions in scale to neighbouring existing and/or planned buildings for the purpose of achieving the objectives of this Plan;~~

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- ~~d) providing for adequate light and privacy;~~
- ~~e) adequately limiting any resulting shadowing of, and uncomfortable wind conditions on, neighbouring streets, properties and open spaces, having regard for the varied nature of such areas; and~~
- ~~f) minimizing any additional shadowing and uncomfortable wind conditions on neighbouring parks as necessary to preserve their utility.~~

4. Development will be required to provide built form transition in scale between areas of different heights and/or intensity of use, including adjacent low-rise Neighbourhoods, heritage properties, heritage conservation districts, cultural landscapes and parks and open spaces. Transition in scale will be provided within the development site and measured from the property line(s) of lower scaled development through the application of one or more of the following, depending on context:

- a) separation distances between buildings;
- b) locating buildings within angular planes;
- c) stepping down of building heights; and
- d) location and orientation of buildings.

~~New development will be massed to define the edges of streets, parks and open spaces at good proportion. Taller buildings will be located to ensure adequate access to sky view for the proposed and future use of these areas.~~

5. Development will limit overlook, provide access to natural light from interior spaces, and provide opportunities for landscaping through the application of one or more of the following, depending on context:

- a) rear and side yard setbacks from neighbouring properties; and
- b) separation between adjacent building walls that contain windows.

6. The design of new buildings should consider and be informed by the existing or planned character and context, including the scale, proportion, materiality, rhythm and fit of adjacent buildings.

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7. Development will reinforce the scale, character, form and setting of heritage resources and heritage conservation districts by providing massing and placement of new buildings to lend prominence to heritage resources.
8. The organization, massing and height of a building on one site will not be a precedent for development on an adjacent or nearby site.
59. ~~New d~~Development will promote civic life and provide amenity for pedestrians in adjacent streets and open spaces to make these areas attractive, interesting, comfortable and functional ~~for pedestrians~~ by providing:
- a) improvements to adjacent boulevards and sidewalks ~~respecting~~ including sustainable design elements, which may include one or more of the following: trees, shrubs, hedges, plantings or other ground cover, high-albedo surfaces, permeable paving materials, bio-retention swales, street furniture including seating in various forms, curb ramps, waste and recycling containers, energy efficient lighting and bicycle parking facilities;
 - b) co-ordinated landscape improvements in setbacks to ~~create~~ enhance local character and provide attractive, safe transitions from the private to public realms;
 - c) weather protection such as canopies, and awnings;
 - d) landscaped open space within the development site;
 - e) landscaped edges of surface parking lots along streets, parks and open spaces to define the street edge and visually screen ~~the parked autos~~ parking lots;
 - f) safe, direct pedestrian routes and tree plantings throughout the site and within surface parking lots; and
 - g) public art, where the developer agrees to provide this, to make the building and its open spaces more attractive and interesting.
610. New multi-unit residential developments will provide high quality, well designed indoor and outdoor shared amenity space that provides programming for residents of all ages and abilities over time and throughout the year. Non-residential development is encouraged to provide high-quality and well-designed indoor and

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outdoor amenity space.~~Every significant new multi-unit residential development will provide indoor and outdoor amenity space for residents of the new development. Each resident of such development will have access to outdoor amenity spaces such as balconies, terraces, courtyards, rooftop gardens and other types of outdoor spaces.~~

11. Outdoor amenity spaces will:

- a) have direct access to sunlight;
- b) be located at grade, where possible, to accommodate mature tree growth;
- c) mitigate impacts on the public realm and neighbours;
- d) be physically separated and located away from loading and servicing areas;
- e) have generous and well-designed landscaped areas to offer privacy and an attractive interface with the public realm;
- f) provide comfortable wind, shadow and noise conditions; and
- a)g) promote use in all seasons.

3.1.3 BUILT FORM – ~~TALL BUILDINGS~~BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

Toronto's building types are defined by their physical characteristics including: scale; relationship to the public street; organization on the site including setbacks and step backs; ground floor uses; entrances and circulation; and massing including transition in scale. The following policies are intended to provide direction around building types that are used to achieve residential and/or mixed-use intensification in the City. Other building types including institutional buildings, shopping centres and some employment buildings may be informed by some of the following policies, but generally have unique built form relationships.

1. A mix of building typologies is encouraged on larger sites that can accommodate more than one building. Where proposals for development include more than one building, development will ensure appropriate site composition and coordination of different building typologies, including new and existing streets and other public realm elements, building organization, setbacks, floor plates and separation distances from other buildings on and adjacent to the site.

Townhouse and Low-Rise Apartment Buildings

Townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings provide grade-related housing in a form that is more intensive than single and semi-detached houses. Where appropriate and permitted, these low-rise typologies can be infill buildings on small sites or part of large sites to increase the range of housing types, provided that the development can ensure compatibility with and transition to adjacent established residential areas.

2. Townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings will be no taller than 4 storeys in height.
3. Townhouse and low-rise apartment buildings will be designed to:
 - a) provide unit and building entrances that have direct access to and are visible from public streets, pedestrian mews and walkways;
 - b) integrate with and maintain existing grades on site and at the property line;
and
 - c) ensure sunlight on ground floor units by providing appropriate facing distances, angular planes and step backs.

Mid-Rise Buildings

Mid-rise buildings are a form of development that provides transition and relationship to streets, parks and open spaces. Typically found along *Avenues* and *Major Streets* in *Mixed-Use Areas*, they help establish and reinforce an urban environment and support transit infrastructure while maintaining an open view to the sky and good access to sunlight from the public realm.

Mid-rise buildings may contain single uses such as offices or residential apartments, or a mix of uses such as retail, office, community service and residential in the same building. The proposed intensification in this Plan is primarily anticipated to be achieved with street-oriented, grade related mid-rise building types that define and support a sunny, comfortable public realm inclusive of streets that are lined with active uses.

4. Mid-rise buildings are buildings greater than four storeys in height, with a maximum height generally equivalent to the width of the right-of-way that they front onto. Maximum permitted heights will be determined based on the criteria established in Policy 5.

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5. Mid-rise buildings will be designed to:

- a) provide a streetwall height consistent with the existing and/or planned context;
- b) maintain street proportion and access to skyview by stepping back building massing generally at 80% of the adjacent right-of-way width; and
- c) provide articulation and massing that breaks up long facades in a manner that respects and reinforces the surrounding built form context of existing buildings.

Tall Buildings

Tall buildings have larger civic responsibilities and obligations than other building types. They are an intensive form of development that come with both opportunities and challenges. When the quality of architecture and site design is emphasized, tall buildings can become important city landmarks, help to define the City's structure, and contribute to the skyline. However, not every site is appropriate for a tall building. Tall buildings should only be considered where they can fit into the existing or planned context.

6. Tall buildings are generally buildings greater in height than the width of the adjacent right-of-way. The maximum permitted heights of tall buildings will be determined based on the criteria established in Policy 8.

7. Tall buildings will only be permitted on sites where the following can be achieved:

- a) a tower separation distance consistent with the existing or planned context and not less than 25 metres, measured from the exterior wall of the buildings excluding balconies; and
- b) a minimum 12.5 metre tower setback to a side or rear lot line.

8. Tall buildings should be designed to consist of three parts, carefully integrated into a single whole and designed to achieve the following objectives:

- a) Base buildings or podiums should be:
 - i. designed to fit harmoniously within the existing context of neighbouring building heights at the street and to respect the scale and proportion of adjacent streets, parks and open spaces;

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- ii. generally aligned parallel to adjacent buildings, streets, parks and open spaces;
- iii. lined with active, grade-related uses to promote a safe and animated public realm; and
- iv. articulated with high-quality materials and design elements that fit with neighbouring buildings and contribute to a pedestrian scale.

b) Tower middles or shafts should be organized, located, shaped and articulated to:

- i. have residential floor plates generally no larger than 750 square metres, excluding balconies;
- ii. generally be aligned parallel to adjacent streets, parks and open spaces;
- iii. minimize shadow impacts on the public realm and surrounding properties;
- iv. reduce visual and physical impacts of the tower from the public realm and neighbouring properties;
- v. mitigate pedestrian level wind impacts through step backs and articulation;
- vi. maximize access to sunlight and sky view from the public realm;
- vii. provide access to natural light from interior spaces;
- viii. create architectural interest and visually diminish the overall scale of the building mass; and
- ix. promote design excellence, innovation and sustainability.

c) Tower tops should be designed to:

- i. contribute to the surrounding skyline character;
- ii. integrate roof top mechanical systems into their design; and
- iii. avoid uplighting and excessive lighting.

9. Tower separation, setbacks and stepbacks will increase as tower height increases to achieve the daylight, skyview and privacy objectives of this Plan on all floors.

~~Tall buildings currently exist in many parts of the City, in the Downtown, in the Centres, along parts of the waterfront, at some subway stops and in clusters around the City.~~

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~~These individual buildings and groups of buildings can be seen rising above the forest cover and the City's low scaled residential and employment areas.~~

~~Tall buildings are desirable in the right places but they don't belong everywhere. When appropriately located and designed, tall buildings can support and draw attention to the city structure, visually reinforcing our civic centres and other areas of civic importance. In the context of Toronto's relatively flat topography, tall buildings help define the City's image. When the quality of architecture and site design is emphasized, tall buildings become important city landmarks. By concentrating development on a small part of the site, they can also provide high quality publicly accessible open spaces and areas for community services and amenity.~~

~~When poorly located and designed tall buildings can physically and visually overwhelm adjacent streets, parks and neighbourhoods. They can block sunlight, views of the sky and create uncomfortable wind conditions in adjacent streets, parks and open space and create traffic congestion. The open space created on poorly designed sites is often residual, unsafe and uncomfortable to use.~~

~~Tall buildings are only one form of intensification. Most of the proposed intensification in this Plan is anticipated to be achieved with street oriented, grade related or mid-rise building types that define and support sunny, comfortable and vital streets, parks and open spaces. Tall buildings, typically buildings whose height is greater than the width of the adjacent road allowance, are generally limited to parts of the Downtown, Centres, and other areas in which they are permitted by a Secondary Plan, an area specific policy, a comprehensive zoning by-law, site specific policies in effect as of the approval date of this Official Plan or site specific zoning that pre-dates approval of this Plan. Tall buildings will only be permitted in other areas on the basis of appropriate planning justification consistent with the policies of this Plan.~~

Policies

~~Tall buildings come with larger civic responsibilities and obligations than other buildings. To ensure that tall buildings fit within their existing and/or planned context and limit local impacts, the following additional built form principles will be applied to the location and design of tall buildings:~~

- ~~1. Tall buildings should be designed to consist of three parts, carefully integrated into a single whole:~~

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- ~~a) base building— provide definition and support at an appropriate scale for adjacent streets, parks and open spaces, integrate with adjacent buildings, minimize the impact of parking and servicing uses;~~
- ~~b) middle (shaft)— design the floor plate size and shape with appropriate dimensions for the site, locate and orient it on the site and in relationship to the base building and adjacent buildings in a manner that satisfies the provisions of this Section; and~~
- ~~c) top— design the top of tall buildings to contribute to the skyline character and integrate roof top mechanical systems into the design.~~

~~2. Tall building proposals will address key urban design considerations, including:~~

- ~~a) meeting the built form principles of this Plan;~~
- ~~b) demonstrating how the proposed building and site design will contribute to and reinforce the overall City structure;~~
- ~~c) demonstrating how the proposed building and site design relate to the existing and/or planned context;~~
- ~~d) taking into account the relationship of the site to topography and other tall buildings;~~
- ~~e) providing high quality, comfortable and usable publicly accessible open space areas; and~~
- ~~f) a) meeting the other goals and objectives of this Plan.~~