

## Policy Direction Highlights - Booklet 3

# BUILDING FOR LIVEABILITY

New challenges have emerged as buildings in parts of the Downtown continue to get taller. What policies are needed to better guide growth and shape built form in a manner that is sustainable and maintains and improves liveability for residents, workers, and visitors in the Downtown?

Proposed buildings on infill sites must accommodate amenity space, public realm improvements, adequate setbacks, parking, loading, and other requirements of new development. They must be carefully considered in the context of the compact Downtown fabric, and address the elements of liveability related to the scale and form of development.

## Intensity of Development

D1 D2 D3

Much of the intensification happening Downtown is in the form of tall buildings. Taller buildings are appropriate in some locations but not everywhere. The cumulative impacts of multiple tall buildings on a block must be better understood and managed.

The built form policies of the Secondary Plan will balance both the urban design measures by which to shape buildings, including overall height and massing, and be informed by the infrastructure that is available and/or able to support this intensity of use.

## Designing Buildings to Improve the Public Realm and Streetscapes

D7 D8

The Official Plan requires new development to enhance the quality of the public realm, define its edges and support its use, improve the attractiveness of adjacent streets and fit with or improve the character of the surrounding area. Proposals for new development should also explore opportunities to expand the public realm through setbacks, plazas, gardens or forecourts.

The base or lower floors of buildings are the main interface between the public and private realms, where pedestrians experience the building. Careful consideration should be given to this relationship through building location, organization, massing, and design.

## D POLICY DIRECTIONS

**D1:** Proposals for buildings will be evaluated with respect to the appropriateness of their built form, height and density, as well as their relationships to other existing and planned buildings and open space, including the cumulative effect on sun and shadow, sky-views, comfort, and quality of the public realm.

**D2:** Proposed buildings must retain and enhance the liveability of their surroundings and ensure the liveability of the spaces contained within them.

**D3:** Determination of the appropriate built form will include consideration of the existing and planned infrastructure necessary to support the development.

**D7:** Determine an appropriate scale of buildings, including the base building and overall building mass, to provide enclosure at a scale that fits with its neighbours and is proportional to the scale of the street or space it is adjacent to.

**D8:** Encourage appropriate ground floor uses and design, including façade articulation that supports the use of the adjacent streets, parks and open spaces, and fits with its neighbours.

## Access to Sunlight

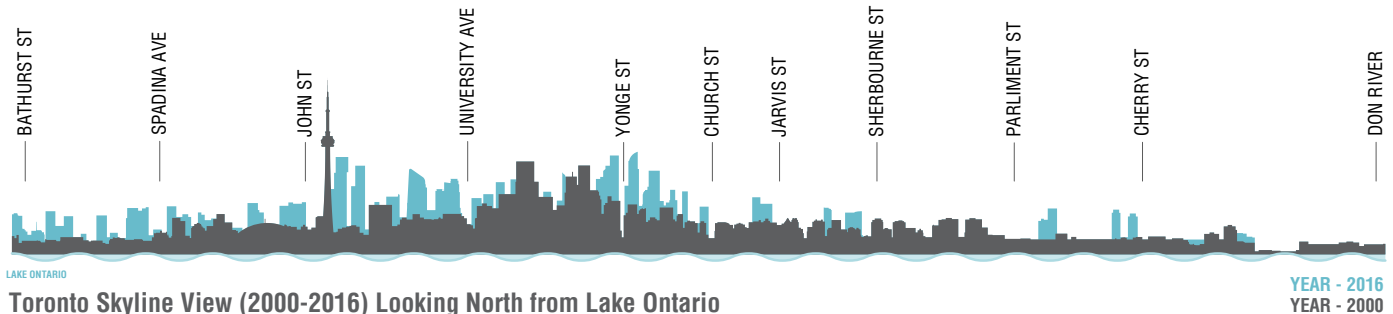
D9 D10

Toronto is a “four season city” and as such, providing access to sunlight and limiting shadows, especially on our public realm ensures thermal comfort in these spaces throughout the winter and in the shoulder seasons. Protecting for adequate sunlight also contributes to an environment in which trees and other plants can thrive. Preserving sunlight in the public realm – particularly in the Downtown with a growing residential and office population and a high volume and intensity of pedestrians – is crucial to promoting the comfortable use of the public realm.

## Built Form Spacing and Fit

D11

The Downtown comprises the full spectrum of land uses and built form types – low-rise *Neighbourhoods* such as the Annex with its singles, semis, townhouses, walk-up and mid-rise apartments, King Street East with its warehouse conversions and new mixed use buildings, St. James Town with its tower-in-the-park apartments, and tall commercial buildings in the Financial District. In some areas there is a consistent pattern and scale, while in other areas, there is a mix of building types and scale, even within a single block. Each of these areas has its own distinct character, which should be understood and reinforced through a transition in built form.



## D POLICY DIRECTIONS

**D9:** Identify specific areas that will be protected from net new shadow, including, but not limited to, streets, sidewalks, parks, open spaces, school building and grounds, child care centres, playgrounds, institutional open spaces and POPs.

**D10:** Develop sunlight standards for vertical communities, including but not limited to sun access on outdoor amenity spaces and daylighting of individual units.

**D11:** Identify appropriate transition and building spacing policies and standards between areas of varying scale and intensity, as well as to streets, parks and open spaces.

## New Requirements for Amenity Space

D14 D15 D16

Recently, condominium units have been designed with smaller and smaller footprints – the average unit size has decreased 20% from 1996 to 2016. These small units increase the need to provide high-quality and well-designed indoor and outdoor common space for residents within these vertical communities.

With an influx of workers anticipated in the Downtown over the next 25 years and the space-per-worker ratio declining significantly, the Secondary Plan will ensure that new non-residential development provides workers with amenity opportunities within the buildings in which they spend their working hours.



Rooftop amenity space for office workers (Credit: City of Toronto)

## Importance of Context

As Downtown becomes denser, it is necessary to evaluate the context of the neighbourhood and the larger surrounding area when evaluating the appropriateness of intensification on a specific site. This is especially important within the *Mixed Use Areas* where growth is anticipated at a higher intensity.

Evaluating the existing and planned context, and demonstrating how the proposed building responds to the patterns and context within the surrounding area is essential to ensuring that the Downtown's liveability is enhanced and maintained.



King-Spadina Regeneration Area (Credit: City of Toronto)

## D POLICY DIRECTION

**D14:** Encourage the provision of high-quality and well-designed indoor and outdoor amenity space in mixed-use and residential buildings recognizing the wide variety of occupants of these buildings, including but not limited to, seniors, families, children, and pets.

**D15:** Protect private and shared outdoor amenity space to ensure sunlight access.

**D16:** Encourage the provision of high-quality indoor and outdoor amenity space in non-residential buildings.



## Have you met our Avatars?



**Fatemeh**

66 years old | Senior | Grandparent | Walks  
Symphony goer | North York

"I think the proposals to identify more public spaces to protect from new shadows will help make Downtown a more enjoyable place to visit."



**Ann**

30 years old | Métis | Works & lives Downtown | Rents  
Walks everywhere | About to start a family

"As a condo dweller about to have a baby, it's important to me that TOcore is tackling the kinds of amenity spaces that developers provide in new buildings. Hopefully, we'll start to see more family- and pet-friendly spaces."

Tell us about yourself

How will these policies improve the quality of your life?



**You**

## Have Your Say

- How do you think these policies will improve Downtown?
- What policies would you change? How?
- Is anything missing?

This booklet provides you with an overview of the Policy Directions in the TOcore Proposals Report. To see them all please visit

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