

Markham-Ellesmere Revitalization Study

Urban Design Guidelines and Conceptual Master Plan

City of Toronto
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1.0 Introduction

The Urban Design Guidelines and Conceptual Master Plan for the Markham-Ellesmere Revitalization Area provide clarification, interpretation and illustration of the vision or development framework for physical planning and design in Site and Area Specific Policy No. 322 in Chapter 7 of the Official Plan, within the general context of the Official Plan.

The Urban Design Guidelines and Conceptual Master Plan apply to new development and public works in the Markham-Ellesmere Revitalization Area, which includes sites fronting on, or in close proximity to, Markham Road between Progress Avenue and the Hydro Corridor south of Brimorton Drive which are designated Mixed Use Areas or Apartment Neighbourhoods and have the potential for redevelopment or intensification.

The Urban Design Guidelines provide guidance on public realm improvements, and the design and organization of the built environment. The Conceptual Master Plan illustrates key components of the vision and development framework for the area.

The Guidelines and Conceptual Master Plan are intended for use by developers in the preparation of development proposals, and by the City of Toronto in the development review process, and in the planning of public projects.

2.0 Public Realm Guidelines

Public realm improvements in the Study Area will improve connections within and between neighbourhoods, improve streetscapes, encourage pedestrian oriented activities, and renew parks and open spaces.

The public realm includes streets and streetscapes, public parks and open spaces, as well as publicly accessible private open spaces.

New Road Connections

- New public street connections will be established to create a connected community with a road system that facilitates the movement of pedestrians and traffic within the area. The new road links will provide public street frontage for development blocks and connections to the arterial roads:
 - (a) from Tuxedo Court to Ellesmere Road and to Markham Road; and
 - (b) from Ellesmere Road to Brimorton Drive and to Markham Road.
- Street dimensions and features should match their function and importance in the public framework. The new streets will serve as local streets and/or minor collectors depending on their location.

- New traffic signals are desirable to assist pedestrians by providing breaks in the traffic flow and more places to safely cross the arterial roads, and to provide additional turning opportunities for vehicles in the areas east of Markham Road:
 - (a) on Markham Road approximately mid-way between Tuxedo Court and Ellesmere Road at the connection with the new east-west road through 1221 Markham Road; and
 - (b) on Ellesmere Road between Markham Road and Dormington Drive where the proposed north-south road link connects to Ellesmere Road.

Planted Medians

- Planted centre medians will be installed on Markham Road and Ellesmere Road to enhance safety for both vehicular traffic and pedestrians by restricting turning movements, and improving the appearance of the arterial roads. Such planted medians exist on Ellesmere Road (between Brimley Road and McCowan Road) and on Kennedy Road (between Lawrence Avenue and Highway 401).

Streetscapes and Pedestrian Activity

- Existing and new streets will receive extensive street tree planting and other landscaping.
- Markham Road, Ellesmere Road and any new streets will be lined with generous sidewalks to create a pedestrian-oriented environment for the whole Markham/Ellesmere area.
- Streetscape improvements will be designed and constructed so as promote safe and comfortable pedestrian access to a potential new rapid transit station in the vicinity of the intersection of Markham Road and Progress Avenue.
- Coordinated street furniture will be employed to promote pedestrian comfort and to increase the Markham/Ellesmere area's attractiveness.
- The pedestrian entrances of all new development will be connected directly to the nearest public sidewalk.
- Driveways and service areas will be located so as not to have an adverse impact on streetscapes.
- All new development and redevelopment will contribute to improved pedestrian access to existing and new open spaces and public facilities such as Woburn Park, Confederation Park, the Hydro Corridor, the Highland Creek valley and the Scarborough Centennial Recreation Centre. Pedestrian connections will be improved:
 - (a) from the Tuxedo Court community to the surrounding green spaces;
 - (b) between the north part of the Study Area and Ellesmere Road;

- (c) to Woburn Junior Public School and Woburn Collegiate Institute from the Tuxedo Court community and from Markham Road;
 - (d) along the south side of Ellesmere Road west of Markham Road between the Revitalization Area and Confederation Park; and
 - (e) along both sides of Markham Road between the Revitalization Area and the Hydro Corridor and the communities to the south.
- New streets north of Ellesmere Road will be designed and constructed so as to foster improved pedestrian access to and from the existing school grounds.

Public Square

- The creation of a publicly accessible urban square, to act as a community focus for the area, will be strongly encouraged. The preferred location is at or near the southeast corner of the intersection of Markham Road and Ellesmere Road.
- The publicly accessible urban square will be lined with mixed use buildings with direct access to the square.

Parks and Open Spaces

- Pedestrian connections to, and within, local parks and open spaces will be improved.
- Improvements will be made to the parks and recreation facilities serving the Revitalization Area. Woburn Park will be renewed with improved facilities, furnishings and lighting; the improvements may include items such as seating and a splashpad play amenity for children. Opportunities to improve facilities at Scarborough Centennial Recreation Centre in Confederation Park, such as gym and multi-purpose space, will also be promoted.
- Better community use of the indoor and outdoor facilities at Woburn Junior Public School and Woburn Collegiate Institute will be promoted. Tree plantings along the western and northern boundaries of the high school grounds will be encouraged.

Public Art

- Public art installations will be encouraged in all new development to add to the quality of the public realm in the Markham/Ellesmere area. The publicly accessible urban square is a key location for public art.

3.0 Site Development and Built Form Guidelines

Mixed Use Development/Commercial Uses

Commercial uses need to be attracted to and retained as part of the Revitalization Area.

- Mixed use development with commercial uses including restaurants, a food store and other retail uses are particularly encouraged on the lands southeast of Markham Road and Ellesmere Road. A strong commercial presence at this location, more or less in the centre of the Study Area, has the potential to become the key focal point for the community, supported by the public square.
- Mixed use development is also encouraged on the south side of Ellesmere Road east of the proposed north-south road link between Brimorton Drive and Ellesmere Road, at a modest scale providing appropriate transition to the low density neighbourhood to the east.
- Mixed use development is encouraged on the Markham Road frontage of 1221 Markham Road, as an ideal location for retail uses serving the northern half of the Study Area, as well as community facility uses.
- High quality design will be encouraged in any proposals for additions to, or redesign of, the existing Shell and Esso service station sites, at the northeast and southwest corners respectively, of Markham Road and Ellesmere Roads.

New Residential Development

- Residential development adjacent to existing low density residential neighbourhoods, south of Ellesmere Road, east of the proposed north-south road link between Ellesmere Road and Brimorton Drive, should be low-rise.
- Mid-rise residential buildings may be permitted at 2085 Ellesmere Road, as an appropriate transition to the existing townhouse complex to the west.
- A range of building heights from mid-rise to high-rise development may be permitted on the east side of Markham Road, north of Brimorton Drive, and west of the proposed north-south road link between Ellesmere Road and Brimorton Drive. Higher buildings should be concentrated towards Markham Road and building heights stepped down towards the low density residential areas to the east and south.
- High-rise residential development may be permitted on sites adjacent to existing high-rise development, removed from low density residential areas, including the east side of Markham Road north of Tuxedo Court, and at 1221 Markham Road.

Potential Tower Renewal

- The existing rental apartment buildings in the Revitalization Area are candidates for “potential tower renewal” through retrofitting to improve energy efficiency and other improvements including enhanced landscaping and tenant amenities. The owners of the

rental apartment buildings will be encouraged to invest in upgrades to their buildings and properties. These sites also have the potential for modest intensification which could take the form of townhouses and/or additional apartment buildings in accordance with the policies of the Official Plan.

Built Form

- All new development will be designed to respect adjacent single family homes through extensive buffering and through the concentration of new building massing along Markham Road and Ellesmere Road, to ensure appropriate transitions to the adjacent neighbourhoods.
- All existing and new streets will be lined with buildings which foster the creation of a high quality, safe urban environment through the building of attractive, visually interesting street frontages.
- Building designs will be encouraged which maximize the amount of building at or near the street-line.
- The lower floors of all buildings will contribute to the creation of a continuous street edge, with occasional breaks for landscaped open spaces which increase diversity and visual interest.
- Non-residential development will be designed to maximize the visibility of grade level activity from the sidewalks.
- All buildings will be designed to create safe, comfortable pedestrian level micro-climates.
- All non-residential buildings will provide weather protection through the use of canopies, colonnades or building overhangs.
- All buildings will be designed and oriented to promote the use of public transit on Markham Road and Ellesmere Road.
- All new buildings will be identified by name and a clearly visible street address.
- All new buildings will be designed to accommodate convenient and safe bicycle parking preferably on the main level.

Development Implementation

Individual development proposals will be assessed taking into account the details of their site, location, and context and will be reviewed against these and other relevant urban design guidelines and the policies of the Official Plan.

August 18, 2009
Not To Scale