2.0 SITE ORGANIZATION

2.1. BUILDING PLACEMENT AND ADDRESS

Locate mid-rise buildings to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open space in a way that fits harmoniously with the existing and planned context, while providing opportunities for high-quality landscaping and streetscaping.

Figure 2.1.1: Illustration of streetwall placed parallel to the street with strategic setbacks, where appropriate.

Organize mid-rise buildings to use existing or new public streets for address, and ensure primary building entrances front onto public streets, are well-defined, clearly visible, and universally accessible from the adjacent public sidewalk.

a. Organize the site at the early stage of the planning process to consider microclimate and passive solar design to improve surrounding comfort and energy efficiency.

b. In general, orient the primary facades of buildings parallel to the street and extend the streetwall the length of the site along the edges of streets, parks, and open space.

c. Design all building elevations that face streets, parks and open spaces and mid-block connections to appear and function as fronts to activate the public realm.

d. Locate mid-rise buildings to:
   i. align with neighbouring building frontages where the existing setback pattern is consistent and not planned to change;
   ii. achieve a sidewalk zone of 6.0 metres where a consistent setback pattern does not exist or is planned to change, except for heritage properties;
   iii. resolve differences where existing setbacks are well-established but vary on either side of a proposed development; and
   iv. maintain and enhance the character of existing soft landscaped streetscapes.

e. Provide greater building setbacks at strategic locations to avoid long, monotonous facades to improve pedestrian amenity, including more space for tree planting, wider sidewalks, forecourts, plazas, and other publicly accessible open spaces.

f. On corner sites, align the building to the setback pattern of neighbouring buildings on both streets and provide primary facades facing both streets.

g. Organize the site to optimize the opportunity for high-quality, grade-related landscaped open space and tree planting at grade. Opportunities may include hard and soft landscaped setbacks, plazas, courtyards, etc. On smaller infill sites, this landscaped open space may be combined in part with above-grade areas, such as rooftop amenity or green roofs.

h. Use high-quality architectural and landscape design to emphasize primary entrances.

i. Differentiate between residential and commercial entrances in mixed-use buildings.

j. Provide an entrance to each ground floor retail unit, which is identifiable and directly accessible from the public sidewalk.

k. Encourage fine-grained articulation of the street facades and provide opportunities for secondary entrances to animate the street when a larger retail tenancy is planned and provide flexible design for converting into small units in the future. Where building entrances are set back by a plaza or forecourt, ensure high visibility and direct, universal access from the public sidewalk.

l. Coordinate the location of building entrances with transit stops and stations.

m. Provide weather protection at entrances to allow pedestrians to move comfortably throughout all seasons. Ensure weather protection elements, such as overhangs and canopies, have sufficient depth and are well-integrated into building design, carefully designed and scaled to support the street, and positioned to maximize function and pedestrian comfort.

Figure 2.1.2: Example of clear, visible entrance with direct access to the sidewalk, complemented by public art and landscaping.

Rationale

Toronto's traditional urban pattern is of buildings aligned parallel to the street with a consistent setback from the front property line. This pattern of building placement clearly defines the edges of streets, parks, and open spaces to promote a vibrant pedestrian environment. Well-placed base buildings create a coherent streetscape and help new buildings fit in with existing neighbours. Where the setback pattern is not consistent or planned to change, the placement of base buildings at the required setback line, parallel to the street, helps establish a pedestrian-oriented context for the future. Where the existing building setback line is close to the property line, greater building setbacks at strategic points or along the entire frontage may be required to expand the public realm and include soft landscaping to improve pedestrian comfort and amenity. Buildings, site services, and amenities should also be arranged to maximize grade-related and other on-site opportunities for high-quality landscaped open spaces to enrich the public realm, improve living and working conditions, and promote sustainable design.

Setbacks allow for soft landscaping, spill-out spaces and patios for retail uses and projecting elements such as porches, canopies, and landings for residential uses. These elements add visual interest to the front façade, provide transition in scale from the sidewalk to the main wall of the building and contribute to the creation of an creation of a safe, animated and comfortable streetscape.

Well-designed entrances create an arrival experience and identity for the building and can help define the transition between public and private realms. Typically, the most vibrant and interesting streets are lined with active, street-related uses accessed by a series of entrances from the public sidewalk. Clear, visible entries and views from building interiors to the street provide security for building occupants and pedestrians. Direct, universal access from the public sidewalk to a mid-rise building or use within a building, animates the street and encourages pedestrian activity to occur in the public realm.

Official Plan Reference:

2.3.1 Healthy Neighbourhoods | 3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 3.5.3 The Future of Retailing

4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies: Accessibility Design Guidelines | Streetscape Manual

Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space Design Guidelines |Toronto Green Standard | Retail Design Manual

2.2. PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACES

Provide grade-related, publicly accessible open space within the mid-rise building site to complement, connect, and extend the existing network of public streets, parks, open space, and laneways.

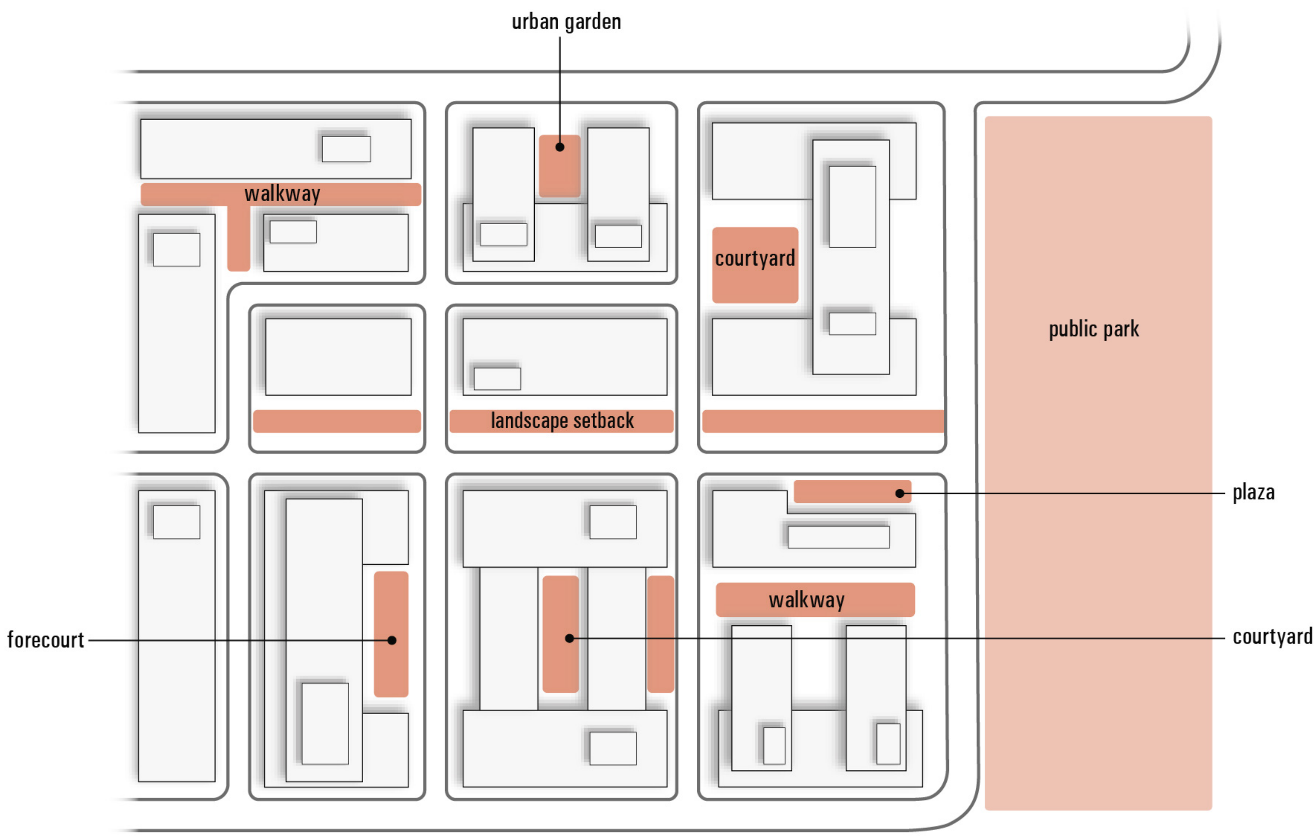


Figure 2.2.1: Illustration of the broad range of publicly accessible open space opportunities in mid-rise communities.

a. Locate and design publicly accessible open space to:
   i. read as a public place and include features and programming opportunities to encourage year-round use;
   ii. provide direct visual and physical connections to public streets, parks, and open space, including adjacent pedestrian and cycling routes;
   iii. complement and connect with publicly accessible open space on neighbouring properties, where possible;
   iv. maximize soft landscaping opportunities for site sustainability, stormwater management, and comfort, create attractive views and focal points;
   v. provide the opportunity to celebrate and honour the history and enduring presence of Indigenous peoples on the land as well as recognizing black and other equity-deserving communities; and
   vi. maximize safety, accessibility, comfort, and amenity, including access to sunlight, clear views to and from adjacent streets and buildings, universal accessibility, pedestrian-scale lighting, four season landscaping, seating, public art, and protection from wind and inclement weather.

b. On larger sites, use publicly accessible open space to provide mid-block pedestrian and cycling connections to support greater block permeability, finer-grained human-scaled frontages, and an interconnected active mobility network.

c. Define and animate the edges of publicly accessible open space with well-proportioned streetwalls, permeable façades, and active uses at-grade.

d. Use design elements, such as surface materials, furnishings, landscaping, and pedestrian-scale lighting that are high-quality, functional, universally accessible, and environmentally sustainable.

Rationale

Mid-rise building sites are encouraged to provide publicly accessible open spaces to support the development of complete communities and provide spaces for all users to enjoy. Public open spaces should not be reserved only for large sites with multiple buildings and all sites are encouraged to provide these important spaces where possible. Mid-rise building sites present many opportunities to provide open spaces: within setback zones to soften the site edge and transition to the adjacent properties, between building wings to create well-framed courtyards, at corners to create prominence and space for pedestrian movement, adjacent to entrances to create places for rest, at a recessed point along the building facade to articulate the massing and provide a placemaking opportunity. In some cases, providing publicly assessable open spaces adjacent to heritage buildings enhances views of their facades and gives them greater prominence.

Although these open spaces are typically privately-owned and maintained, they should read as public places and be designed to encourage year-round public use. 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, site characteristics, and the range of open spaces available in the surrounding area. Providing good quality, publicly accessible open space within a mid-rise building site can help new development fit within the existing context and is particularly important when there is a shortage of public park space in the surrounding area. Publicly accessible open space should be large enough and flexible in its design to support a variety of uses and programming opportunities. The design should also create a micro-climate that supports pedestrian comfort, biodiversity, and should meet or exceed public standards for universal accessibility, safety, and high-quality architectural, landscape, and sustainable design.

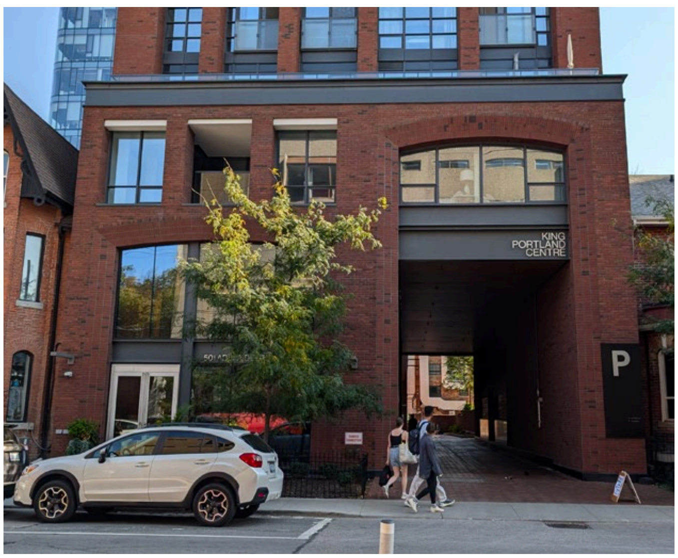
Legal agreements for easements on title to secure public access to open space and owner maintenance responsibilities may be required.

Types of publicly accessible open space may include:

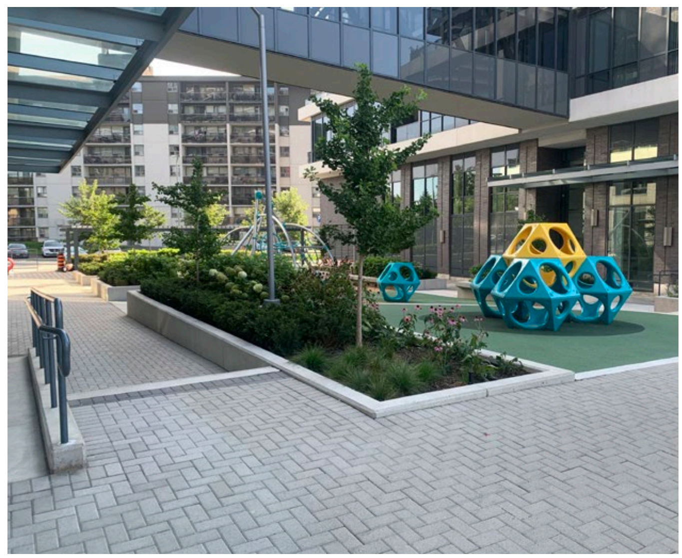
- **Courtyards -** landscaped open space, located in the centre of a single or consolidated block with no direct street frontage.
- **Forecourts -** landscaped open space between the public sidewalk and the main entrance of a building.
- **Landscaped Setback -** space between the public sidewalk and building face characterized by hard or soft landscape treatment.
- **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.
- **Walkways -** exterior public pedestrian route at street level, usually providing connection through the block. A galleria, when glazed and enclosed.

A plaza with concrete pavers, public art and seating (1844 Bloor Street West).

Landscaped walkway providing a mid-block connection (1155 Queen Street West).



Covered mid-block connection (501 Adelaide Street West).



A publicly accessible open space with seating, whimsical elements for children, landscaping and decorative paving (2 Gibbs Road).

Figure 2.2.2: Examples of publicly accessible open spaces.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form - Building Types | 3.2.3 Parks and Open Space

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard | Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Space Design Guidelines

2.3. SHARED INDOOR AND OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACES

Provide a range of high-quality, comfortable outdoor amenity space throughout the mid-rise building site.

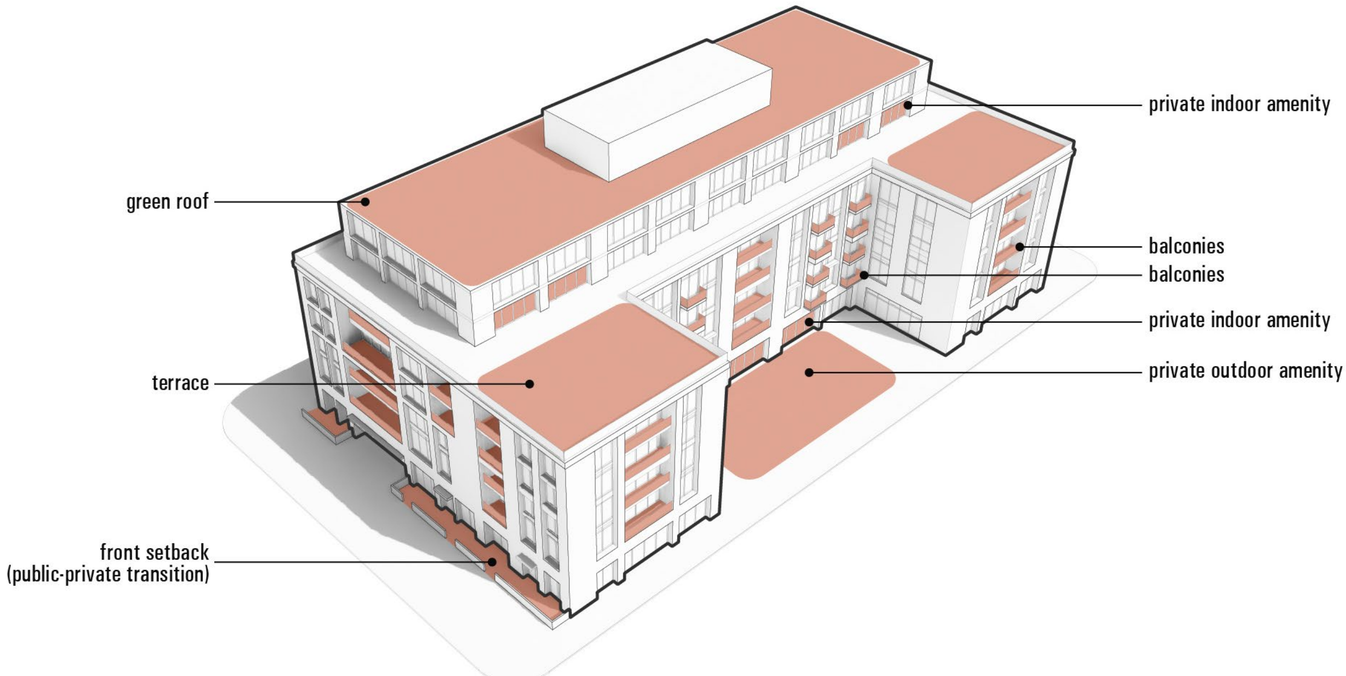


Figure 2.3.1 : Illustration of private and shared amenity space opportunities throughout a mid-rise building site.

a. Locate and design outdoor amenity space to:
   i. maximize comfort, which includes providing access to sunlight and minimizing wind impact, preferably without the use of free standing wind barriers;
   ii. minimize noise and air quality impacts from site servicing, mechanical equipment, etc.;
   iii. include high-quality, universally accessible, and environmentally sustainable materials, four season landscaping, seating, pedestrian-scale lighting, trees, shade structures, weather protection, screening, and programming opportunities, as appropriate.
   iv. Encourage outdoor amenity spaces to be located at grade.

b. To the greatest extent possible, locate private patios and gardens to minimize overlook from neighbours.

c. Make private balconies large enough to provide usable outdoor space, such as space for seating (see also Guideline 3.7 Balconies and Projections).

d. In residential or mixed-use developments, provide pet friendly amenity space in accordance with the Pet Friendly Design Guidelines and Best Practices for Multi-unit Buildings.

e. In residential or mixed-use developments, provide a range of flexible amenity spaces to support a variety of age groups in accordance with the Growing Up Guidelines.

f. When rooftops are used for outdoor amenity, ensure that the base of any building mass that faces onto the space is treated to protect migratory birds and mitigates wind.

g. Where possible, locate interior amenity facilities adjacent to shared outdoor amenity areas and provide windows and doors for direct physical and visual access between these spaces.

Rationale

Whether shared or accessed exclusively by individual building occupants, private open space should meet a broad range of needs, including those of families with children and pet owners. Private outdoor amenity space, such as balconies, gardens, courtyards, roof terraces, and accessible intensive green roofs, should be comfortable, safe, and designed to accommodate year-round use.

On-site shared outdoor amenity areas complement the public park and open space system and provide additional gathering space to support community life. Developments with well-designed and located shared amenity areas with places for children to play, facilities for pets and other shared elements like communal gardens, allow residents to experience and share in 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 walking distance. 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 on large sites with multiple building blocks.

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

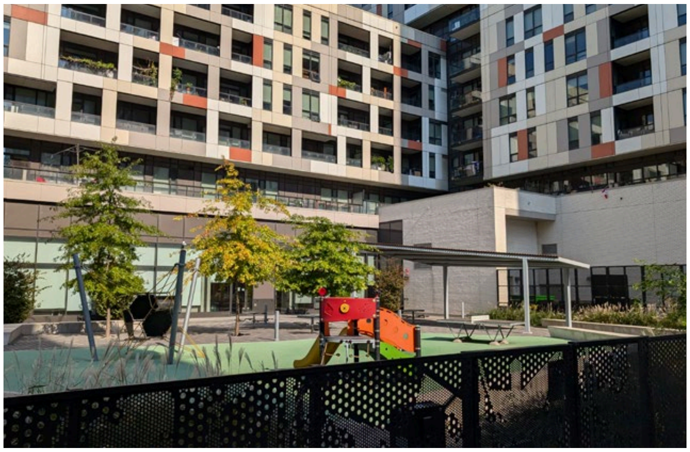


Figure 2.3.2 : Examples of at-grade shared outdoor amenity spaces.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form - Building Types | 3.2.3 Parks and Open Space

3.4 The Natural Environment

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Growing Up Guidelines | Pet Friendly Design Guidelines and Best Practices for Multi-unit Buildings

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

2.4. PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING CONNECTIONS

Provide comfortable, safe, and accessible pedestrian and cycling routes through and around the mid-rise building site to connect with adjacent routes, streets, parks, open space, and other priority destinations.

a. Design on-site pedestrian and cycling routes to:
   i. read as publicly accessible (easements on title to secure public access may be required);
   ii. be direct, logical, and continuous to limit the need for added wayfinding measures;
   iii. include landscaping, pedestrian scale lighting, and other amenities to enhance safety, comfort, and four season use, and
   iv. meet or exceed design standards for universal accessibility and safety in the public realm.

b. Where appropriate, new streets and laneways should incorporate cycling connections and facilities and connect to transit stations and stops to facilitate multimodal trips.

c. Locate short-term and long-term bicycle parking with direct access from the public street and near entrances to buildings, transit, and other pedestrian infrastructure.

d. Where short-term bicycle parking is provided within mid-rise building locate at-grade and, where possible, design with glazing to ensure the bike storage area is visible from the public realm and/or from active common areas within the building.

e. Design bicycle parking in accordance with the Toronto Green Standard and Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities.

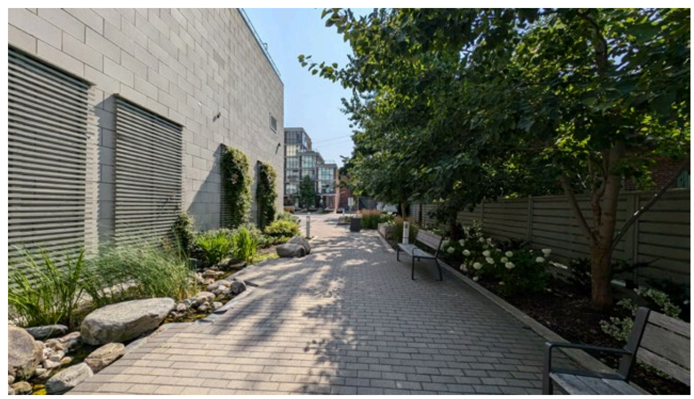


Figure 2.4.1: Examples of on-site pedestrian and cycling connections.

Rationale

Mid-rise buildings are a compact built form that can be accommodated in many areas across the city and are supportive of walking and cycling as primary modes of transportation. Mid-rise developments should support pedestrians and cyclists and provide amenities to make their journeys safe, comfortable and convenient. Mid-rise buildings should be sited and designed to encourage walking and cycling as viable transportation choices for building occupants. High-quality pedestrian and cycling routes should be well-connected with related infrastructure, such as transit, bicycle lanes, on-site bicycle parking, generous public sidewalks to reduce auto-dependency, support safer and more active streets, and promote a healthier city. Providing direct, convenient, safe, highly-visible, and universally accessible connections to the surrounding public realm is key to promoting walking and cycling.

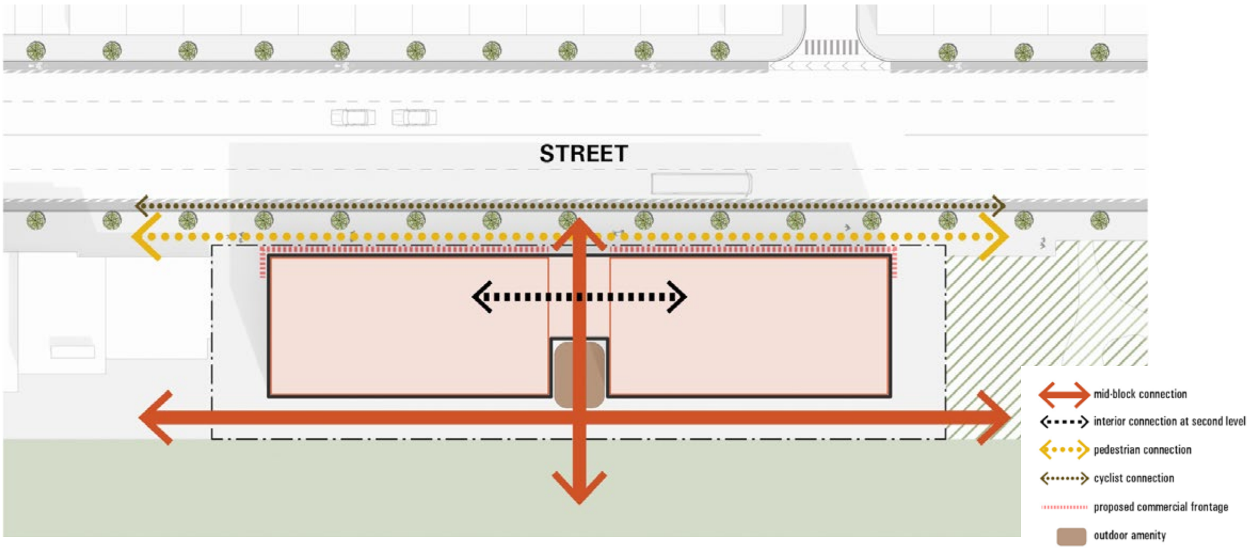


Figure 2.4.2: Illustration demonstrating potential pedestrian and cycling connections

Figure 2.4.3: Examples of bicycle parking.

Official Plan Reference:

2.4 Bringing the City Together: A Progressive Agenda of Transportation Change | 3.1.1 The Public Realm

5.1.3 Site Plan Control

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Toronto Green Standard | Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities

Complete Streets Guidelines

2.5. SITE SERVICING, ACCESS, AND PARKING

Locate loading, servicing, utilities, and access to vehicle parking within the building mass, away from the primary frontage and screened from the public realm and public view.

Access

a. The location, design and arrangement of vehicular access, loading, servicing and parking access activities should limit negative impacts on the safety, accessibility, comfort, and quality of the public realm. Where appropriate, use high-quality architectural elements and landscape design to screen these activities from public view.

b. Provide access to site servicing and access to parking at the rear of the building, from a lane, if present, or from a shared driveway, if possible.

c. Wherever possible, vehicular access to on-site parking, loading, and servicing facilities should be provided from local streets and rear lanes.

d. Where there are opportunities to expand the public lane network and connect to an existing lane, access easements should be secured to ensure that private driveways can provide access for adjacent properties on the block in the future.

e. Mid-block vehicular access should be avoided wherever possible. However, there are instances where this is the only point of access for certain sites. For mid-block sites without rear lane access, a front driveway may be permitted, provided the following criteria are met:

   i. The driveway is located as far from the adjacent intersection as possible, or a minimum of 30 metres from the centre of the driveway to the centre of the nearest side street;
   ii. Appropriate spacing between adjacent driveways is maintained resulting in no more than one driveway every 30 metres;
   iii. Where possible, approved mid-block driveways to major streets should be designated for shared access to serve adjacent properties in lieu of, and until a rear public laneway is established as adjacent redevelopment occurs;
   iv. Where front driveways are permitted, they should be contained within the building massing with additional floors built above the driveway and,

f. Wherever possible, prioritize shared driveways, consolidated vehicular access points, and shared loading and parking facilities between multiple developments to limit curb cuts along public streets and reduce vehicular conflicts with pedestrian and cycling networks.

g. Organize drop-off areas into the side or rear of the site. When located at the rear, provide direct visual and physical pedestrian aaccess with a through lobby to the front pedestrian entrance and to the public sidewalk.

h. Provide decorative paving to clearly define areas where vehicles may encounter pedestrians and cyclists at locations such as drive aisles, crosswalks and intersections.

i. Laneways, driveways and servicing areas should be designed to be safe, and comfortable for pedestrians. Animate these spaces and provide passive surveillance by providing active uses along a portion of the frontage wherever possible.

j. On sites with multiple frontages, building facades and public realm treatments on the "back of house" frontage should be designed with the same level of animation and articulation as the front facade to create a vibrant and comfortable pedestrian realm and prevent the creation of service-oriented streets.

Figure 2.5.1: Illustration of vehicular access points from rear lane.

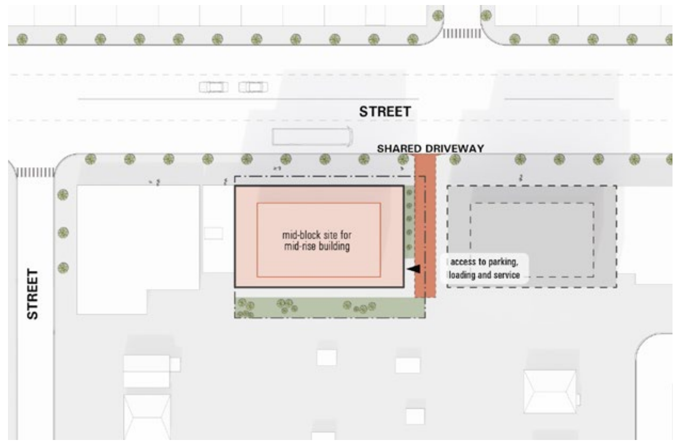


Figure 2.5.2: Illustration of vehicular access points for mid-block sites.

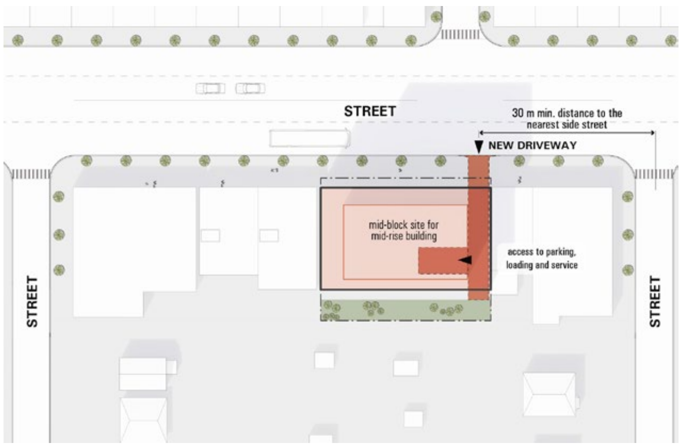


Figure 2.5.3: Illustration of vehicular access points for mid-block site with future lane/driveway access.

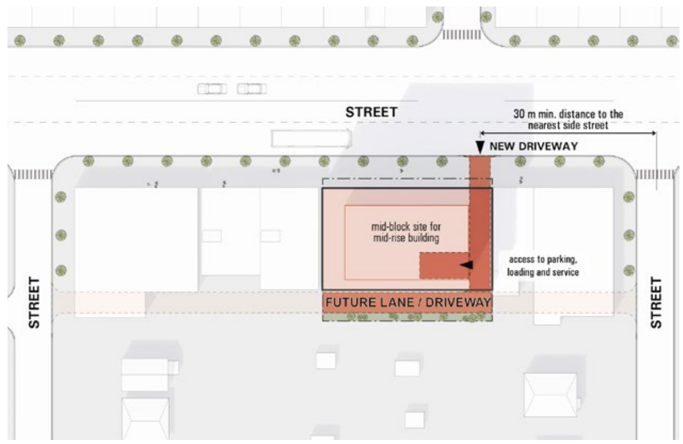


Figure 2.5.4: Illustration of consolidated vehicular access via a shared driveway.

Site Servicing

a. Locate loading and servicing areas in the interior of blocks and ,integrate them and underground parking into the area of the building footprint to maximize unencumbered landscaped open spaces and active uses at grade along all frontages.

b. Minimize the extent of site area dedicated to servicing and vehicular access through the use of shared infrastructure and efficient layouts and leave as much space as possible at grade, for outdoor amenity, landscaping and public realm improvements.

c. 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.

d. Locate ventilation shafts, grates, and other above-ground mechanical or site servicing equipment, away from the public sidewalk (especially the pedestrian clearway) and public or private open spaces.

e. Locate gas metres in discrete locations, away from the public realm and screened by the building mass or other design features.

f. For mid-rise buildings serviced by curbside solid waste collection, the design of buildings and bin placement areas should ensure that curbside collection does not compromise the quality of the public realm, preserving space for tree planting and providing comfortable areas for pedestrians and cyclists, and avoid clearway obstructions.

g. Provide sufficient vertical clearance for loading areas, in accordance with the Loading Space Standards in the Zoning By-law.

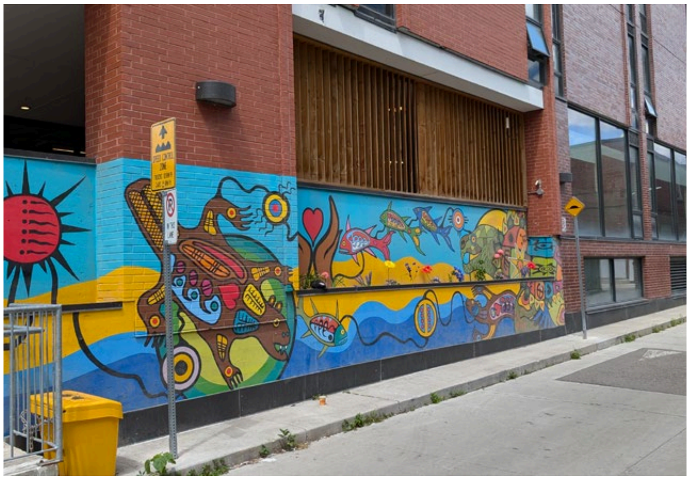


Figure 2.5.5: Example of service area treatments that animate the facade.

Figure 2.5.6: Example of discrete location and screening of gas meter.

Parking

a. Provide pedestrian and cyclist access to and from parking areas that are clearly visible, well-lit, convenient, and easily accessible from the street.

b. Minimize parking to reduce embodied carbon emissions and support sustainable design practices.

c. Locate parking underground within the building footprint.

d. Equip parking spaces with EV infrastructure in accordance with Toronto Green Standard.

e. When parking cannot be located underground (due to, for example, below grade transit infrastructure or high water table) locate parking within the building envelope and line at-grade or above-grade parking with active uses to animate the public realm and the building facades.

Rationale

As directed by the Official Plan, development will locate and organize vehicle parking, vehicular access and ramps, loading, servicing, storage areas, and utilities to minimize their impact and improve the safety and attractiveness of the public realm, the site and surroundings.

Servicing, access and parking 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, also helps mitigate noise, air quality concerns, and unattractive views within the building site and on adjacent streets, public or private open spaces, and neighbouring properties.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3. Built Form | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas | 2.2 Structuring Growth in the City | 2.4 Bringing the City Together

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 5.1.3 Site Plan Control

Official Plan Reference:

Toronto Green Standard | Guidelines for the Design and Management of Bicycle Parking Facilities

Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines | City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013

2.6. PUBLIC ART

Pursue public art opportunities and funding strategies on mid-rise building sites, or adjacent public lands, to enhance the quality of the development, the public realm, and the city.

Figure 2.6.1: Nicolas Baier, Network, 95 The Pond Road

a. Where applicable, provide adequate building setbacks and space around public art so that it can be properly viewed and experienced from the public realm.

Rationale

Public art enriches the public realm by making buildings and open spaces more interesting, engaging, and memorable. It can help activate the site and create a more inclusive, vibrant, and visually engaging neighbourhood that reflects the values, aspirations, and diversity of its residents and visitors. Public art also provides the opportunity to celebrate and honour the history and enduring presence of Indigenous peoples on the land as well as recognizing black and other equity-deserving communities.

When considered early in the project planning stages, the most impactful locations and opportunities for public art can often be identified and secured.

Public art opportunities on mid-rise building sites may include:

- a conceptual framework to organize open spaces including parks, plazas, setbacks, or streetscapes;
- a stand- alone artwork that marks an entryway, corner, feature area, or view terminus;
- the integration of public art within the building elements, including façades, canopies, floors, lighting, etc.; and
- public art combined with landscape design, functional, and decorative elements of a site, such as water features, lighting, seating, paving, walls, fences, entrances and exits, etc.

Paul Raff, Shoreline Commemorative Feature, 55 Front Street East

Olaf Breuning, Guardians, 85 East Liberty Street

Public Studio, We Are All Animals, 1830 Bloor Street West

Julie Dault, Wheel of Fortune, 115 Haynes Avenue

Figure 2.6.2: Examples of public art on mid-rise sites.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.5 Public Art

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies: Percent for Public Art Program Guidelines | Toronto Public Art Strategy 2020-2030 | Toronto Public Art Strategy Implementation Plan: Phase 1 (2024 – 2026)

3.0 MID-RISE BUILDING DESIGN

3.1. MID-RISE BUILDING HEIGHT

The Official Plan states that “mid-rise buildings will be designed to have heights generally no greater than the width of the right-of-way that it fronts onto”.

a. Mid-rise building scale is contextual and maximum building height corresponds to the right-of-way (ROW) width ranging from 5 storeys (16.5m) up to 14 storeys (45m).

b. Achieving the maximum building height on each right-of-way will be dictated by the assessment of contextual fit, good street proportion and sun/shadow performance set out in subsequent guidelines.

c. Additional height taller than the adjacent ROW width may be considered on deep lots, provided that the development meets the objectives of the Official Plan policies and other guidelines in this document, including but not limited to the following criteria:

   i. Fits with the existing and planned context;
   ii. Maintains an overall mid-rise building scale with good street proportion;
   iii. Meets required sun/shadow performance on the adjacent street and public realm;
   iv. Provides appropriate setbacks, step-backs and separation distances; and
   v. Provides appropriate transition in scale and massing to adjacent heritage properties and context.

Height above the ROW width should be located and massed to reduce physical and visual impacts on the public realm and incorporate increased setbacks/step-backs equal to or greater than the additional height.

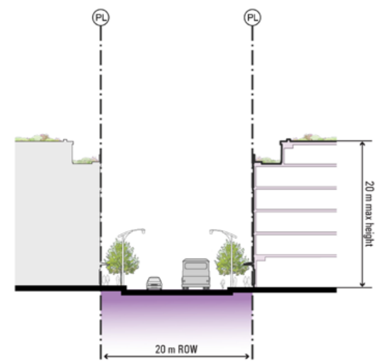


Figure 3.1.1: 1:1 on 20m ROW

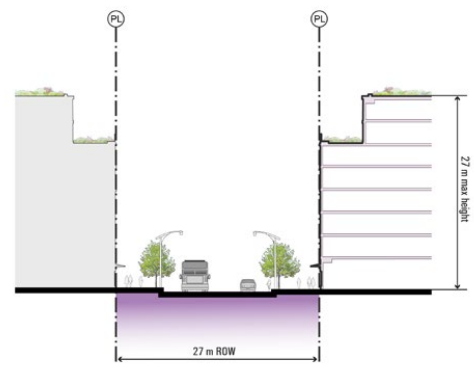


Figure 3.1.2: 1:1 on 27m ROW

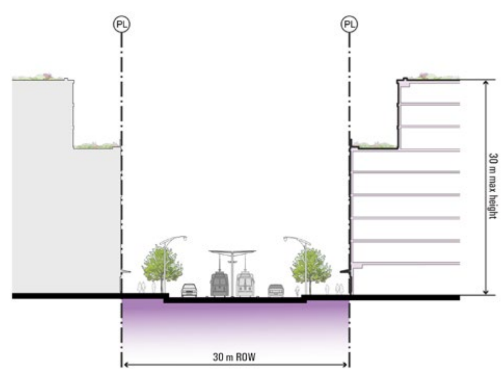


Figure 3.1.3: 1:1 on 30m ROW

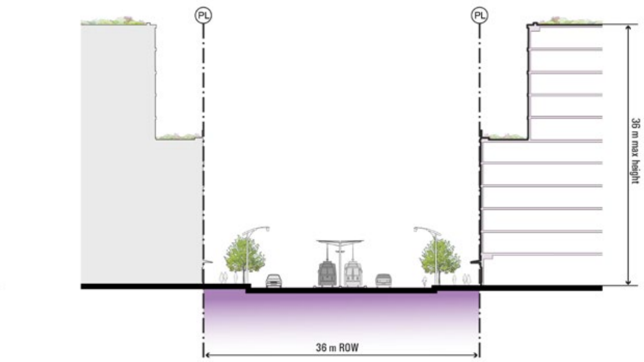


Figure 3.1.4: 1:1 on 36m ROW

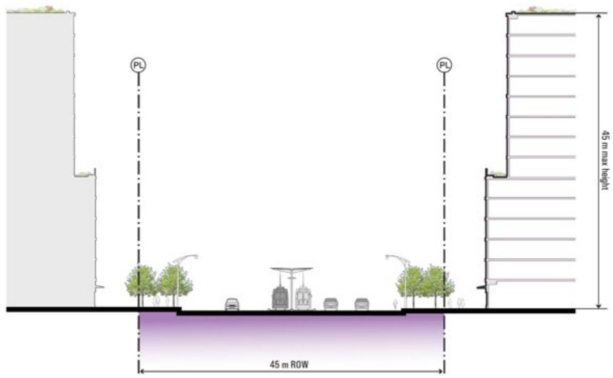


Figure 3.1.5: 1:1 on 45m ROW

Rationale

As defined in the Official Plan, mid-rise buildings are a transit-supportive form of development that provides a level of intensification at a scale between low-rise and tall building forms. Mid-rise building heights are contextual and are informed by the width of the right-of-way onto which they front. For example, on a street with a 20-metre-wide right-of-way, a mid-rise building consisting of commercial uses at grade and residential uses above, can be generally up to 20 metres in height, or approximately 6 storeys.

Official Plan Map 3 – Right-of-Way Widths Associated with Existing Major Streets, identifies major streets with seven different right-of-way (R.O.W.) widths: 20, 23, 27, 30, 33, 36, and 45 metres. The maximum mid-rise building height at 14 storeys (45 metres) is equivalent to the 45-metre right-of-way.

The Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study introduced Performance Standards for mid-rise buildings in 2010 which prescribe a maximum building height equivalent to the width of the adjacent right-of-way to a maximum of 11 storeys. Since 2010, many mid-rise buildings of various heights and scales have been constructed across Toronto, with many built to heights equivalent to the adjacent right-of-way width. In some instances, buildings that are taller than the right-of-way width, but still present a mid-rise typology have been approved through site-specific applications which were evaluated based on the context of the site, including considerations for proximity to transit, separation from Neighbourhoods properties and other low-rise areas and demonstration of the mitigation of built form impacts and appropriate contextual fit.

There may be certain circumstances where buildings that exceed the height of the right-of-way are appropriate. Consideration for the development of mid-rise buildings greater than the adjacent width of right-of-way should be evaluated on a site-by-site basis and are dependent on the criteria indicated in these guidelines.

The maximum allowable height defined in this section is the determining factor for height maximums. This guideline is not intended to replace other area-specific guidelines, rather, it should be read in conjunction with them to support the specific objectives and visions of each area. This guideline document recognizes that building height is only one aspect of regulating building design. Subsequent guidelines outline additional methods to shape and design mid-rise buildings.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form

3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types

3.2. STREET PROPORTION AND FRONT FAÇADE

The Official Plan states that "mid-rise buildings will be designed to maintain street proportion and open views of the sky from the public realm by stepping back building massing generally at a height equivalent to 80% of the adjacent right-of-way width".

a. Consider existing and planned conditions to determine appropriate heights, scale, streetwall heights, pedestrian perception step-backs and setbacks of buildings that establish well-proportioned streetscapes and ensure sunlight onto public streets.

b. Mid-rise buildings on both sides of the street should be generally consistent in terms of heights, scale, streetwall heights, pedestrian perception step-backs and setbacks to create a balanced and comfortable streetscape.

Figure 3.2.1: Example of a mid-rise building that frames the adjacent right-of-way with good proportion.

Rationale

Street proportion is the ratio of the height of buildings along the edges of the street and the distance between buildings across the street. Street proportion is a fundamental determinant in the character and scale of the street, influences how people experience the urban environment and provides a measure of certain qualities of the street and the buildings that front onto it, including access to direct sunlight, daylight and views to the sky.

Street proportion is contextual and varies across the City. Good street proportion is used to guide the massing of development. It is determined by considering the existing and planned conditions and determining the appropriate setbacks, scale and massing of buildings to provide a street proportion that will provide good sunlight and daylight conditions, considering the planned intensity of development and expectations for the character and quality of the street in the future.

The guidelines that follow are meant to provide a flexible framework for developing mid-rise buildings with good proportion, appropriately scaled and well-designed street facing façades.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types

3.2.1. SUN / SHADOW PERFORMANCE

Mid-rise buildings should be designed to protect access to sunlight within the surrounding public realm. The height, scale and massing of the building and front façade should achieve at least five consecutive hours of sunlight on the street boulevard at the equinoxes.

a. The consecutive five-hour sunlight window will vary depending on the location of the site and the orientation of the street but will be measured generally between 9:18 a.m. and 6:18 p.m. on March 21st and September 21st.

b. The consecutive five-hour sunlight window on various streets across the City should generally align with the sample sun/shadow study provided in Appendix A.

c. Mid-rise buildings should demonstrate through a sun/shadow study, how the proposed building provides good access to sunlight and minimizes shadowing of nearby parks and natural areas.

d. On sites with multiple mid-rise buildings, limit or vary the height of buildings to reduce the extent of shadows and length of time they are cast on public realm elements and consider the cumulative effect of multiple buildings on resulting shadowing.

e. Additional shadow mitigation may be required for a particular street, park, open space, natural area, heritage property, Heritage Conservation District, or other shadow sensitive area on a site- or area-specific basis.

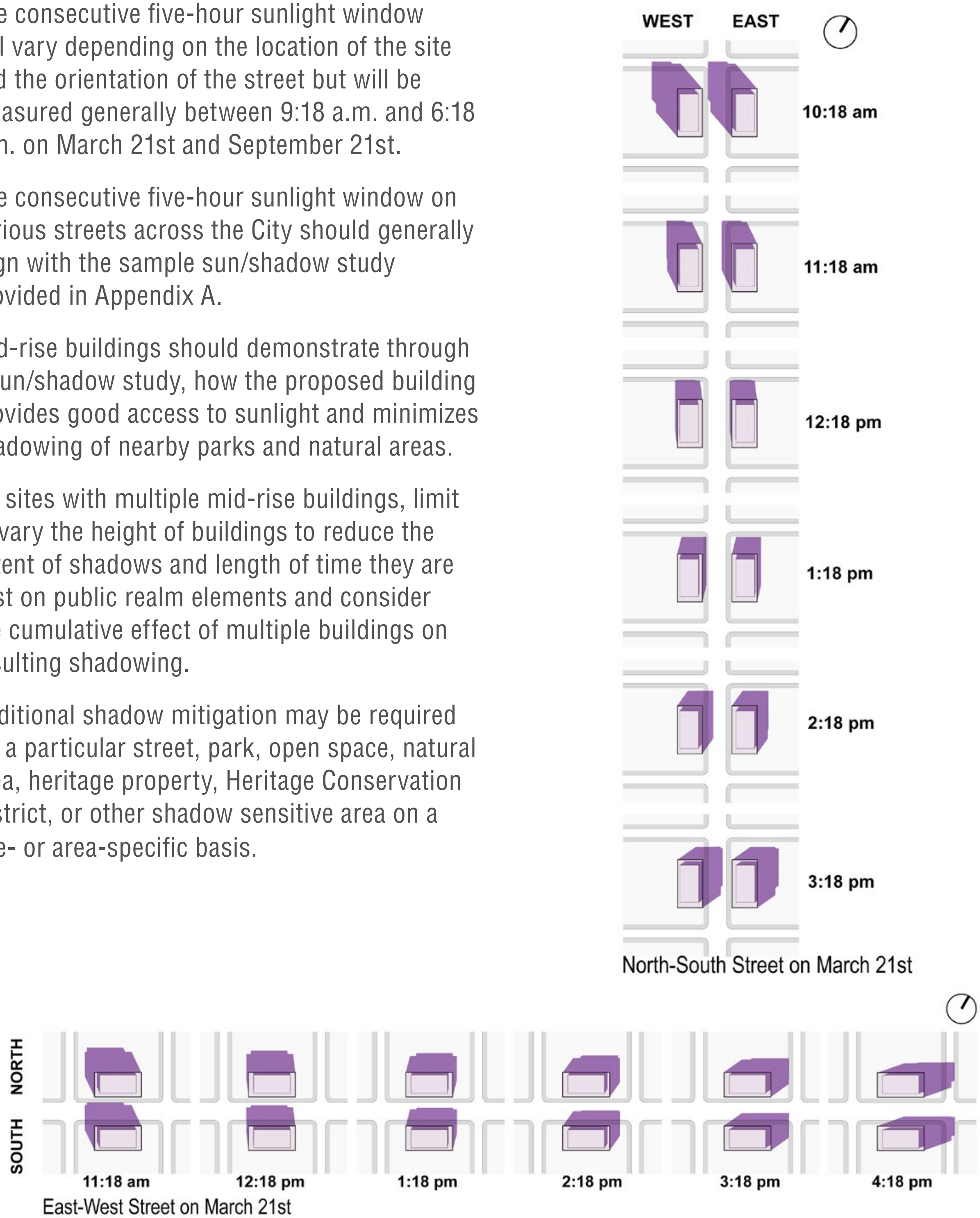


Figure 3.2.2: Sample illustration of five consecutive hours of sunlight on the boulevard.

Rationale

Extensive research about the effects of sunlight on Toronto's sidewalks was compiled in "Sun, Wind, and Pedestrian Comfort: A Study of Toronto's Central Area" by Bosselman et al., 1990. Key recommendations of this study support the objective to maintain a minimum of five hours of sunlight on Toronto's streets between the spring equinox and fall equinox to enhance pedestrian comfort during the shoulder seasons.

The City's Thermal Comfort Study (2024) also shows that access to sunlight is essential in Toronto. It allows all living things, including trees, vegetation, insects, animals and humans, to thrive and improves the usability and enjoyment of outdoor spaces. It enhances thermal comfort for pedestrians, as is easily observed on Toronto streets, where the majority of people choose to walk on the sunny side of the street, from September to May.

Given that there may be mid-rise buildings as tall as the adjacent right-of-way width, the upper storeys of buildings will need to be located and massed to provide sunlight on the opposite sidewalk. Buildings built to the front property line and to the maximum allowable height will need to provide step-backs to ensure sun/shadow performance in compliance with these guidelines.

The recommendations of these guidelines apply to all mid-rise development located on north-south, east-west, and diagonal streets.

Sample shadow studies illustrating the five consecutive hour sunlight intervals on various streets across the City are provided in Appendix A. The specific test time window should be confirmed with the City for each mid-rise development application.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types

3.2.2. STREETWALL HEIGHT AND PEDESTRIAN PERCEPTION STEP-BACK

Streetwalls should be designed to fit harmoniously within the existing and/or planned context of neighbouring building heights at the street edge and to respect the scale and proportion of adjacent streets and open spaces. Provide pedestrian perception step-backs above the streetwall height to reduce the perceived building height and create a comfortable pedestrian experience.

Figure 3.2.3: Example of pedestrian-scale streetwall.

a. Streetwalls should be designed to fit compatibly within the existing and planned context of neighbouring streetwall heights.

b. Incorporate a gradual transition in streetwall height toward heritage properties to maintain the prominence of heritage buildings and the overall streetwall.

c. Where there is an existing streetwall height context, align the height of the streetwall on new buildings with the existing streetwall to maintain a consistent streetscape.

d. In the absence of an existing or planned streetwall height context, provide a streetwall height between 3 storeys (10.5m) and 80% of the adjacent street right-of-way width, up to a limit of 8 storeys (25.5m) in height.

e. An increased streetwall height, up to 6 storeys (20m), may be appropriate along the streets with a ROW width of less than 27metres, provided the development meets other guidelines in this document, including, but not limited to, compatibility and fit with the surrounding context, heritage conservation, and sun/shadow performance.

f. On sites where the adjacent context is lower-scale and not anticipated to change, provide an appropriate transition in streetwall height that steps down to the lower-scale neighbours.

g. The minimum dimension of the pedestrian perception step-back above the streetwall height should be no less than 3.0 metres to maintain the legibility and prominence of the streetwall and create opportunities for terraces and balconies above of a sufficient depth.

h. A pedestrian perception step-back that aligns with the structural grid is encouraged along the street facing façades to reduce embodied carbon and improve energy efficiency.

i. On corner sites, continue the pedestrian perception step-back along the side street and vary the height and form of the streetwall to respect and respond to the height, scale, and built-form character of both streets.

Rationale

Streetwalls support the pedestrian experience and reinforce human scale at the street level. The streetwall height and scale should frame and create an appropriate relationship to the streetscape and street proportion. Streetwalls should create an appropriate sense of enclosure along the street to promote and encourage the development of walkable streets. Pedestrian-scaled building elements make the streetscape comfortable and inviting and align with numerous city building objectives. The recommended streetwall height aligns with Official Plan Built Form Policy 3.1.4.4, establishing a consistent yet flexible framework. For narrow streets with a ROW under 27 metres, a streetwall height from 3 storeys up to 6 storeys may be appropriate, while a streetwall height from 3 storeys up to 8 storeys may be recommended for wider streets. This approach ensures that maximum streetwall height is generally equivalent to 80% of the ROW width while maintaining pedestrian scale and integrates the mid-rise building standards with the base building criteria in the Tall Building Design Guidelines. This will ensure a cohesive development of the Avenues, Major Streets and other areas across the city, with appropriate context-based variation.

The location of the step-back above the streetwall height is encouraged to be aligned with the structural grid and aligned with the height of the rear step-back where appropriate. The overall form of mid-rise buildings should generally be repeatable and produce predictable impacts on the surrounding area, but variation in architectural design is encouraged to create dynamic and memorable streetscapes, including accentuating a major intersection or corner, central open space, view terminus or other key urban design feature through streetwall height variation.

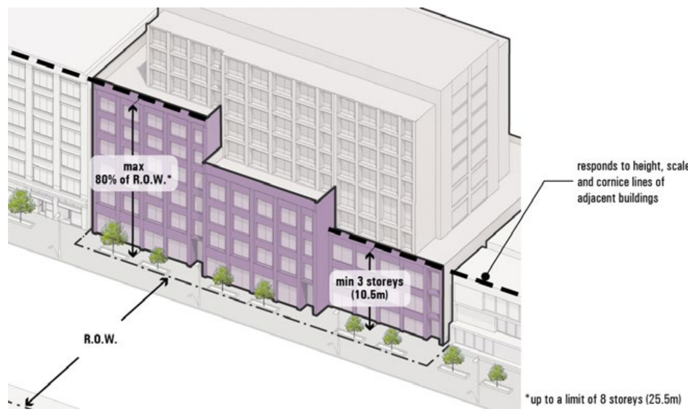


Figure 3.2.4: Example of variation in streetwall height.

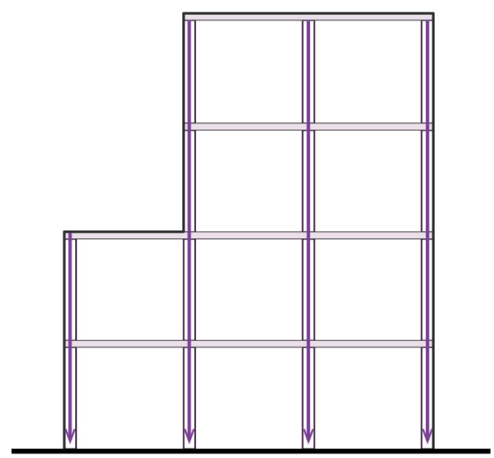


Figure 3.2.5: Illustration of step-back alignment with structural grid in a mass timber buildings to promote sustainable building design.

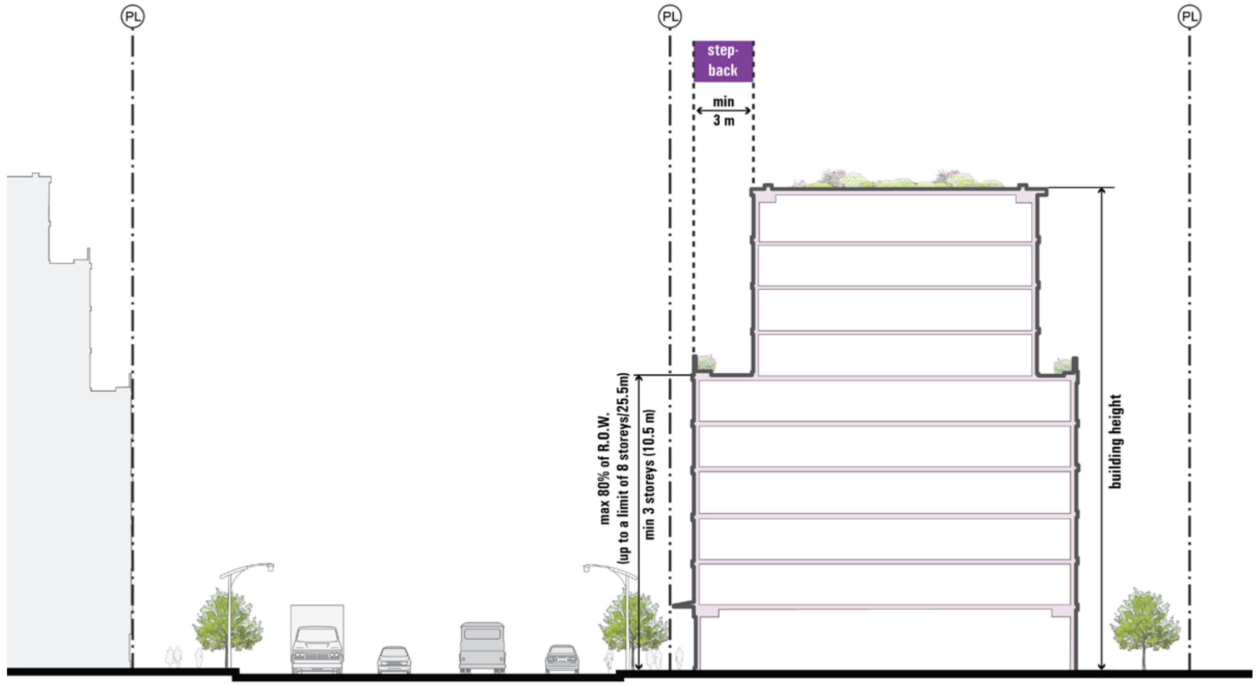


Figure 3.2.6: Illustration of pedestrian perception step-back.

Figure 3.2.7: Example of a step-back above the streetwall that reduces the perception of height when viewed from the pedestrian level.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types

3.2.3. STREETWALL DESIGN

Front façades of mid-rise buildings should be designed to frame and support the adjacent public realm, including streets, parks and open spaces, through well-articulated and appropriately scaled façades.

a. Design front façades to create a comfortable, highly animated, pedestrian environment through architectural elements and expressions, including building entrances, windows, canopies, recesses and projections, and other design interventions to reinforce a variety of scales and textures.

b. Where there is a defined streetwall character and established architectural rhythm, new buildings should be designed to respect and reinforce existing character reflected in elements such as the vertical rhythm and fine-grained built form, as well as the fenestration and window patterns of neighbouring structures. Additionally, integrating datum lines from adjacent buildings will help reinforce the architectural rhythm.

c. Where there is no prevailing streetwall character, design streetwalls to establish a new architectural character, with a fine-grained pattern and sense of pedestrian scale through the use of vertical and horizontal articulation.

d. Variations in streetwall height should be provided to break the long continuous façade and provide an appropriate transition to adjacent properties.

e. Reinforce the human-scaled nature of the pedestrian perception zone with human-scaled materiality and textures to add visual interest. Where retail uses are provided, design the streetwall to be compatible with traditional storefront compositions, such as recessed entries, bulkheads, transom windows, display windows, piers, signage bands, and storefront cornices. Refer to the Retail Design Manual for further details.

f. Design windows to encourage views and interaction between the interior spaces and exterior pedestrian environments.

g. Utilities, vents, gas meters and other functional servicing elements should be avoided on the lower levels of façades adjacent to the public realm or should be integrated into the architectural composition and away from public view.

h. Where there is a change in grade along a street frontage, step the floor plate of the ground floor level of the front façade to maintain a consistent relationship with the public sidewalk.

Rationale

Streetwall design interventions, such as articulation and architectural rhythm, play an important role in ensuring streetwalls are compatible with the existing and planned context. How the building addresses the street is essential for establishing a positive first impression and successful interface between the public street and private building. The way a building performs in this regard is strongly influenced by the quality of its ground floor design, façade articulation, material use, and the location and treatment of building entrances.

The façade is the exterior of a building visible to the public, and its exterior design contributes to a more beautiful and environmentally sustainable Toronto. The exterior design of a façade includes the form, scale, proportion, pattern and materials of building elements, including doors, roofs, windows, and decorative elements. It is important to consider the exterior design of a façade at grade as it relates to the general layout and organization of interior spaces closest to the pedestrian environment. In particular, the placement of doors and unobstructed clear glass windows, with little or no tint, play an important role in supporting a safe, accessible and vibrant public realm, provided that the design is also bird friendly. These design measures are necessary to help new development support the public realm and fit with the existing and/or planned context.

Building articulation is equally important in a building's contribution to human-scale at the street level. The application of sensitive building massing, high quality and compatible materials and sustainable design will ensure that all new mid-rise buildings contribute to a great public realm.

Figure 3.2.8 : Examples of streetwall design.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Retail Design Manual

3.2.4. ALIGNMENT

The front façade of mid-rise buildings should establish a front setback line that appropriately responds to the existing and planned context, while providing a sidewalk zone at least 6.0 metres in width wherever possible.

Figure 3.2.9: A mid-rise building placed parallel to the street and aligned with the frontages of neighbouring buildings.

a. On blocks where a consistent setback pattern does not exist or is planned to change, the streetwall should be located at the required setback line to achieve a 6.0-metre sidewalk zone.

b. here the existing setback pattern is consistent and not planned to change, the front streetwall should align with the frontages of the neighbouring buildings.

c. If existing setbacks are well-established but vary on either side of the mid-rise building site, the front streetwall should be located and designed to resolve the differences, avoiding blank side walls visible from the street.

d. On corner sites, the setback pattern and alignment of neighbouring buildings on both streets should be considered.

e. Greater building setbacks should be provided at strategic points or along the entire frontage, as appropriate, for architectural interest and to enhance pedestrian amenity. This includes more space for tree planting, wider sidewalks, building entrances, outdoor marketing areas, forecourts, plazas, mid-block connections and other publicly accessible open spaces.

f. At special corners, major intersections, or other focus areas, more generous setbacks are encouraged, as these locations play a key role as important cultural, civic, and social places, or present opportunities to improve the interface between such spaces. Public realm improvements at focus areas are encouraged to honor and celebrate the history of the surrounding community in which they are located, including Indigenous heritage.

g. Where applicable, the character of existing soft landscaped streetscapes should be maintained and reinforced by providing generous setbacks for trees and plantings, and prioritizing tree preservation.

h. To ensure adequate space for public realm elements at grade when below-grade utilities limit design options, a cantilever into the setback zone may be considered. This option is site-specific and requires the first 10.5 metres of the building to align with the setback line. The cantilever must maintain a minimum of 3.0-metre setback from the tree planting zone to protect existing and future tree canopy.

i. Any below grade building structures should be built to the setback line at grade and ensure sufficient soil volume and depth are provided to support mature tree growth and unencumbered tree plantings where possible in the setback areas.

j. In residential contexts, the front façade of mid-rise buildings should provide a minimum 3.0-metre landscaped setback to enhance the quality of the public realm spaces and provide privacy for residents at the lower lever of the mid-rise buildings. Soft landscaping, trees and plantings, are required in the setback zones.

k. In residential contexts, where the existing setback pattern is consistent and not planned to change, the front yard setback should be the average between the two neighbouring buildings, up to maximum 6.0 metres.

Rationale

Buildings oriented parallel to streets with a consistent setback, create clear edges for walkways and green spaces and define the public realm. Well-placed streetwalls create a coherent streetscape and help new mid-rise buildings fit in with existing and future neighbours.

Providing consistent and aligned front yard setbacks ensures that development will frame and support adjacent streets, parks and open spaces to promote civic life and the use of the public realm, and to improve the safety, pedestrian comfort, interest and experience.

When determining the appropriate setback from the front property line, the uses at grade along with objectives for streetscape design, including the minimum sidewalk zone and tree planting zone requirements, should be considered. The appropriate setback from the front property line will also vary based on the mid-rise building typology. Main street mid-rise buildings seek to create an urban street edge condition where a smaller setback is generally desirable, while residential mid-rise buildings seek to create a residential street edge where a more generous landscaped setback is desirable. The setback from the street should also consider the location of the neighbouring buildings and should seek to resolve any jogs in the streetwall as well as other considerations provided in these guidelines.

Properties develop incrementally over time and may result in inconsistent setbacks along the street. Where this occurs, new buildings and streetscapes should be designed to limit the perception and impacts of inconsistent setbacks on the public realm.

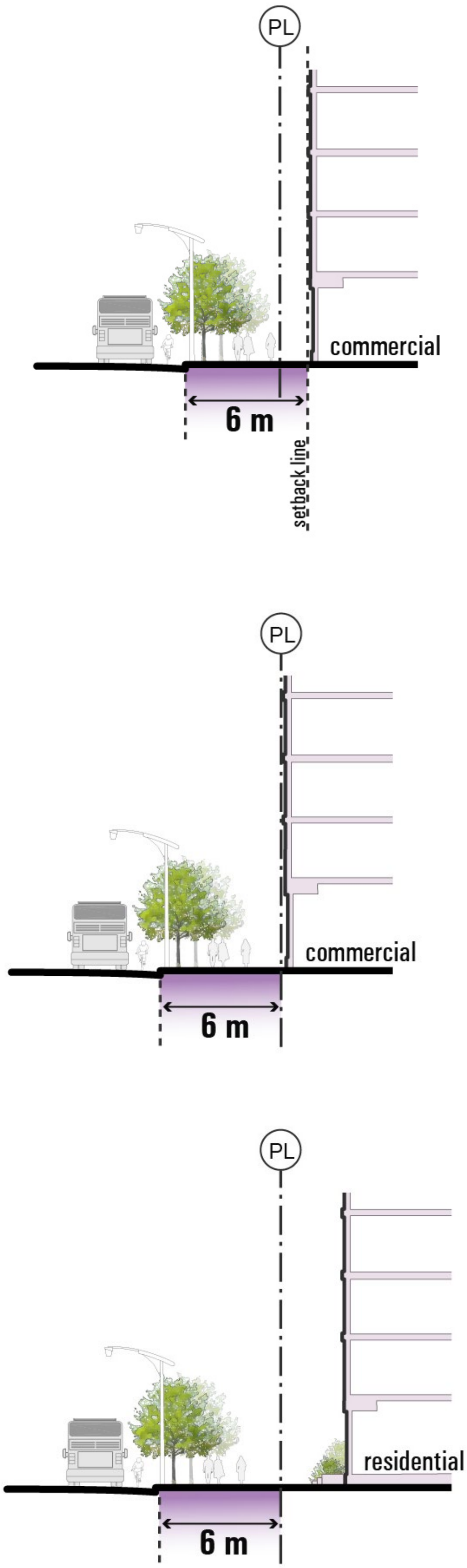


Figure 3.2.10: Examples of setback conditions with a minimum 6.0-metre sidewalk zone.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form

3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types

3.3. REAR TRANSITION

3.3.1. REAR TRANSITION TO BUILDINGS

The transition between a mid-rise building and abutting buildings and properties to the rear should be created through a combination of building heights, horizontal separation such as setbacks and/or step-backs of upper floors, landscaping, as well as façade articulation.

a. Transition should be provided between mid-rise buildings and abutting buildings and properties to the rear. This transition should include a minimum setback of 7.5 metres from the rear property line to the mid-rise building face. The 7.5-metre setback allows for the creation of rear lanes and/or vehicular access for parking, servicing and loading, open spaces, outdoor amenity areas, as well as space for tree plantings with adequate soil volume.

b. For mid-rise buildings up to 20 metres (6 storeys) in height, no step-backs are required along the rear of the building (see Figure 3.3.1).

c. For mid-rise buildings with heights greater than 20 metres (6 storeys), a 2.5-metre step-back should be provided along the rear of the building, 7th storey. The height of the step-back should be determined based on the surrounding land uses, existing and planned building heights and built form impact (see Figure 3.3.2).

d. There may be scenarios where increasing the rear setback while reducing or eliminating upper-level step-backs may be appropriate to achieve appropriate transition with a more simplified built form. This option should be considered on a site-by-site basis and be informed by the appropriate supporting studies that demonstrate that built form impacts (e.g., wind impact) can be appropriately limited and mitigated (see Figure 3.3.3).

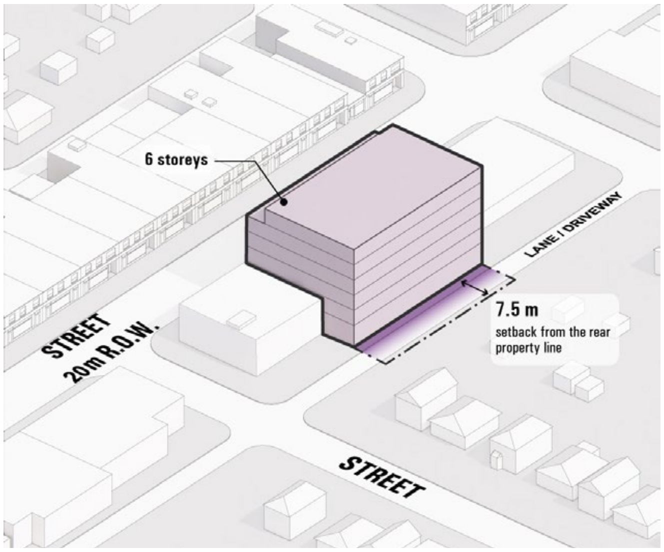


Figure 3.3.1: Sample illustration of a 6-storey building with no step-backs required at rear setback line.

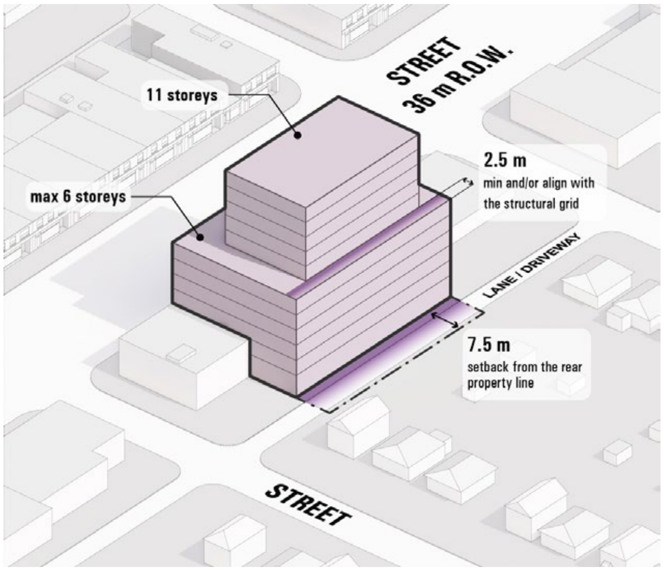


Figure 3.3.2: Sample illustration of an 11-storey building with one step-back at 7th storey rear setback line.

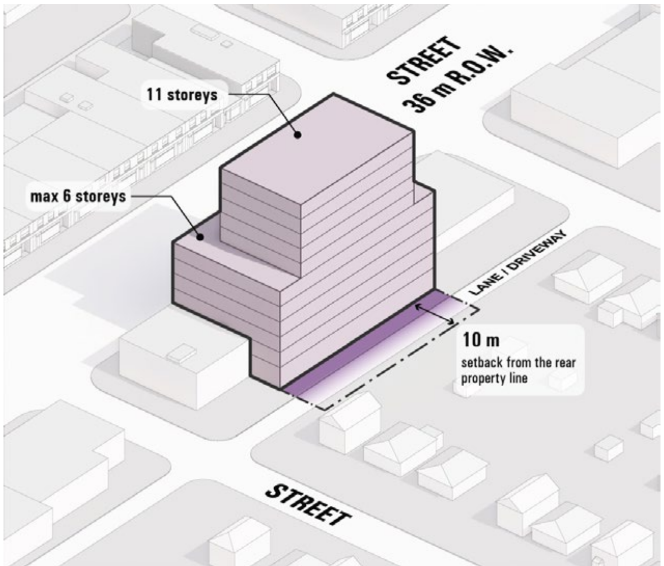


Figure 3.3.3: Sample illustration of an 11-storey building with increased setback and no step- backs at the rear.

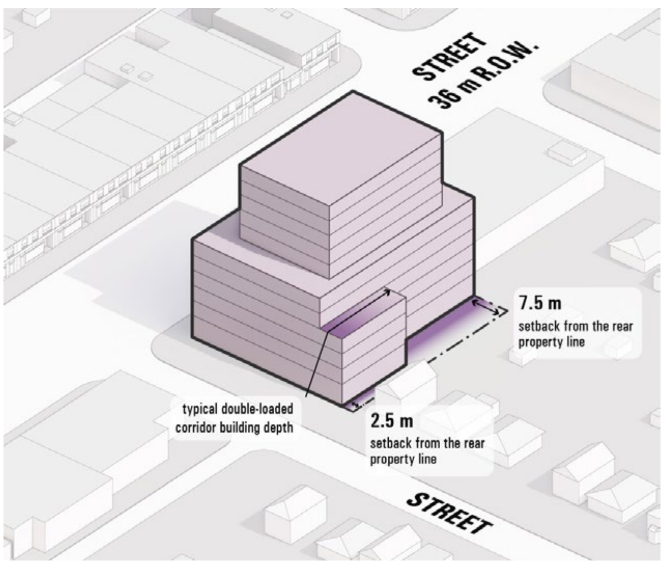


Figure 3.3.4: Sample illustration of an 11-storey building with one step-back at the rear for the taller portion of the building and a reduced setback at the rear for the lower portion of the building facing the existing side yard along the side street (rear yard to side yard condition).

e. On some corner sites, the rear setback for the portion of the building facing on to the side street may be reduced to 2.5 metres so the building frames the side street if the following conditions apply (see Figure 3.3.4):

   i. there is no opportunity to create or extend a continuous vehicular laneway at the rear;
   ii. vehicular entrances and circulation will be contained within the building and/or site;
   iii. the maximum height within the 7.5- metre setback area from the rear property line is no taller than 4 storeys; and
   iv. the existing and/ or proposed building portion in the reduced setback have no primary windows facing the shared property line.

f. The minimum separation distance provided between mid-rise buildings in a singular site or on adjacent sites should increase with the building height to ensure privacy between units and allow good access to sky view, sunlight and daylight within spaces between buildings and the units within the buildings. When a building is on an adjacent property or proposed as part of the same development as the mid-rise building, the following separation distances apply (see Figures 3.3.5-3.3.7):

   i. Up to a height of 6 storeys, a minimum separation distance of 15 metres should be provided;
   ii. For mid-rise buildings, or building elements, taller than 6 storeys, a minimum separation distance of 20 metres should be provided; and
   iii. For mid-rise buildings that have limited additional height above the 1:1 ratio and/ or building frontages exceeding 60 metres, building massing articulation and additional separation may be required to meet the objectives of the Official Plan and other guidelines in this document.

g. Where a mid-rise building is adjacent to a mid-rise or tall building in an Apartment Neighbourhood, greater separation distance and additional step-backs may be required, in keeping with the existing and planned context of these areas.

h. Where appropriate, mid-rise buildings should provide an active edge at-grade along the rear façade, through grade-related units with individual entrances (residential, non-residential or community uses) or other appropriate design interventions. Walkways and landscaping should be provided along the edge of the building.

i. Ensure that any existing open spaces

associated with an existing mid-rise or tall building to the rear are not negatively impacted by new mid-rise buildings by providing appropriate setbacks and step-backs and mitigation of shadows and pedestrian-level wind conditions. Where an adjacent mid-rise or tall building has an associated open space amenity, Guideline 3.3.2 will apply.

j. Existing healthy trees along the rear property line should be preserved with sufficient soil volumes in accordance with City standards to enhance the transition to the adjacent properties in the rear.

k. A minimum 2.5-metre unencumbered landscaped setback should be provided along the rear property line, wherever possible, to mitigate development impact and support mature canopy trees and allow for the planting of new trees where possible that can grow to maturity.

l. Ensure the rear setback allows for a continuous rear lane system where appropriate, with additional spaces for pedestrian access and landscaping.

m. Where an existing public laneway abuts a site, the width of the laneway may be included for the purposes of establishing the rear setback.

n. Where a mid-rise or tall building abuts or is planned on the other side of the laneway, the rear setback should be measured from the centreline of the laneway.

Rationale

The Official Plan's Built Form policies are clear in their direction for development to "… provide good transition in scale between areas of different building heights and/or intensity of use in consideration of both the existing and planned contexts of neighbouring properties and the public realm." The livability of existing and new mid-rise buildings should be supported by appropriate transition between building typologies, including mid-rise to mid-rise buildings. Official Plan Policy 3.1.3.3. supports this direction "Development will protect privacy within adjacent buildings by providing setbacks and separation distances from neighbouring properties and adjacent building walls containing windows."

This guideline typically applies to infill sites with one building proposed, although it may apply to deep sites, where a mid-rise building is proposed. It is not meant to apply to very deep or large sites, which would include sites that require new streets and blocks, and sites with multiple buildings or buildings that are not a typical double-loaded corridor oriented parallel to the main street frontage.

Transition to sites in Apartment Neighbourhoods may be different from tall buildings on infill sites in Mixed Use Areas, for example. Apartment Neighbourhoods are characterized by their open space and landscape settings, and any mid-rise development adjacent to these sites should provide a transition that respects and reinforces the context of these sites.

Guidelines for setbacks and step-backs vary based on the overall building height. Generally, the taller the mid-rise building, the larger the overall setbacks and step-backs away from the building area should be. The greater the height, the greater the need for transition. A combination of these standards may apply and should be considered based on the site's existing and planned context.

The rear transition guidelines outlined here are intended to apply to buildings up to 45 metres (approximately 14 storeys) in height. For buildings exceeding this height, refer to the Tall Building Design Guidelines for appropriate guidance. For larger sites, refer to Guideline 1.3.1 for additional design considerations to ensure cohesive and context-sensitive development.

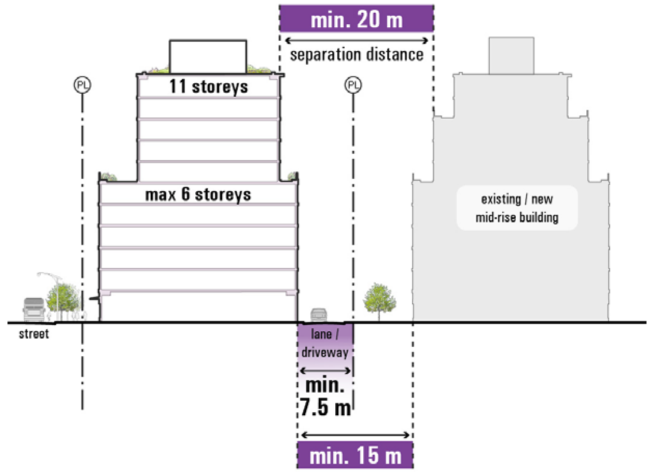


Figure 3.3.5: Sample illustration of a mid-rise building with a mid-rise building to the rear, showing a minimum 20- metre separation distance, with step-backs applied.

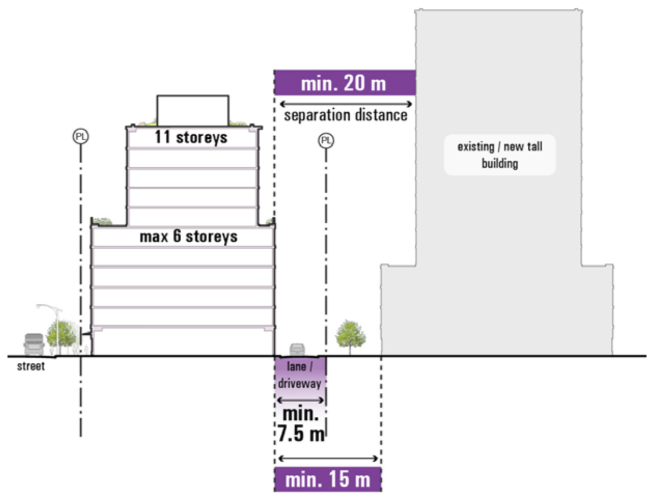


Figure 3.3.6: Sample illustration of a mid-rise building next to and abutting a tall building. A 15- metre separation distance is shown between the lower storeys, and a 20- metre separation distance is shown between the mid-rise and tall building.

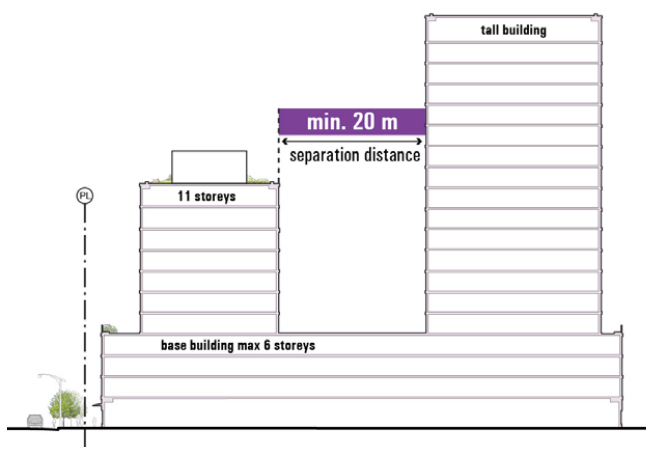


Figure 3.3.7: Sample illustration of a mid-rise building that shares a base building with a tall building. A minimum 20- metre separation distance is shown between the mid-rise building and the tall building.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form – Building Types | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

3.3.2. REAR TRANSITION TO PARKS & OPEN SPACES

The transition between a mid-rise building and parks, open spaces or natural areas to the rear should reinforce a human scale next to the open space, maximize access to sunlight, minimize shadow impacts and create comfortable wind conditions on the parks, open spaces, or natural areas through a combination of setbacks and step-backs.

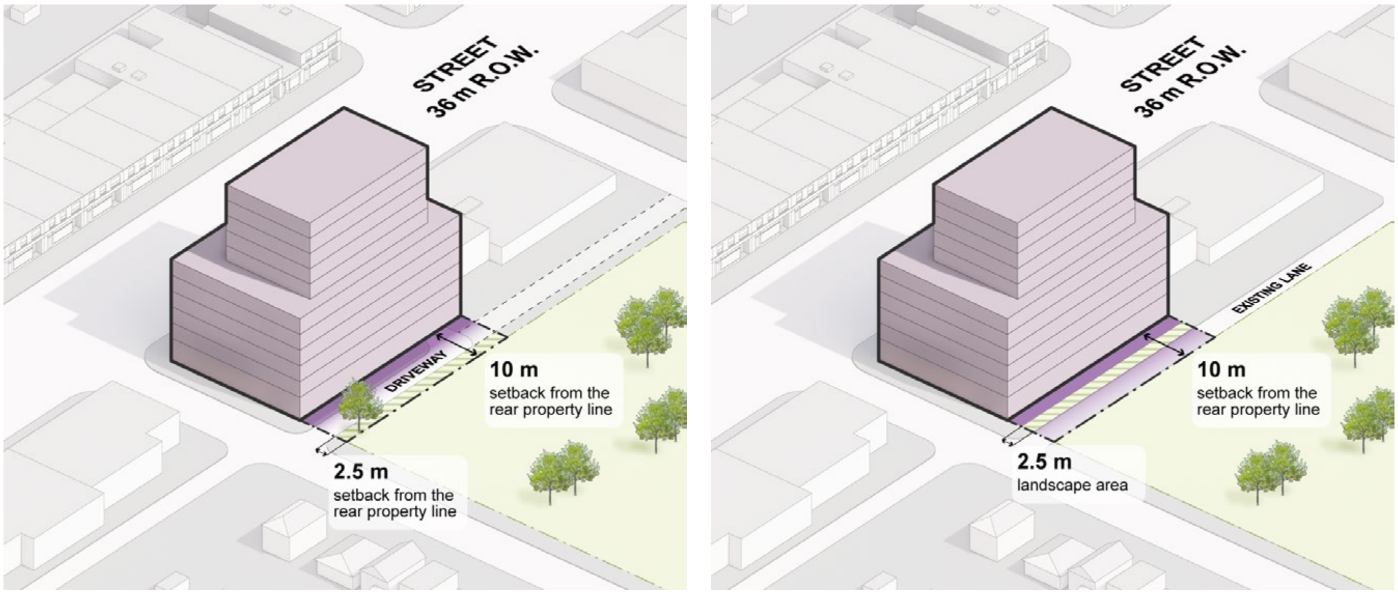


Figure 3.3.8: Sample illustrations of a mid-rise building with rear access abutting a park or open space to the rear. The setback at grade includes a landscaped area along the building edge or the property line depending on the nature and arrangement of vehicular access.

a. Where a mid-rise building is separated by a rear public laneway and/or driveway from abutting parks, open spaces or natural areas, the transition for mid-rise buildings will include a minimum rear setback of 10 metres to the building face from the property line, or a greater setback where prescribed by natural heritage/ravine bylaw requirements. The setback should be designed to accommodate outdoor amenity spaces, the extension of existing rear lanes and/or vehicular access for parking, servicing and loading, as well as the creation of a minimum 2.5- metre landscaped, treed setback area (see Figure 3.3.8).

b. In addition to the 10- metre setback, a 2.5- metre rear step-back should be introduced between the 3rd and 7th storey. The height of the step-back should be determined based on the surrounding land uses, existing and planned building heights and built form impact.

c. The transition for mid-rise buildings to adjacent parks, open spaces and/or natural areas, should be based on the location of the mid-rise building relative to the parks, open spaces or natural areas. These are generally outlined below:

   i. Where a park or open space is generally south of a development site, and there are limited shadow impacts, additional step-backs may not be necessary beyond those identified in Guideline 3.3.1 for building adjacencies.

   ii. Where development of a site would have shadow impacts on adjacent parks, open spaces, or natural areas, additional setbacks and step-backs and shaping of the massing should be applied to minimize shadow on these spaces.

d. Where a public laneway abuts a site, the width of the laneway may be included for the purposes of establishing the setback.

e. The lower portions of a mid-rise building should provide an active edge at ground level facing the park, through grade-related units with individual entrances (residential, commercial or community uses) or other appropriate design interventions. Where there is no public lane, and/or where vehicular access is not appropriate along the edge of the park or open space, the setback to the park can be reduced to a minimum of 6 metres to encourage the creation of a pedestrian-friendly boulevard with a walkway and landscaping, and sufficient maintenance space as per Parks, Forestry and Recreation standards (see Figure 3.3.9).

Figure 3.3.9: Sample illustration of active edge along a park with a 6.0-metre setback.

Rationale

The Official Plan's Built Form policies are clear in their direction for the public realm to be safe, comfortable, and enjoyable spaces for all. Where a mid-rise building is adjacent to parks, open spaces, or natural areas, it should be located and massed to ensure direct sunlight is maximized and adverse shadow impacts are limited. These impacts can be mitigated through setbacks and step-backs, and overall building height.

The creation of an appropriate relationship between a mid-rise building and parks, open spaces, or natural areas to the rear, should be "designed to provide good transition in scale to the parks or open spaces to provide access to direct sunlight and daylight" (Official Plan Policy 3.1.3.8). These public realm spaces should be comfortable, with new development scaled and massed to provide thermal comfort, including access to sun for.for wildlife, people and vegetation, and comfortable pedestrian-level wind conditions. The scale next to parks and open spaces should also reflect an appropriate human scale. Where appropriate, the mid-rise building should provide an active frontage along the park, and vehicular access provided internal to the building or site.

This guideline typically applies to infill sites with one building proposed. Sites large enough to require new streets and blocks, or sites with multiple buildings or buildings that are not a typical double-loaded corridor oriented parallel to the main street frontage may require additional and/or site-specific transition measures. Refer to Guideline 1.3.1 for design considerations for larger sites.

Figure 3.3.10: Image of building with individual units along park edge, with a lane (1285 Queen Street East).

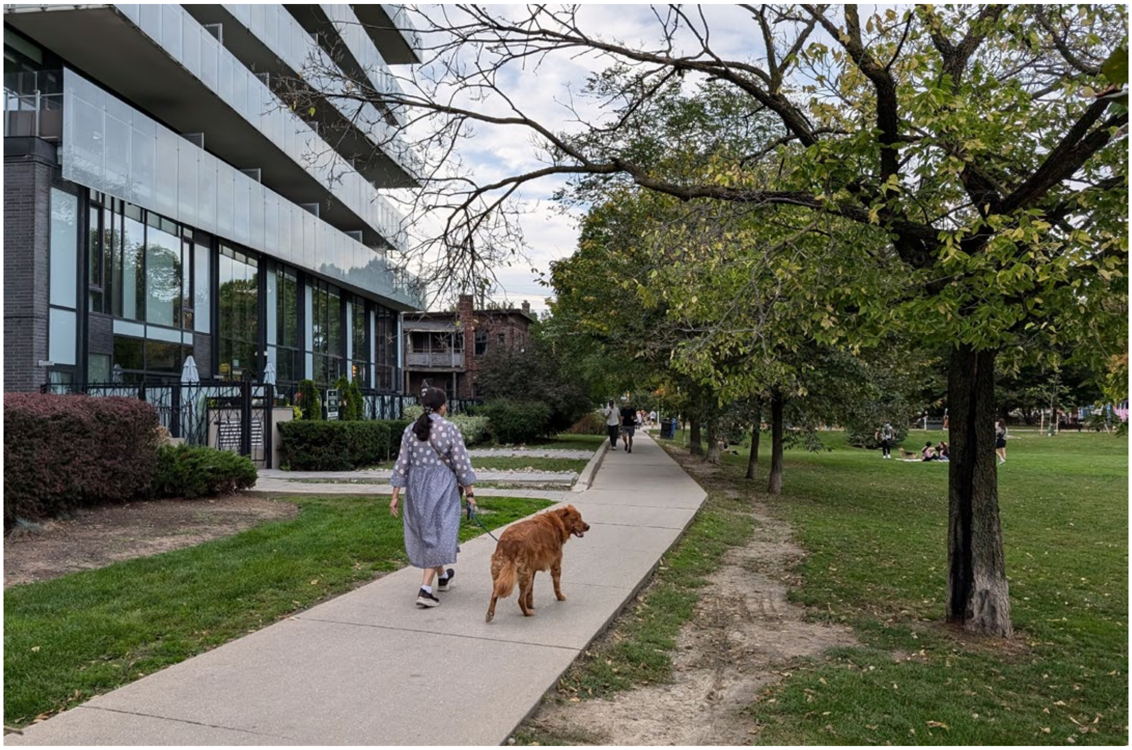


Figure 3.3.11: Image of building with individual units along park edge (15 Stafford Street).

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form- Building Types | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

3.3.3. REAR TRANSITION FOR SHALLOW SITES

On a site that is otherwise appropriate for a mid-rise building but is too shallow to feasibly accommodate the building, consideration may be given to expanding the site through site consolidation with properties to the rear to enable development of the site, while adhering to all front, rear and side setbacks, and step-backs.

a. If the existing site depth cannot reasonably accommodate a functional mid-rise building floor plate based on the mid-rise building design guidelines, consideration may be given to increasing site depth to approximately 30 metres for a maximum 6-storey building,36 metres for a maximum 11-storey building and 37 metres for a maximum 14-storey building (see Table 1 provided in Guideline 1.3 for more details).

b. If any portion of the development is located in the Neighbourhoods designated lands, that portion will have a maximum height of 4-storeys (see Figure 3.3.12).

c. A minimum 7.5-metre rear setback should be provided to allow for the creation of a continuous rear lane system, extend, widen or realign an existing laneway, where feasible, or provide sufficient space for vehicular access to the rear of the mid-rise site, as well as landscaping, tree planting and other pedestrian amenities.

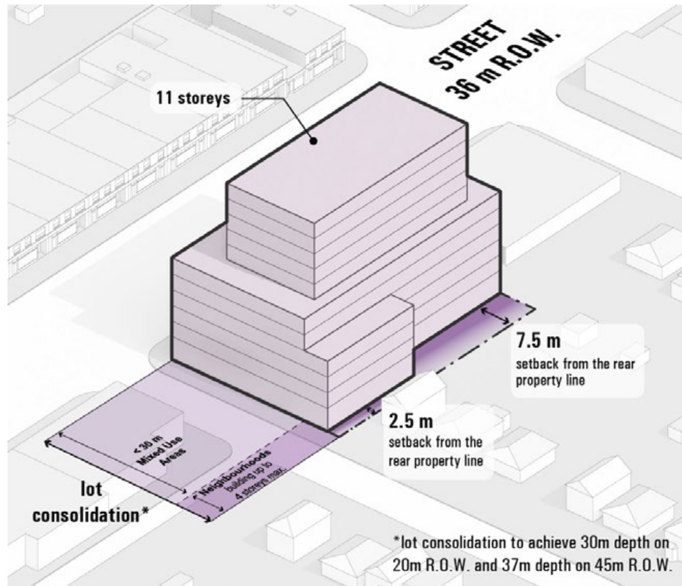


Figure 3.3.12: Sample illustration of a low-rise portion of a mid-rise building within the Neighbourhoods land use designation.

Rationale

Where a site is too shallow to accommodate an efficient and feasible mid-rise development (i.e., an approximately 18- metre building depth is required at the uppermost storeys for a typical double-loaded corridor building), consideration may be given to applications that propose to consolidate additional properties within Neighbourhoods or abutting sites to the rear. This would allow shallow properties to achieve mid-rise heights with a more regular envelope and floorplate. On shallow sites, without consideration for increasing lot depth, a mid-rise building could not be achieved or could result in a less feasible floorplate (single loaded corridors) at upper levels.

This guideline considers the ideal lot depth for developing an efficient and well-designed mid-rise building. The ideal lot depth for a mid-rise building site increases with the width of the right-of-way and the corresponding height of the building in order to accommodate the appropriate setbacks, step-backs and separation distances within the site. Ideal minimum lot depths based on the prevailing right-of-way widths across this city are provided in Guideline 1.3 Mid-Rise Site Typologies.

The ideal lot depths identified in the guidelines are not intended to encourage the consolidation of properties in order to accommodate taller buildings on deeper sites – building height should be proportionate to and generally no greater than the width of the adjacent right-of-way. The intent of this guideline is to allow for the feasible development of a 1:1 mid-rise building on a shallow site, where lot depth precludes the optimal redevelopment of the site.

Any new mid-rise building should follow the applicable guidelines for their respective rear transition condition and other applicable guidelines. Support for consolidating properties designated Neighbourhoods will be contingent on other guidelines being achieved (e.g. widened boulevards and sidewalks, maximum building heights, building setbacks and step-backs, etc.). There are other considerations including, but not limited to, heritage conservation, public realm improvements and achieving Toronto Green Standard soil volumes for tree planting, which would also be considered to demonstrate the appropriateness of a mid-rise building on a site. Any portions of a mid-rise building built on Neighbourhoods designated properties would be required to comply with the Official Plan direction for development in Neighbourhoods. In this regard, the height of the building element would be limited to 4 storeys, and design considerations for preserving the character of the Neighbourhood will apply.

This guideline is presented as one solution to developing mid-rise buildings on shallow sites and may not be applicable in all circumstances.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form

3.1.4 Built Form- Building Types

4.1 Neighbourhoods

4.2 Apartment Neighbourhoods | 4.5 Mixed Use Areas

3.4. SIDE YARD SETBACKS

Mid-rise buildings should be designed with regard for the existing and planned conditions of the abutting properties and other immediate adjacencies. In determining the appropriate side yard setbacks, consideration should be given to the redevelopment potential of the adjacent properties to maintain appropriate facing conditions between buildings in the present and future, while allowing access to sky view and sunlight on the adjacent public street.

Figure 3.4.1: Examples of continuous streetwalls.

a. Mid-rise buildings in main street or emerging main street contexts should generally be built to the side property lines up to the height of the streetwall, typically between 10.5 metres (3 storeys) and 20 metres (6 storeys).

b. The construction process used to build a sidewall next to the sidewall of an adjacent building should result in a minimal gap to avoid unsightly areas that are unusable and collect refuse.

c. Mid-rise buildings in residential contexts should be set back from the side property lines to provide windows on all elevations and opportunities for soft landscaping and a walkway, where appropriate.

d. Where the side elevation is set back from the side property line, it should provide a well-articulated façade design that complements and continues the front façade design.

e. For buildings taller than 6 storeys, floors above the streetwall should be set back from the side lot lines by a minimum of 5.5 metres to provide sky views and increased sunlight access on the adjacent public street(s).

f. Where more “porous” streetwalls are preferred, side step-backs are encouraged above the minimum streetwall height of 10.5 metres (3 storeys).

g. In some cases, reducing or eliminating side step-backs at upper levels on narrow sites may be appropriate to improve building performance. This option should be considered on a site-by-site basis and supported by the relevant studies demonstrating that the building:

   i. Appropriately supports the existing and planned context;
   ii. Meets requirements for sun access within

the public realm;
iii. Responds to human scale within the public realm;
iv. Provides acceptable pedestrian-level wind conditions;
v. Meets requirements for conserving cultural heritage resources; and
vi. Contributes to sustainable development.

h. On narrow sites, alternative design solutions may be considered in order to reduce the impacts of the party wall and provide access to daylight for residential units. The use of lightwells, notched elevations and other design interventions may be appropriate to provide additional windows, daylighting and ventilation into dwelling units. Where lightwells provide the only windows and means of daylight into a unit, the dimensions should generally be a minimum of 5.5 metres by 11.0 metres in size to provide adequate access to light, air and privacy.

Rationale

Avenues, certain major streets and other built-up Mixed Use Areas are envisioned to maintain a continuous streetwall lined with shops, restaurants, cafes and other community and commercial services. A break in the continuity of the streetwall and building fabric is disruptive to the success of the public function of the main streets. This will also be dependent on the width of a building site, and where it is necessary for development to maximize density and build to a lot line.

For this reason, front yard parking, automotive uses and buildings with large setbacks are detrimental to the evolution of streets with a main street character in mixed-use and commercial areas. The continuous "streetwall" portion of a building's front façade is defined as a minimum of 10.5 metres (3 storeys) up to a maximum of 20 metres (6 storeys) in height (see Guideline 3.2.2). Streetwalls of main street buildings should therefore generally be built to the side property line with no side windows.

Figure 3.4.2: Examples of porous streetwalls with 4-sided pavilion typology buildings.

In circumstances where this is not possible or undesirable and side windows are provided, the side yard setbacks in Guideline 3.4.2 and Table 2 apply.

While continuous streetwalls are generally desirable in a main street context, there are many contexts across the city where this condition is not appropriate, and greater separation between buildings and increased landscape coverage provide a more appropriate built form response. Development sites on the post-war areas in the city are less likely to be adjacent to existing properties with buildings built to side property lines. Many of these sites also tend to have larger lot sizes and wider frontages. The development model that has emerged to-date for these larger sites demonstrates a preference for four-sided buildings that include windows on all sides and employ larger side property setbacks, often with soft landscape and tree planting. For additional information and guidance for determining the appropriate mid-rise built form typology for a site, refer to Guideline 1.1.

As mid-rise buildings are built across the city, it will be important to maintain sky view and sunlight access to the public realm. On larger rights-of-way, this will be particularly important, because the maximum building heights will be taller. By requiring side property step-backs at upper storeys, the potential for a "canyon effect" will be avoided.

Where properties have a wider frontage, the uppermost storeys of the building can step back on the sides to allow for increased sunlight, daylight and sky view, as well as side glazing reducing the extent of blank sidewalls. Side yard step-backs provided at upper storeys will reduce the height of blank sidewalls, provide spaces for additional primary windows in units, provide both greater light penetration and varied rooflines, and create opportunities for private outdoor terraces and sitting areas.

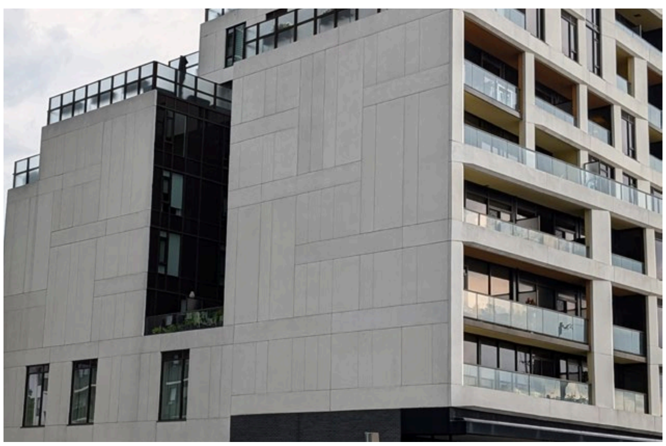


Figure 3.4.3: Example of a lightwell (Left).

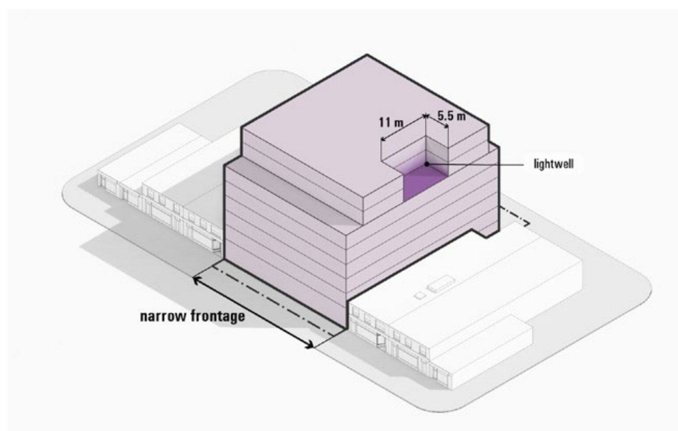


Figure 3.4.4: Illustration of lightwell design (Right).

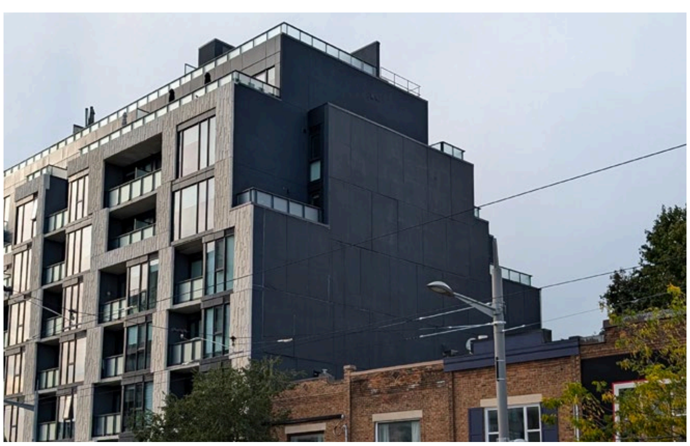


Figure 3.4.5: Example of a notched elevation (Left).

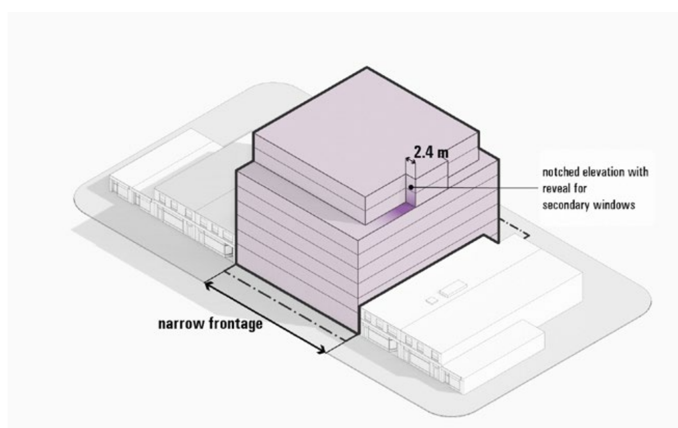


Figure 3.4.6: Illustration of notched elevation (Right).

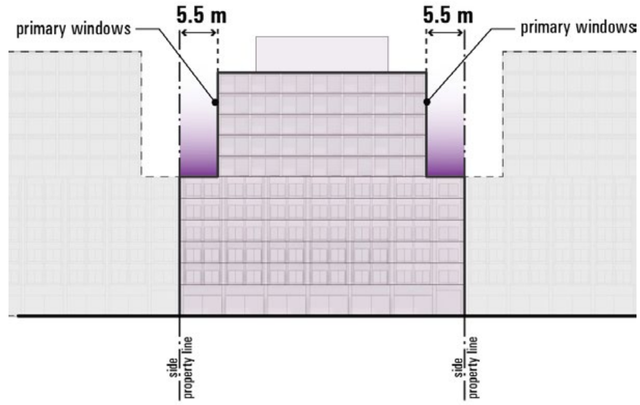


Figure 3.4.7: Illustration of side yard setbacks in main street or emerging main street contexts where upper storeys above the streetwall should provide a minimum of 5.5- metre setback.

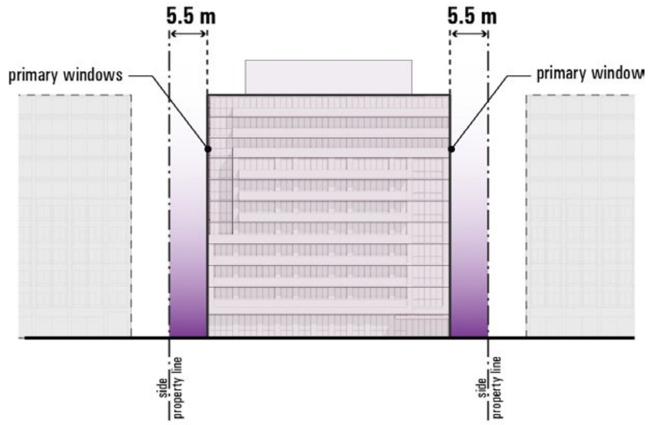


Figure 3.4.8 : Illustration of side yard setbacks in residential contexts, where a minimum 5.5- metre side yard setback should be provided to the adjacent side yard property lines.

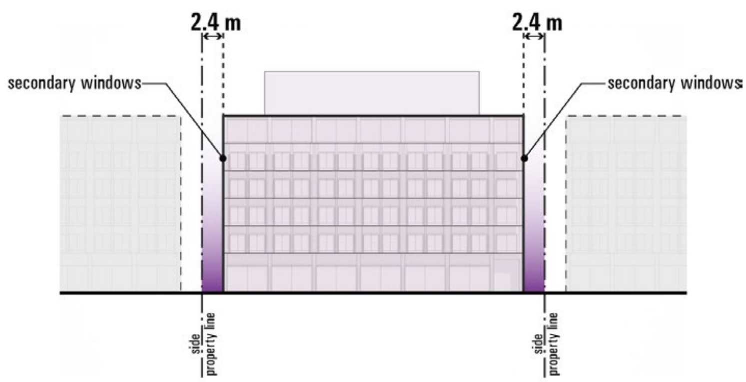


Figure 3.4.9: Illustration of 6 storey mid-rise building side yard setbacks in residential contexts, where a minimum of 2.4- metre side yard setback is required.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form

3.4.1. LIMITING BLANK SIDE WALLS

Blank sidewalls or party walls should be designed as an architecturally finished surface and large expanses of blank sidewalls should be avoided.

a. Generally, blank side walls should be no taller than the streetwall.

b. Blank side wall conditions may be acceptable in limited cases above the height of the streetwall if treated appropriately with a similar level of architectural and material quality as the main façade.

c. To mitigate the impact of blank side walls, they should be designed with a material finish that complements the architectural character of the main building façade(s). Blank walls provide an opportunity to add visual interest when viewed from the public realm and should incorporate high-quality design treatments, such as green walls, murals, or other façade enhancements, where appropriate.

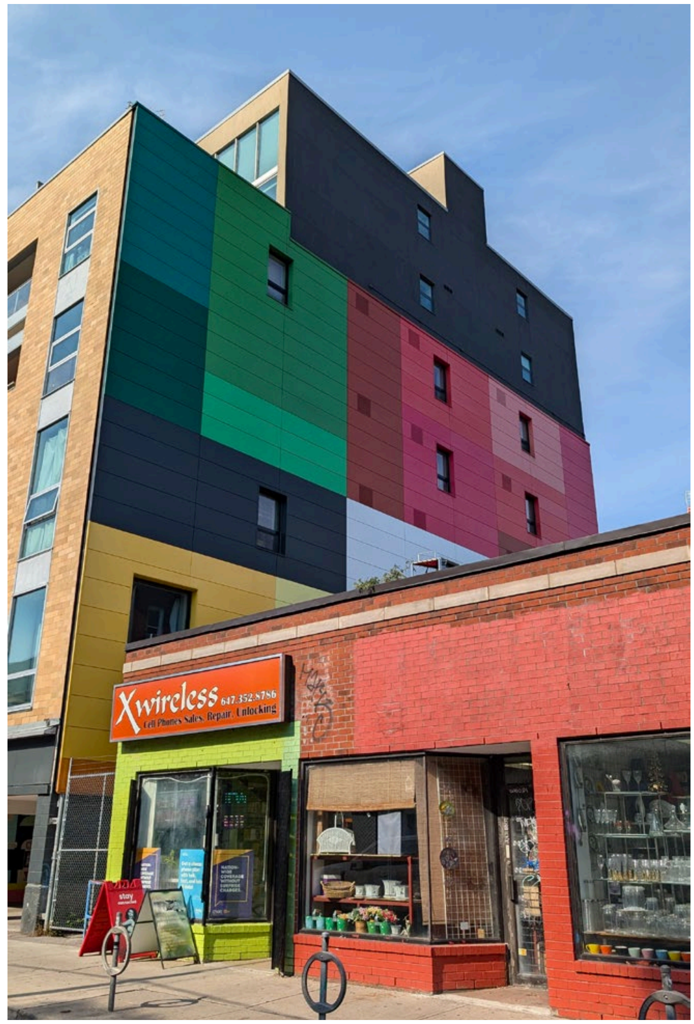


Figure 3.4.10: Example of highly animated blank wall at Kensington Market Lofts (160 Baldwin Street).

Rationale

As areas of the city reurbanize with mid-rise buildings, some buildings will be taller than existing structures or new structures that are not built to the full height limit. The extent of these blank walls is a result of both the height of adjacent buildings and whether the upper storeys of the new building step back at the sides. While exposed blank sidewalls are to be expected during this period of transition, design standards are required to mitigate the appearance and height of blank walls.

In some instances where lots are deep, the length of the building is positioned perpendicular to the street. In these cases, blank walls are generally not an issue except on the lower levels of the building that may extend closer to the side property lines. For these contexts, a more porous streetwall condition should be expected.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form

3.4.2. SIDE WINDOWS

Mid-rise buildings should provide side yard setbacks that appropriately respond to the facing conditions of the adjacent properties. New developments should not negatively impact existing or potential future buildings with side wall windows.

a. Side walls of new buildings should incorporate glazing where possible.

b. Where adjacent properties have walls with no primary windows, new mid-rise buildings should ensure a minimum separation distance of 5.5 metres is provided between all existing walls with no primary windows and all new walls with no primary windows.

c. For mid-rise buildings that are 20 metres (6 storeys) in height or less, a minimum side yard setback of 2.4 metres should be provided where no primary windows are located along the side elevations.

d. Where primary windows are located along the side elevations of a new mid-rise building, a minimum side yard setback of 5.5 metres should be provided from the side property line in order to create appropriate facing conditions and maintain appropriate separation between windows, and to provide sky views and increased sunlight access on the adjacent street and open spaces.

e. For mid-rise buildings oriented perpendicular to the street, or with long side elevations with primary windows, a minimum setback of 7.5 metres should be provided from the side property line.

f. Some conditions may require additional setbacks. Setbacks in this case will be determined on a site-by-site basis. For guidance related to separation between building wings and side yard setbacks for large and deep sites, refer to Guideline 1.3.1 Site Planning for Deep Sites and/or Large Sites.

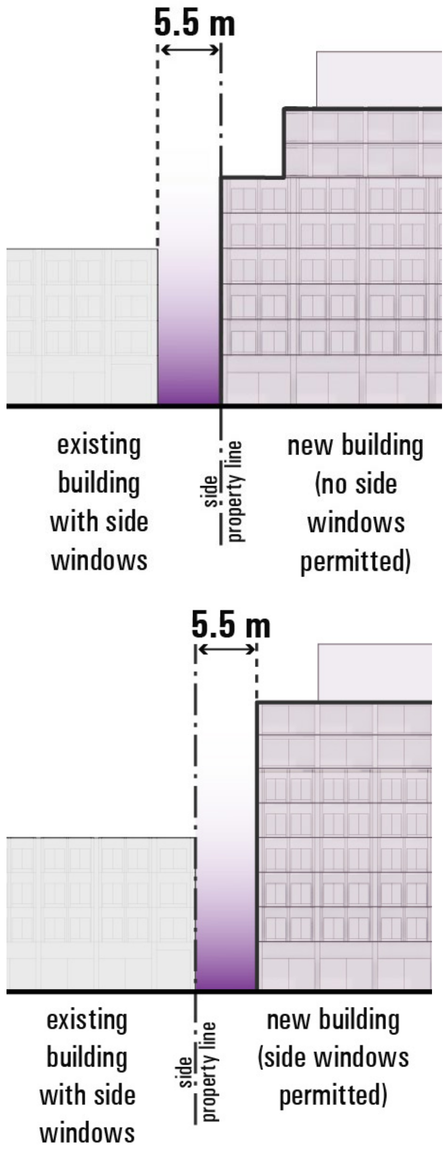


Figure 3.4.11: Illustration of setbacks based on facing conditions.

g. Mid-rise buildings should be designed with regard for the existing and planned context. In determining the appropriate side yard setbacks, consideration should be given to the redevelopment potential of the adjacent properties to maintain an appropriate facing condition between buildings in the present and future.

h. Where the side property line abuts a public lane, the side yard setback should be measured from the centre line of the lane.

i. The minimum separation distance provided between mid-rise buildings or building wings should increase with the length of the façade to ensure privacy between units and allow good access to sky-view, sunlight and daylight within spaces between buildings and the units within them. When mid-rise buildings or wings of a mid-rise building have primary windows along the side elevation, the following separation distances apply:

   i. For building façades less than 25 metres in length with primary windows facing the side property lines, a minimum separation distance of 11 metres should be provided.
   ii. For building façades exceeding 25 metres in length with primary windows facing the side property lines, a minimum separation distance of 15 metres should be provided.

Rationale

Mid-rise buildings with side windows should be designed to respond appropriately to the existing and planned context of the adjacent properties. Based on the site context and facing conditions, side setbacks and the resulting separation distances should be designed to protect access to daylight, sunlight, and privacy for existing and future residential and commercial units to ensure livability, usability and a high-quality of life. Table 2 outlines the side yard setbacks that mid-rise buildings should provide, based on typology and side wall conditions.

Side Wall Condition of New Mid-Rise Building	Side Yard Setback	
	Streetwall (80% of R.O.W. up to a limit of 8 storeys/25.5m)	Above Streetwall
No Windows	0m	N/A*
Secondary Windows	2.4m	5.5m
Primary Windows	5.5m	5.5m
Primary Windows on Long Façades Perpendicular to the Street	7.5m	7.5m

Table 2 – Side Yard Setbacks for Side Windows

**Mid-rise buildings should not provide blank façades above the streetwall. Refer to Guideline 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.*

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form

3.5. BUILDING WIDTH

Where mid-rise building frontages are more than 60 metres in width, building massing should be articulated or "broken up" to ensure that façades are not overly long.

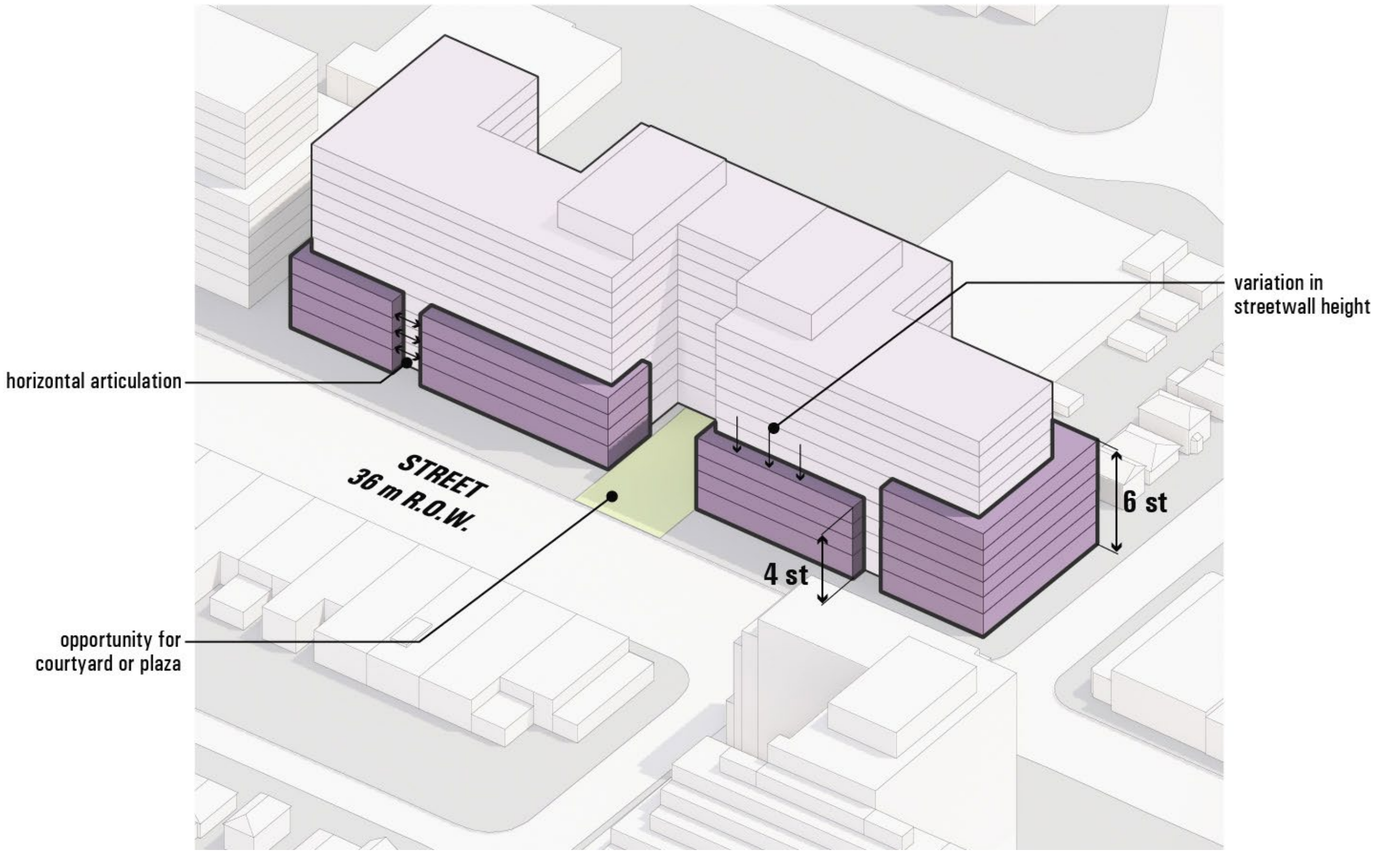


Figure 3.5.1: Illustration of various approaches to breaking up building massing on a long façade.

a. Create multiple buildings on wide sites and provide opportunities for open spaces and pedestrian and cycling connections.

b. Where buildings exceed 60 metres in width, create interesting building/streetwall façades through the use of articulation, including recesses, varied building heights, setbacks, and step-backs, and changes in horizontal and vertical planes.

c. For taller mid-rise buildings (typically above 8 storeys) break up and/or limit the width of upper-level floor plates above the streetwall height to increase sky view and sunlight access.

d. Step-backs and articulated design elements should be of sufficient depth to ensure that the break is perceivable and contribute to enhancing the public realm.

e. Articulation and breaks should reference the architectural scale and rhythm of the surrounding context and maintain a fine-grain pedestrian scale along the streetwall.

Rationale

Long, uninterrupted façades have a negative impact on the pedestrian realm. They provide less interest and variation at the pedestrian level. At upper storeys, long, continuous façades prevent sunlight access and sky views at the street (see also Guideline 3.4.1 Side Yard Setbacks). Where multiple long buildings develop next to one another, they can create a canyon effect along the street, which can contribute to reduced sunlight on the public realm, leads to urban heat island effect and creates uncomfortable pedestrian level wind conditions. Long façades can also contribute to a disjointed public realm as they limit opportunities to improve site permeability and provide mid-block connections and open spaces.

Building façades should be broken up both physically and visually. Breaks in long building façades provide mid-block connections for pedestrians and allow for the creation of additional "corners" and spaces to gather or interact.

There are multiple approaches to breaking up larger sites, the most appropriate is dependent on the surrounding context, the program of the building(s) and dimensions and geometry of the site. Some methods include, but are not limited to:

- Vertical break type 1: building remains connected, and a visual break is created using articulation (see figure 3.5.2). This type of break should be multi-storey in scale and ideally extend from ground level to the top of the building.
- Vertical break type 2: streetwall remains connected, and a physical break is provided in the upper building (see figure 3.5.3).
- Vertical break type 3: streetwall and upper building breaks, creating a bridge connection.
- Creating multiple buildings (most appropriate on larger sites depending on the site orientation and context).

The most appropriate approach to vertical breaks will be determined on a site-by-site basis.

Where articulation in the façade results in primary windows that face each other, the separation distances outlined in Guideline 3.4.3 Side Windows should be adhered to, ensuring that units are afforded daylight and privacy.

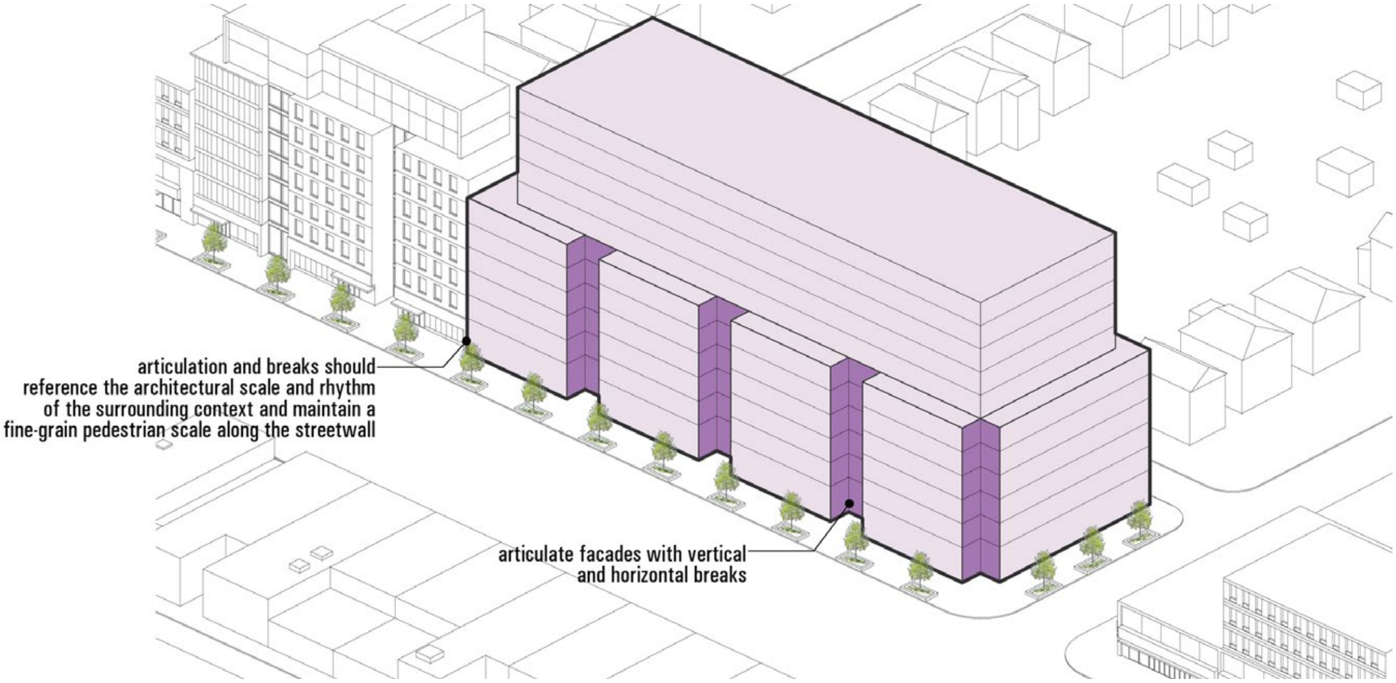


Figure 3.5.2: Illustration of design solutions for incorporating visual breaks into façades.

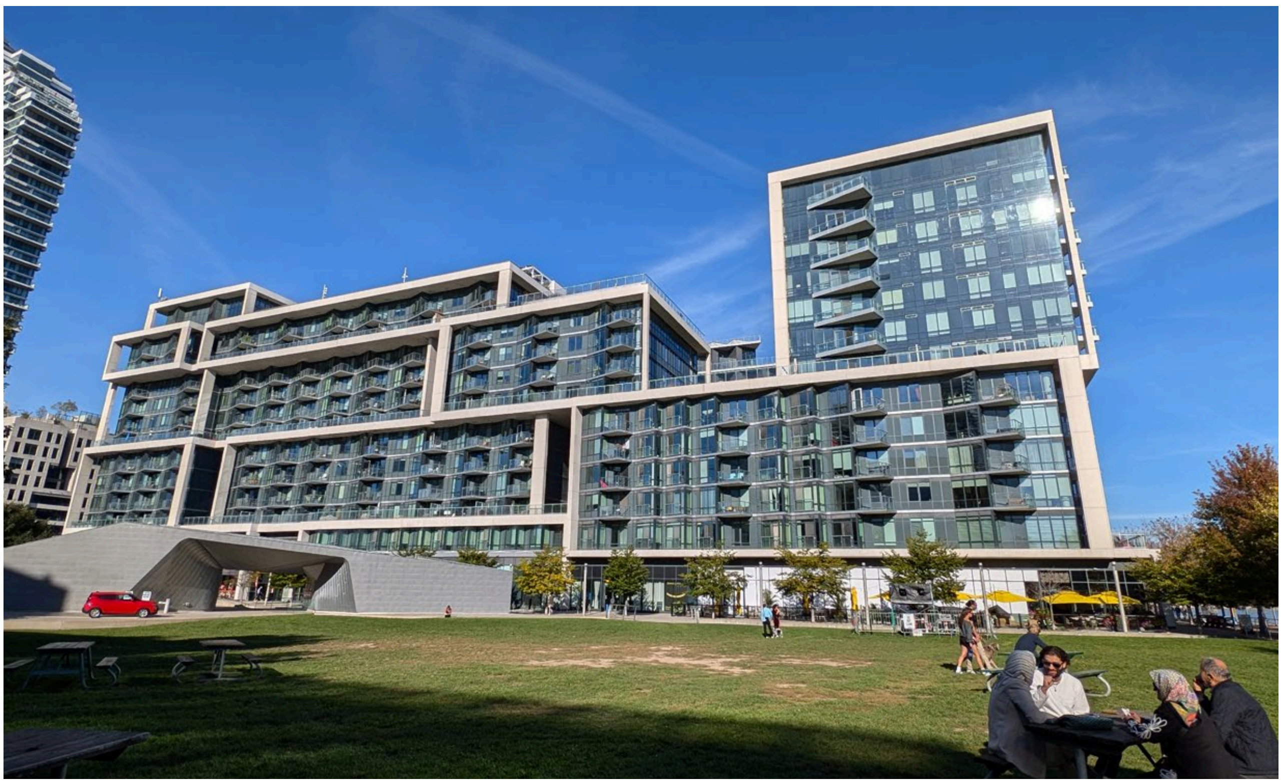


Figure 3.5.3: Example of a physical break above the streetwall.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form | 5.1.3 Site Plan Control

3.6. GROUND FLOOR HEIGHT

The minimum floor-to-floor height of the ground floor, except for heritage properties, should be 4.5 metres to facilitate commercial and other non-residential uses at grade.

a. Ground floor heights should be a minimum of 4.5 metres (floor to floor, measured from average grade) to accommodate retail uses and provide sufficient clearance for trucks into internal spaces of a building. Where residential uses front onto streets at grade level, the vertical distance from exterior grade to the top of the second storey floor level should also measure 4.5 metres.

b. In the residential context, the ground floor height may be reduced if the primary uses are residential at grade.

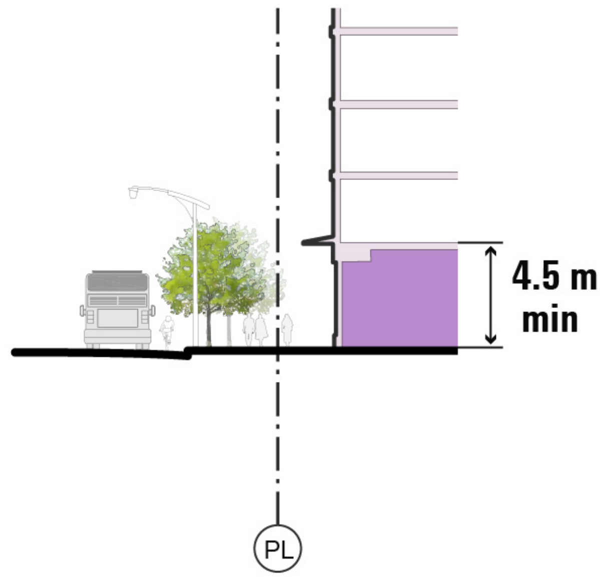


Figure 3.6.1: Illustration of 4.5m minimum ground floor height.

Rationale

Floor heights for commercial uses are generally higher than a typical residential floor. A taller floor-to-floor height at grade will provide for flexibility of grade level uses and increase the marketability of retail spaces. A floor-to-floor height of 4.5 metres has been cited as the desirable height to achieve this. A taller floor-to-floor height at the street level also emphasizes this portion of the building and thereby increases the visibility of any developed retail. A floor-to-floor height of 4.5- metres generally provides sufficient clearance for trucks into internal spaces of a building (i.e. would not require double height garage door openings), which should be met at the rear of the site. A 4.5- metre floor-to-floor height is also required for at-grade residential uses. For residential uses, the 4.5 metres height would be taken from exterior grade to the top of the second storey floor level. This approach could help to enhance privacy for the ground floor residential units by slightly raising the interior grade of the first floor. As community and market needs evolve over time, residential uses at grade may be converted to retail uses. The 4.5- metre height considered with a horizontal setback required for residential uses provides an infill zone that can accommodate this transition.

Official Plan Reference:

2.2 Structuring Growth in the City: Integrating Land Use and Transportation | 3.5.2 The Future of Retailing

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Retail Design Manual

3.7. BALCONIES AND PROJECTIONS

Balconies and other projecting building elements should not negatively impact the public realm or prevent adherence to other guidelines.

a. Balconies should be designed to maximize usability, comfort, and building performance to meet sustainability objectives.

b. Balconies within the streetwall setback zone (between 2 and 6 storeys) should be inset behind the streetwall to create a sense of privacy and provide shade and thermal comfort for residents, reduce the overall impact on the volume of the building massing, and be less carbon intensive than other design alternatives.

c. Balconies or other permanent building elements should not encroach into the public right of way or front yard setback and should ensure at least 3 metres of horizontal clearance is maintained from tree planting zones.

d. Balconies should be designed and located with consideration for their impact on the building's physical and apparent visual mass. Projecting balconies immediately above the pedestrian perception step-back should be limited.

e. Balconies should provide external shading, associated with the building orientation and height on the building façade, where possible, to provide thermal comfort and long-term heat resilience.

f. Cantilevered and thermally broken “attached” balconies are generally discouraged as they are more carbon intensive and increase total carbon metrics.

g. Avoid projecting balconies and cantilevered portions of new developments above heritage properties to maintain the visual prominence of heritage buildings and the streetwall.

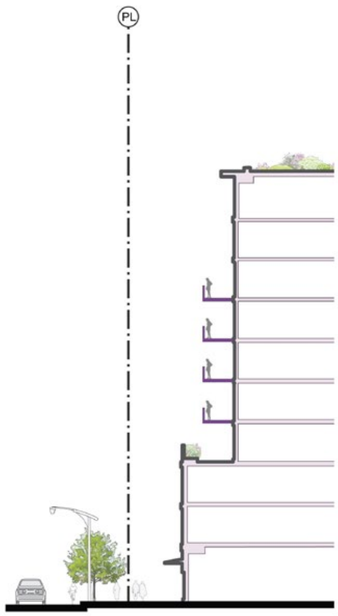


Figure 3.7.1: Illustration of balconies.

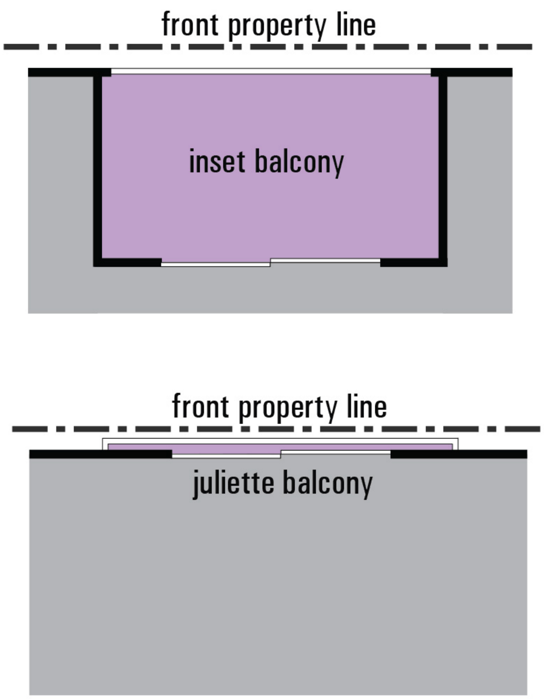


Figure 3.7.2: Illustration of balconies in plan view.

Rationale

The guidelines in this document have been developed to promote appropriately scaled and massed mid-rise buildings with good street proportion. The intent of these guidelines is to allow mid-rise buildings to frame the street while limiting negative impacts on the public realm or neighbouring properties, including excessive shadowing or overlook.

Therefore, any architectural features that project from the building face (horizontally or vertically) should be contained in a manner that respects and reinforces these relationships to streets, open spaces and other buildings.

To support mature tree canopy growth, projecting balconies should not be located within the Pedestrian Perception Zone, or below the first step-back along a street. Within this portion of the building, recessed balconies, Juliet balconies and terraces (as part of a step-back) are acceptable.

Full floor height screens or louvers are sometimes utilized on balconies for noise or sun protection. The two considerations for the design and use of these screens include their material and their percentage of the total façade area. Generally, these should not form more than 50% of the street facing façade.

The Embodied Carbon Study (2024) undertaken by the City of Toronto and the Atmospheric Fund, prepared by Ha/f Climate Design, provides recommendations for the design of balconies incorporated into this guideline. Balcony design provides an opportunity to reduce embodied carbon and carbon intensity, while also working towards the achievement of thermal comfort targets. Balconies should be located and designed to provide effective solar shading and reduce total carbon metrics.
The use of inset balconies and non-cantilevered balcony designs can reduce carbon intensity, while also creating outdoor amenity spaces that provide privacy, shade and comfortable thermal conditions for residents.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Embodied Carbon Study

3.8. ROOFS AND ROOFSCAPES

Mechanical penthouses may exceed the maximum height limit by up to 5 metres and should respect building envelope controls such as step-backs.

a. Mechanical penthouses should be minimized in size and be strategically located to limit any additional visual and physical impacts on the public realm, the site and surrounding properties, including limiting pedestrian level shadow impacts. Mechanical penthouses should be set back from building edges, in proportion to their heights, and away from public streets.

b. All mechanical penthouses should be designed and clad with materials to complement the building façades.

c. The areas of the roof not utilized as mechanical penthouses should be developed as green roofs and/or usable outdoor amenity space. Green roofs shall comply with the City's Green Roof By-law.

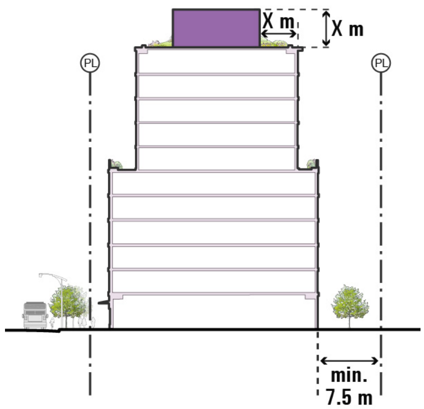


Figure 3.8.1: Illustration of mechanical penthouse placement.

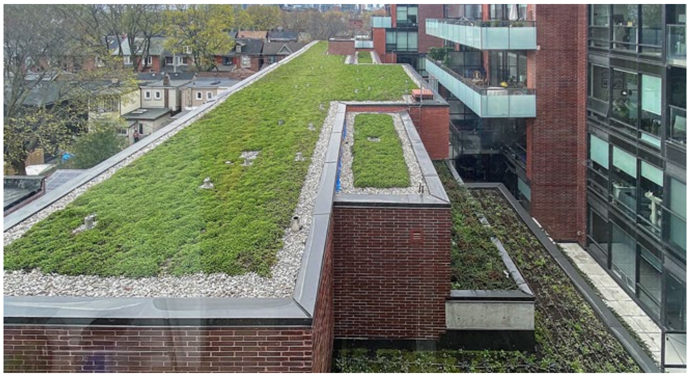


Figure 3.8.2: Example of green roof developed on areas of the roof not utilized as a mechanical penthouse.

Rationale

Mechanical penthouses above maximum allowable heights are already permitted through City zoning by-laws. Mechanical penthouses that extend above the height limit but fall within the 1:1 ratio between their heights and the step-backs to the exterior roof edges, will not impact shadowing, will generally not be visible from the adjacent public sidewalks and are minimally visible from the opposite sidewalk. By keeping penthouses within the 1:1 ratio between their heights and the step-backs to the exterior roof edges, it will position the penthouse to the centre of the roof. However, as mechanical penthouses will be visible from adjacent properties, including neighbourhoods, they must be designed with materials that are complementary to the architecture of the building. Methods for reducing the height and size of mechanical penthouses should be explored or integrated into the top floor of the building.

Where it is not possible to achieve a mechanical penthouse within these guidelines, the optimal building height may not be achieved, or the mechanical penthouse will need to be located within the uppermost storey of a building.

Other sustainable technologies, such as photovoltaic panels, are also encouraged for the roofs of mid-rise buildings.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.3 Built Form | 3.1.4 Built Form- Building Types

Related Standards, Guidelines & Studies:

Green Roof By-law

3.9. EXTERIOR BUILDING MATERIALS

Buildings should utilize high-quality materials selected for their permanence, durability and energy efficiency.

a. Exterior building materials should be compatible with the architectural character of the surrounding context.

b. The use of masonry, stone, steel and bio-based materials in cladding systems is encouraged to reduce embodied carbon.

c. Where possible, consider material reuse to reduce waste and embodied carbon and pay homage to the site history.

d. Where possible, design for disassembly to allow for the easy recovery of parts and materials when a building is disassembled or renovated to ensure the building can be recycled as efficiently as possible at the end of its lifespan.

e. Minimize glazing at locations of greatest thermal heat loss and solar heat gain to reduce operational emissions.

f. Design mid-rise buildings with exterior building materials that meet or exceed the Toronto Green Standard energy performance standards.

Rationale

Building materials are a key component of exterior building design, and the choice of appropriate materials are integral to the process of creating new buildings that will positively influence the character of the streetscape.

The use of appropriate exterior building materials at grade, particularly at the streetwall and areas which are visible from the public realm, is an important design consideration to help new development support the public realm and fit with the existing and/or planned context.

The choice of cladding materials, their thickness (material efficiency), and replacement cycles (durability) directly impact a façade's emissions. To minimize both embodied carbon and operational emissions, careful selection of exterior building materials is critical. This guideline seeks to encourage such sustainable practices while supporting design innovation.

Through the City’s Site Plan control review process, new development will provide drawings depicting the exterior design, including materials. In reviewing a project through Site Plan Control, the City can consider and secure the exterior design and exterior architectural details to the extent that the appearance impacts matters of health, safety, accessibility, sustainable design or the protection of adjoining lands. The City can also consider general façade materials, which influence a project’s character, scale, appearance and how it relates to adjacent buildings and surrounding context.

Figure 3.9.1 : 38 Howard Park Ave - Tier 2 TGS Compliant – Key energy performance measures include: Over 15% of the construction materials used for the development was derived from post and pre-consumer recycled sources by cost, reducing the environmental impact of resource production.

Figure 3.9.2 : 118 Merchant's Warf - Tier 2 TGS Compliant - Key energy performance measures include: Opaque wall comprising a window-to-wall ratio of 40 per cent and double-pane glazing with low-E coating.

Figure 3.9.3: 120-160 Canon Jackson Dr. - Tier 2 TGS Compliant - Key energy performance measures include: High performance building envelope components RSI-7.04/R-40.0 Insulated Roof, RSI-4.40/R-25.0 Fibre Cement Panels.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form

3.10. FAÇADE DESIGN & ARTICULATION

Mid-rise buildings should be designed with well-articulated façades that enhance pedestrian scale, create visual interest, and prioritize sustainability.

a. Façades should be designed with a cohesive architectural composition with careful consideration for proportions, rhythm, and material selection.

b. Create a dynamic and visually engaging façade by articulating the building's massing to distinguish the pedestrian perception zone from the upper storeys.

c. Design building elevations that emphasize three-dimensionality through the strategic use of architectural elements. Incorporate changes in plane, material transitions, step-backs, and varied fenestration patterns to add depth and character to the façade. Integrate architectural elements like balconies, recesses, projections, cornices, columns and window treatments to add layers of texture and reinforce a variety of scales within each component of the building.

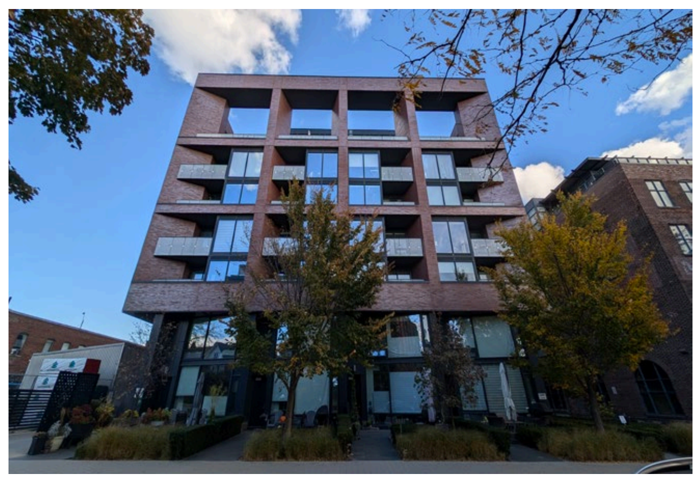
d. Consider natural ventilation, daylighting, wind flow, solar orientation, and energy performance when designing and articulating façades of mid-rise buildings. Articulation and sculpting should be strategic and assist in improving or mitigating these conditions and promoting sustainability. Where appropriate, adjust internal layouts, balcony placement, fenestration and other aspects of the building design to respond to manage passive solar gain and improve building energy performance.

e. Each building elevation should have a façade treatment that complements the overall building design, while responding to facing conditions. Blank walls should be avoided.

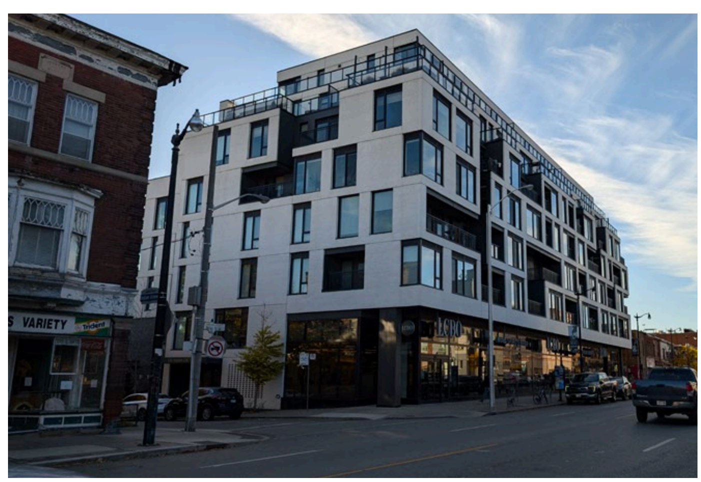
f. Provide a maximum of 60% glazed area for ground floors and commercial frontages and a maximum of 40% glazed area for residential façades in order to reduce embodied carbon and operational emissions.

g. On corner sites, design both elevations with the same level of wall articulation, architectural detail, fenestration and quality of materials to ensure a balanced presence within the public realm.

h. On large sites, architectural variation within development blocks is encouraged to avoid monotony and to create a more visually interesting and dynamic environment. A consistent design language should be maintained throughout the development to ensure overall cohesion and a sense of place.



383 Sorauren Avenue



2803 Dundas Street West

Rationale

A cohesive architectural style, characterized by well-proportioned elements composed with good rhythm and complementary materials, not only creates a visually engaging façade that breaks down the building's scale and integrates it more comfortably into the streetscape, but also contributes to creating places where people are proud to live, work and play.

Articulating a mid-rise building's massing should be considered for more than aesthetic purposes and should enhance the utility and functionality of the building. By integrating environmental considerations, functional requirements and contextual responsiveness, façade design can contribute to a building's overall sustainability and performance. Strategically positioned step-backs, recesses and projections can provide shading from direct sunlight, minimize solar heat gain and mitigate glare, as well as maximize daylight and natural ventilation, reducing reliance on artificial lighting and mechanical heating and cooling systems.

Considering aesthetics and performance in design ensures that mid-rise buildings fit harmoniously within their surroundings, both visually and functionally, and contribute to a comfortable and healthy environment for all users.

500 Lakeshore Boulevard West

80 Atlantic Avenue

Figure 3.10.1: Examples of façade articulation.

Official Plan Reference:

3.1.1 The Public Realm | 3.1.3 Built Form

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