

## toronto's coordinated street furniture program

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## Toronto's Coordinated Street Furniture Program Design and Policy Guidelines

September 2006 - Joint Report

 **Toronto** City Planning, Clean & Beautiful City Secretariat and Transportation Services



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City of Chicago  
City of Dundee, Scotland  
City of Los Angeles  
City of Paris  
City of Vancouver  
City of Vienna  
Gord Brown, Harbord Village Residents Association

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary	Page: 1
1. Introduction	Page: 3
1.1 The Opportunity and The Challenge	
1.2 What is Coordinated Street Furniture?	
1.3 The Role of Advertising in a Coordinated Street Furniture Program	
1.4 The Purpose of this Document	
2. Background and Context	Page: 7
2.1 Context and Timing	
2.2 Pilot Projects and Related Initiatives	
3. Objectives of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program	Page: 11
3.1 Objectives	
3.2 A City-wide Initiative	
4. Process: Public Consultation, Outreach and Best Practices	Page: 13
4.1 Public Consultation Process	
4.2 Best Practices Research	
5. Scope of the Program – A Catalyst for Improving the Public Realm	Page: 17
5.1 Scope of the Program	
5.2 Enhancements to the Street Furniture Program	
5.3 Opportunities for Artist Participation	
6. Design Guidelines	Page: 19
6.1 Appropriateness, Scale, Modularity	
6.2 Coordinated Family of Elements	
6.3 Accessibility and Universal Design	
6.4 Safety and Security	
6.5 Materials, Fabrication, Durability	
6.6 Flexibility	
6.7 Sustainability and Environmental Issues	
6.8 Building and Supporting Toronto's Identity	
7. Placement Guidelines	Page: 25
7.1 Placement Goals	
7.2 Applicable By-laws and Guidelines	
7.3 Public Boulevard Right-of-Way Organization	
7.4 Placement of Street Furniture	
7.5 Detailed Guidance for the Placement of Street Furniture	

- General placement of all street furniture
- Transit shelters
- Litter/recycling bins
- Benches
- Multi-publication boxes
- Information/wayfinding signage
- Postering kiosks
- Postering poles/boards
- Automated public toilets
- Publication box attachment units
- Bicycle parking units

#### 7.6 Process - How Street Furniture Locations will be Approved

8. Street Furniture and Advertising	Page: 39
9. Conclusion	Page: 41
10. Appendices	
10.1 Results of Public Consultation Process	Page: 43
10.2 Results of Design Exchange Charrettes	Page: 51
10.3 Revised InfoPillar Placement Guidelines	Page: 53

## Executive Summary

Toronto's Coordinated Street Furniture Program creates a unique opportunity to dramatically improve and celebrate the quality of our public spaces through exceptional design.

Toronto's streets and sidewalks are key components of the public realm. When they are thoughtfully designed with well-placed amenities, a beautiful, functional and safe urban environment is the result. Street furniture amenities, including transit shelters, benches, recycling bins, publications boxes, information and wayfinding signs, contribute to the way our streets look and feel. When these elements are mismatched, poorly designed and awkwardly placed, they detract from the city's image.

The Coordinated Street Furniture Program intends to change how our city streets look, function and meet the needs of residents and visitors. The goal of the program is to harmonize the design, form, scale, materials and placement of street furniture, so that it contributes to the accessibility, safety and beauty of our public spaces. The program will be implemented through a Request For Proposal (RFP) process that will seek proposals from the private sector to provide coordinated street furniture elements under a financial arrangement that creates long-term value to the City. These improvements will be implemented in all Districts.

While high quality street furniture is important, it is only one of several initiatives aimed at improving the look and character of Toronto's streets. On its own, it will have an impact. However, when combined with other streetscape improvement initiatives, it can become a powerful force for change.

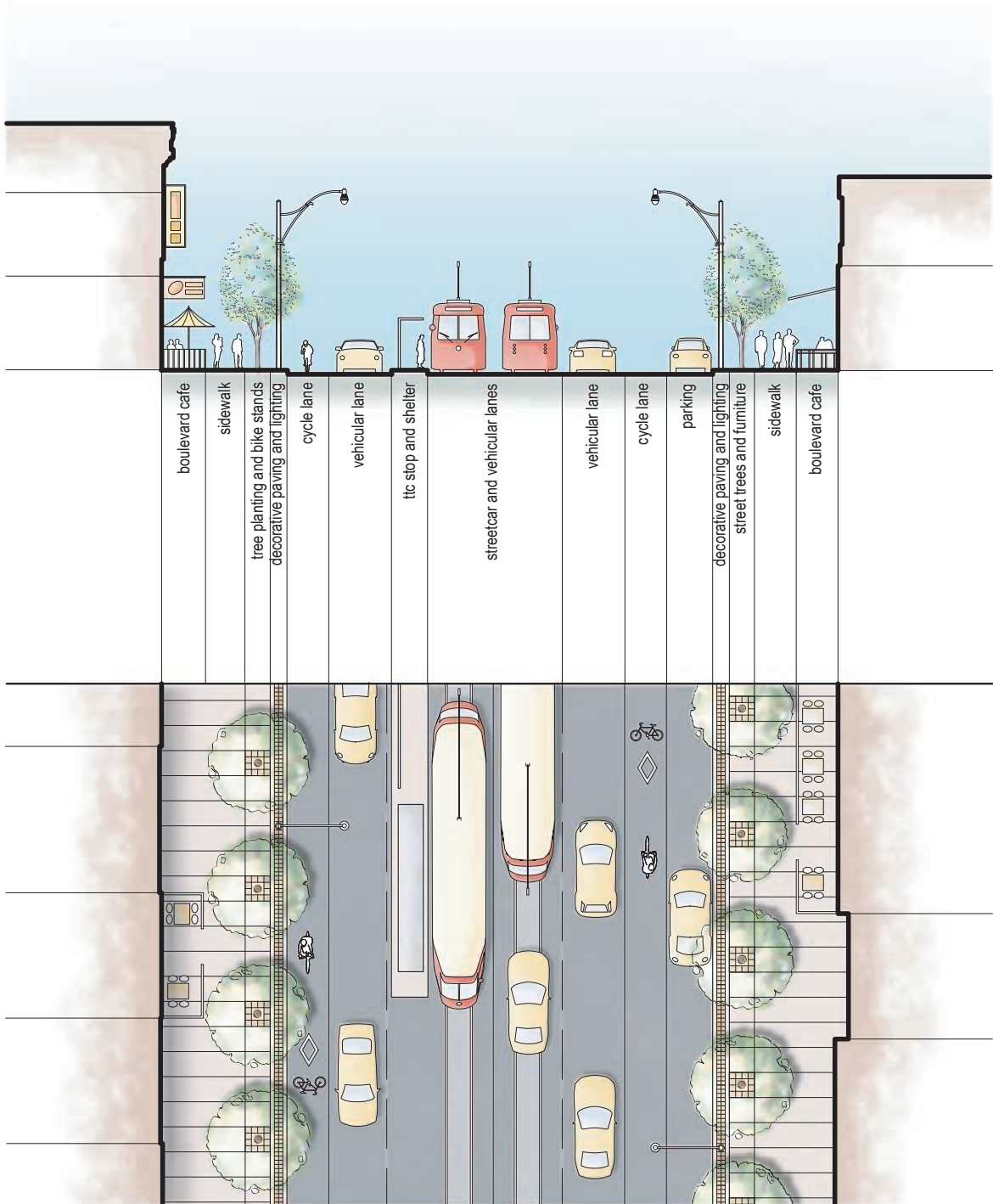
Key existing contracts for street furniture elements expire in the next three years. This provides the opportunity to review the objectives of the street furniture program and develop criteria and guidelines for improving the design and placement of these elements. To inform the development of these criteria, the general public, the design community and other stakeholders have been engaged in an intensive consultation process. Staff also analyzed initiatives and pilot projects in Toronto and the experiences of other municipalities to learn lessons that could be applied to the City's program.

The public were very engaged. Stakeholders expressed a high degree of interest, acute concern and informed opinions about how to make Toronto streets cleaner, more beautiful and more inviting.

Based on the public consultations, relevant experiences and research, a number of criteria were developed for a new program that puts the needs of pedestrians first. The criteria call for new street furniture elements to provide exceptional design, universal accessibility, safety, quality maintenance, pedestrian-oriented placement and sustainable components. Revenues from selective advertising could finance the program and return a benefit to the City for the privilege of occupying the public realm.

The principles in this document are the result of the consultations and research. As the City moves ahead with its RFP process for street furniture, these principles will be refined and made more precise. The guiding principles, the basis for a new approach to street furniture, are an important step in creating a clean and beautiful city.





Toronto's streets and sidewalks are key components of the public realm.



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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The Opportunity and the Challenge



When streets enhance the urban environment and meet the needs of pedestrians, they make a city livable and beautiful.

When streets enhance the urban environment and meet the needs of pedestrians, they make a city livable and beautiful. Appealing, well maintained, safe and accessible public streets are a common theme and a necessary ingredient for positive urban experiences in all great cities around the world. Streets, when well proportioned and designed, become public outdoor rooms. They are places for people to gather, meet, stroll, sit in cafes and window-shop. They are the locations where connections are made among residents and visitors.

As the City works to improve the design and character of the urban environment, it must look carefully at all of the components that result in good street design. Unobstructed and ample pedestrian space, high quality and durable materials, safe and accessible sidewalks and well designed and thoughtfully placed street furniture all contribute to successful streets.



Toronto's streets are currently furnished with a varied collection of street furniture.

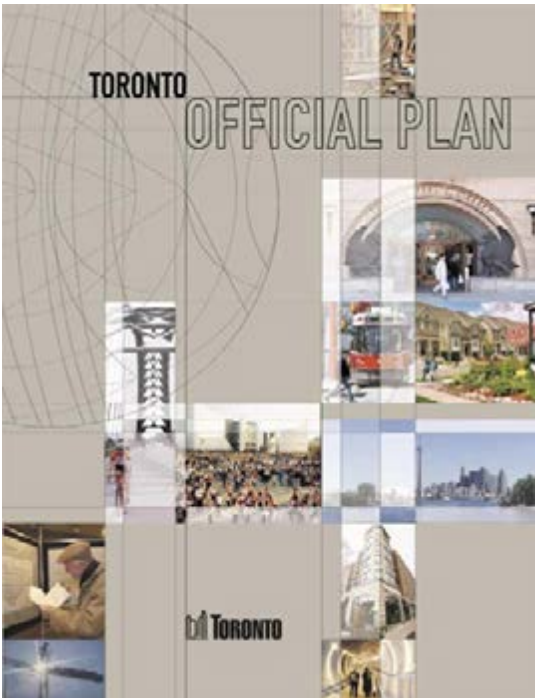
While other City initiatives address many of these key criteria, the Coordinated Street Furniture Program focuses on the design, installation and maintenance of new street furnishings. Toronto's streets are currently furnished with a varied collection of street furniture; some very old, some quite new, some well designed and some not so. Collectively, streets often feel disorganized and cluttered and appear neglected. The purpose of Toronto's Coordinated Street Furniture Program is to address these issues and bring a new sensibility to our streets.

In 2002, the City of Toronto approved a new Official Plan, which contains objectives for many things, including making Toronto's built environment – our buildings, streets and public spaces – more beautiful. The Official Plan has a clear agenda for improving the public realm.

#### Section 3.1.1, The Public Realm:

*6. Sidewalks and boulevards will be designed to provide safe, attractive, interesting and comfortable spaces for pedestrians by:*

*a) providing well designed and coordinated tree planting and landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting and quality street furnishings and decorative paving as part of street improvements; and*



The Official Plan has a clear agenda for improving the public realm.

## 1.2 What is Coordinated Street Furniture?

*b) locating and designing utilities, within streets, within buildings or underground, in a manner that will minimize negative impacts on the natural, pedestrian and visual environment and enable the planting and growth of trees to maturity.*

Several City initiatives currently underway are devoted to improving the pedestrian experience and focus on creating more vibrant and attractive streets. These include the Civic Improvement Program, the Avenues Initiative, the Street-Tree Initiative and the Neighbourhood Beautification and Orphan Space Program. Ongoing City road and street improvements, Business Improvement Area (BIA) streetscape programs, as well as opportunities created by new development projects, also help to enhance the pedestrian experience.

Street furniture consists of a wide variety of elements and amenities installed in the public right-of-way for the use and convenience of the public. Familiar examples include, but are not limited to, transit shelters, benches, litter/recycling receptacles, publication structures, information/wayfinding pillars, bicycle parking and poster kiosks. It has also been suggested that street elements under the jurisdiction of different agencies and outside the scope of this project should be improved including utility poles, traffic signal hardware, signs, planters, tree grates and guards, bollards, maintenance covers, banners, mail and clothing drop boxes and many others.

For the purpose of providing a focus and clarity to this project, we have defined “coordinated street furniture” as:

“the harmonization of design, form, scale, materials and placement of street amenities in a functional and accessible manner, including for persons with disabilities, in an attempt to reduce clutter, beautify city streets and give Toronto an identifiable streetscape.”

There are certain key themes in this definition that merit emphasizing as this project advances. One of the most important

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Many cities in the United States, Europe and Canada have developed and implemented successful coordinated street improvement programs that have had a positive impact on the overall image of these cities.

is the City's determination to ensure cohesive and exceptional design quality. Equally important is the function of the elements in terms of safety, accessibility and placement. These themes are interdependent.

Developing and implementing a Coordinated Street Furniture Program will support the City's ongoing efforts to create an aesthetically appealing, functional, safe and accessible public realm. The result will be a better maintained, more user-friendly and pleasing urban environment.

Many cities in the United States, Europe and Canada have developed and implemented successful coordinated street improvement programs that have had a positive impact on the overall image of these cities. Now it's Toronto's turn to undertake this important step towards enhancing our shared urban space.

## 1.3 The Role of Advertising in a Coordinated Street Furniture Program

City staff have undertaken a high-level analysis of the economics and the financial implications of developing and maintaining a Coordinated Street Furniture Program across the City. This included consultation with other municipalities that have implemented similar programs. Based on this analysis, there is a compelling case that revenue from advertising on some elements can help to achieve the objective of creating and maintaining high quality street furniture at no or little cost to the City.

The programs reviewed in other cities suggest a substantial cost to design, manufacture, install and maintain new street furniture. At the same time, Torontonians are increasingly concerned about the amount of advertising in the public realm. In recognition of this concern, the City wants to ensure that functionality and design are the focus of the new Program and advertising is integrated within those goals. The Program is intended to provide accessible, functional and well designed amenities in the public right-of-way. Accordingly, specific criteria will apply to advertising on those elements selected.

#### 1.4 The Purpose of this Document

This document has two objectives. The first is to outline the City’s guidelines for the development of a new approach to the design, placement, use, accessibility and maintenance for street furniture. The second purpose of this document is to briefly review the background, context, research and consultation process undertaken to develop the design and policy guidelines. This document will be part of the package issued to those companies interested in responding to the City’s RFP.

## 2. Background and Context

### 2.1 Context and Timing



The Coordinated Street Furniture Program is a key component of the Five-Point Action Plan:  
Sweep It, Design It, Grow It, Build It, Celebrate It.

### 2.2 Pilot Projects and Related Initiatives

The City's current contracts for transit shelters and waste/recycling receptacles will expire in 2007 and 2009 respectively. This is a compelling opportunity to begin thinking about Toronto's street furniture holistically, rather than dealing with just a number of separate elements.

In 2004, the City of Toronto embarked on a major effort to enhance its stature and image as a clean and beautiful city. The Clean and Beautiful City initiative was identified as one of the nine priorities for the current term of Council. City Council created the Roundtable on a Beautiful City and adopted a Five-Point Action Plan and funding for a range of coordinated, inter-divisional initiatives.

The Coordinated Street Furniture Program is a key component of the Five-Point Action Plan.

#### **Street Furniture Pilot Projects**

During the past several years the City initiated a number of street furniture pilot projects to respond to identified public needs and to increase City revenues. These projects focused on additional recycling containers, better wayfinding and information structures for residents and visitors and efforts to rationalize the proliferation and placement of publications boxes. Although the pilot projects will likely continue through their test period, Council will need to decide how the RFP incorporates the existing initiatives.

In addition to these pilot projects, many Business Improvement Areas, in the absence of a City-wide program, undertook their own street furniture projects to improve their neighbourhoods.

Current street-related pilot projects include:

#### **New Garbage/Recycling Container Test**

This three month pilot project saw the installation of new garbage/recycling containers at selected locations across the city.





Pilot Projects: Garbage/Recycling and InfoTOgo Pillar

The results of a public consultation process providing reactions to the program were incorporated into a Solid Waste Management Services' staff report submitted on January 11, 2006. A final report on this pilot project is expected to be considered in association with the Street Furniture staff report.

### **infoTOgo Pillars**

In 2005 the Tourism Division, in conjunction with the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, oversaw the installation of twenty-five pillars on high traffic sites in parks and civic squares, adjacent to roads. Apart from advertising, these pillars provide area and pocket maps specific to the location highlighting areas of interest, historical attractions and public transit stops. Evaluation of this project is ongoing.

### **Consolidated Multi-Publication Box Pilot Project**

Three multi-publication prototype boxes will be installed, at the intersections of Bay and Bloor, Yonge and Bloor and Yonge and Dundas Streets, in the spring of 2006. This pilot project will require a number of publications to be housed within one structure.

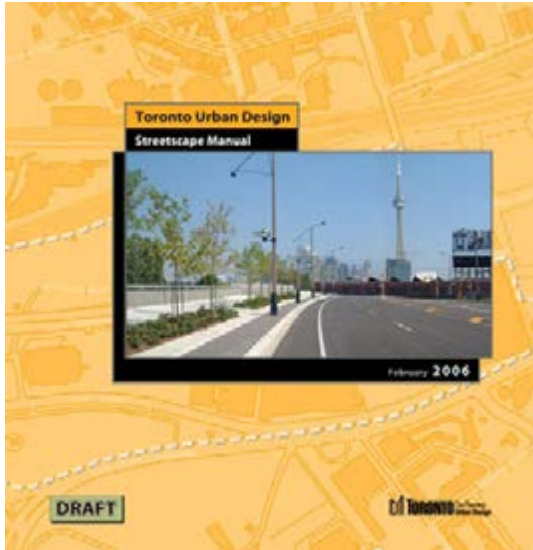
### **Related Initiatives, Guidelines and Policies**

A number of initiatives currently underway in Toronto have direct links to the Coordinated Street Furniture Program. Some are City-driven, such as the Accessibility Design Guidelines, while others have been initiated and developed through residents groups and business improvement associations. In addition, several areas of the city undergoing redevelopment have created site-specific design guidelines for their streets and amenities. These initiatives set out individual standards for placement, design and relationships among street furniture elements.

In addition, as a result of amalgamation, the City is harmonizing the many by-laws that relate to the public right-of-way.

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Toronto Streetscape Manual

The following design guidelines and policies have been reviewed and helped inform the guidelines in this document:

- City of Toronto Accessibility Design Guidelines
- City of Toronto Transit Shelter Program Guidelines
- College Street Revitalization Initiative
  - Harbord Village Residents Association
- Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan
- Railway Lands Central & West Public Realm Plan
- Union Station Precinct Study
- St. Clair West Transit Improvement Project

Other initiatives that have informed the guidelines in this document include: the Draft Toronto Streetscape Manual; new rules regarding posterage that are being finalized in a by-law as part of City Council's posterage initiative; and designs for new street name signs that are being developed.





### 3. Objectives of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program

#### 3.1 Objectives

This Program focuses on the harmonization of the design, scale, materials and placement of street amenities to reduce clutter, beautify city streets and give Toronto an identifiable streetscape. The City approaches this initiative holistically; a coordinated Program will work concurrently with improvements to other elements in the public right-of-way, such as tree planting, decorative paving, pedestrian clearways (areas free of any elements), parking and street signs.

The Coordinated Street Furniture Program has several objectives:

- Implement a family of beautiful, functional, technologically flexible, durable and coordinated furniture for the streets of Toronto
- Promote ease of pedestrian movement and accessibility through the placement and design of furniture
- Generate a fiscally responsible street furniture program
- Establish a Program for ongoing maintenance and renewal
- Achieve attractive streetscapes through a high standard of civic design
- Enhance the safety of city streets
- Promote and enhance Toronto's identity

#### 3.2 A City-wide Initiative

A key objective of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program is to achieve high quality and well designed street furniture in all areas of the City. The Program will include an implementation plan with an articulated and phased approach for the installation of the new furniture elements throughout the City. It is critical to the success of the Program that all areas receive the same high level of service with respect to street furniture and its placement.



## 4. Process: Public Consultation, Outreach and Best Practices

A core project team with representation from Transportation Services, City Planning/Urban Design and the Clean and Beautiful Secretariat directed the project and ensured that a wide range of activities captured the interests and input of diverse stakeholders. Best Practices in both Toronto and other cities were explored and an extensive consultation process involved the public and various stakeholder groups. These activities are the foundation for developing the guidelines for a new approach to coordinated street furniture and for the RFP that will follow.

### 4.1 Public Consultation Process

The public consultation process engaged a broad spectrum of local residents, business groups, the design community, other stakeholder groups and the industry in defining their needs, perceptions and suggestions for improving street amenities.



Designers report on principles for street furniture design at the Design Exchange Charrette.

- Public meetings/workshops were held in Toronto & East York District, Scarborough District, Etobicoke York District and North York District. Participants had an opportunity to learn about the City's Program as well as give their input on key issues (What do they like about street furniture in the city? What don't they like about street furniture? What would they do to improve street furniture as part of this Program? What new street furniture items would they add?).
- Two design charrettes were held in partnership with the Design Exchange with members of the design community (industrial designers; architects and landscape architects; and graphic designers). These focused on developing principles based on an analysis of specific sites throughout the city.
- Discussions also involved other stakeholder groups including: the City's Pedestrian, Cycling and Disability Issues Committees; the Toronto Public Utilities Coordinating Committee; and the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas.
- Discussions were held with the Roundtable on a Beautiful City, including the City Policies, Standards and Practices Subcommittee.
- There were also discussions with the industry (potential bidders).



A CityScapes newsletter with details about the project was sent to residents groups and Business Improvement Areas.

A website ([www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture)) was developed to ensure ongoing communication and information sharing about the initiative among the City, the public and stakeholder groups. Updated on a regular basis throughout the project, the website included meeting minutes, project reports and event notices. An online questionnaire similar to the one used at the public meetings encouraged public feedback. The results were reviewed and used to develop the guidelines.

A CityScapes newsletter with details about the project was sent to residents groups and Business Improvement Areas. Members of Council received copies of the newsletter as well as information about the various public meetings.

The level of interest from the general public and the design community was high. Participants at all of the meetings, public forums and those responding online were passionate and informed in their comments, criticisms and suggestions. During the process there were several articles in the press about the Program. Toronto residents demonstrated deep concern for, and commitment to, the public realm, especially city streets and sidewalks. It is clear that both the RFP process and its results will be carefully monitored and scrutinized by Toronto residents.

## 4.2 Best Practices Research

The “Best Practices” study reviewed programs in a number of cities in North America and abroad. It looked not only at the results of these programs but also investigated the policies and processes involved. The study focused on design, consultation, contractual issues, policy matters, the advertising component and how it was managed, financial models and the RFP process. The cities studied in detail include Boston, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Vancouver. Interviews were conducted with officials in these jurisdictions. In addition, current practices in Toronto were also reviewed.

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The Best Practices review identified a number of lessons learned that have been incorporated into this document and will be reflected in the RFP. These include:

- The benefits of consulting with the public
- The importance of articulating the City's vision, objectives and scope of the project, as well as a set of clear design and policy criteria to get the best results from the RFP process.

Based on the Best Practices review, the RFP will articulate a set of clear design and policy criteria.

## Street Furniture Elements

### 1. Elements of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program

- Transit shelters
- Litter/recycling bins
- Benches
- Multi-publication boxes
- Information/wayfinding signage
- Postering kiosks
- postering pole/boards
- Automated public toilets
- Publication box attachment units
- bicycle parking units

### 2. Linked Elements

- Bollards
- Pedestrian railings/guards
- Tree grates, guards, planters
- Maintenance covers
- Subway entrance canopies
- News vending kiosks
- Telephone booths

### 3. Other Street Elements Beyond the Scope of the Coordinated Program

- Lighting
- Hydro poles
- Pay parking units
- Street signs
- Traffic sign supports
- Water fountains
- Clothing drop boxes
- Mailboxes
- Banners
- Markers/gateways to neighbourhoods
- Planters and flower baskets
- Decorative paving

Note: Listing elements separately does not imply that they cannot or should not be combined where appropriate to reduce clutter.



## 5. Scope of the Program – A Catalyst for Improving the Public Realm

There are many public amenities on city sidewalks. Some are under the jurisdiction of the City and its agencies, such as the Toronto Parking Authority, while others are the responsibility of third parties, such as Bell Canada, Toronto Hydro and Canada Post. It is the City's intent to use the Coordinated Street Furniture Program as a catalyst for encouraging improvements to all elements in the public realm, regardless of who is responsible for them.

### 5.1 Scope of the Program

The adjacent chart outlines the elements that will form part of the RFP for the Coordinated Street Furniture Program. The list is divided into three blocks:

The first block, "Elements in the Coordinated Street Furniture Program" includes all of the core elements to be designed, installed and maintained through the Coordinated Street Furniture Program. These will form the basis for the RFP and the resulting submissions.

The second block, "Linked Elements" identifies a family of elements that should be linked through design to the Coordinated Program. To facilitate this linkage, the selected proponent would be required to fund a design study for developing these elements. This will ensure that the design of these elements complements the core elements of the Program the proponent is providing. The City would implement these linked elements as part of its continuing improvements to streets and sidewalks.

The third block contains other street elements that are beyond the scope of the current initiative. During the public consultation process questions were frequently asked about issues related to street or abutting properties that impact the overall look of our streetscapes. They are fundamental to the look and use of the public realm and their future inclusion in the Coordinated Program will have to be considered. Many of them are outside the City's direct control and will require coordination with other agencies and third parties.

## 5.2 Enhancements to the Street Furniture Program



Local BIAs and other areas (such as designated historic districts) may wish to customize the look of their streets, including street furniture, in order to maintain or enhance their special identity.

The first step in this Program is the design of a cohesive family of street furniture. Enhancements beyond this family may be pursued in certain circumstances:

Local BIAs and other areas (such as designated historic districts) may wish to customize the look of their streets, including street furniture, in order to maintain or enhance their special identity. The strategy of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program is to offer opportunities for customized elements that can be added to its core line of furniture. These additions can reflect the specific character of these areas. Colour, materials or special add-on elements (such as plaques) might be used. Customized enhancements would need to be paid for outside of the core Program.

Unique area identities also can be achieved outside the scope of the Street Furniture Program in the form of planters, light standards, banners, decorative paving, gateway features, public art, etc. Appropriate design links with the elements of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program will be vital.

In addition, changes in technology may impact the individual street furniture elements over time. It is the City's intention to encourage design solutions that are flexible to allow changes that will benefit the public.

## 5.3 Opportunities for Artist Participation



Artist inspired street furniture, Dundee Scotland.

The City's Official Plan encourages public art and a lively public realm. During the consultation process many participants expressed a strong desire to see an increase in the opportunities for art in the city. To this end, RFP proponents might consider including an artist on their team to enrich the thinking about the Program and the opportunities in the public realm.

Any forms of artistic expression around street furniture customization will not constitute public art as defined by the City's formal public art process.

## 6. Design Guidelines

There was one clear message about street amenities and the Coordinated Program at all public and stakeholder group consultations – “design matters”. The guidelines which follow outline a set of principles and criteria that will result in public amenities that are of superior design, well sited, maintained, functional, accessible, safe and provide real value to the City.

The intention of these guidelines is to encourage innovation and creativity and to support a unique identity for Toronto through its Coordinated Street Furniture Program. Coordination does not mean identical. Solutions should recognize different conditions, scale and neighbourhood character and might respond to these with different yet coordinated materials and sizes.

The design guidelines are based on the results of the public process, Best Practices, relevant City design guidelines and reports and on-going staff experience with street furniture initiatives and pilot projects.

### 6.1 Appropriateness, Scale, Modularity

The design of street furniture must prioritize the needs of pedestrians and users with appropriate sizes and scales. Design solutions should respect the variety of urban conditions in Toronto.

- Each element should be appropriate and scaled to its function. The size and scale of the street elements should reflect their use in a specific location.
- The number of elements should reflect and respond to use patterns, placement opportunities, accessibility and pedestrian flow.
- Individual street furniture elements should be designed with a series of modular parts that are available in a range of sizes for use in different site conditions (i.e. smaller number of elements for narrow sidewalks, additional elements for larger spaces).

## 6.2 Coordinated Family of Elements

Coordinated street furniture will be achieved through a family of elements related by design, materials and application.

- Combining individual uses into a common element is encouraged as a way to reduce clutter. Multi-functionality is desirable, especially in downtown locations.
- Colour, graphics, materials and finish details can be used to customize or differentiate furniture elements where desirable (for example in a Business Improvement Area or Heritage Area).

## 6.3 Accessibility and Universal Design

An important objective of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program is to design and install street furniture that is accessible to all users and follows the principles of “universal design”. The Centre for Universal Design defines universal design as “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design”.



An important objective of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program is to design and install street furniture that is accessible to all users.

- Street furniture elements should be designed to accommodate people with disabilities, such as those with physical and visual disabilities or impairment, as well as children and the elderly.
- All furniture must be designed with entry and adjacency clearances to accommodate wheelchairs and scooters.
- Transit shelters in particular must provide seating and resting ledges and all seating should have suitable support.
- To ensure the safe movement of the visually impaired, all street furniture elements must have bases that are cane detectable.
- For detailed information about accessible design requirements in the City of Toronto, please refer to the “Accessibility Design Guidelines” ([www.toronto.ca/diversity/accessibility\\_design\\_guidelines.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/diversity/accessibility_design_guidelines.htm)).
- For detailed information on the principles of Universal Design, please refer to the Centre for Universal Design ([www.design.ncsu.edu](http://www.design.ncsu.edu)).

## 6.4 Safety and Security

The design of street furniture elements must incorporate safety and security features. This includes both personal safety as well as broader community safety issues.

- All street furniture elements must use safe materials and design details to prevent injury (e.g. no sharp corners, exposed fasteners).
- Street furniture and its placement must consider visibility and sightlines, lighting, barrier-free accessibility and ingress/egress issues as they relate to women, children, the elderly and the disabled (For more on safety features, please refer to the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children website, [www.metrac.org](http://www.metrac.org)).
- To maintain visibility at night, it is critical that sufficient lighting be incorporated into the interior of transit shelters.
- Where appropriate, street furniture should incorporate provisions for communications/panic alarms.
- Special design considerations should be given to areas considered unsafe or at risk.

## 6.5 Materials, Fabrication, Durability

High quality materials and robust detailing ensure a long life and durability for street furniture.

- Materials and finishes must have proven their long term ability to function in and withstand severe environmental conditions (i.e. snow, ice, salt, pollution etc.), while maintaining their appearance.
- Materials must have proven success in terms of their intended use and ability to withstand vandalism and other abuse.
- Elements must be fabricated to the highest standards and have a proven track record of use in high traffic environments.
- Repair must be easy. Replaceable modular parts should be designed to make repair easy, so that elements are not “out of service” for any length of time.

## 6.6 Flexibility

The design of the street furniture should allow for opportunities for customization and the ability to accommodate new technologies as they become available. The term “coordinated” does not necessarily mean the same solution across the City.

- Some parts of the street furniture should be able to be customized to reflect different conditions or areas of the City.
- The family of street furniture should be designed to provide additional or optional items that can be added to the core furniture elements.
- Street furniture elements should be designed to be adaptable to new technology. The design of elements should allow for upgrades in the future.

## 6.7 Sustainability and Environmental Issues

The Coordinated Street Furniture Program is committed to addressing sustainability and environmental issues in the design of street furniture elements. The use of sustainable materials and energy saving/efficient design is encouraged.

- Solar energy through the use of solar panels is a preferred option. This aligns with the City’s support for sustainable technologies. At a minimum, energy efficient lighting should be used for those elements requiring electricity.
- Planting and landscaping as part of street amenities is encouraged. City Council has recently approved a Green Roofs Strategy to encourage the construction of green roofs on new and existing City-owned buildings. This initiative recognizes the positive environmental role green roofs can play. Opportunities exist to extend this strategy into the design of new street furniture.
- Other environmental innovations are encouraged, including the use of recycled materials and energy harvesting.

## 6.8 Building and Supporting Toronto's Identity

Through unique street furniture Toronto can build, strengthen and communicate its identity. One of the objectives of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program is to encourage a Toronto-specific family of furniture, rather than off-the-shelf products common to other cities around the world.

- Toronto is a unique city. This should be reflected in the look and feel of our streets and sidewalks. The City expects that the new street furniture will be designed specifically for Toronto. This may include using local materials, design elements and graphic treatments.
- Design, details, materials and colours should be simple, elegant and timeless. Given the variety of Toronto architecture, the design should be compatible with all styles.





## 7. Placement Guidelines

The Coordinated Street Furniture Program presents an opportunity to reorganize Toronto's sidewalks and boulevards to create a more accessible and user friendly public realm. Toronto is made up of a wide range of streets, from tight urban sites to expansive suburban conditions, with varying sidewalk widths and building setbacks. The Coordinated Street Furniture Program supports this diversity through the use of appropriately designed and scaled furniture which is thoughtfully placed. Street Furniture Placement Guidelines assist in integrating street furniture into the public realm in a sensitive manner, while ensuring street furniture is accessible and safe to all. These guidelines provide general guidance for the placement of street furniture, and encourage site specific solutions for conditions which are not considered to be typical. More detailed placement guidelines are available in the Streetscape Manual, Street Furniture section (refer to F-2 Coordinated Street Furniture Placement).

### 7.1 Placement Goals

- To establish and maintain a distinct, linear pedestrian clearway
- Furniture size to be responsive to width of pedestrian clearway
- For quantity of furnishings to reflect the use patterns and placement opportunities
- For sidewalks and street furniture to be accessible to all users
- To maintain sight lines at intersections
- To respond to surrounding architecture and open space
- To respond to specific site conditions

### 7.2 Applicable By-laws and Guidelines

Currently, there are several by-laws and guidelines in place which determine the placement of street furnishing elements such as publication dispensing boxes, TTC stop poles, and traffic light poles in the public right-of-way. Applicable street right-of-way and sign by-laws should be referred to prior to the placement of any furniture. The following guidelines should also be consulted:

- TTC Technical Guidelines for Placement of Transit Stops
- City of Toronto, Transit Shelter Guidelines
- City of Toronto, Accessibility Design Guidelines
- City of Toronto, Streetscape Manual
- City of Toronto, Official Plan

### 7.3 Public Boulevard Right-of-Way Organization



View of Typical Toronto Main Street



View of Typical Toronto Green Street

The City of Toronto's Streetscape Manual uses a streetscape hierarchy which differentiates between streetscape types. In turn, each Streetscape Type is matched with a particular set of detailed design guidelines. This same hierarchy can help to create a framework for the organization of the public boulevard. The two general streetscape categories are Main Streets and Green Streets. A detailed overview for these Streetscape Types can be found in the Streetscape Manual at [www.toronto.ca/streetscapemanual](http://www.toronto.ca/streetscapemanual).

Main Streets and Green Streets are defined as follows:

**Main Streets** normally have commercial, residential and mixed-use buildings which generate grade-related activities. The buildings create a continuous street wall with a direct or 'storefront' relationship to both the pedestrian realm and the vehicular portion of the street. Main streets support public transit networks, pedestrians, private vehicles and in some cases cyclists. This category of streetscape encourages diverse types of economic stimulation and social interaction at a pedestrian scale.

**Green Streets** are highlighted by adjacent natural areas, public parks and open spaces. The urban elements within the streetscape are integrated with the natural environment and enhanced with street tree planting, creating open space corridors with a naturalized form. This streetscape category encourages diverse types of environmental protection and social interaction at a pedestrian scale.

In order to successfully serve the many competing demands, it is critical that the sidewalk space be organized in a way which facilitates safe, efficient and accessible pedestrian movement. As outlined by the Institute of Transportation Engineers in *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities, 2006*, public boulevard right-of-way space can be divided into four distinct zones, each with their own specific function.

## **Zones: The Public Boulevard Right-of-Way**

**Edge Zone** – Immediately back of curb, providing clearance between the travelled portion of the road or parked vehicles and the other sidewalk/boulevard functions. This area provides a safety buffer against door swings, mirrors, etc., possibly accommodates sign and utility posts, garbage set out and snow windrow storage. On Green Streets, a hard surface treatment in this zone is optional.

**Furnishing and Planting Zone** – This zone, which is normally back of the edge zone, may contain street furniture, trees and other fixed objects, and may be characterized by decorative paving features. Coordinated alignment of such services within this zone is desirable, and these features should be placed in a manner that does not obstruct the Pedestrian Clearway. This zone provides an important comfort buffer between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

**Pedestrian Clearway** – This zone accommodates pedestrian movement; a clear, straight, unobstructed continuous path of sidewalk with a reasonable width to serve pedestrian flow. Provision of this zone is a high priority.

**Frontage and Marketing Zone** – The area adjacent to the building/property line that buffers pedestrians from windows, doorways, other building appurtenances. This area may consist of marketing, boulevard cafes and/or landscaping and in some cases may support street furniture, depending on space available.  
(endnote1)

*Main Streets* are comprised of each of these zones. Given the nature of *Green Streets*, their sidewalk zones are organized slightly different than Main Street zones. As Green Streets often have open spaces nearby and often a residential component, there is no Frontage and Marketing Zone. Instead, the Furnishing and Planting Zone can be on either side of the Pedestrian Clearway, depending on the public space available.

## Typical Main Street

### Edge Zone

- Located next to curb
- Provides buffer between vehicles and boulevard
- Accommodates car door swings, mirrors, garbage set out and snow windrow storage

### Furnishing and Planting Zone

- May contain street furniture, street trees and other fixed objects
- Elements should be aligned in a manner that does not obstruct Pedestrian Clearway

### Pedestrian Clearway

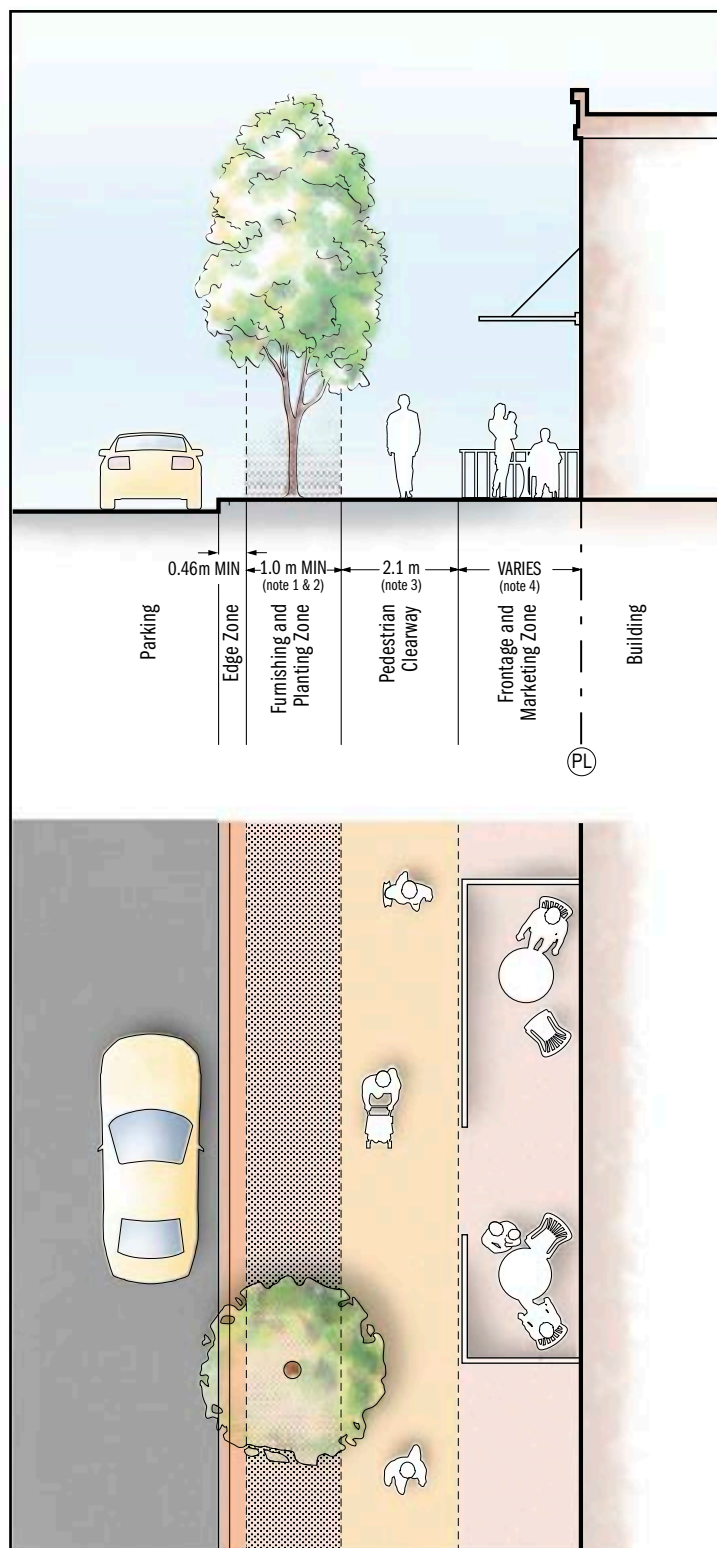
- Accommodates pedestrian movement
- A clear, straight, unobstructed path with a reasonable width to serve pedestrian flow
- Provision of the clearway is a priority

### Frontage and Marketing Zone

- Adjacent to building/property line
- May consist of marketing, boulevard cafes and or landscaping
- In some cases may support street furniture, depending on the space available

#### Notes:

1. If Furnishing and Planting Zone is less than 1.0 metre, consider placing furniture in alternate location; see "Main Street Alternate Location" drawing for details.
2. For tree planting within the Furnishing and Planting Zone, refer to Urban Forestry for minimum tree planting width requirements (1.8 metre minimum typical).
3. The recommended minimum width for the Pedestrian Clearway is 2.1 metres. Where this cannot be achieved, at least 1.7 metres should be secured. In rare and extreme cases, the minimum width may be reduced to not less than 1.525 metres.
4. Frontage and Marketing Zone width varies, but must be 1.0 metres minimum if street furniture is placed here.





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## Typical Green Street

### Edge Zone

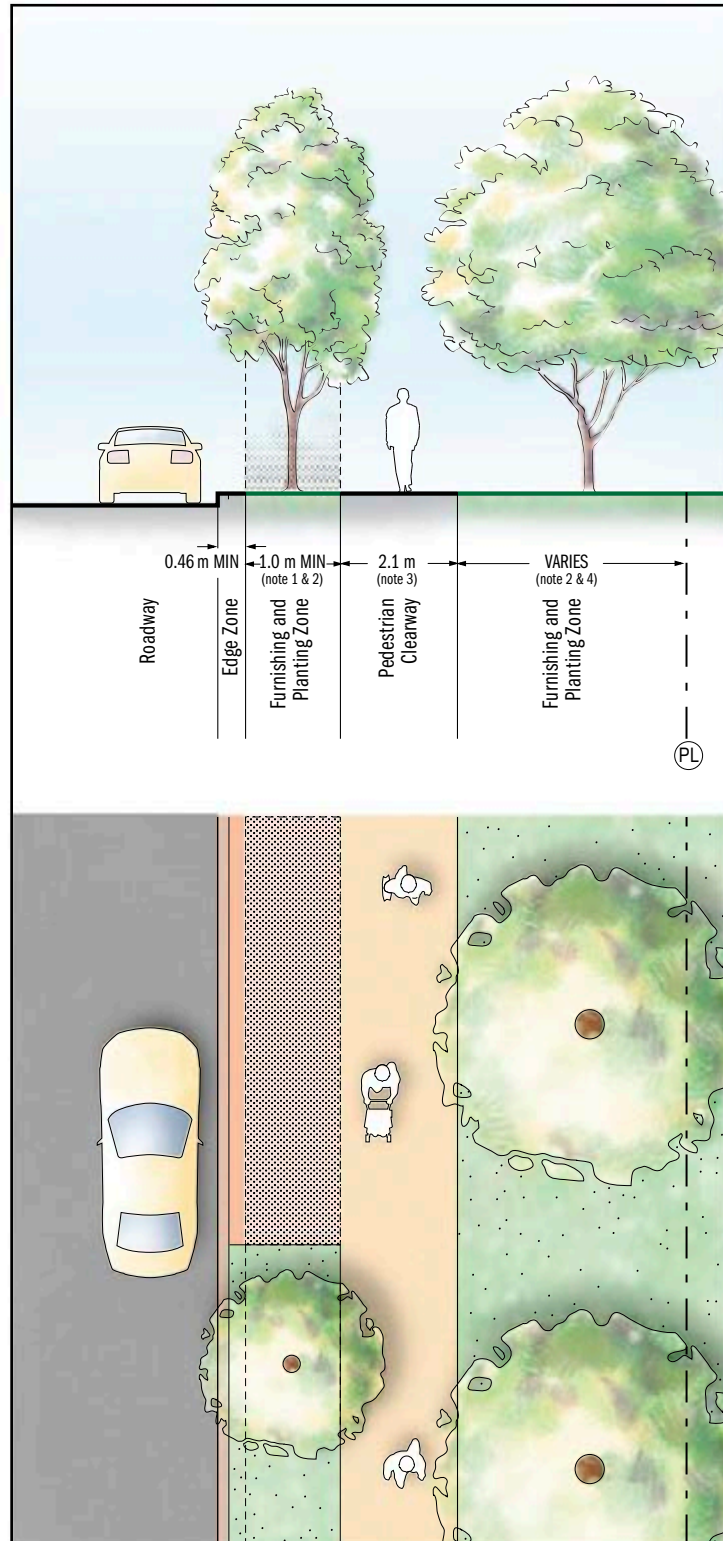
- Located next to curb
- Provides buffer between vehicles and boulevard
- Accommodates car door swings, mirrors, garbage set out and snow windrow storage
- Hard surface treatment in this zone is optional

### Furnishing and Planting Zone

- May contain street furniture, street trees and other fixed objects
- Elements should be aligned in a manner that does not obstruct Pedestrian Clearway

### Pedestrian Clearway

- Accommodates pedestrian movement
- A clear, straight, unobstructed path with a reasonable width to serve pedestrian flow
- Provision of the clearway is a priority



#### Notes:

1. If Furnishing and Planting Zone is less than 1.0 metre, consider placing furniture in alternate location; see "Green Street Alternate Location" drawing for details.
2. For tree planting within the Furnishing and Planting Zones, refer to Urban Forestry for minimum tree planting width requirements (3.2 metre minimum typical).
3. The recommended minimum width for the Pedestrian Clearway is 2.1 metres. Where this cannot be achieved, at least 1.7 metres should be secured. In rare and extreme cases, the minimum width may be reduced to not less than 1.525 metres.
4. Furnishing and Planting Zone width varies, but must be 1.0 metres minimum if street furniture is placed here.

### **Design Priorities: Width of Public Boulevard Right-of-Way Zones**

- The Edge Zone should be a minimum of 0.46 metres wide, including the width of curb
- The width of the sidewalk in the Pedestrian Clearway should be determined prior to the width of the Furnishing and Planting Zone, to ensure it supports the existing or projected volume of pedestrian traffic
- The Furnishing and Planting Zone width may vary depending on available space, with not less than 1.0 metre recommended
- If the Furnishing and Planting Zone is less than 1.0 metre, consider placing furniture in alternate location (see Main Street and Green Street Alternate Location drawings for more detail)
- To plant trees, the Furnishing and Planting Zone should be at least 1.8 metres on Main Streets and 3.2 metres on Green Streets (narrower conditions may be considered through City staff review)
- If street furniture is to be placed within the Frontage and Marketing Zone, this zone must be a minimum 1.0 metre wide
- The preferred width of the Pedestrian Clearway is 2.1 metres. Where this cannot be achieved, at least 1.7 metres should be secured. In rare and extreme cases, the minimum width may be reduced to not less than 1.525 metres.
- The width of the Frontage and Marketing Zone varies, depending on the building set back and location of the property line

## **7.4 Placement of Street Furniture**

A clear pedestrian pathway is essential for a functional and accessible streetscape. All street furniture should be placed outside of a straight, continuous sidewalk within the Pedestrian Clearway to best serve pedestrian movement. In situations where the width of the public boulevard is limited, the design of the street furniture must accommodate the limited available space. The following principles should be considered when placing street furniture within the public boulevard right-of-way:

- The width of the Furnishing and Planting Zone should take into consideration the pressures of the pedestrian clearway, such as the volume of pedestrian traffic
- The proportions of installed street furniture should respond to the width of the Furnishing and Planting Zone. For example, on a narrow boulevard where the Furnishing and Planting Zone



is 1.0 metre wide, furniture should be narrow enough to comfortably fit within this space

- Street furniture should be arranged in a way which groups key pieces together such as transit stop poles, transit shelters, benches, litter/recycle bins, and multi-publication boxes
- Street furniture should be placed in coordination with street trees and the tree canopy height and width should be taken into consideration
- Where possible, street furniture should be placed to allow easy access to underground and overhead services
- Furnishings such as bicycle stands should be placed in a way which is integrated with other furnishing and is accessible to cyclists, while mindful of the pedestrian clearway
- Although the Furnishing and Planting Zone is the preferred zone for the placement of street furniture, in specific situations, furniture placement is acceptable in the Frontage and Marketing Zone

The characteristics of a streetscape help to determine the appropriate placement of street furniture. Once the width of the zones in the public boulevard right-of-way have been established, the location of the furniture can be determined. For example, if the sidewalk width permits, the street furniture should be placed next to the Edge Zone. If the sidewalk width is too narrow to permit this, the furniture can alternately be placed in the Frontage and Marketing Zone.

### **Special Situations**

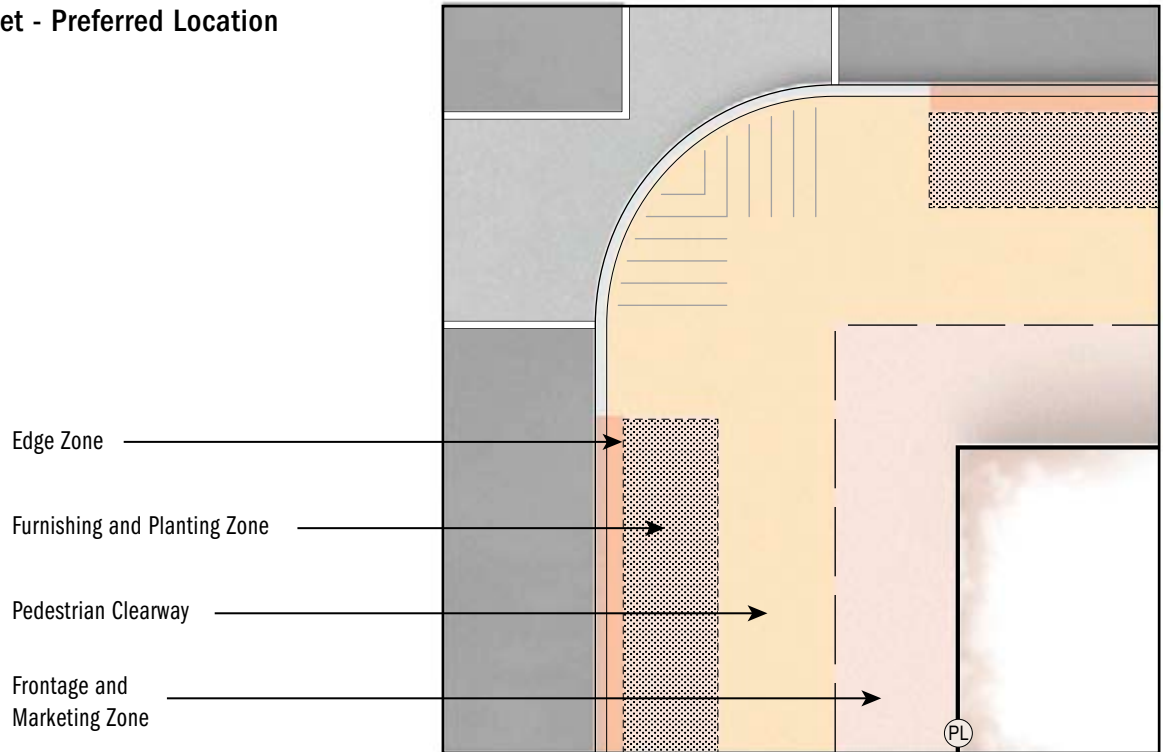
It is anticipated that there will be special situations which will require site specific solutions for the placement of furniture. These special situations may be urban public boulevards with intense pedestrian use, requiring special considerations for the placement and size of furniture implemented, or may be adjacent to an important public square.

When street furniture is to be placed adjacent to the property line of a heritage building, structure or landscape (listed or designated), consultation with Heritage Preservation Services should occur.

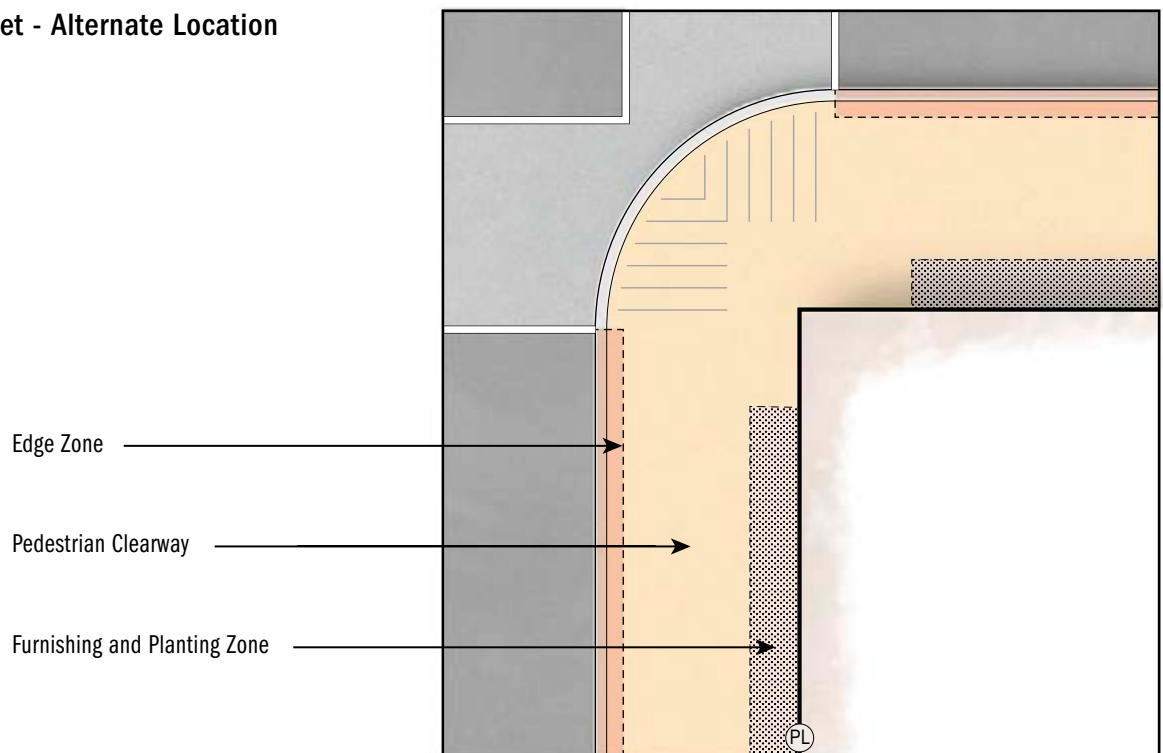
The review of these special situations will be part of the approval process.

Note: The width of the Pedestrian Clearway should be determined prior to the width of the Furniture and Planting Zone, and the Frontage and Marketing Zone. When minimal space is available for furnishings, the design of the furniture must accommodate such situations (refer to the Streetscape Manual, F-1 Coordinated Street Furniture for design options).

### Main Street - Preferred Location



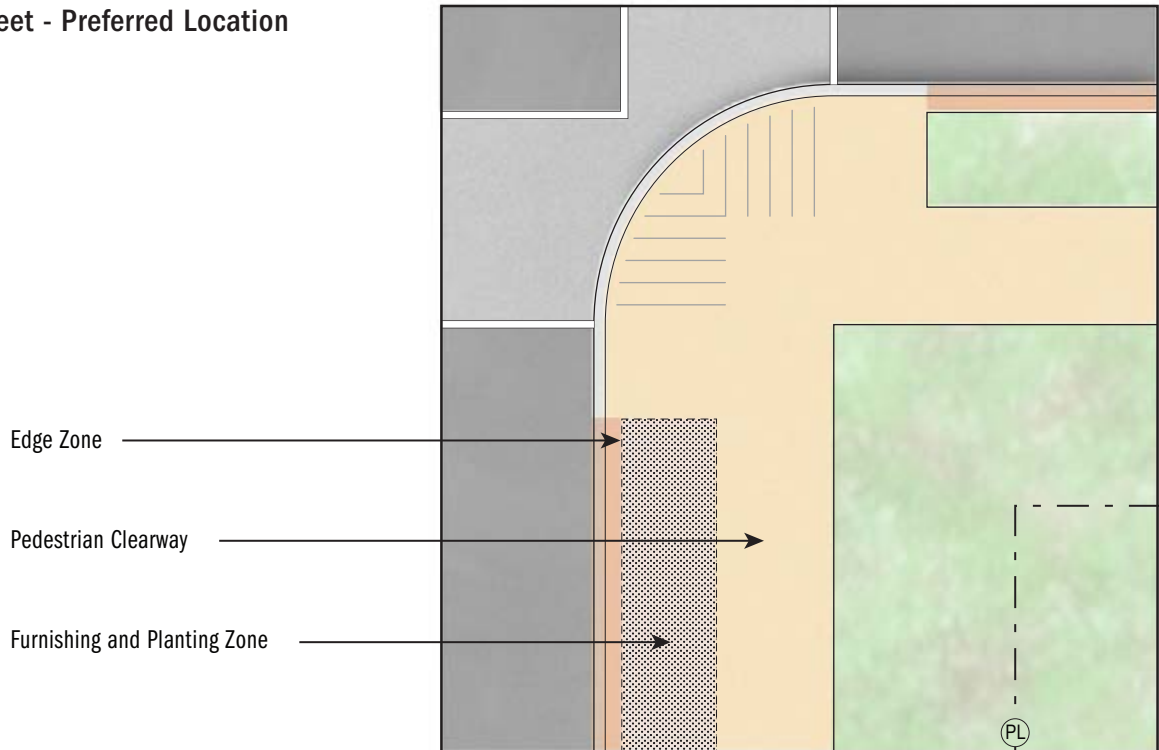
### Main Street - Alternate Location



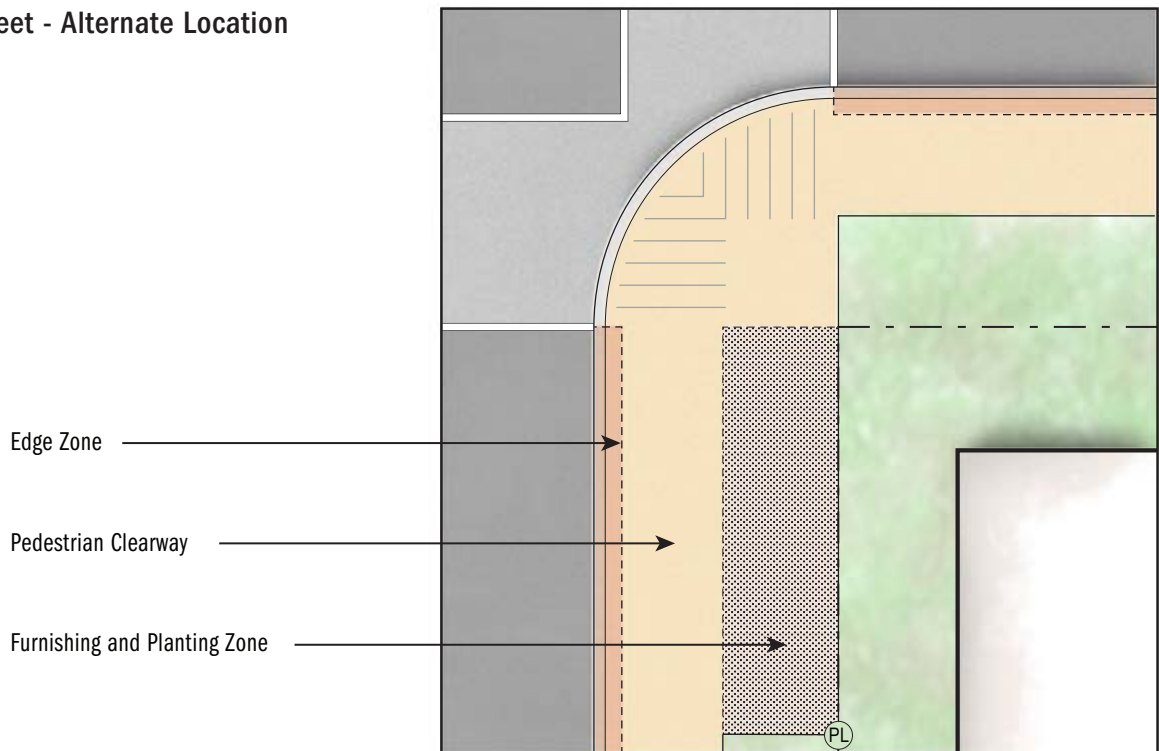
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## Green Street - Preferred Location



## Green Street - Alternate Location



## 7.6 Detailed Guidance for the Placement of Street Furniture

### **General Placement of all Street Furniture**

*No furniture will be placed:*

- within 2 metres of the end of corner radius
- within 1 metre of curb cut, designated to facilitate disabled persons
- within 0.46 metres of the outside of curb
- within 0.6 metres of a driveway
- within 2 metres of fire hydrant or other fire service connection
- within 1 metre of traffic signal pole, utility pole to which pedestrian crossing activation button is attached, decorative street light pole, or tree
- in a manner which interferes with boarding, disembarking or queuing by transit passengers
- within the Pedestrian Clearway zone or such that use of the furnishing will interfere with Clearway
- in a manner that obstructs pedestrian, cyclist or driver sight lines
- in a manner that compromises the safety of pedestrians, cyclists or drivers
- on top of utility maintenance hole, vault, pole or other equipment or permitted encroachment
- on any unpaved surface
- must be accessible to all
- must not be located directly in front of a standpipe

### **Transit Shelter**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- If placement of transit shelter blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the shelter
- Entrance/exit of bus shelter must be situated on pedestrian clearway side
- If shelter is more than 4 metres in length, it must have 2 entrances

## **Litter/Recycling bins**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- If placement of litter/recycling bin blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the litter/recycling bin
- Receptacle openings must be situated on pedestrian clearway side

## **Benches**

- Must be situated to face pedestrian clearway (or street at transit stop)
- Must be weighted or affixed to boulevard

## **Multi-Publication Boxes**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- If placement of multi-publication box blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the multi-publication box
- Door of multi-publication box must be situated on pedestrian clearway side
- Must be positioned a minimum of 40 metres apart

## **Information/Wayfinding Signage**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- If placement of information/wayfinding signage blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the information/wayfinding signage
- Wayfinding information must be situated towards pedestrian clearway

## **Postering Kiosks**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building

- If placement of postering kiosk blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the postering kiosk
- Postering information must be situated towards pedestrian clearway

#### **Postering Pole/Boards**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- If placement of postering pole/board blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the postering pole/board
- Postering information must be situated towards pedestrian clearway

#### **Automated Public Toilets**

- Require site specific approval

#### **Publication Box Attachment Units**

- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- If placement of a publication box attachment unit blocks a display window, the owner of the building and occupant of the business must provide in writing that they have no objection to the location of the unit
- Must be situated to permit doors of publication boxes to be accessible from the pedestrian clearway
- Must be positioned a minimum of 40 metres apart

#### **Bicycle Parking Units**

- Must be affixed to boulevard
- When oriented parallel to a building face or fence must be at least 0.6 m. from the building or fence, unless intended to serve only one bicycle, in which case they may be as close as 0.3 m

- When perpendicular to a curb, fence, or building face must be at least 1.2 metres back from the curb, fence, or building wall, and 1.0 metres apart (centre to centre)
- A series of bike stands oriented parallel to the curb should be at least 2.5 metres apart, except on high-volume pedestrian walkways, or streets with high-turnover on-street parking, where a minimum separation of 3.5 metres is preferable
- Must not be located directly in front of an entrance to or exit from a building
- Must not block access to permitted boulevard parking spaces or outdoor café areas

## 7.6 Process - How Street Furniture Locations will be Approved

An multidisciplinary team of City staff will oversee the approval process for the implementation of new street furniture. They will be responsible for ensuring the Street Furniture Placement Guidelines are followed.

The placement of street furniture is as important to the success of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program as the design of the furniture itself. The Placement Guidelines ensure that the furniture is placed in a manner that is accessible and safe for all. By organizing the public boulevard right-of-way into clearly defined zones, each with a specific function, the competing demands of the public boulevard can be balanced and a Pedestrian Clearway will be made a priority. The distinction of different Streetscape Types (Main Streets and Green Streets), helps to create a framework for the public boulevard, which addresses the streetscape, uses and character of the street. Flexibility of the Guidelines encourages site specific solutions when necessary. More detailed placement guidelines are available in the Streetscape Manual, Street Furniture section (refer to F-2 Coordinated Street Furniture Placement).





## 8. Street Furniture and Advertising

**Guiding Principle:** *Balance the quantity, size and quality of advertising with the needs of the public by integrating it into the design of street furniture elements.*

Advertising must be tastefully and functionally integrated into the design of the new furniture. Proper placement is a key requirement, so that different street furniture elements do not visually compete with each other or dominate the streetscape. This Program will not permit advertising on all street furniture elements. Where such elements are combined or clustered, there will be limits to the amount and size of advertising faces. In addition, there will be distancing requirements between ad faces determined by street width and type.

The City believes it is important to create opportunities for local businesses to advertise as well as national brands. It is expected that different levels of advertising and communications will be accommodated: national, local, public and community.

- The design of new street furniture must demonstrate appropriateness for its intended use, not as a venue for advertising. This means the public must be able to recognize the functionality and use of the elements. The size and scale of amenities should not be increased in order to accommodate larger advertising faces.
- The number and size of advertisements per location will be specified. It is the City's expectation that this Program will allow for a reduction in the number of advertising faces in proximity to one another.
- Advertising near schools and places of worship will be carefully monitored for appropriate content.
- Public service announcements and community notices should also be part of the Program.
- All advertising must be in accordance with the regulations and standards set by the Advertising Standards Council of Canada.
- Certain types of advertising will be prohibited (e.g. tobacco advertising and material deemed to be offensive on racial, religious or other grounds).
- All advertising must be contained within the amenity; three dimensional advertisements or those that project beyond the structure of the amenity are not permitted.

- Advertising is only anticipated within certain guidelines on transit shelters and information pillars.
- Where street furniture is clustered, only one element may contain advertising.

## 9. Conclusion

The City of Toronto is committed to improving the quality of public spaces in all areas of the city as a fundamental component of the Clean and Beautiful City initiative. Coordinating the design and placement of the many street furniture elements on public sidewalks to make them appealing, well designed, user-friendly, well maintained, accessible and safe is the fundamental objective of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program. The Program will create a stronger identity for Toronto and a better environment for residents and visitors. Equally important are clear guidelines that manage the advertising supporting these high quality street amenities.

Based on research and extensive public consultation this report outlines a series of design and policy guidelines that will form the basis for a Request for Proposals that the City will issue to solicit proposals for coordinated street furniture. These guidelines are expected to inform proponents' submissions, serve as the criteria for reviewing their submissions and determine how to provide the best long-term benefit to the people of Toronto. The result will be a more beautiful and welcoming city.



The City of Toronto is committed to improving the quality of public spaces in all areas of the city.

### Endnotes:

1. Institute of Transportation Engineers. *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. (Washington: Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2006), 95-96.





### **Description and Results of Public Consultation Process - Coordinated Street Furniture Program**

The City conducted an extensive public consultation process from February, 2006 to early April, 2006 in order to receive input on the Coordinated Street Furniture Program from a diverse range of stakeholders. The following stakeholders were consulted:

- The Public, including ratepayer and other stakeholder groups
- Toronto Pedestrian Committee
- Toronto Cycling Committee
- Toronto Disability Issues Committee
- Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas (TABIA)
- Roundtable on a Beautiful City and the City Policies, Standards and Practices Subcommittee
- TTC
- Toronto's professional design community – architects, landscape architects, industrial designers, graphic designers
- Industry (potential bidders on an RFP)

## **1.0 Consultation Activities**

### **Meetings**

Meetings were held with the Toronto Cycling Committee (February 13), the Toronto Pedestrian Committee (February 15), and the Toronto Disability Issues Committee (February 27). The City met with the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas on March 21. An informal meeting was held with a representative of the Toronto Public Space Committee on February 17. Meetings were also held with the Public Utilities Coordinating Committee (March 22) and the Associated Newspaper Publishers (April 12).

### **Public Workshops**

Project staff hosted four public workshops. One was held in each of the four City Districts to ensure residents from across Toronto had an opportunity to participate. An information notice was sent to each residents association/ community group on file with the Clerk's Division and to all BIAs on February 21, 2006. The notice provided project details, dates and times of the workshops, the project website ([www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture)), a dedicated phone line and a mailing address, so that those who were unable to attend a workshop could provide comments. A dedicated e-mail address ([streetfurniture@toronto.ca](mailto:streetfurniture@toronto.ca)) was provided on the website for submission of comments. The Fall 2005 edition of City Routes was distributed across Toronto on October 30, 2005. It included an article about the Coordinated Street Furniture Program and instructions to visit the City website in the coming months for more details. A public notice of the workshops was sent to all City Councillors on February 20, 2006.

Advertisements for the public workshops were placed in The Etobicoke Guardian - February 22, The Scarborough Mirror - Feb. 26, The North York Mirror - March 1, and Now Magazine - March 2. The workshops were held as follows:

- Etobicoke Civic Centre - Feb. 28, - 18 participants signed the optional sign-in sheets
- Scarborough Civic Centre - March 1 - 33 participants signed the optional sign-in sheets
- Metro Hall - March 6 - 118 participants signed the optional sign-in sheets
- North York Civic Centre - March 7 - 27 participants signed the optional sign-in sheets

All workshop minutes were posted for public review at [www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture) by March 21, 2006.

### **Design Community Charrettes**

The City of Toronto partnered with the Design Exchange to hold two “Design Charrettes”. Industrial designers, graphic designers, architects and landscape architects were invited to hear a presentation on the Program and provide City staff with advice on key design principles. The charrettes were held on Wednesday, March 8, and Thursday, March 16, 2006 at the Design Exchange. A summary of the Design Exchange Charrettes prepared by Design Exchange staff will be posted at [www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture) as soon as their report is submitted.

### **Industry Consultation**

The City hosted a two stage Industry Consultation process, endorsed by City Council, to receive input from potential bidders regarding the structure of a Request for Proposals. Notice of this consultation and specific Terms of Reference were posted on the project website on Friday, March 10, 2006. Advertisements for the Industry Consultation were placed in the Toronto Star Business Section on Thursday, March 23. The Stage One consultation was held on Wednesday, March 29. Stage Two consultations, in which each participant was given an opportunity to suggest to project staff how an RFP should be structured, were held on April 5 and April 6 at City Hall.

## **2.0 Public Consultation Summary – Key Themes**

A number of common themes emerged from the public consultation. The following is a summary of key themes raised and recommendations submitted to project staff. A more comprehensive compilation of feedback is included following this summary.

### **Key Themes and Recommendations**

#### **1. Focus on Design and Functionality**

Workshop participants and those that e-mailed the City and filled out questionnaires expressed very clearly that the design and functionality of all street furniture items must be primary. These individuals expressed the opinion that Megabins are advertising vehicles rather than functional recycling bins. They are opposed to them and any other item that, in their opinion, functions as a “billboard” first and street amenity second. Across the city, residents felt that plastic benches were geared primarily for advertising at the expense of comfort. A concern was also raised --particularly at the downtown workshop and in questionnaires-- that information pillars place advertisers’ needs before functionality, because two sides of the pillars have ads and the map side is placed away from pedestrians.

#### **2.0 Street Furniture Placement**

##### **2.1 Enhance Safety and Accessibility**

There was unanimous opinion that the current clutter from newsboxes not only detracts from the appearance of streetscapes, but, more importantly, creates an impediment to pedestrians. The Toronto Disability Issues Committee and the Toronto Pedestrian Committee raised concerns that the current placement of newspaper boxes often pushes pedestrians into streets and makes sidewalk navigation difficult. Residents across the city would like to see the implementation of a “multi-publication” box to reduce clutter from newsboxes which were cited as the most problematic item in terms of impeding pedestrian movement. Some residents also requested the complete removal of all newspaper boxes from sidewalks.

The Toronto Pedestrian Committee, the Toronto Disability Issues Committee, the Toronto Cycling Committee and residents at the workshops cited Megabins as a safety concern. Residents indicated the Megabins block sightlines at corners for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

The Toronto Disability Issues Committee and workshop participants across the city want to ensure that any new street furniture item is fully accessible and cane detectable. A request was made for any new street furniture colours -- particularly on bollards-- to contrast with the pavement colour and general surroundings. Contrasting colours would help people with sight impairment detect furniture items.



A strong desire was expressed by the Toronto Pedestrian Committee, the Toronto Disability Issues Committee, representatives of the TTC's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT) and many workshop participants --particularly the sight impaired-- for a Pedestrian "Clearway" of 1.5- 2 metres on sidewalks. This "Clearway" would be free of any street furniture (including sandwich boards) and would enhance pedestrian circulation and safety, particularly for people with disabilities.

The Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children provided the following safety recommendations for the Coordinated Street Furniture Program:

- Adequate lighting should be installed and maintained in every bus shelter. Currently, all shelters are equipped with roof lights, however many are not functioning. The City of Toronto must ensure that lighting is maintained consistently.
- Sightlines of pedestrians should be ensured when the new street furniture is installed. Currently, the Megabins are very large and obstruct sightlines.
- Glass bus shelters should be transparent on all 4 sides with no advertisements obstructing sightlines.
- Bus shelters should have 2 exits/entrances.
- Coordinate placement of street furniture to ensure accessibility on sidewalks and with bus shelters.

The Riverside Area Residents Association which represents residents from Munro St., Hamilton St., Blackburn St., and Mount Stephen from Dundas St. East to Gerrard St. East, has requested that no new phone booths operated by private companies be installed in their neighbourhood as part of the Program. They indicated that such booths were formerly used in the drug trade.

## **2.2 Improve the Placement of Street Furniture - Create a Well-Organized and Attractive Streetscape**

Participants in consultations noted that improved placement of street furniture must work hand in hand with the new Program. This would significantly enhance the appearance of Toronto streetscapes by reducing the current clutter.

## **3. Create Opportunities to Express Local Character and Incorporate Art**

Business Improvement Areas expressed a strong desire to maintain their unique characters and would like to ensure that they are able to customize new street furniture that is placed in their area. Some BIAs expressed concern that even with this option, it would be challenging to accommodate their need to make their area unique. Residents and BIAs would like the Coordinated Street Furniture Program to provide high quality design standards, but ensure there is flexibility built-in to allow the unique character of different neighbourhoods to shine.

At all of the City consultations, residents and BIAs indicated they would like opportunities for art to be incorporated into new street furniture to beautify Toronto's streets.

## **4. Concern about Amount and Placement of Advertising**

At all workshops, and through emails and questionnaires, the public noted that the current amount of advertising on City streetscapes is overwhelming. This includes advertising on street furniture and billboards. There was the expressed opinion that advertising should not be placed in parks, near community centres, schools or religious institutions.

In Etobicoke and North York participants expressed a desire to reduce advertising on street furniture and the need for the City to control where it is placed. At the Scarborough workshop there was a desire to reduce advertising, however, some residents stated that it would be better to have *some* advertising and allow for a greater number of items than to settle for fewer items with zero advertising.

At Metro Hall, there was a great deal of discussion of the need to make advertising subordinate to furniture design and to find ways to completely remove or minimize advertising on street furniture.

A minority opinion was expressed indicating that the City should design and fabricate street furniture in-house --to ensure high quality-- and lease advertising space to companies to recover costs if absolutely necessary.

There was an opinion expressed across the city that a certain percentage of space should be reserved on street furniture for community announcements. In particular, residents and BIAs would like to see space reserved for announcements of local cultural events and festivals that bring vitality to neighbourhoods.

## **5. Opposition to an Advertising-Funded Program**

Many workshop participants, particularly at Metro Hall, (which was well attended by members of the Toronto Public Space Committee) and individuals who e-mailed the City and filled out questionnaires, expressed opposition to any process that would fund a street furniture program through advertising revenue. These stakeholders believe strongly that the design (aesthetics), maintenance, placement, safety, and functionality of street furniture would be sacrificed for advertisers' needs. Megabins were the most common example illustrating the position that street furniture funded by advertising would compromise the aforementioned principles. These stakeholders would prefer that the City of Toronto allocate funds to design, fabricate and maintain street furniture to ensure a high quality product.

## **6. Enhance Maintenance of Street Furniture**

An ongoing theme throughout consultations was the need for a well-funded maintenance plan for the program. Residents were concerned about the proliferation of graffiti and posterage on street furniture across the city. They noted that a coordinated program would fail, if maintenance was not strictly enforced. A recommendation was made to incorporate a provision into the RFP that places financial penalties on companies who fail to meet maintenance requirements. A recommendation was also made to include a phone number on furniture items to enable the public to notify staff of poor maintenance.

## **7. Environmental Recommendations – Opportunities for “Greening” the City and Energy Efficiency**

There was unanimous agreement at all public consultations for the City to integrate as much well-maintained greenery into new street furniture as possible. Green roofs on transit shelters, hanging flower baskets, and trees --particularly where benches are placed-- were listed as items that should be implemented to beautify the city. Residents also stressed that the City must provide the necessary funds and plan to properly maintain both existing greenery, particularly trees, and new greenery.

Residents would like to see conservation of energy to the greatest extent possible and the use of solar/wind power where lighting is used. Workshop participants and questionnaire respondents indicated that bins should include slots for the recycling of styrofoam, batteries and green waste. Suggestions were also made to build furniture items from recycled material and/or use material that can be recycled.

## **3.0 Summary of Public Workshops and Questionnaire Responses**

The following is a summary of responses to each of the four questions posed at the Public Workshops and in the City's Questionnaire. The purpose of the workshops and questionnaire was to garner ideas, views, and recommendations from stakeholders about street furniture. These activities were not intended for purposes of an empirical, statistical analysis. The questions at the workshops and in the questionnaire were the same. The project website- [www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture) includes minutes from the public workshops. As of April 12, 2006, 125 questionnaires (online and offline) were filled out. A total of 196 people signed the optional sign-in sheets at the four public workshops.

### **1. What do you like about street furniture in the City?**

#### **New Transit Shelters**

- New shelters are attractive, smooth design
- Functional and well-lit which enhances safety
- Clean and modern looking

- New shelters without ads are functional

#### **The post and ring bike stand**

- It is simple, functional, made in Toronto and does not contain any advertising
- Iconic of Toronto
- Elegant and attractive
- Efficient, effective and unobtrusive

#### **Business Improvement Area furniture**

- Residents across the city support the individuality and enhanced quality of street furniture in Business Improvement Areas. Specifically, they enjoy the planters, flower baskets, decorative paving/lighting, benches and curb cuts
- Benches in Liberty Village
- BIAs make a great effort to choose items that signify their neighbourhood and are high quality

#### **Greenery**

- Any vegetation, gardens, tree plantings, that are well-maintained
- Raised planter boxes
- Hanging baskets
- The more well-maintained greenery the better

#### **Benches**

- Comfortable benches without ads
- Benches - particularly in parks and at transit stops

#### **Items that go above and beyond normal street furniture**

- Art work on Spadina Avenue
- Fountains and statues on University Avenue
- Public art, murals and outdoor sculptures

#### **Other comments**

- I like that you can recycle, but bins should be more functional with bigger slots

## **2. What don't you like about street furniture in the City?**

#### **Newspaper boxes**

- Appearance is "hideous", creates clutter, impediment for pedestrians, covered in postering and graffiti – particularly free papers
- Remove all newsboxes as in Montreal

#### **Megabins -**

- Geared for advertising, not functional, block sightlines at corners, difficult to identify as bins

#### **Advertising**

- Current state of ads on street furniture is overwhelming, makes the city look cheap
- City should fund design of furniture as opposed to relying on ad revenue
- Ads are given precedence over safety, functionality, and aesthetics of street furniture – most common examples given: megabins, information pillars, plastic benches
- Don't like advertising near schools and community centres in particular
- Ads in some bus shelters block sightlines

#### **Maintenance**

- Overall maintenance is poor - graffiti and postering on all items – particularly parking metres, Canada post boxes, newspaper boxes, telephone booths
- Lack of maintenance of planters and tree pits, design of tree pits is poor
- Litter bins not emptied frequently enough

### **Placement**

- Clutter around bus stops from all items impedes pedestrians – particularly people with disabilities
- Sandwich boards/newspaper boxes in particular block sidewalk
- Gas shut-off valves cut off sidewalk space
- Furniture placement pushes pedestrians into the street
- Traffic signal boxes poorly placed and not designed well
- Pedestrian clearway free of any street furniture is needed

### **Shortage of Items**

- More functional recycling/litter bins needed – particularly near parks, fast food restaurants and convenience stores, and throughout Kensington Market
- Need more benches – comfortable ones without ads
- Well placed and well designed benches and bollards needed for people to sit on and lean against
- Not enough bike racks, especially near transit
- Add more post and ring bike stands - will prevent cyclists from locking their bikes to street posts, private property, gates or other objects
- Not enough public toilets

## **3. What would you do to improve street furniture as part of this program?**

### **Advertising – removal, reduction**

- Needs of public must be placed before needs of advertisers
- Remove advertising completely from all furniture, do not use this approach to secure new furniture
- Design beautiful furniture that de-emphasizes advertising
- Reserve a % of space on transit shelters and other items for local artists to beautify the city
- Make rules about ads – how much, where and what, specific in RFP
- Provide room for non-profits to place posters
- The City should do a cost-benefit analysis on providing street furniture without advertising
- If ads are placed, spread them around to reduce visual clutter
- Information pillars must place maps toward street not ads
- No ads in parks

### **Removal of Items**

- Remove newspaper boxes
- Remove Megabins
- Remove all items that place advertising ahead of function
- Remove ugly utility boxes on roadways
- Remove plastic benches
- Remove traffic signal boxes –no need for large ones
- Hydro wires should be buried, there is duplication and triplication in some instances
- Remove redundant utility poles

### **Enhance Safety**

- Implement a Pedestrian Clearway with no street furniture
- All items must be cane detectable
- Install only open phone booths
- Cover the open stairwells to subway with something that prevents water (snow and rain) from getting on the stairs and that has attractive architecture
- Old sewer covers are a safety issue for bikes
- Translucent ads
- Street furniture (particularly benches) should be designed to encourage people to spend more time in the public realm, participating in the life of the city

### **Beautify the City - Art and High Quality Design**

- Increase use of art, involve local artists

- Art should be a feature of any RFP – either as an integrated item (part of the traditional types of furniture) or as art on its own
- Tie in the greening of Toronto to the street furniture project. e.g. bench and a tree, a shelter and a green roof
- There should be consistency of high quality design, but flexibility to allow flavour of neighbourhoods to come through

### **Maintenance**

- Dedicate budget to enforce contract and ensure compliance (cash penalties for companies who fail, record number of public complaints)
- Well-funded maintenance plan needed for all street furniture

### **Coordination and Standards**

- Placement of items should be determined by functionality and accessibility – hierarchy of items should be established
- Coordinated typography needed on all street furniture and street signs –develop custom font for Toronto with local expertise
- There should be a mechanism that resolves private vs. public interests (i.e. a business that wants a bench or shelter removed vs. the public need)
- Incorporate more consistent themes of street furniture within neighbourhoods, BIAs
- Give the people in the neighbourhood a say about what the furniture should look like. This will create a balanced vision for an area
- Quality of any furniture item proposed for streetscapes after an RFP is issued must be to same standards as set out in an RFP and follow the same guidelines
- Neighbourhoods require a proper assessment of needs
- Areas with higher pedestrian traffic would require a greater number of trash bins than areas with less traffic, BIAs/ ratepayer groups can be consulted on this
- Precise rules needed for every furniture item

## **4. What new street furniture items would you like added?**

### **Greenery**

- Green roofs on transit shelters and TTC entranceways
- Flower baskets on utility poles
- Improved tree grates (for healthier trees, etc.)
- Decorative metal grates around street trees to allow in more water and air – e.g. Montreal

### **Multi-publication newsracks**

- Multi newsracks to reduce clutter and remove ugly chains that hold boxes together - e.g. Chicago
- Would love to see a well-designed concentrated newspaper box (a la Chicago or New York, but better designed) - Proliferation of boxes on Toronto's streets is awful

### **Public Toilets**

- Supervised and properly maintained public toilets
- Toilets that are fully accessible for people with disabilities
- Only self-cleaning toilets
- Toilets are needed for people with IBS or gastric problems. An automated system like Paris's or London's would do a lot to make long shopping expeditions more comfortable
- Toilets needed in urban downtown - Chinatown, Little India, Greektown, Queen St., Jarvis St. - essential for residents and tourists
- Place next to Green P Parking

### **Kiosks**

- Kiosks for community/cultural postings like in Spain or France
- No commercial postings on kiosks - focus on community
- Kiosks will reduce graffiti and postering
- Staffed vendor kiosks - keep an eye on the street, replace newspaper boxes, may include public toilets,

e.g. New York

- Kiosks in places where they do not compete with local merchants
- Consolidated newspaper kiosks similar to Calgary and Chicago
- Designated kiosks for graffiti artists

#### **Furniture as focal points**

- Water fountains, drinking fountains, flower beds (if well-maintained)
- Sculptures
- Space for local artists
- Furniture should encourage public use of streets, enhance vibrancy and safety of city

#### **Bus Shelters**

- New technologies – talking bus shelters, VIVA info of next bus coming
- Install convenience machines that sell bus tickets
- Phone booths integrated with shelters

#### **Bicycle Sharing**

- Automated Bicycle Vending Machines e.g. France; Norway
- Call-A-Bike system, e.g. Germany
- Place bike shares outside of TTC stations, close to hotels, close to parks and the Waterfront and in the business and tourist core.

#### **Others**

- Public clocks
- Community Art Board to discourage graffiti
- Covered TTC entranceways with public art integrated
- Way finding tiles on sidewalks for the blind
- Music from bins, directions on how to use bins
- Music, poetry on the street – e.g. Murmur program
- Gateways to neighbourhoods
- Increased use of bollards for safety between pedestrians and traffic
- Dog litter receptacles
- Ashtrays
- Gum receptacles
- Outdoor gallery exhibits for local artists
- Bicycle lockers would be excellent and prevent bikes from being vandalized
- High density bike lockup racks with lighting (e.g. 10 bike rings on a rack mounted to a light pole)
- “Way-finding” signage to guide pedestrians to libraries, schools, community centres, etc.
- Tourist information boards that have maps showing where you are, and nearby local attractions.  
(eg. Museums, shopping districts, buildings of significance, city landmarks, unique neighbourhoods, markets, parks, etc.)
- Benches that allow homeless to sleep on them (without homeless hoops) – BIAs expressed disagreement

### **4.0 E-mail and Letter Correspondence**

Of the 31 e-mail comments submitted to the City, 26 indicated a clear objection to advertising on street furniture. A total of six letters were mailed to the City. The letters expressed opinions ranging from the need to enhance safety and improve accessibility on sidewalks (4) to improving the placement of information pillars and the need to limit advertising.

Permission has been requested from the Corporate Access and Privacy Office to include the entire text of each e-mail submitted --with personal information removed-- on the project website [www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture) and to include the text of each letter submitted in an appendix. As of April 13, 2006, ten individuals who submitted e-mails had granted the City permission to post the full text of their e-mails on the project website in an appendix to this document and one had declined.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Design Exchange in partnership with the City of Toronto convened two Coordinated Street Furniture Design Charrettes. The Coordinated Street Furniture Program calls for the harmonization of design, form, scale, materials and placement of street amenities in a functional and accessible manner, in an attempt to reduce clutter, beautify city streets and to give Toronto an identifiable streetscape. The charrettes invited stakeholders in the Toronto design community to set out new ideas and opportunities for leading, sustainable, community-based and universally designed coordinated street furniture. The charrette series intended to provide an opportunity to further Toronto's Clean and Beautiful City Initiative and to inform the City's Design and Policies Guidelines document leading to a Request for Proposals later in 2006. The Coordinated Street Furniture initiative should be a symbol of a new Toronto with a solid international profile.

Leading design specialists, special stakeholder groups and representatives from the City of Toronto participated. Approximately 100 individuals took part. The charrettes included an overview of the project history and plan by Robert Freedman, Robert Millward and Andrew Koropeski of the City's project team. Eight teams on March 8<sup>th</sup> and seven teams on March 16<sup>th</sup> developed site scenarios over four-hour sessions. The latter part of the sessions consisted of team presentations and discussion. This final report gathers sketches and suggestions from the teams, which were intended to inform a Design and Policy Guidelines document which will in turn frame the upcoming RFP.

The full report of the Design Exchange sessions is posted on the City of Toronto's website: [www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture](http://www.toronto.ca/streetfurniture)

Appendix A of the report provides an overview of the Coordinated Street Furniture Program documented in the City of Toronto newsletter, CityScapes.

Appendix B of the report details the ten sites identified by the City of Toronto representing all 8 Wards, which were used for the design charrettes.

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, teams were given a design challenge of developing coordinated street furniture for one unique site within Toronto and asked to sketch solutions for the site conditions and develop a set of design criteria and principles from the exercise. Teams were consistently small (4-6 people) for this charrette.

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, larger teams (5-8 people) were given a design challenge that included two unique site conditions, one urban site and one suburban site. They were to sketch solutions for both, and determine a series of principles and design criteria that would benefit both conditions. Additionally, two teams were provided unmarked site locations and encouraged to develop details about the design and positioning of coordinated street furniture. Extended notes with the team suggestions from the March 16<sup>th</sup> charrette are provided in Appendix C



of the report. Suggestions for the RFP review process were also elicited and documented in this summary. Appendix D of the report provides a summary of Top Principles of each team group on March 16<sup>th</sup> for the Coordinated Street Furniture Program.

As part of the two charrettes, the Design Exchange asked all participants to identify the best ideas presented by the teams with red stickers. The top ten design ideas are identified in this report. These ideas refer back to the summaries of each team's priorities in sketch and text form, and include the list of team members.

## Appendix 10.3 - Revised InfoPillar Placement Guidelines (May16, 2012)

The following principles set out a guide for the placement of InfoPillars:

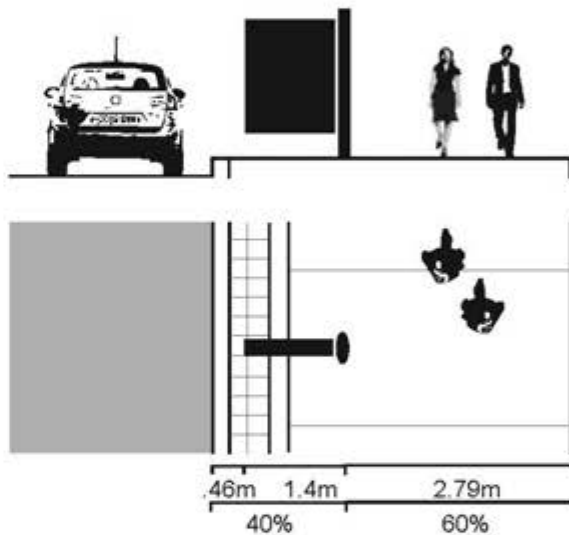
1. InfoPillars will be situated in locations where they provide a wayfinding function, irrespective of the provision of any other wayfinding element.
2. Subject to the requirements of these guidelines, every attempt will be made to ensure maximum distribution across the city, including ensuring that no single ward has greater than 20 percent of the total number of InfoPillars installed.
3. The permitted location for InfoPillars is completely within the furnishing or planting zone of the sidewalk where they can be appropriately integrated into the streetscape, and not impede the passage of pedestrians. Furnishing zones vary in size and treatment but must be a minimum of 1.86 metres to accommodate an InfoPillar. InfoPillars may be placed at an angle or parallel to the curb to ensure they are fully contained within the furnishing zone.

### 10.3-3. Permitted Location



The permitted location for InfoPillars is completely within the furnishing or planting zone.

#### 10.3-4. Optimal Location



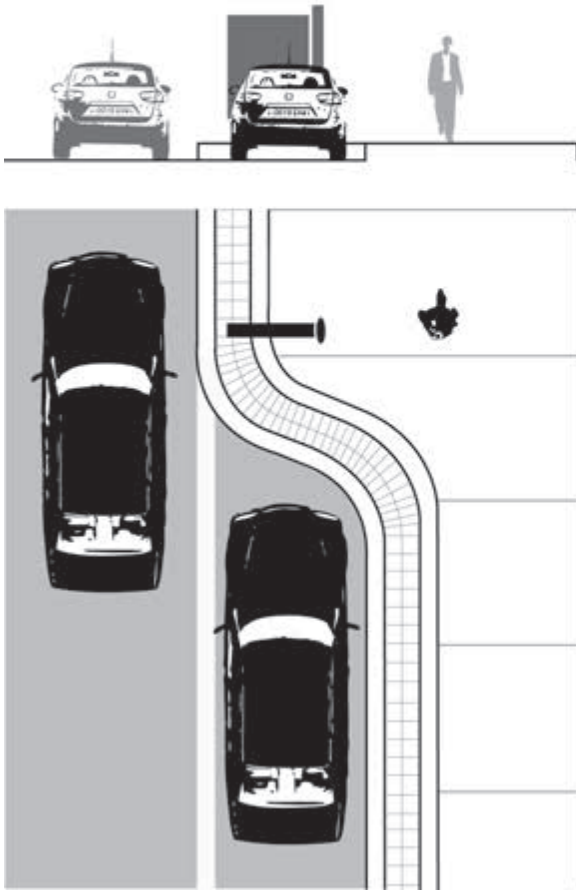
The InfoPillar shall consume only up to 40 percent of the sidewalk.

4. The InfoPillar shall consume only up to 40 percent of the sidewalk from the curb face to the property line, secured privately-owned public setback and/or building face. (There may be exceptions to this standard, and these will be handled on a case by case basis.) If the privately owned public setback is utilized for locating an InfoPillar, it must be smooth, contiguous and level with the public sidewalk. If the privately-owned public space is no longer available, and the pedestrian clearway is reduced to less than 2.79 metres, then the InfoPillar would be removed and relocated at no cost to the City.
5. Staff shall conduct pedestrian volume analysis in high pedestrian traffic areas to ensure pedestrian safety, particularly at peak hours.

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toronto's coordinated street furniture program

## 10.3-9. Parking Bays



Any InfoPillar located in the vicinity of parking bays will be placed on the downstream end of the bay.

6. Each location will be assessed to ensure that:
  - a) all safety and sightline matters are addressed for pedestrians, drivers and cyclists;
  - b) pedestrian volumes show sufficient room for pedestrian passage and safety during peak travel times;
  - c) relevant view corridors to heritage properties and public art are maintained;
  - d) InfoPillars are situated in such a way that they are offset and do not block or hinder access to building entrances, doorways or stairs; and
  - e) the accessibility safety principles that have an impact on people with disabilities are in adherence.
7. Installations shall have regard for existing streetscape paving patterns, materials and configurations including cast in place concrete furniture zones, control joints and sawcuts. All streetscapes shall be returned to their original condition with the installation of the InfoPillar.
8. All InfoPillars will be installed with a wayfinding map.
9. Any InfoPillar located in the vicinity of parking bays will be placed on the downstream end of the bay.

## Process

1. City staff will review all potential locations with Astral to ensure that they meet the placement principles identified above.
2. City Councillors and BIAs will be consulted as to the placement of the pillars.
3. All abutting property owners will be consulted where there are special pavement treatments i.e. granite.
4. The local Councillor will be advised if the installation of pillars requires the removal of bike rings. Bike rings will be reinstalled close to the original location immediately or within a reasonable amount of time.