

URBAN DESIGN

The urban design component of the EHON Major Street Study comprised three phases. These phases progressed from background research in Phase 1, to physical analysis of parcels in *Neighbourhoods* along major streets that front directly onto, or flank, the major streets. Phase 3 then addressed those parcels that have reverse frontages.

Background Research, Data Analysis and Policy Review

Phase 1 began with data collection about the existing *Neighbourhoods* context along major streets in the city, such as street widths, lot patterns, building heights, setbacks, green spaces, and driveway accesses. Fronting, flanking and rear-facing lot types are the three typical lot orientations in the *Neighbourhoods* on major streets. Through review the lot fabric of the properties found along major streets in *Neighbourhoods*, lot sizes were reviewed. While lot frontages did not have enough consistency to produce general averages for width, average lot depth was determined. This work showed average lot depth to be approximately 36 meters. Further work tested built form to demonstrate how it may be accommodated on deeper lots of 45 metres lot depth.

During this phase, the relevant urban design guidelines, such as the Townhouse & Low-Rise Apartment Guidelines and Retail Guidelines, were reviewed and analyzed, as were recent applications for townhouses and low-rise apartment building typologies in the *Neighbourhoods* on major streets. Many of townhouses and low-rise apartments can be found on major streets with *Neighbourhoods* designations. There are several, historically developed, areas of the city where these types of buildings can be found. Examples of these areas are along Bayview Avenue, Vaughn Road, and Marlee Avenue.

Through the background research and study, the following design guiding principles were developed:

- Provide more housing opportunity in the *Neighbourhoods* on major streets;
- Use an incremental development approach to fit new development into the existing neighbourhood context with modest changes;
- Allow for more building types, such as townhouses, stacked townhouses, and small-scale apartments (up to 6 storeys) on major streets;
- Provide local commercial and retail opportunities;
- Consider both the existing and planned contexts, as well as the site-specific attributes of the lots, and increase the number of dwelling units by assembling the existing lots;
- Preserve existing mature trees and enhance soft landscape spaces; and
- Consolidate and minimize curb cuts on major streets and use other streets and laneways at side or rear of the property for access.

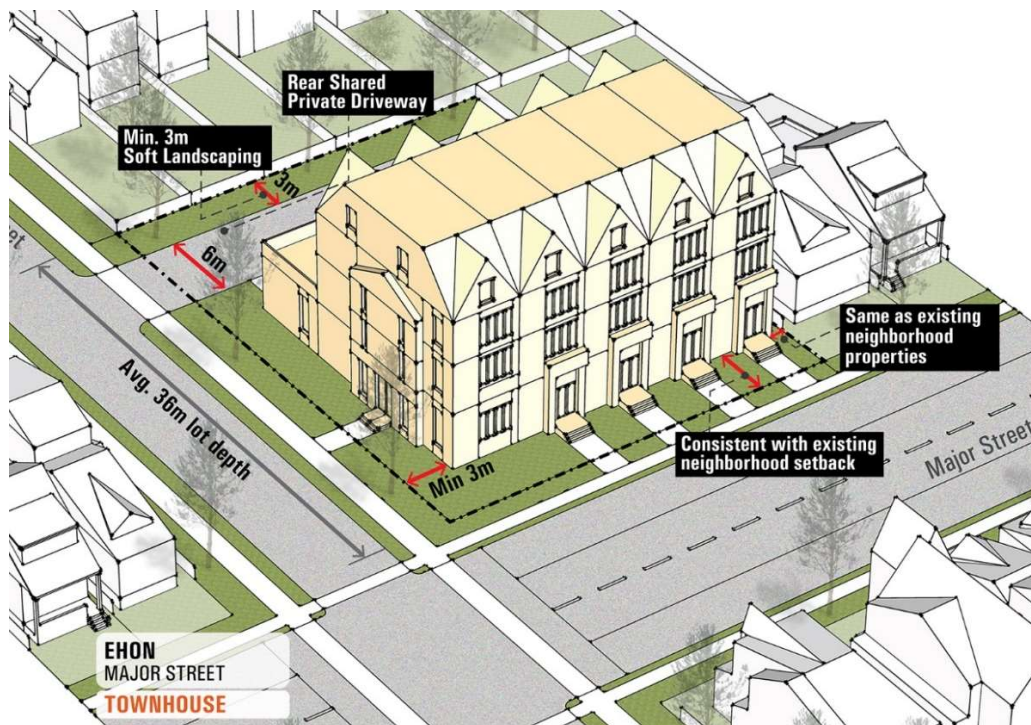
Major Streets Physical Context

Phase 2 of the Urban Design study focused on a physical analysis of the fronting and flanking lot conditions on major street. Staff from across divisions collaboratively reviewed existing and past planning work and development proposals on major streets to understand the range of development options for lots fronting and flanking on major streets with *Neighbourhoods* designations. The review was done through a lens of promoting a variety of housing options.

Staff examined precedent townhouse and low-rise apartment typologies from each of the four community planning districts. Many townhouses and low-rise apartments had been developed along major streets with *Neighbourhoods* designations. The Council-adopted Bayview Townhouse Design Guidelines addresses both shallow lot and deep lot conditions for the townhouse development proposals along Bayview Avenue in the *Neighbourhoods* designations.

City Planning’s Urban Design team tested various massing models on a range of lots fronting and flanking on major streets, as illustrated below. All models were prepared using the lot fabric of existing neighbourhoods, and the sites shown are illustrations of what each model could look like in existing contexts across the city.

Fig 1. Potential Massing Model (Stacked Townhouse) with Lots Fronting and Flanking on Major Streets

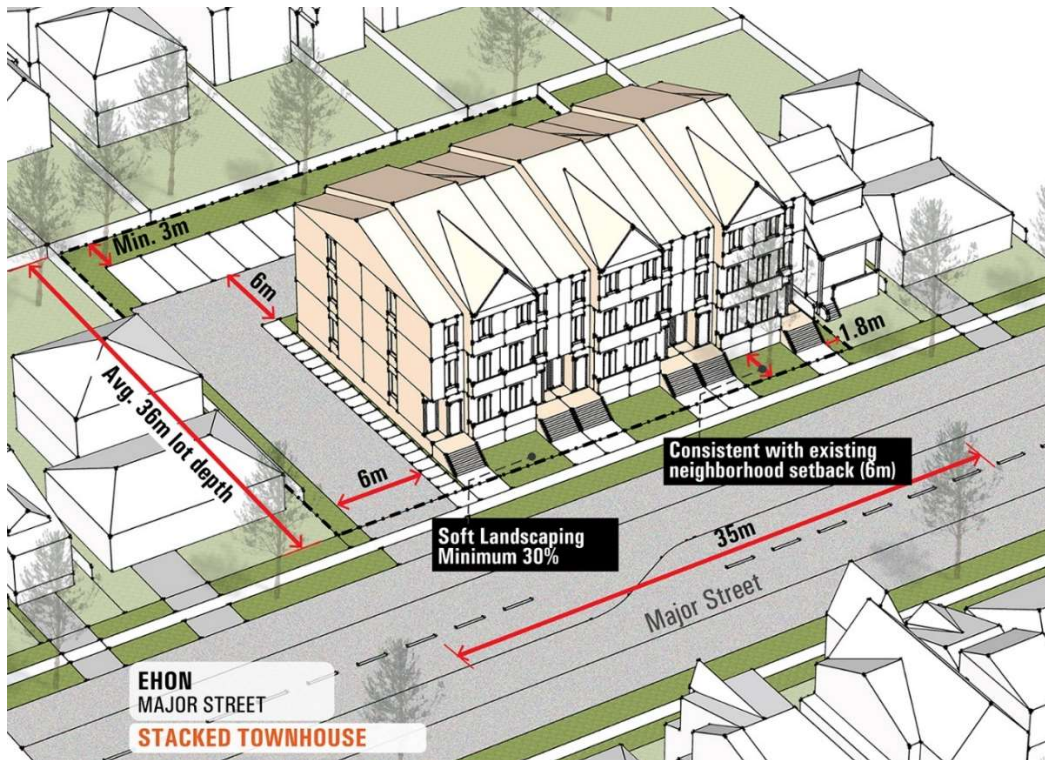


The models demonstrate how apartments, townhouses, and stacked townhouses can be developed incrementally while providing amenity spaces, preserving mature trees, consolidating driveway accesses, and staying within the 30-unit maximum with no loading requirement. The study analyzed:

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- building types, heights and depths;
- front, rear and side setbacks;
- trees;
- soft landscaping;
- site access and service elements; and
- retail opportunities

Fig 2. Potential Massing Model (Townhouse) with Lots Fronting and Flanking on Major Streets



Height

The models incorporate a variety of housing types, including townhouses, stacked townhouses, and small-scale apartment buildings. As discussed in the body of the report, and in Attachment 3 (Major Streets Study and Analysis), the proposed building heights represent buildings that are generally higher than the currently permitted 4-storey maximum for *Neighbourhoods* set in the Official Plan, but no higher than the lowest permitted height in the Mid-Rise Building Performance standards. These building scales were explored for their potential for gentle intensification in *Neighbourhoods* along major streets.

As a result of the analysis, modeling of building heights are limited to 6 storeys for small-scale apartment buildings and 4 storeys for townhouses and stacked townhouses. Although the height of the apartment building is increased to the height set out in the Mid-Rise Buildings Performance Standards, the maximum 30-unit requirement has kept the scale of the development small to fit into the existing and planned context of the *Neighbourhoods*. As such, a 6-storey maximum height has been proposed for

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apartment buildings along major streets in *Neighbourhoods*. The maximum building depth of a townhouse is 19 meters, and the maximum building depth of an apartment building is 25 meters. The models also show how the new developments can be placed to front major streets and side streets to create an active streetscape.

Lot Assembly

Lot sizes vary from neighbourhood to neighbourhood. It's common that land assembly occurs as part of the development of multi-unit residential buildings. For the purpose of exploring and modeling potential-built form in the Major Streets Study, two generic lot sizes were used:

- 30 to 35 m frontage by 36 m depth; and
- 30 to 35 m frontage by 45 m depth.

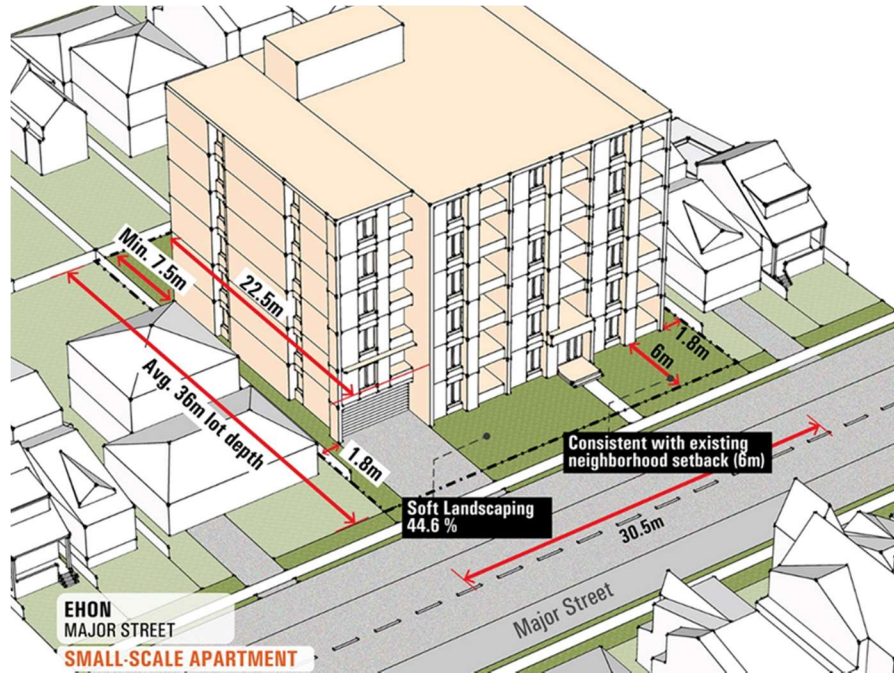
These lot sizes are not generally found as single lots across the city. Instead, lots of this size would be created through land assembly. Land assembly, of even 2 lots, will allow for the introduction of a more diverse type of housing, while supporting neighborhood character. For the purpose of the Urban Design modelling, assembly of 2 and 3 lots is used as the likely amount of land assembly for the small-scale apartment building type in *Neighbourhoods*.

Setbacks

The modelling has illustrated building setbacks that are appropriate for townhouse developments and small-scale apartment buildings on major streets in a *Neighbourhoods* context. Based on the review, Urban Design staff recommend that the front yard setback be implemented through use of the average of the existing neighbouring setbacks, or a minimum of 3 meters, whichever is greater. This approach maintains consistency with the existing character of the *Neighbourhoods* supports protection of existing mature trees.

For corner lots, the front yard setback applies to the side streets. The minimum back yard setback is recommended to be 7.5 meters. Additionally, the setback for the rear yard is also proposed to be 7.5 meters, of which a minimum 3-meter soft landscaping area to permit support tree planting and protection. However, it is recommended that development with a laneway at the rear not be subject to the 3 meters. landscaping requirement as part of the back yard setback.

Fig 3. Potential Massing Model (Small-Scale Apartment Building) with Lots Fronting and Flanking on Major Streets



For small-scale apartment buildings, Urban Design is recommending a side yard setback of a minimum of 1.8 meters, which allows for a pedestrian walkway to the backyard, as well as separation from the adjacent buildings. The side yard setback for townhouses is proposed to be a minimum of 0.9 meters, which is consistent with recent multiplex permissions. These minimum side yard setbacks will limit the type of side wall windows on side elevations of small-scale apartment buildings and townhouses to secondary windows, such as bathroom windows. The side yard setback is proposed to be increased to 7.5 meters if the small-scale apartment or townhouse are oriented to the side yard, and have main windows, such as living room windows, on the side elevations.

Site Design

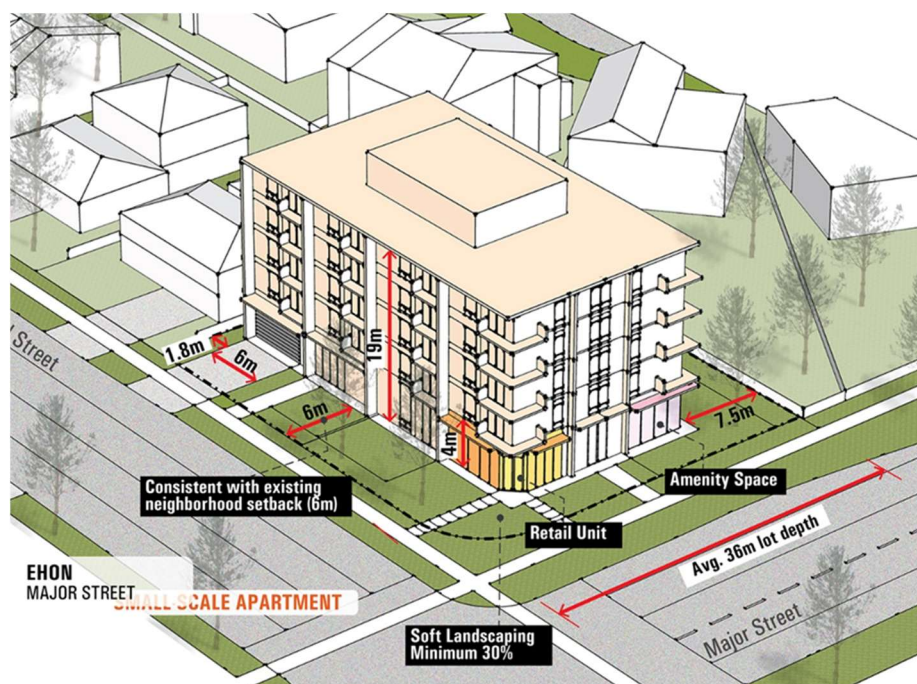
The Urban Design Study analyzed consolidating curb cuts on major streets, promoting alternative rear or side access whenever possible to enhance the urban environment. Additionally, the provision of rear parking, tree planting and landscaped amenity spaces was reviewed to consider how to enhance the livability of the developments. The preservation of existing mature trees and improvements to soft landscape spaces are verified in the models. The massing models are evaluated for the inclusion of ground floor small-scale retail spaces, promoting active street fronts and pedestrian-friendly environments, and reflecting opportunities for local commercial and retail permissions in keeping with the work being done by the EHON Local Commercial Study.

Tree Planting and Preservation

Tree planting and protection have been considered, and prioritized, as part of the Major Streets study work. The issues of sustainable building practices, tree canopy protection, spatial requirements for green infrastructure, and other climate change and sustainability considerations were explored, as were the related spatial requirements and current standards. The models shown in this attachment incorporated the existing trees in the neighbourhood as part of the existing condition. The modeling maintains trees in their existing locations, as can be seen clearly in Figure 4, below.

Research and design work has informed draft zoning regulations for soft landscaping and canopy protection. The draft zoning regulations support tree protection and tree planting through the use of minimum setbacks and landscaping standards based on required soil volumes. Setback requirements will be supported through site plan approvals, and the requirement for submission of Soil Volume Plans as part of a complete application for Site Plan Approval.

Fig 4. Potential Massing Model with a retail at the corner of a Major Street



Rear-Facing Lots

Phase 3 of the Urban Design Study examined the rear-facing lot condition on major street with the *Neighbourhoods* Designation. Unlike the front facing lots, the rear-facing lots on major streets have two frontages. The existing front of the residential houses face the internal local streets, while the rear yards face the major streets. Such lots comprise 41% of the *Neighbourhoods*-designated parcels that abut major streets in Toronto. The Urban Design team recognized the distinction between the rear facing lot and the fronting and flanking lots on major streets. Rear-facing lots present a unique condition in the city's street and block pattern, creating unique challenges and opportunities.

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The majority of rear facing lots are found in the Scarborough, North York and Etobicoke Districts. Unlike the fronting and flanking lot types, the rear-facing lots currently have larger areas of soft landscaping, mature trees and fences, but no driveway access on major streets. Chart 4 shows the proportion of the subject lots with fronting, and flanking/rear facing orientation city-side, and Chart 5 shows these lots as they occur in the City's Community Planning Districts.

Chart 4: Neighbourhoods Lots on Major Streets City-Wide by Lot Orientation

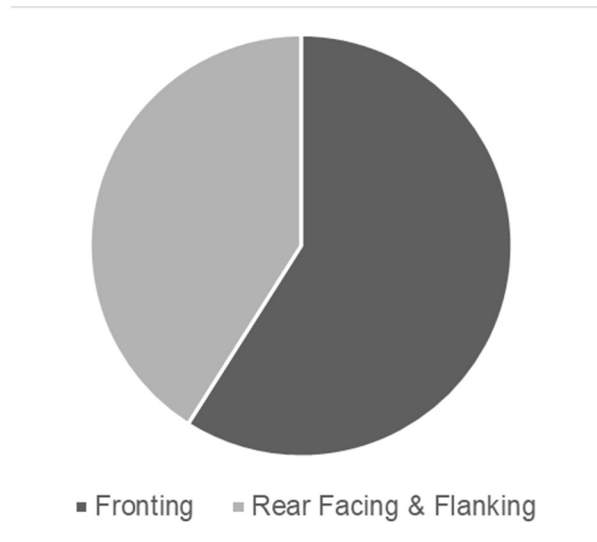
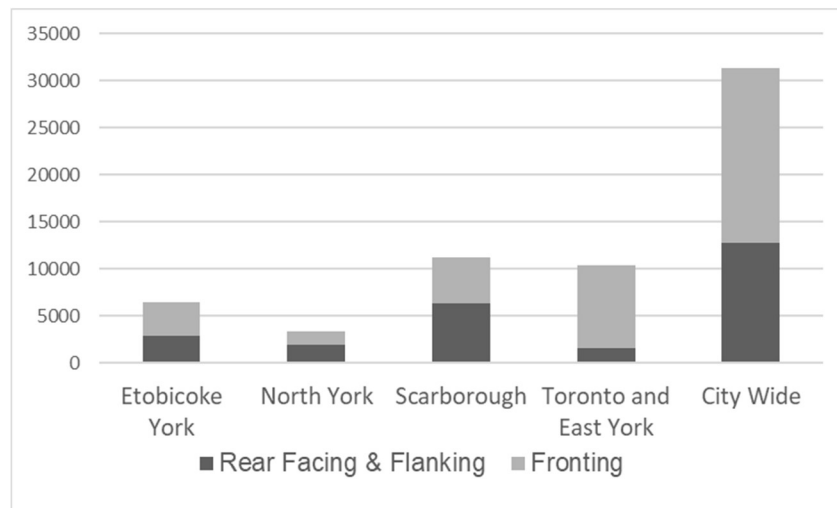


Chart 5: Neighbourhoods Lots on Major Streets by Lot Orientation (Planning Districts)



Rear-facing lots require consideration in development permissions on major streets. The existing rear lot conditions are a historical condition that reflects mid-century subdivision practices in Toronto. They are not consistent with the Urban Design Built Form policies in the Official Plan, which requires development frame and support adjacent streets. The EHON Major Streets study needs to set out a framework within which these properties can evolve and change over time in a way that is consistent with the Official Plan.

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The study of the rear-facing lots is to explore opportunities for additional housing to be introduced in these areas, to ensure that new developments comply with the Official Plan Built Form policies, to ensure that development frames and supports the adjacent street, to preserve the existing mature trees in the back yards which could otherwise be impacted by the new development, and to address challenges to servicing future development on these properties.

City staff from across divisions worked with Urban Design staff to explore opportunities and challenges to modifying permissions for new building types based on existing land use policies and regulations, as well as servicing requirements and capacity in this context. This included testing various massing models on a range of rear facing lots on major streets as illustrated below.

Fig 5. Potential Massing Models with Rear Facing Lots on Major Streets



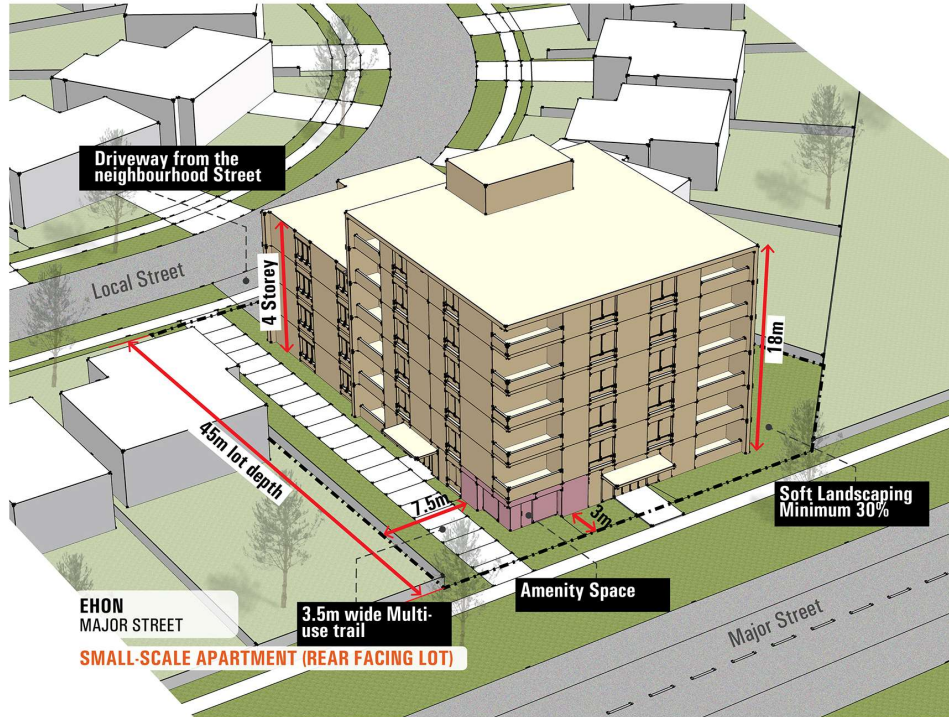
The proposed building heights, massing and setbacks for the townhouses and small-scale apartment buildings for the rear-facing lot development are consistent with the standards applied to fronting and flanking lots described above. Aside from the performance standards that will be consistent for all lot frontage orientations, rear-facing lot developments need to provide active frontages on both major streets and internal local streets as well as consideration of a small height transition on the neighbourhood and local street lot line. Building types such as back-to-back townhouses, small-scale apartment buildings with height transition, and bar shaped apartment buildings, or development of two rows of townhouses on deeper lots, have also been tested for potential rear facing lot development.

The potential development of the rear facing lots can help to improve the connectivity between the inner neighbourhoods and retail services and bus stops on major streets. Cycling and pedestrian connections between the internal local street and the major street are necessary to improve connectivity between the interior of the neighbourhoods

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and local streets, to provide easier and faster access to transit, as well as an overall contribution to supporting sustainable transportation options.

Fig 6. Potential Massing Models with Small-Scale Apartment on Rear Facing Lots on Major Streets



The rear facing lot development is proposed to maintain and emphasize soft landscaping and setbacks to support existing streetscapes. At the time of development, improvements to the public realm along the major streets, including the incorporation of benches, seating areas and landscaped amenities along major streets to enhance the outdoor enjoyment of the neighbourhoods.