

GEARY WORKS

PLANNING FRAMEWORK REPORT

Urban Design - April, 2021

1. Vision

Geary Avenue is a vibrant employment area embedded within the established low-rise residential neighbourhood of Davenport. Geary Avenue is prized for its "maker" uses such as small-scale manufacturing, food production, artists' studios and production studios. The eclectic mix of these uses with small-scale restaurants, bars and other cultural uses in old low-rise industrial buildings gives the street an authentic, alluring "vibe" that is increasing, making Geary Avenue a social destination.

In parallel with the City's study, an undergraduate studio at the Department of Architectural Science at Ryerson University, co-taught with Professor Masha Etkind, served as an incubator to test ideas for the area.

2. Goals

The goals of the planning framework are to:

- Support existing businesses and cultural enterprises.
- Facilitate a vibrant mix of light industrial, commercial, cultural and recreational uses, where appropriate.
- Enhance the public realm to create an inviting and exciting street.
- Protect the Davenport neighbourhood from excessive negative impact from uses on Geary Avenue.

Secondary Goals:

- Provide opportunities for gentle intensification along Geary Avenue.
- Provide appropriate transition and privacy to the Davenport neighbourhood.
- Support a safe public realm that will allow for a wide range of activities, mainly in the front of the buildings facing the avenue.
- Provide appropriate thermal comfort conditions to support activities on the avenue.
- Create opportunities to incorporate passive solar design in existing and new development.
- Protect the north neighbourhood from the railway's negative impacts.

- Improve the connections to the neighborhoods north and south of the railway.
- Provide a continuous public realm between Geary Avenue and the west neighbourhood.
- Enhance public activities and high-quality public realm in existing local focal points.

3. Pedestrian Experience: Improving the Public Realm Through Building Design

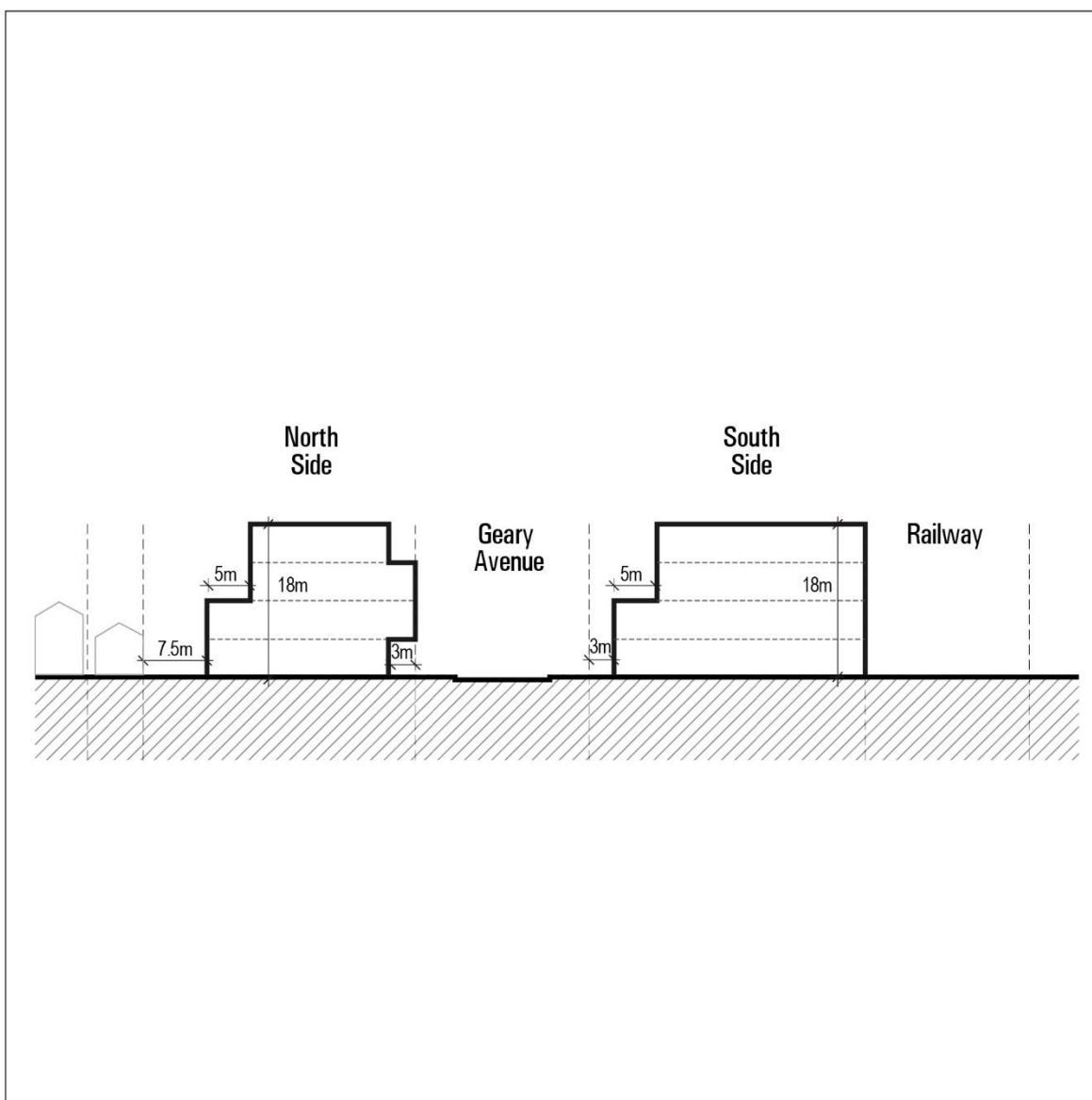
Backing to the railways on the south side and to the neighbourhood on the north, the activities on Geary Avenue take place in front of the buildings, facing the street. The Geary Works Planning Framework builds on existing policies and guidelines to enable a wide range of activities, both formal and informal.

The current conditions on Geary Avenue allow for sunlight exposure all year round on most parts of the north side of the avenue. Maintaining sunlight exposure on the public realm and building facades helps enable a high-quality, desirable pedestrian environment and supports activities in the public realm, specifically on the ground floor facing the avenue.

To provide appropriate sunlight exposure, Geary Avenue is designed in an asymmetric massing geometry (see section 1). The south side is intended to provide shade on the sidewalk in summertime, while the north sidewalk is intended to allow for access to sunlight in the spring and autumn.

The Canadian Pacific Railway that crosses Toronto provides unique opportunities for the City. It can serve as a visual corridor, enhancing visual permeability and, potentially, future inner-city links for pedestrians and cyclists. It is also a source of undesirable conditions, such as visual disturbance and noise. Historically, properties along the railway have provided a buffer space for the residential neighbourhoods. The south side of Geary should develop into a high-quality area, but still retain its function as a visual and acoustic buffer space.

- 3.1. **Sun Exposure:** New development or additions to development should be carefully assessed to make sure that they comply with the intended sun conditions.
 - 3.1.1. The north sidewalk of Geary Ave. should be exposed to sunlight for a minimum of five hours during the spring and fall equinoxes from 9:18 a.m. to 5:18 p.m.
 - 3.1.2. Applications should provide sun and shadow analysis for all seasons.
 - 3.1.3. Special attention should be given to important public spaces such as the connections to the south, existing green spaces, proposed green spaces and POPS. Green and open spaces should comply with the City's sun/shadow study terms of reference, test's times for parks and green spaces.
- 3.2. **Acoustics and aesthetics of the rail corridor:** On the south side of Geary Ave. new non-residential uses in the lands designated as Employment Area will be located and designed to mitigate impacts from the rail corridor.
 - 3.2.1. Buildings along the south side of Geary Ave. should be designed appropriately to the view of this façade from the lands on the south side of the rail corridor.
 - 3.2.2. New development within the Study Area on the south side of Geary Ave. will be a minimum of two storeys and 8.5m in height.
 - 3.2.3. New development should be located to generally provide a continuous massing.



Section 1

Typical North –South Section along Geary Avenue

File # 19 207051 STE 09 02



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04/15/2021

4. Pedestrian Connectivity, New Green Spaces and POPS

The Geary Works Planning Framework provides a structure for creating new pedestrian connections and improving existing ones. The avenue attracts people from the adjacent neighbourhoods and further away, and also provides a connection to the adjacent streets and avenues. Since the railway has created a border within the city, and reduces permeability in the area, addressing the pedestrian and cycling connections is a main concern for the planning framework.

4.1. North side of Geary Ave.:

- 4.1.1. The maximum building dimension on the north side of Geary Ave. is 100m.
- 4.1.2. Where the separation of buildings is appropriate for larger buildings, a minimum of 6m separation is required.
- 4.1.3. Areas designated for potential green spaces and POPS: should comply with the City's guidelines for POPS. The adjacent buildings should be encouraged to provide appropriate setbacks to enable high-quality POPS.

4.2. South side of Geary Ave.: The south side of Geary Ave. is fronting the Avenue and backing to the railway. New non-residential uses in the lands designated as Employment Area will be located and designed to mitigate impacts from the rail corridor.

- 4.2.1. The maximum building/block dimension on the south side of Geary Ave. is 200m.
- 4.2.2. Where the separation of larger buildings is appropriate a minimum of 6m separation is required.
- 4.2.3. The west end of 259 (**as designated in Diagram 1**), is designated for a POPS location. The adjacent buildings should be encouraged to provide appropriate setbacks to enable high quality POPS.

4.3. **Dufferin St. underpass (see Diagram 1):**

The intersection of Dufferin St. and Geary Ave. is an important local corner. The underpass is a major circulation path between north and south. Addressing the underpasses that cross the railways can significantly improve the pedestrian links between Dupont St. and Geary Ave., while creating a more desirable public realm. New development adjacent to the underpass will:

- 4.3.1. Be set back from the street property line to allow a minimum of 7m from the curb to the front face of the building on all corners.
- 4.3.2. Avoid using retaining walls.
- 4.3.3. Be encouraged to provide landscaped areas including trees along Dufferin St.

4.4. **New connection to the west:**

New development should enable pedestrian and cycling connections to the west, between Geary Ave. and Primrose Ave.:

- 4.4.1. The new connection should be generally aligned with the north sidewalk of Geary Ave.
- 4.4.2. New development on both sides should provide a minimum of 6m unobstructed passage.
- 4.4.3. New development will provide a minimum of 6m height clearance.
- 4.4.4. If the new development will require windows to the new connection, a minimum 3m setback for facades from the side lot line is required.)

4.5. **New connection to the south (see Diagram 1):** The Galleria project is a significant project in the area and would benefit from high-quality pedestrian connections to Geary. A direct at-grade pedestrian and cycle connection should be established between Primrose Ave. and Emerson Ave. (as designated in the diagram):

- 4.5.1. New development on all four sides of the intersection should be encouraged to provide POPS.
- 4.5.2. The adjacent buildings should be encouraged to provide appropriate setbacks to enable high-quality POPS.

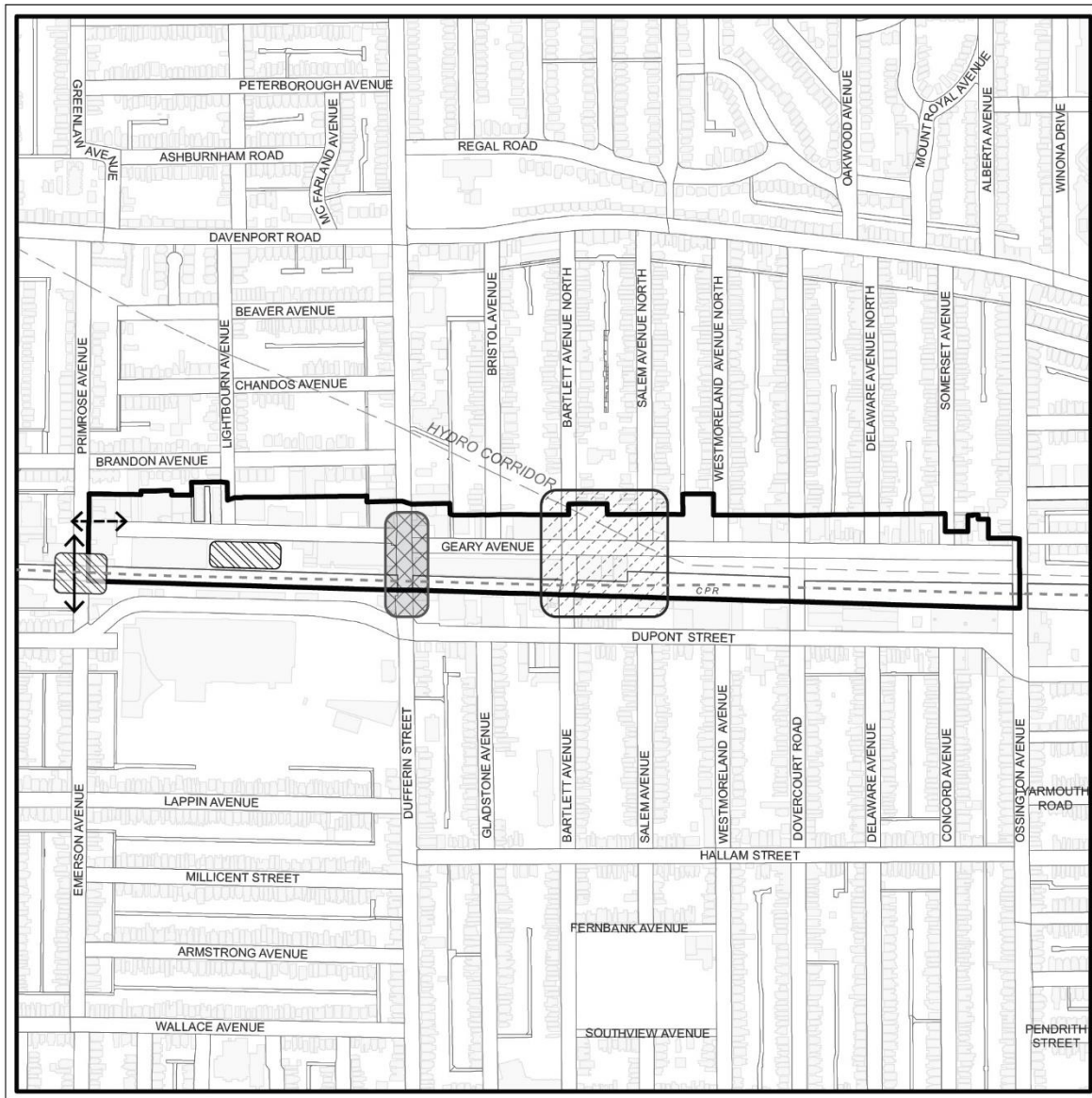


Diagram 1

Geary Works Planning Study

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5. Built Form

The Planning Framework's built form objectives fit within the vision for Geary Works and the adjacent area. It builds on existing policies and guidelines such as the existing ZBL, the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study and the Official Plan.

Currently staff are assessing the applications along Geary Avenue with the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study performance standards. OPA 480 recognises three scales of building types, and acknowledges that mid-rise buildings are defined at a scale between low-rises and tall buildings. Mid-rise buildings are “taller than a typical house or townhouse but no taller than the width of the street’s public right-of-way.” Although Geary Avenue is not identified in the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study, the scale of proposed buildings and the existing permissions for height are similar to the mid-rise heights as defined in the study. Therefore, continuing to apply the study’s standards was deemed appropriate for the Study Area.

However, in order to allow for mid-rise development on Geary Avenue while complying with the objectives of the planning framework, refinement of the mid-rise performance standards is required. To allow for gentle densification while maintaining the character of the street and protecting the residential neighbourhoods on the north side, building heights should not exceed 18m. The planning framework should also adjust the back and side setbacks to allow for better development opportunities. Restricting heights and allowing for larger building footprints will ensure that new development will be in keeping with the scale of the low-rise built form north of Geary Avenue, while maximising development opportunities.

To protect the Davenport neighbourhood, appropriate separation distances and a landscaped buffer zone are required. While buildings on the north side of Geary Avenue are permitted to have additional height, complying with the built form recommendations will ensure appropriate scale transition, mitigating overlook and shadow casting by providing step-backs in the building mass and privacy restrictions. Replacing the rear Transition to Neighbourhoods Angular Plane with the additional step-back requirements will achieve the same aims, while creating a consistent requirement for the development on Geary Avenue.

The existing ZBL requires front setbacks of 3m. To comply with the Planning Framework's goals for a well-designed and safe public realm, new development will maintain the front setbacks. In order to promote a vibrant public realm on Geary Avenue, buildings on the north side of the avenue will be permitted to cantilever on the second and third floor above the ground floor setbacks. This building typology will enable activities facing the avenue, while also creating appropriate weather protection and maximising opportunities for development. Maintaining the 3m setbacks on buildings' fourth floors will comply with the need for Pedestrian Perception Step-Back without applying a front angular plane. On the south side of the street, a front step-back in the massing will provide both a Pedestrian Perception Step-Back and appropriate sun exposure. A large footprint with no setbacks to the side or to the rear, and with no step-back on the rear, will enable new development on the south side to maximise the development potential.

The north side of Geary Avenue is fronting the avenue and backing to a neighbourhood. The corners are important connectors to the neighbourhood, and should be designed to provide continuity to the neighbourhoods. As the avenue provides few opportunities for vegetation and street furniture, the corners should create more space for streetscape to compensate for the lack of trees. To provide a safe and vibrant public realm, additional setbacks will be required on the intersections of main streets that are crossing the railway.

5.1. Typology:

- 5.1.1. If not specified differently in this report, the buildings will comply with the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study Guidelines.

5.2. Height:

- 5.2.1. New development will be a maximum of 18m and 4 storeys in height.
- 5.2.2. All structures on the roof such as mechanical equipment, elevators, or stair towers will comply with the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study Guidelines.
- 5.2.3. The minimum height of any new building or structure in the study area is 8.5m and two storeys.
- 5.2.4. The ground floor will provide a minimum floor-to-floor height of 4.5m, and comply with the design guidelines in this report.

5.3. **Setbacks**

- 5.3.1. On the sides of the properties that are located on intersections of Geary Ave. with perpendicular streets, new development will be set back in order to provide for a wide sidewalk and boulevard with enhanced pedestrian amenities and tree planting.
- 5.3.2. New development on corners will be set back from the street property line to allow a minimum of 4.8m from the curb to the front face of the building (see Section 2).
- 5.3.3. New development on corners of the four major streets and avenues (Dufferin, Bartlett, Dovercourt and Ossington) will be set back from the street property line to allow a minimum of 7m from the curb to the front face of the building (see Section 3).

5.4. **North Side Geary Ave. (see Section 1)**

- 5.4.1. Front Setbacks: In the front of the building, provide a minimum of 3m front yard setbacks from property line. On the second and third storey between 4.5m and 13.5m, on the front yard, no setback is required.
- 5.4.2. Rear Line Setbacks: In the back, provide a minimum of 7.5m yard setbacks from property line.
- 5.4.3. Side Setback: In the side, unless adjacent to a POPS, on corners or when needed to mitigate the size of the building, no setback is required.
- 5.4.4. Step-back, Rear Side: In the rear, above the second storey and 9m height, a minimum 5m step-back is required.
- 5.4.5. If the building will have windows on the side facade, a minimum 5.5 metre setback for the side facades (east and west) from the side lot line is required.
- 5.4.6. Encroachment /penetration of envelope/structures in the rear buffer space: In the rear of the building, no structure or penetration will be allowed to the building's envelope closer than 7.5m from the rear lot line. Balconies should be internalised.
- 5.4.7. If the property is not backing to a public back-lane, a 2m landscaped strip in the back of the property is required.
- 5.4.8. On corners above the third storey and 13.5m, a setback of 3m is required on all streets (see Section 2 and Section 3).

5.5. South Side (see Section 1)

- 5.5.1. Front Setback: In the front of the building, provide a minimum of 3m front yard setback from property line.
- 5.5.2. Rear Line Setbacks: In the back, no setback is required.
- 5.5.3. Side Setbacks: In the side, unless adjacent to a POPS, on corners or when needed to mitigate the size of the building, no setback is required.
- 5.5.4. Step-back, Front Side: In the front, above the second storey and 9m height, a minimum 5m step-back is required.
- 5.5.5. If the building will have windows on the side facade, a minimum 5.5 metre setback for the side facades (east and west), from the side lot line is required.
- 5.5.6. On corners above the third storey and 13.5m, a setback of 3m is required on all streets (see Section 2 and Section 3).

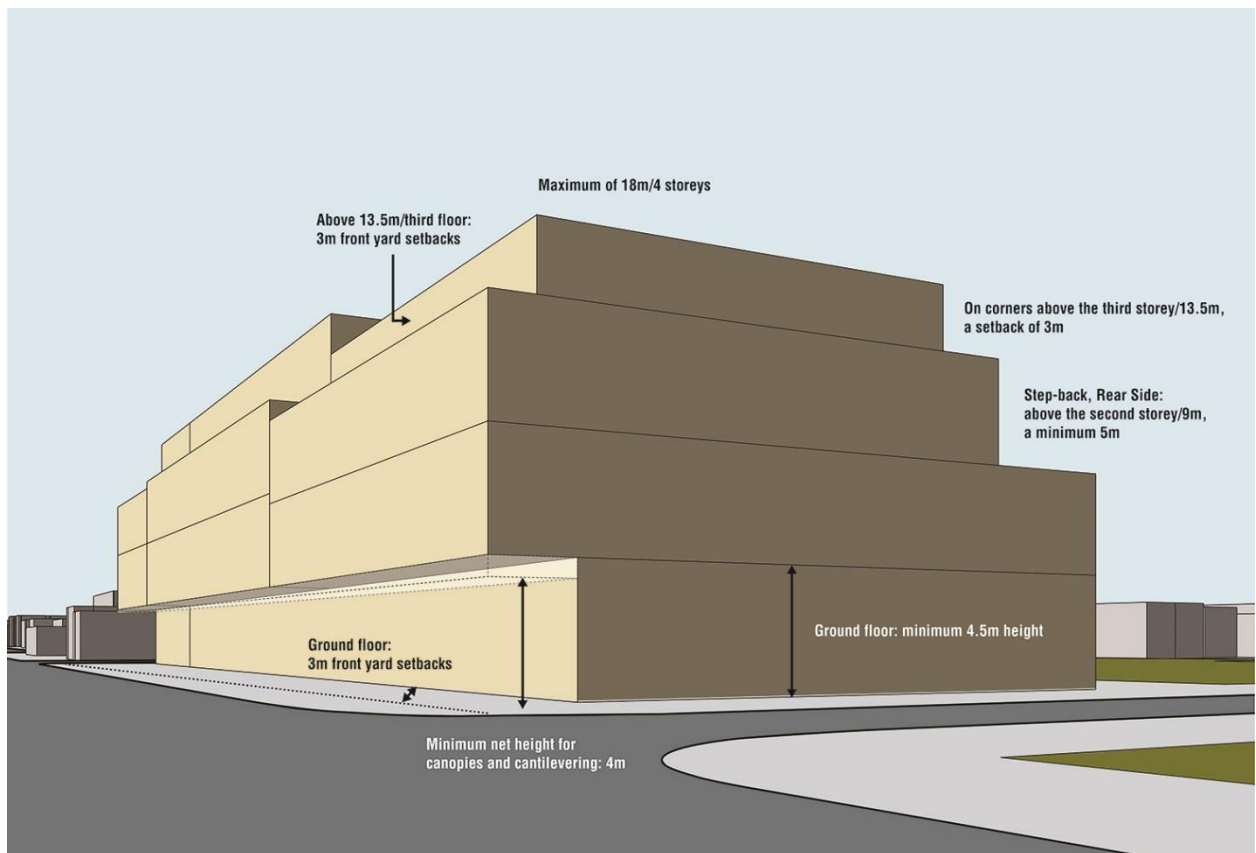


Image 1: Sample building envelope illustrating the Built Form Recommendations, North Side.

6. Building Design

The Mid-Rise and Avenues Performance Standard requires the ground floor to be articulated and highly transparent, "with a minimum 60% of this frontage to be glazed and transparent." However, the Geary Works Study acknowledges the special local character, especially west of Dovercourt Road. Properties in this area are using design techniques that personalise their properties. While high transparency is encouraged, a lower level of transparency will be allowed if used for specific high-quality design.

- 6.1. New development within the study area should be cladded with high-quality materials.
- 6.2. The ground floor of new development should be articulated and highly transparent. West of Dovercourt Rd., in order to preserve the character area, less transparency is acceptable if it can maintain the personalisation at the ground floor by the business.
- 6.3. New development on the north side of Geary Ave. will coordinate the ground floor canopies and cantilevering. The minimum lower absolute height is 4m. High-quality materials should be used and light fixtures should be incorporated/integrated in the design.
- 6.4. New development on the north side of Geary Ave. will provide adequate privacy, and mitigate overlook to the neighbourhood on the north. If the roof will be publicly accessible, a buffer such as a raised planter to the neighbourhood is required. Transparency and glazing should be taken in consideration to the adjacent to residential neighbourhood.
- 6.5. On the north side, in the front of the building, shading devices may be accepted if the applicant can demonstrate that they will contribute to the building's solar conditions.

7. Special Character Areas

7.1. **Bartlett plaza** (see Diagram 1):

The Bartlett area is already a focal point for Geary Ave. and the adjacent neighbourhood. New development in this area (as designated in the map) will focus on the pedestrian realm, and be designed to encourage public activities. It will include uses on the ground floor which animate the public realm, create places for the public, and add to the vitality of the streetscape. New development will:

- 7.1.1. Be set back from the street property line to allow a minimum of 7m from the curb to the front face of the building (as described in section 3).
- 7.1.2. Provide for a wide sidewalk and boulevard with enhanced pedestrian amenities and tree planting.
- 7.1.3. Be encouraged to be programmed with public activities on the ground floor facing the plaza, such as patios and retail spaces.
- 7.1.4. Will incorporate weather protection design.
- 7.1.5. Will be encouraged to design the ground floor with a high level of transparency.
- 7.1.6. Minimize shadow impact on the parkette and comply with the City's sun/shadow study terms of reference, test's times for parks and green spaces.

7.2. **Bartlett Ave. railway passage** (see Diagram 1): Bartlett Ave. at ground crossing is an important N-S connection and a unique point in the area, offering views along the railway. The crossing should be designed as a safe pedestrian and cycling connection. New development will:

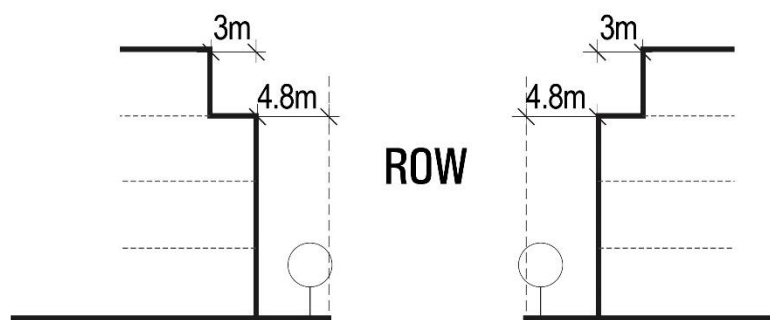
- 7.2.1. Be set back from the street property line to allow a minimum of 7m from the curb to the front face of the building (as described in Section 3).
- 7.2.2. Provide for a wide sidewalk and boulevard with enhanced pedestrian amenities and tree planting.

8. Loading and Servicing Area

New development facing open spaces should screen the servicing activities. Garbage areas should be screened from the public realm or other properties. Laneways in the area adjacent to Geary Avenue will serve as access to the backs and sides of the buildings. They can also serve as buffer spaces and transition spaces between the neighbourhood and the employment area. In areas where the blocks are long, laneways can be used for pedestrian connections.

9. Implementation

The Planning Framework is to be used as a guideline in the review all current and future planning applications in the Geary Avenue area.

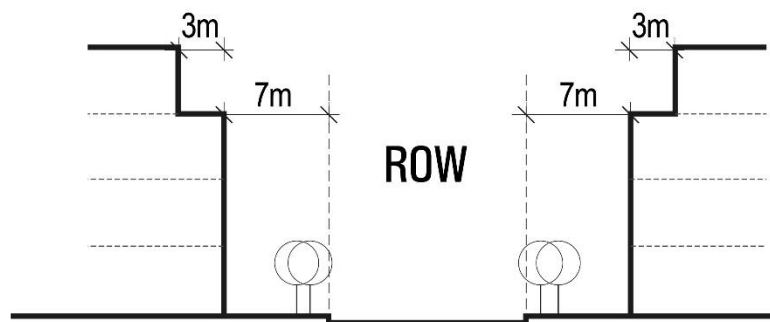


Sections for corner properties with frontage on:
Somerset Avenue, Delaware Avenue North, Westmoreland
Avenue North, Bristol Avenue and Lightborne Avenue

Section 2

File # 19 207051 STE 09 02

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Sections for corner properties with frontage on Ossington Avenue, Dovercourt Road, Bartlett Street, Bartlett Railway Crossing, Salem Avenue North, and Dufferin Street

Section 3

File # 19 207051 STE 09 02

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04/15/2021