
MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS

Development in Morningside Heights will be consistent with the following urban design guidelines. The guidelines correspond to General Policy 1.4.2 of the Morningside Heights Community Secondary Plan in Section 3 of Chapter 6 of the City's Official Plan. The guidelines provide a framework for development in Morningside Heights and are to be read in conjunction with the urban design policies of the Official Plan.

LOCATION

The area bounded by the Rouge River, Finch Avenue East, the CPR Havelock Line and the CPR Belleville Subdivision

GUIDELINES

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the guidelines is to establish the design principles that will direct the detailed planning of the community to ensure that the special qualities of the local area are recognized and enhanced by the proposed development.

COMMUNITY DESIGN VISION

The unique natural features that characterize the Morningside Heights Community, and the strong physical boundaries that contain it, create the opportunity to develop a distinctive, high-quality residential community with a special sense of place. This vision will be realized through the application of the following design principles.

1. Re-inforcing community identity through careful design and implementation of key components of the visible public realm, specifically: streetscapes, parks and natural open spaces.
2. Developing a well-defined community structure based on a connected and accessible system of natural features, parks, open spaces and significant public places.
3. Establishing an environmentally-friendly plan that preserves, restores, and enhances the many extraordinary natural features of the site.
4. Creating attractive community edges through architectural, landscape and built form treatments along perimeter roads, railway lines and adjoining natural features.

5. Promoting a strong sense of arrival and identity that conveys the envisioned qualities and character of the community.
6. Establishing a clear and understandable road network and pedestrian circulation system that responds to significant natural features; encourages views and vistas into natural amenities; and provides linkages with the parks and open space network.
7. Encouraging pedestrian-friendly, thematic streetscapes enhanced by traditional street furniture, extensive street tree planting, and coordinated built form.
8. Creating distinctive residential neighbourhoods that are well-defined by natural features, parks and open spaces, and also characterized by strong neighbourhood identity established through individual site plans, architectural themes and housing forms.
9. Introducing distinctive community design characterized by consistent architectural themes and compatible built forms.

COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

Nine major structuring elements will make up the Morningside Heights Community:

- Edges
- Gateway Features
- Open Space, Park and Trail Systems
- Street Systems
- Views and Vistas
- Residential Neighbourhoods and Enclaves
- Commercial Nodes
- Business Park
- Built Form

Each element will be developed in a way that expresses the overall urban design philosophy.

A consistent design theme will extend throughout all levels of the community structure, including streetscaping, private and public landscaping, and built form. As a guiding philosophy, this design theme will be traditional and casual in nature.

The following more detailed design guidelines apply to each of the structuring elements.

EDGES

In Morningside Heights, edges are both external and internal. The following are the community design guidelines and principles that apply to each of these areas.

Morningside Avenue Extension

1. The curbside impression of the residential community will be dominated by soft landscape, with a double row of street trees, low earth berm and associated landscape, providing a strong green foreground view.
2. South of the Hydro Right-of-Way, parallel service roads with residential buildings fronting the arterial will be employed to create an attractive architectural edge.
3. North of the Hydro Right-of-Way, medium density block development will be carefully designed to continue the architectural edge in a consistent, high-quality fashion.
4. Along the westerly side of the Morningside Avenue Extension, the Business Park will create a highly-articulated built form and streetscape edge.

Future Morningside Avenue Extension Edge - Buffer Reserve

A buffer reserve block has been established along the west limit of the development, north of the hydro corridor in anticipation of a possible future extension of Morningside Avenue.

1. A berm of roughly 3.5m height will be provided for acoustic protection and visual screening.
2. A 2.0m acoustic barrier will be placed at the crest of the berm. Materials used in the construction of the barrier will be of lasting quality. Where exposed to public view, the barrier will be treated as a streetscape amenity with appropriate attention to detailing, colour, architectural coordination, etc.

3. Random groupings of deciduous and coniferous trees and mass shrub beds will be introduced in clusters to mitigate the visual impact of this feature.

South Boundary (CPR Belleville Line)

1. A 15.0m wide noise and safety buffer zone is proposed along the southern perimeter.
2. With the exception of the most easterly section, this buffer will typically abut a single-loaded road, allowing rear yard acoustic protection to be provided by the proposed dwelling units.
3. It is proposed that the buffer be shaped (contoured) in the form of a shallow valley that simulates the appearance of a natural watercourse.
4. Naturalization plantings will be introduced within the buffer zone to enhance the visual impression of this edge and create a wildlife linkage between Morningside Tributary and the Rouge River Valley.

Rouge River Valley Edge

1. A development setback will be provided from the existing stable top-of-bank. Construction along the edge will conform to a detailed edge management plan.
2. The natural edge character of the Rouge River Valley will be extended and enhanced within the setback zone. Existing ground covers, grass and forest regeneration will be carefully preserved. The area will be seeded with a natural meadow turf grass mixture to stabilize exposed soils and provide the basis for long term forest regeneration.
3. In keeping with the goal of creating a green community, maintenance will be minimized to: allow introduced plant materials to thrive; encourage existing natural regenerative processes; and generally foster a natural landscape appearance.
4. Park and walkway block openings will be provided to create opportunities for significant visual exposure to the Valley for both pedestrians and motorists.
5. Pedestrian access to a top-of-bank trail will be provided at selected points.

Cedar Brae Golf Course Edge

1. The realignment of a section of Staines Road (north of the Hydro Corridor) will provide passing motorists a substantial view into the golf course and the nearby Rouge River Valley.
2. A small parkette and walkway linkage will be provided at this point to allow pedestrians the opportunity to linger and enjoy this viewing opportunity.

Morningside Tributary Edge

1. Slopes along the Morningside Tributary edges will vary in steepness but will generally not exceed 3:1 (horizontal to vertical), with areas of 4:1 or flatter being encouraged.
2. The edges of the tributary will be planted with clusters of native trees and shrubs to create a natural landscape character. The ground surface will be seeded with native grasses and ground covers.
3. In keeping with the goal of creating a green community, maintenance will be minimized to: allow introduced plant materials to thrive; encourage existing natural regenerative processes; and generally foster a natural landscape appearance.
4. Trail linkages and pedestrian crossing points will be provided at intervals along the corridor.
5. Park blocks will be provided at intervals along the corridor to create "windows" to the valley and provide convenient access points from adjoining neighbourhoods.

North Woodlot Edge

1. In view of the environmental significance of the North Woodlot, a 1.2m black vinyl chain link fence will be provided to establish a clear separation between the forest and adjoining residential land uses.
2. Public access will be strictly limited to a low-impact nature trail system.
3. Edge construction will conform to a detailed edge management plan.

GATEWAY FEATURES

Four major Gateways will lead into Morningside Heights. Three will be established in the early stages of development at the intersections of the Major Collector system and the Morningside Avenue Extension. Long term, a fourth Gateway may be established at the north end of the community where Staines Road intersects the future Steeles/CPR underpass.

Gateway Features will be designed in a distinctive manner that reinforces the overall image, character and theme of the community. The following design guidelines will be applied.

1. Permanent architectural monumentation will flank either side of each entry intersection. Typically taking the form of masonry gateways, these features will be designed to coordinate with the overall architectural theme of the community and will be consistent in style across the entire Morningside Heights area.
2. Identity features will be set within a landscaped open space block (buffer).
3. Private realm landscape treatment of the Gateway buildings will be designed and coordinated with the landscape of the identity feature and will reflect the theme established for the adjacent neighbourhood.
4. Orderly rows of deciduous street trees will be planted on either boulevard along the associated Gateway Streets (Major Collectors).
5. Planted centre medians will be incorporated into the design of the Gateway Streets to strengthen the visual impression of the entry and to further establish these areas as points of orientation.
6. To create a consistent visual impression, buildings located on Gateway Streets will be coordinated with the design of the identity feature.
7. Architecture at these locations will be of the highest quality. Pedestrian-friendly elements such as porches and verandas will also be incorporated.
8. Buildings will be of distinctive design and demonstrative of the overall community theme and character.
9. Laneways will allow for streetscapes that are not dominated by garages and driveways.

OPEN SPACE, PARK AND TRAIL SYSTEM

A major feature of the Morningside Heights Community Plan is the significant urban design role played by the Open Space, Park and Trail System. When combined with the fabric of existing natural features, these open space elements collectively set the dominant physical structure of the plan and are the armature on which each neighbourhood and residential enclave will be developed.

Overview of Open Space And Park Planning Principles

The established goals and objectives of the Open Space, Park and Trail System are follows.

1. Provide for the basic recreational and leisure needs of the community – both active and passive.
2. Enhance and preserve the environment through careful placement and construction of park and open space features.
3. Develop a well-defined community structure with distinctive residential enclaves that are focused on natural features, parks and/or open spaces.
4. Establish a sense of openness within the community by creating a highly-visible and accessible park system.
5. Create a clear and understandable pedestrian and bicycle circulation system that interconnects all significant natural features, parks and open spaces.
6. Include civic squares and other formal park spaces to create memorable landmarks and focal points throughout the urban fabric.
7. Encourage efficient land use by combining schools with active neighbourhood parks.
8. Create memorable views and vistas into valley and open space system.

Elements of The Natural Feature, Park And Open Space System

The principal elements of the Natural Feature, Park and Open Space System are:

- School/Park Campus Sites
- Civic Squares, Traffic Circles and other Significant Public Spaces

- Parkettes and Small Parks
- Rouge River Valley
- Morningside Tributary
- Minor Tributary Linkages
- North Woodlot Park
- Passmore Hedgerow
- Ontario Hydro Transmission Corridor

Specific design guidelines and planning principles applied to each of these elements are as follows.

School/Park Campus Sites

Two Neighbourhood Parks will be provided within the community. Each will be combined with an adjoining school site to create a campus setting and provide the major focal point for active recreation.

Community design and planning guidelines for these sites include the following.

1. The design character of the parks will reinforce their role as focal points for each of the two major neighbourhoods.
2. School/Park Campuses will be centrally-located, generally within five minutes walking distance of the majority of local users.
3. Where possible, they will provide convenient connections to nearby natural open spaces, tributary valley systems and on-street trail linkages.
4. Significant road frontage will be provided on minor collectors to ensure that each park site is highly visible and accessible to the community.
5. To ensure efficient use of land and to maximize the benefits of joint use, outdoor sports facilities will be "shared" between schools and park without regard for property boundaries and administrative jurisdictions. In this regard, the design of the school grounds in respect to both layout and details will be seamlessly integrated with the adjoining parkland.
6. A variety of sports facilities will be provided. The emphasis will be on neighbourhood-level program needs. Large, illuminated facilities that serve the needs of the larger municipality will be discouraged.
7. The organization and layout of these sites will typically enclose active sports facilities within a foreground setting of passive public spaces. This will create scenic interest, buffer views, and generally emphasize the civic character and neighbourhood orientation of the park space.
8. School buildings will be designed as dignified public structures that reinforce the overall architectural character of the community.

Civic Squares, Traffic Circle and Other Significant Public Spaces

Three civic squares, a strategically located traffic circle, and several other small formal park spaces have been proposed at key locations within the Community Plan. These squares have been designed with a distinctive traditional character that reinforces the structure, spatial definition, and architectural theme of the overall community.

1. Civic Squares will act as the focal point for the neighbourhood or residential enclave in which they are situated.
2. Civic Squares and/or Traffic Circles will typically be placed on-axis with the principal streets to create pleasing views and reinforce the sense of arrival at strategic points of entry to the community.
3. The features will be designed as attractive, well landscaped ceremonial spaces. Other than small playground facilities, active recreation will be discouraged.
4. Significant road frontage will be provided on a major street to ensure that each Civic Square is highly visible and accessible to the community.
5. Local traffic calming devices will be introduced to slow the pace of traffic around these features and promote convenient pedestrian access.
6. Design character and site-specific details will be carefully coordinated with the character of the local streetscape and the adjoining architecture.
7. Evergreen buffer plantings will be provided to create a backdrop and visual screen against adjoining residences. Formal street tree plantings will be provided within the adjoining municipal boulevards.

8. Facilities provided in Civic Squares will typically include: meandering walkways; pedestrian-scaled lighting; sheltered sitting areas; display gardens; and occasionally an arbour, pavilion or similar landmark feature.
9. Civic Squares will be reinforced by appropriate surrounding built form that creates an appealing architectural frame or edge to the park.
10. Where architectural elements such as pavilions, gazebo's, etc. are provided, they will be placed at focal points to act as prominent visual landmarks. All such park structures will be designed to a level of detail that reinforces the formal character of the park space and contributes to the overall community design theme.

Parkettes And Small Parks

A variety of small parkettes and local parks have been introduced throughout the fabric of the community plan. Community design and planning guidelines include the following.

1. Parkettes and small parks will typically serve neighbourhood-level open space needs and will include only passive recreation facilities.
2. Their location and configuration will take advantage of opportunities to provide scenic vistas, punctuate the urban fabric, and maintain important linkages to the overall community trail network.
3. In the case of Rouge Overlook Park, an important linkage will be created to the Rouge Valley top-of-bank trail system. Parking will be provided (in the form of a street layby) to facilitate access by city-wide visitors.
4. Road frontage will be provided to make these spaces highly visible. Where appropriate, consideration will also be given to meandering the municipal sidewalk into the park space.
5. Evergreen plantings and landforms will buffer views to the adjoining rear yard privacy areas and fences.

Rouge River Valley

The Rouge River Valley provides a dramatic natural backdrop to the development. In keeping with the principle of protecting and enhancing the natural environment, it is proposed that this valley feature experience only modest recreational development in accordance with the following design and site planning guidelines.

1. Recreational development will be limited to a meandering bicycle and pedestrian pathway situated within a top-of-bank setback zone. Pathway paving materials will typically be granular to encourage groundwater recharge. The alignment of the path will be designed to respond to existing forest cover, local topography, and concerns for privacy of adjoining residential properties.
2. Park and walkway block openings will be provided to create opportunities for pedestrian access and provide visual exposure to the valley.
3. The setback zone will be allowed to develop as a natural area in which the dominant visual impression is that of an abandoned meadow.

Morningside Tributary

Morningside Tributary runs north-south through the site creating an attractive open space spine at the heart of the community. Within the unforested central and lower reaches of the tributary, a series of stormwater management ponds and a naturalized stream channel are proposed.

The following design and site planning guidelines will govern development of this feature.

1. An open space trail will be provided within the corridor. Trail materials will be granular to encourage natural groundwater infiltration. The width will allow for convenient use by pedestrians and also to accommodate service vehicles for access to the storm water management ponds located in the valley.
2. The corridor will be allowed to develop as an unmaintained open space in which the dominant visual impression is that of a natural floodplain meadow.
3. Tributary crossings will be limited to only those points considered necessary to create a fully inter-connected open space trail system.

Bridges will be relatively short-span timber structures designed to harmonize with the natural character of the valley. Low impact crossing techniques such as stepping stones or fords will also be considered.

4. Stormwater management ponds will be designed with natural shapes and gentle side slopes to visually harmonize with the valley landscape.
5. Parks will be located at intervals along the corridor to create "windows" into the valley and provide convenient points of access from the adjoining neighbourhoods.

Minor Tributary Linkages

Two minor tributaries have been integrated into the plan to: further enhance pedestrian linkage opportunities; promote the overall environmental goals of the plan; and deal with stormwater management issues. Characterized as the Pitchfork and Neilson Tributaries respectively, both systems drain directly into the Morningside Tributary. Neilson Tributary is an intermittent watercourse that flows generally west-east through a series of natural channels and man-made ditches, joining the Morningside Tributary at the hydro corridor. By contrast, the Pitchfork Tributary is entirely man-made and connects to the Morningside Tributary within the southerly section of the community where it affords an opportunity to create a direct linkage to the southerly school park campus.

Community design guidelines and planning considerations include the following.

1. A path will be constructed within the reconstructed cross section of each tributary. Connections and linkages will be created to nearby parks, schools, open spaces, connecting walkways and street systems to create a fully integrated trail network.
2. Deciduous and coniferous tree plantings will be introduced in clusters along the edges of the greenway. A low maintenance approach will be taken to these sites. Natural ground covers and meadow grasses will predominate.
3. Black vinyl chain link fencing will establish the boundary between open space and private residences.

North Woodlot Park

The upper reaches of the Morningside Tributary meander through an attractive hardwood forest. Extending well past the floodplain into the adjoining tableland, the feature is the dominant natural focal point for the northerly of the two Morningside Heights neighbourhoods. This feature also provides an important natural edge that screens views to the nearby rail line.

1. The guiding principle of development in and around the north woodlot will be preservation and enhancement.
2. A significant portion of the new Staines Road will be single-sided to bring the north woodlot into view.
3. Recreational development within the woodlot interior will be limited to a simple trail system. Trail routes will attempt to follow existing clearings wherever practical. Public access to other areas of the woodlot will be discouraged.
4. Former fairways of Brookside Golf Course which lie within the woodlot will be allowed to naturally revegetate. Occasional mass plantings of native saplings will be introduced in pockets to foster accelerated regeneration.
5. Perimeter fences will be restricted to black vinyl chain link of modest height. Gates from private property into the woodlot will not be permitted.
6. Woodlot edges will be protected throughout the development process.

Passmore Hedgerow

In keeping with the goals of creating an environmentally-friendly community and a fully interconnected open space system, the plan calls for preservation of a remnant hedgerow located on either side of the unopened Passmore Avenue road allowance.

1. Integration of this feature into the plan will preserve an important natural corridor that is inter-connected to the community-wide trail system through the North Woodlot and the nearby Morningside Tributary. An additional north-south trail linkage (along a closed section of Staines Road) will provide a connection to an overlook opportunity along the edge of the Rouge Valley.

2. In keeping with the goal of environmental protection and enhancement, existing ground covers and forest regeneration within the hedgerow will be carefully preserved. Dead and dangerous trees will be removed and disturbed areas will be over-seeded with natural meadow turf grasses that will encourage on-going regeneration. Maintenance within the hedgerow will be minimized to promote a natural appearance and further support natural regeneration.
3. Public access will be limited to a casual granular trail. Traffic-calming measures located at the Staines Road crossing will create a positive visual linkage to the North Woodlot trail system and will promote safe pedestrian access.
4. Fencing of rear yards will be black vinyl chain link constructed at the minimum acceptable height to comply with local by laws.
5. Development along the hedgerow edges will be carefully controlled in accordance with an edge management plan.

Ontario Hydro Transmission Corridor

An Ontario Hydro transmission corridor extends east-west through the centre of the community creating a substantial open space amenity. Design guidelines and development proposals for this area are as follows:

1. Trail systems will be provided to create recreational and fitness opportunities for the community. Linkages will be provided to adjacent parks, open space corridors, and road frontages to create a fully inter-connected trail network.
2. Turf naturalization programs will establish low-growing native ground covers across the corridor to enhance its appearance and promote development of wildlife habitat.
3. Subject to approval, planting of corridor edges with clusters of native shrubs and low-growing trees will soften the appearance of the corridor and buffer views to adjoining residential lands.

Associated Buildings and Structures

Buildings associated with natural features, parks, open spaces and school sites play a special role in creating a positive impression of the community.

Buildings in these locations will be sited to frame views to open spaces and natural features. The high visibility of these buildings makes them focal points and orienting elements within the community. Therefore it is important to ensure that the architectural style, detail and elements in each case are appropriate to the site and in keeping with the overall community vision. Built form guidelines for these locations are included in the Architectural Design Guidelines for Morningside Heights.

The Architectural Design Guidelines address:

1. the need to strengthen the streetscape character through architectural massing and detailing
2. the opportunities for special architectural design and detail in highly visible locations
3. the quality of architecture.

STREET SYSTEMS

Overview Of Road Hierarchy And Related Design Considerations

The streetscape design of Morningside Heights places a high priority on the creation of visually-interesting, pedestrian-friendly environments that are supportive of the overall community vision. The specific image created by these streetscapes will be a combination of many diverse elements, including: right-of-way dimensions; design and placement of adjacent architecture; quality of landscape elements; style and placement of street furniture; character of lighting; and signage.

The proposed hierarchy of residential and business park streets in Morningside Heights, consists of the following:

- Morningside Avenue Extension – Arterial
- Primary Residential Collectors – Entry Roads
- Minor Residential Collectors
- Local Streets
- Parallel Service Roads
- Laneways
- Business Park Streets
- Special Streets

Morningside Avenue Extension - Arterial

Morningside Avenue Extension will form the dominant visual edge of the new community. The road will initially to be constructed with only four travel lanes. Long term, the potential exists for expansion to six lanes.

Community design features:

1. Land uses on the west side of the arterial road will be high performance industrial and office buildings that are mainly low-rise in character. The east side will be residential along the entire edge. In view of the prominence of these buildings, and their important role in establishing community character, a variety of built form design guidelines have been proposed.
2. The north and southbound travel lanes will initially be separated by a planted centre median.
3. Two rows of broad crown deciduous trees will be planted on either side - one within the boulevard and the other on the adjacent private property (or lateral road right-of-way).
4. Trees will be planted in formal rows, approximately 7.0m on centre. Their layout will be coordinated on either side to create a "colonnade" effect. Trees selected for this location will be native species with a dense crown form that will create a strong canopy.
5. A combined pedestrian and bicycle path will be situated between the double row of trees on the easterly boulevard (i.e. residential side). Occasional seating and resting areas will be provided, typically at intersections and junctions with other open space trail systems.
6. A low earth berm will be provided between the arterial road and adjacent parallel service road to act as a partial visual screen and to strengthen edge definition.
7. High quality light standards will be installed. Fixtures and poles will be consistent in style with those found throughout the interior of the Morningside Heights Community.

Primary Residential Collectors - Entry Roads

Primary collectors have been designed to establish a strong initial thematic character for the community at each of the three major arrival points. Referred to as Entry Roads, these streets will incorporate the various design features summarized below.

1. The road allowance will contain a centre median that extends the entire length of the initial block.
2. Adjacent land uses will be carefully designed to minimize driveway accesses along the length of the entry road median.
3. The boulevards and centre median will be planted with matching rows of deciduous trees. To reinforce the traditional character of the arrival experience, boulevard trees will be planted in organized rows (approximately 6.0m on centre) and will be of matching species.
4. Sidewalks, will be provided on both boulevards.
5. Light standards and other items of street furniture will be carefully coordinated to reinforce the overall traditional character of the community.
6. Careful attention will be paid to the location of transformers, switchgear and other utilities to ensure an uncluttered arrival impression that allows sufficient space for the development of attractive entry gates.
7. Laneways will be employed at these locations to permit houses to be constructed without visible driveways and garages.
8. Each entry road will focus on a significant open space feature such as a civic square or traffic circle.
9. The most southerly entry road will be designed to provide extended open space views from its crossing point over the Morningside Tributary. This road will also be designed to terminate at its east end with an open space window to the Rouge River Valley.
10. Provision will be made for porch and veranda encroachments to encourage an intimate and sociable streetscape.
11. Built form located along the edges of entry roads will be the most prominent in the community and will be considered high priority.

Minor Residential Collectors

Minor residential collectors are designed to link the various gateway features along the Morningside Avenue Extension through to the interior of the community, as the primary internal street system.

Community design features of these streets are as follows:

1. Sidewalks will be located 1.0m offset from the streetline on both boulevards, and typically be designed 1.5m wide.
2. In areas where the road abuts an open space, park or woodlot block, consideration will be given to "meandering" the sidewalk so that it penetrates a modest distance into the adjacent public space.
3. A lush green streetscape will be created by providing a row of broad crown deciduous trees (approx. 6.0m on centre) on both boulevards. Wherever possible, street trees will be situated between the sidewalk and curb.
4. Tree placement will be random, dictated by the constraints of driveways and street furniture.
5. Planting will consist of hardy, native species. Given the need for a relatively random layout, and the importance of encouraging species diversity, a wide variety of tree species will be encouraged.
6. Civic squares will be located along the primary north-south minor collector (Staines Road) to create memorable landmarks and community focal points.
7. Generous view opportunities to features such as the Morningside Tributary, Rouge Valley and Passmore Hedgerow will be provided at intervals along the north-south collector.
8. Traffic-calming measures will be incorporated along the north-south collector to enhance the quality of the streetscape and discourage through traffic from Steeles Avenue to Finch Avenue.
9. All school/park campuses will be located on minor residential collectors.
10. To encourage intimate and sociable streetscapes, provision will be made for reduced front yard building setbacks with porch encroachments.
11. Variation in lot sizes and layouts, as well as modulation of building setbacks, will be encouraged on minor collectors to achieve visual interest and spatial variety.

Local Streets

Local residential streets will possess the following community design features.

1. Streetscape image will be modest and functional, with special attention paid to priority lot locations and the interface of these streets with minor collectors and entry streets.
2. Sidewalks will be provided on one side, where required. The preferred sidewalk location will be immediately abutting back of curb. This placement will allow for an uninterrupted expanse of landscaped space between the residential architecture and pavement edge.
3. To create a lush green streetscape, a row of broad crown deciduous trees will be provided on both boulevards, typically located between the sidewalk and curb at roughly 6.0m on centre. Trees selected will be hardy native species planted in a relatively random arrangement as dictated by the placement of street furniture, driveways, etc. Considerable variety in species will be encouraged.
4. Provision will be made for reduced building setbacks for porch and veranda encroachments.
5. Careful siting and detailing of buildings will be encouraged to help create distinctive residential areas that provide a sense of local identity.

Parallel Service Roads

Located along the easterly edge of the Morningside Avenue Extension, these roads will be designed to present an attractive architectural face along the entire outer edge of the community, these streets will have residences developed on only one side. Community design features are as follows.

1. The westerly boulevard will be constructed with a gentle berm and planted with shrub beds that complement and strengthen planting within the adjacent Morningside Avenue Extension.
2. Sidewalks will not be provided.
3. Two rows of broad crown deciduous trees will be provided, one on either boulevard, and matching the species selected for the Morningside Heights Extension.

4. To be consistent with the balance of the community, provision will be made to allow porch and veranda encroachments.

Parallel service roads or window streets create significant framed views into the community. The following guidelines will be considered.

1. Landscaping of the community edge along the arterial road will be layered and coordinated with that of the service road streetscape.
2. Buildings will present high quality, coordinated architecture to the exposed edge with a strong preference shown for less dominant garages.

Laneways

Laneways have been introduced sparingly within the community, typically at the major entry points where they support the urban design objective of reducing the impact of garages at the principal arrival points.

1. Curbs will be continuous along the lane and will be constructed with a rolled cross section.
2. Garage setbacks will occasionally vary to create visual interest.
3. Sideyard setbacks will be "twinned" wherever possible.
4. Tree planting will be provided wherever space permits.
5. Transformers located on flankage lots will be used as an opportunity for tree planting.

Business Park Street

Applicable to only one short cul-de-sac located north of the hydro right-of-way and immediately west of Neilson Road, this street will contain the following community design features:

1. Street furniture will match the style and theme of the adjacent residential community.
2. Regular street tree planting will be provided within the boulevard zone wherever space permits.

Built Form Along Special Streets

The special streets in the Morningside Heights Community include:

- Morningside Heights Extension
- East-west minor collectors (between Morningside Heights Extension and Staines Road)
- Staines Road

Built form on each of these special streets will be a major determinant of community image and character. Accordingly, the design of these streets will have regard for the following guidelines.

1. Strong massing, increased height and reduced front yard setbacks will be employed to create strong edge definition on all special streets.
2. Architecture that highlights and displays front doors will be encouraged.
3. Pedestrian-friendly elements such as porches, verandas, bay windows and balconies will be encouraged.
4. To reinforce the overall community image and character, building designs will emphasize dignified, thematic architectural detailing.
5. Strong streetscape landscaping will reinforce the architectural edge definition and enhance the pedestrian-oriented character of the community.
6. Architectural treatments that de-emphasize garages will be encouraged.
7. At least one principal living space will be oriented to the front of the dwelling to establish an inviting architectural presence and "eyes on the street".

Street Planting Guidelines

The following general guidelines will be applied.

1. Street trees will be consistent in form - typically broad crown deciduous species capable of providing a substantial shaded canopy over both road and sidewalk. In general, canopy widths and ultimate tree heights will be related to the street hierarchy and road widths.
2. Local streets and minor collectors will be planted with a variety of tree species selected for hardiness, diversity, seasonal colour and texture. Native species will generally be preferred.

3. Arterial roads and entry gateways are considered areas of major architectural emphasis. As such, they will be planted with a single tree species. Tree selection will emphasize dense, symmetrical crown shapes.
4. Accent plantings will be introduced at focal and turning points along the road system. Trees selected for these locations will have a flowering habit or distinctive foliage.
5. Trees planted within centre medians will be underplanted with groundcover and shrubs and will be protected from road de-icing agents by a hard surface splash pad.
6. Street trees will typically be located between the sidewalk and curb.
7. All planting will conform to the minimum caliper size specified by City of Toronto standards.
8. Where roads abut forested open space or woodlot blocks, boulevard tree selection will emphasize complementary species.

Street Lights And Signs

The following guidelines will apply to these elements.

1. All street lights will be from a common family of high quality components.
2. Light fixtures will be traditional in style and will be co-ordinated with the architectural theme of the community.
3. Light fixtures will be consistent for all road types throughout the community, with necessary variations for mounting height and spacing as required to suit the geometry of the road.
4. In recognition of the increasingly pedestrian orientation of the more local streets, mounting height and spacing of light fixtures will reduce as the order of street declines from major collector to minor collector to local road.
5. Street signs will also be traditional in style and colour to reflect the character of the community. They will be mounted on poles that match the style of poles used for street lighting.

Community Mailboxes

The following guidelines will apply.

1. Mailboxes will be grouped and distributed throughout the Morningside Heights Community to conform to Canada Post and City of Toronto standards for safety, maintenance and performance.
2. They will be sited with care to avoid conflicts with residential units. Preferred locations will be on the flankage section of a corner lot (with adequate setback from the intersection) and opposite residential units on all single-sided service roads.
3. Landscape screening and buffer planting will be provided for all mailboxes installed on park frontages or other prominent locations.
4. Where possible, mailboxes will be located adjacent to on-street parking.
5. Decorative hard surface paving materials will be provided under all mailboxes to connect to the adjacent sidewalk and/or curb edge. The needs of the physically challenged will be considered in the design.
6. Each mailbox location will be equipped with a waste receptacle.
7. Roadway lighting will be carefully designed to ensure these locations are well illuminated.
8. Mailboxes will be integrated with flankage lot fencing to create a protective enclosure. In the case of park frontages, a small protective enclosure will be provided that is consistent with the overall architectural theme of the community.

Above Ground Utilities

Above ground utilities include electrical switch gear, transformers, telecommunication pedestals, traffic signal control panels and the like. They require special design treatment, as follows.

1. They will be located in unobtrusive areas, well away from intersections, daylighting triangles, or at the end of significant views and vistas.
2. Where possible, they will be organized in clusters at regular intervals along the boulevard.
3. Flankage locations are preferred to residential frontages.

4. Open space and park block locations will be integrated with the design of the public space and well screened with landscape planting.

Fencing

All fencing that is visible from public streets and/or open spaces will be subject to design review. The following guidelines will be applied.

1. The design of all visible fences located on opposite sides of a street, or within the same viewshed, will match in detail and be complementary in colour.
2. Fences will provide full privacy without gaps.
3. Fences will be a maximum of 1.8m high.
4. Fence designs and colours will reflect the traditional theme of the community and local architecture.
5. Perimeter fencing adjacent to all parks and open spaces will be 1.2m high black vinyl chain link.

VIEWS AND VISTAS

Visual exposure to natural features and significant architectural elements, is a deliberate urban design intention in the design of Morningside Heights. A memorable pattern of local landmarks will be established by focusing views on:

- Significant built form - public buildings and private residential locations
- Civic squares
- Park focal points.

The following design guidelines are proposed for reinforcing these features.

Natural Vistas

1. Natural vistas and view corridors will be arranged along the minor collector roads to reinforce the green community theme by focusing views on the Morningside Tributary, North Woodlot, Passmore Hedgerow and Rouge River Valley.
2. View corridors will also be designed to provide pedestrian access to the valley and open space trail network.
3. At bridge crossings over the Morningside Tributary, scenic opportunities will be enhanced with belvederes and overlooks.

Architectural Vistas

There are key locations within the overall community plan that become architectural vistas. For example, gateway locations where buildings form part of the prominent feature that announces the community entry locations, as well as locations where buildings terminate view corridors. Additional architectural vistas within the community include:

1. Corner lots throughout the community that have high visibility with two exposed street edges
2. 'T' road junction locations where a significant grouping of buildings is formed
3. End views at curved streets and street elbows with special opportunities to highlight the built form.

Given the special visual significance of each of these locations, architectural design guidelines will address:

1. The quality of the architectural design on all exposed elevations
2. The preferred location for the front door
3. The use of architectural features such as wrap-around porches, turrets, and bay windows or sun terraces, where possible
4. Architectural massing, detailing and landscape accent plantings where appropriate
5. Varied building setbacks
6. Clustered sets of buildings of high architectural quality
7. Off-setting of garages on adjacent units to allow for pairing of lawns, thus creating opportunities for enhanced landscape treatments.

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENCLAVES

Morningside Heights consists of four distinct residential neighbourhoods, each composed of a series of smaller enclaves. This structure is a product of the organization of the major public spaces and principal road systems. It is also strongly influenced by the site's existing natural features. The intention of this structure is the deliberate creation of an intimate local identity that is one of the keys to achieving the urban design vision for Morningside Heights.

The following community design principles will be applied to the creation of neighbourhoods and enclaves.

1. In general, strong natural or man-made edges will contain each neighbourhood.
2. Each enclave will have a distinctive focal point – typically a civic square, school/park campus or special environmental feature.
3. The two largest neighbourhoods will be bounded by the Morningside Tributary on the east and the Morningside Avenue Extension on the west. Each will have a centrally-located school park campus as the local focal point of both the neighbourhood and surrounding enclaves.
4. The northeast neighbourhood will be bounded by the forested upper reaches of Morningside Tributary to the west and Cedar Brae Golf and Country Club to the east. The focal point of the enclave will be the North Woodlot and Passmore Hedgerow Parks.
5. The southeast neighbourhood will enjoy a strong sense of natural enclosure from the nearby natural landscape of the Morningside Tributary and Rouge Valley. The focal point of this small neighbourhood will be the Rouge Square.
6. Local streets will also be arranged to provide convenient connections to collector roads, schools, parks, open spaces, and local shopping. The general residential block pattern will be rectilinear with appropriate modifications to suit local topography and natural features.
7. Each school park campus will be located within an average 5 minutes walking distance of the majority of local residents.

8. Neighbourhood identity will be further reinforced by the siting and design character of selected built form elements – particularly at neighbourhood entry points, along boundary roads and edges, and at the key focal points within each neighbourhood.
9. To strengthen the sense of local identity, neighbourhood street patterns will be designed to create view corridors to landmark buildings, civic squares, and significant natural features.

COMMERCIAL NODES

Two commercial nodes have been designated in Morningside Heights. Both are highly visible with frontage on Morningside Avenue Extension, as well as strategic exposure to the major residential gateways on the opposite corners. In addition to their commercial function, these elements act as important community landmarks and neighbourhood focal points. As the principal built form elements at the two major gateways, these elements also perform a strategic urban design function by reinforcing the overall community image and sense of arrival.

The following guidelines will apply.

1. Commercial block site plans will be designed to create an attractive, pedestrian-friendly streetscape along the westerly edge of the Morningside Avenue Extension and the adjoining east-west streets.
2. Elements to be considered in the creation of this comprehensive streetscape image will be on-site landscaping, pedestrian walkways, access points, built form and massing, architectural treatment, and signage.
3. To strengthen the gateway and arrival impression, commercial structures will include a pavilion, or other distinctive architectural feature, near the intersections and typically on-axis with the major street system.
4. Corner setbacks will be enhanced with significant soft landscaping and architectural monumentation designed to complement the gateway identity treatments on the opposite residential corners. Monumentation will typically be of the same material, colour and detailing as the residential gateway features, but more modest in scale.

5. Commercial buildings will be encouraged to form a strong built form edge along the street line that complements and reinforces the adjacent streetscape.
6. Changes in plane and elevation relief will be incorporated to divide long continuous sections of facades and provide visual interest.
7. Storefronts and building entrances will be encouraged to orient to the street frontage. Canopies, arcades or similar architectural features will be encouraged to highlight the building entrances and provide protected pedestrian routes from the adjacent street edges, parking lots, etc.
8. At the intersection of the Morningside Avenue Extension and future Finch Avenue, commercial buildings will be oriented to establish a strong built form edge backing on to, and partially screening, views to the railway lines.
9. The architectural style of commercial buildings will be designed to harmonize with the overall image of the community.
10. Large parking areas will be divided with the use of landscaped islands and the placement of free standing buildings.
11. Landscaped islands will be organized to form safe pedestrian routes to the nearby commercial buildings.
12. Loading and service areas will be located at the rear of buildings and will be screened with architecture or landscaping.
13. Major project signage will be grade related and will be integrated into the site plan with appropriate landscape treatment and will be carefully coordinated with the corner architectural monumentation.
14. Light fixtures will harmonize with the fixtures employed throughout the residential development. Excess lighting and spillage into the adjacent residential areas will be avoided.

BUSINESS PARK

The Morningside Avenue Extension forms an important interface between the residential community and the proposed Business Park to the west. Recognizing the important role of this edge in establishing the overall image of Morningside Heights, the following guidelines will be applied to the Business Park:

1. Business Park site plans and structures will be carefully designed to create a highly-articulated built form edge and pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Elements to be considered in the creation of this comprehensive edge condition will be on-site landscaping, entrance and access points, built form and massing, architectural treatment, and signage.
2. Business Park structures will be located to create a strong built form edge. Changes in wall plane and horizontal elevation relief will divide long sections of facade and provide visual interest.
3. At the intersection of Morningside Avenue Extension and the future Finch Avenue, Business Park structures will be drawn to the corner to complement the scale and character of the adjacent commercial buildings.
4. Building entrances will be oriented to the street where possible and highlighted with canopies or similar architectural features.
5. Setbacks at intersections will be enhanced with soft landscaping and architectural monumentation that is designed to complement the gateway identity treatments on the opposite residential corners. Monumentation will typically be complementary to the material, colour and detailing of the residential gateway features.
6. The architectural style of Business Park structures will be high quality and will be carefully designed to complement the overall community character. Given the direct frontage on an arterial road with a continuous centre median, the number of vehicular entrances will be minimized. Entrances that are shared between blocks will be encouraged.
7. Parking will be limited on the Morningside Avenue frontage and will be well screened with high-quality landscaping and berming.

8. Large parking areas will be sub-divided by landscaped islands and/or the placement of buildings. Islands will be organized to form safe pedestrian routes.
9. Loading and service areas will be located at the rear of buildings and will be screened from Morningside Avenue with architecture and/or landscaping.
10. Major project signage will be grade related and will be integrated into the site plan with appropriate landscape treatment.
11. Site lighting fixtures will harmonize with the fixtures employed throughout the residential development. Excess lighting and spillage into adjacent residential areas will be avoided.

BUILT FORM

The urban design vision for Morningside Heights identifies the principle of creating a distinctive community design that is characterized by consistent architectural themes and compatible built forms.

Morningside Heights Architectural Design Guidelines will build on the community design principles and objectives established throughout this document and summarized below:

1. Creating strong, identifiable and consistent community edges, identity features, and entry gateways.
2. Reinforcing prominent streets, intersections and focal points within the community.
3. Framing views into open spaces, parks and natural features.
4. Establishing memorable landmarks at intervals throughout the community.
5. Establishing distinctive neighbourhood character and theme.
6. Introducing variety and interest within the streetscape.
7. Maintaining consistent, high quality built form throughout the community.

Priority Locations

Priority locations are streets, lots, buildings, elevations, and private yards for all land uses which are located in positions of high public exposure or which terminate view corridors. The design of buildings sited on these lots will ensure that the strong character within the community is expressed. Special consideration will be given to a variety of design elements including building siting, unit and garage design, facade treatment, and landscape elements.

Priority built form locations are:

- Gateways
- Special Streets
- Settings Adjacent to Natural Features, Parks, Open Spaces and Schools
- Significant Public Places
- Corner Lots
- 'T' Road Junctions
- End Views at Curved Streets and Street Elbows
- Window Streets

Community design guidelines and the built form objectives for each of these locations are discussed throughout this document.

Street Related Residential Buildings

A key objective in the design of the low density built form is the creation of a distinctive, high quality residential streetscape.

The Architectural Design Guidelines for Morningside Heights provide guidelines for conventional, wide-shallow and laneway lots related to:

- Building types;
- Building setbacks from the street line;
- Elevation variety within each streetscape;
- Consistent architectural quality and details; and
- Garage designs for various lot sizes and shapes, as well as opportunities for different locations, depending on the lot layout.

Residential Block Development

Residential block developments are affected by the same underlying urban design objectives as street related housing pertaining to developing strong streetscapes in keeping with the overall community character. In addition to these site planning principles, the intent is to ensure that block developments contribute to the collective streetscape image of the community.

The Morningside Heights Architectural Design Guidelines assist in the integration of block development into the community's streetscapes through guidelines that address:

- Consistency of architectural style with the balance of the community
- Building massing, roof lines and elevations
- Building entrances
- Consistency of details
- General site planning items.

Commercial Building Forms

Two commercial areas are included in the Morningside Heights Community. Their design will be governed by the following built form and siting principles.

- A variety of building types will be encouraged. In all cases, built form and architectural style will be consistent with the theme of the overall community.
- There will be a strong emphasis on developing an attractive pedestrian retail environment.
- Both the siting and design of buildings will take advantage of significant view corridors and landmark opportunities at key locations.
- Commercial streetscapes will be carefully coordinated, including signage, displays, and street furniture.
- Parking areas will be located to the rear and side of buildings where possible.
- Comprehensively designed landscape buffers will be provided at the street edge to screen visible parking.
- Loading areas will be located away from the street and will be screened appropriately.

Institutional Buildings

Institutional buildings such as schools and community centres will be encouraged to maintain a strong presence on the street to serve as significant civic landmarks and focal points. The following principles will be respected when developing these structures.

- Building designs will have regard for the architectural styles expressed in the community.
- At intersections, institutional buildings will be encouraged to be sited to create a significant architectural address at the corner.
- On flankages, the main mass of the building will typically be located close to the front property line but with sufficient setback to fully reveal the detailing, massing, and special features of the structure.
- Service areas and activities will be screened from public view - typically by being located at the rear or the side of buildings.
- Landscaping will be compatible with, and complementary to, the adjacent streetscape and other nearby uses.

