

Guelph Commercial Built Form Standards



November 25, 2019



BrookMcIlroy/

Contents

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Role of the Standards	1
1.2 How to Use This Document	1
1.2.1 Document Structure	1
1.3 Application of the Standards	4
Approvals Process	4
2.0 Key Drivers	5
3.0 Site Organization & Design	7
3.1 Sustainable Site Design	9
3.2 Parking, Access & Circulation	11
3.2.1 General Standards	11
3.2.2 Structured Parking	13
3.2.3 Surface Parking	13
3.2.4 Bicycle Parking	14
3.3 Landscaping	15
3.3.1 General Standards	15
3.3.2 Landscaped Buffer Strips	16
3.3.3 Tree Planting	17
3.4 Mid-Block Connections	18
3.5 Open Spaces & Urban Squares	19
3.6 Public Art	20
3.7 Site Signage, Display Areas & Wayfinding	21
3.8 Lighting	23
3.9 Gateways	24
3.10 Rooftop Mechanical & Mechanical Systems	25
3.11 Servicing & Loading	25
4.0 General Standards for Commercial Buildings	27
4.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions	28
4.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design	31
4.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials	32
4.4 Building Resiliency	36

5.0 Main Street Buildings	37
5.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions	40
5.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design	40
5.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials	40
6.0 Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings	41
6.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions	44
6.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design	44
6.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials	44
7.0 Vehicle Oriented Uses	45
7.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions	48
7.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design	48
7.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials	48
7.4 Additional Standards for Service Stations	49
7.5 Additional Standards for Drive Through Facilities	50
7.6 Additional Standards for Car Dealerships	51
8.0 Mixed Use Buildings	53
9.0 Large Commercial Sites	57
9.1 Site Organization & Design	60
9.2 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions	61
9.3 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design	61
9.4 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials	61
9.5 Site Evolution	62
10.0 Implementation	65
10.1 Zoning By-Law Updates	65
10.1.1 Definition Updates	65
10.1.2 Regulation Updates	66
10.2 Next Steps	68
10.2.1 Review and Consultation	68
10.2.2 Urban Design Awards	68
11.0 Glossary	69

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Role of the Standards

The Commercial Built Form Standards for the City of Guelph provides clear directions and criteria for the design of commercial development across the City, with the exception of the Downtown, which is subject to the [Downtown Built Form Standards](#).

The Standards consider opportunities associated with Main Street Buildings, Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings, Vehicular Oriented Uses, and Large Commercial Sites, and provide recommendations related to best practices in built form and public realm design. They provide solutions to ensure that new development is compatible with the local context. The Standards have been tested and adapted through the creation of demonstration plan concepts that are integrated throughout this document.

The Standards aim to achieve high quality urban design and built form on commercial and mixed-use sites within the City of Guelph. They promote sustainable, vibrant and accessible development that will enhance the unique built form and natural character of Guelph.

1.2 How to Use This Document

The Commercial Built Form Standards provide clear directions for urban designers, architects, landscape architects, developers, City Staff and the public, and will help in the evaluation of urban design briefs and planning applications.

The Standards provide guidance and interpretation to assist in implementing urban design policies in the City's Official Plan and recommendations for the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review (currently in progress). In text references to relevant sections and/or policies within the Official Plan (OP) are included where relevant.

This document contains general guidance for site design and building design for mixed-use buildings. Guidance from the [Built Form Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings and Townhouses](#) should also be followed where residential uses are being proposed as part of the mixed-use development.

1.2.1 Document Structure

The Commercial Built Form Standards contain the following sections:

Section 1.0 Introduction contains a summary of the purpose of the Commercial Built Form Standards, identifies how to navigate the document, and identifies how the Standards work within the City's existing policy and guideline framework.

Section 2.0 Key Drivers identifies the core issues that have motivated the creation of the Commercial Built Form Standards.

Section 3.0 Site Organization & Design contains urban design standards related to the location and organization of components on a site, including buildings, parking, access, circulation, storage, loading, landscaping, signage, and lighting. These standards are applicable to all Commercial Buildings and sites.

Section 4.0 General Standards for Commercial Buildings contains general built form standards that are applicable to all Commercial and mixed-use buildings and sites within the City of Guelph. Standards relate to building massing, scale, and transition; ground floor and street edge design; articulation, façade design, and materials; and building resiliency. Guidelines for interior building layout are also included.

Section 5.0 Main Street Buildings outlines built form standards specific to the Main Street Buildings typology.



Left and Right: Existing commercial development within the City of Guelph, showing a mix of building massing and design and site design conditions.

Section 6.0 Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings outlines built form standards specific to the Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings typology.

Section 7.0 Vehicle Oriented Uses identifies general built form standards related to Vehicle Oriented Uses, and includes further focused direction on Service Stations, Drive Through Facilities, and Car Dealerships.

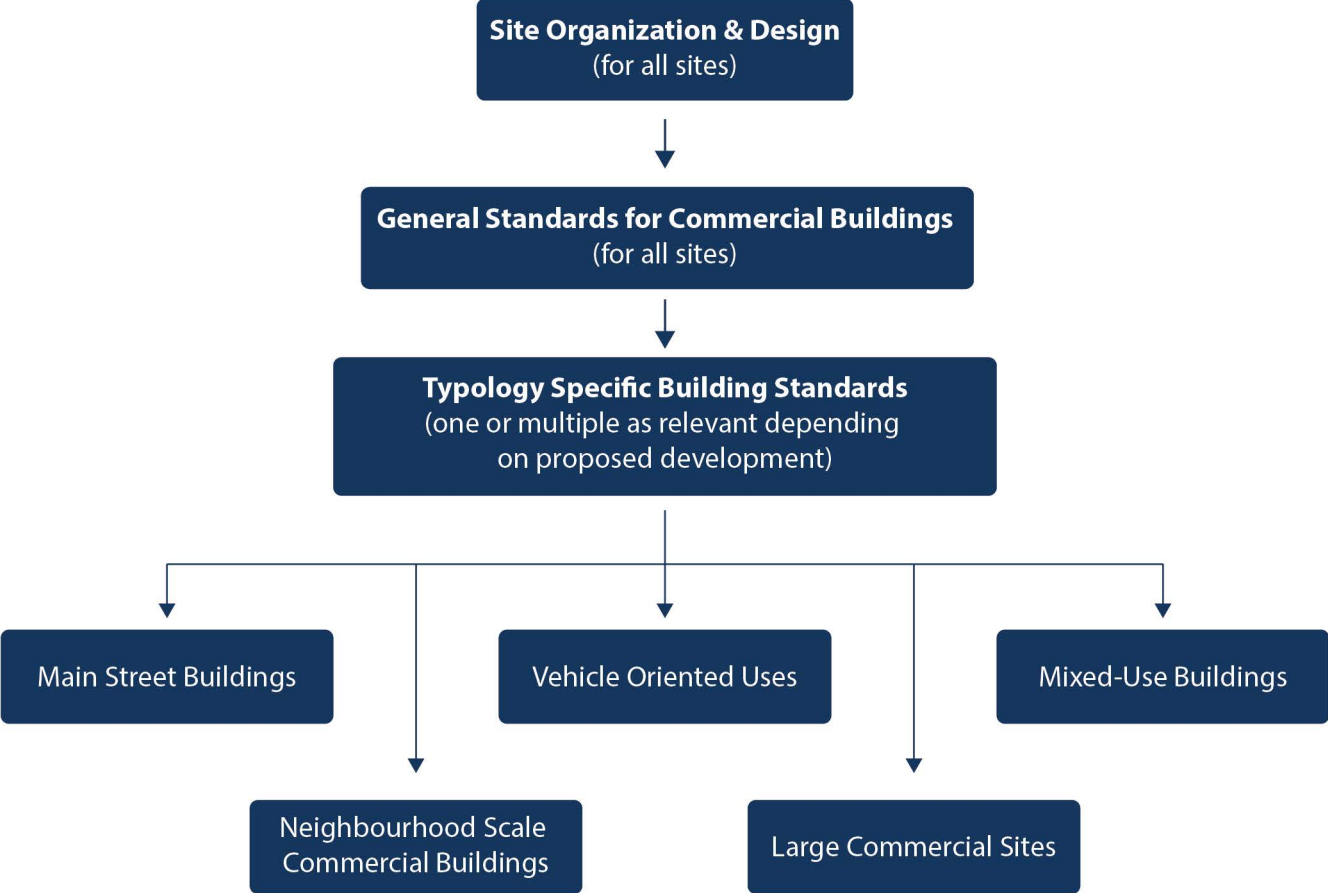
Section 8.0 Mixed-Use Buildings defines these building types and identifies where to receive further design direction on mixed-use buildings and sites.

Section 9.0 Large Commercial Sites identifies site design and built form standards related to Large Commercial Sites, and includes direction on planning for site evolution.

Section 10.0 Implementation contains next steps for the implementation of the Commercial Built Form Standards including recommendations for the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review.

Section 11.0 Glossary contains definitions for key concepts and terms identified in the Commercial Built Form Standards.

How to Use the Standards for a Specific Development



1.3 Application of the Standards

The Commercial Built Form Standards support the City's existing policies and guidelines, including the following:

- The City of Guelph Official Plan (2018 Consolidation);
- Built Form Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings and Townhouses (2018);
- Commercial Policy Review (2018);
- Urban Design Action Plan (2017);
- Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864 (1995);
- Development Engineering Manual (2019);
- Tree Technical Manual (2019);
- Guelph Noise Control Guidelines (2018);
- Community Energy Initiative Update (2018);
- Natural Heritage Action Plan (2018);
- Active Transportation Network Study (2017);
- Water Efficiency Strategy (2016);
- Guelph Facility Accessibility Design Manual (2015);
- Water Supply Master Plan (2014);
- Urban Forest Management Plan (2012); and
- Stormwater Management Master Plan (2012).

Where a conflict exists, the direction contained in the Official Plan, Secondary Area, or Zoning By-Law will prevail over the Commercial Built Form Standards.

Where a conflict exists between the Standards in this document and requirements of the Ontario Building Code and related provincial codes, the codes will prevail over the Commercial Built Form Standards.

Recommendations for zoning regulations are included within the Commercial Built Form Standards.

Approvals Process

Development applications for commercial and mixed-use development within the City of Guelph will be reviewed by the City and relevant agencies as per complete application submission requirements. There are varying development types, each with their own unique requirements for approvals, circulation and reviews by the City and relevant agencies. All development applications pertaining to commercial or mixed-use development should demonstrate how relevant standards from the Commercial Built Form Standards have been met or their ability to be met in subsequent phases of design.

Adherence to the Commercial Built Form Standards will be integrated into the approvals process.

Development applications should summarize deviations from the Standards with justification, such as within an Urban Design Brief, as part of a complete submission. Acceptance of these deviations is at the discretion of the City.

2.0 Key Drivers

Introduction

A number of key drivers have resulted in the need for Commercial Built Form Standards in Guelph. These include urban intensification, shifts in the commercial and retail landscape, policy objectives, and clear design expectations for commercial and mixed-use buildings.

Intensification

The City of Guelph is within the Greater Golden Horseshoe, a growing region with an anticipated increase of 4.5 million people and 1.8 million jobs between 2011 and 2041. As the number of residents and jobs in Guelph continues to grow, managing intensification in areas outside of the downtown requires a careful balance between meeting the changing needs of a larger population, and maintaining the qualities that make Guelph a unique and special place to live, work, and play. Development of commercial and mixed-use buildings and sites provide retail, restaurant, office, services, and mixed commercial and residential spaces that are necessary to support Guelph's strong economy. Future commercial and mixed-use development will play an instrumental role as Guelph works to meet provincial intensification targets responsibly and sustainably. The Commercial Built Form Standards acknowledge the City's forecasted growth and aim to address it by introducing a framework for the design of commercial and mixed-use buildings and sites within the City.

Shifts in the Commercial and Retail Landscape

The commercial and retail landscape is changing quickly. As consumers take advantage of new technologies in their shopping and daily activities, businesses are adapting their service offerings and service delivery models to remain competitive. This has resulted in increased demand for smaller, flexible, adaptable commercial spaces, as well as mixes of uses within a site and within buildings. By recognizing and adapting to shifting trends in the commercial and retail industries, Guelph will remain competitive as a choice location for businesses to grow and thrive.

Official Plan Implementation

The City's Official Plan affects the development of commercial sites and buildings, particularly in how they address aspects of social equity and ecological sustainability. Some examples from the Official Plan include:

- Objectives for sustainable urban design, active transportation networks, natural heritage system protection, universal accessibility, and pedestrian connectivity;
- Integration of public realm design into commercial site development;
- Promoting and implementing mixed-use development to support changing needs over time;
- Celebration of Guelph's unique character and sense of place through private development; and
- Achieving appropriate transitions between adjacent land uses.

Clear Design Expectations

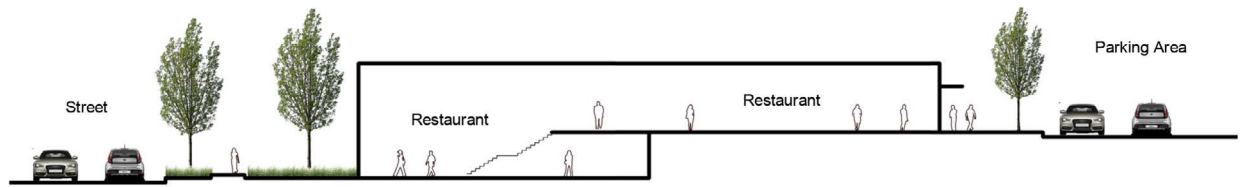
As commercial and mixed-use sites in Guelph develop, grow, adapt and redevelop over time, it is necessary that residents, developers, designers, and business owners understand the design expectations for these types of development. The creation of Commercial Built Form Standards can help to provide a cohesive framework against which future development proposals can be evaluated, achieving certainty and shared expectations that elevate the standard of design quality in Guelph.



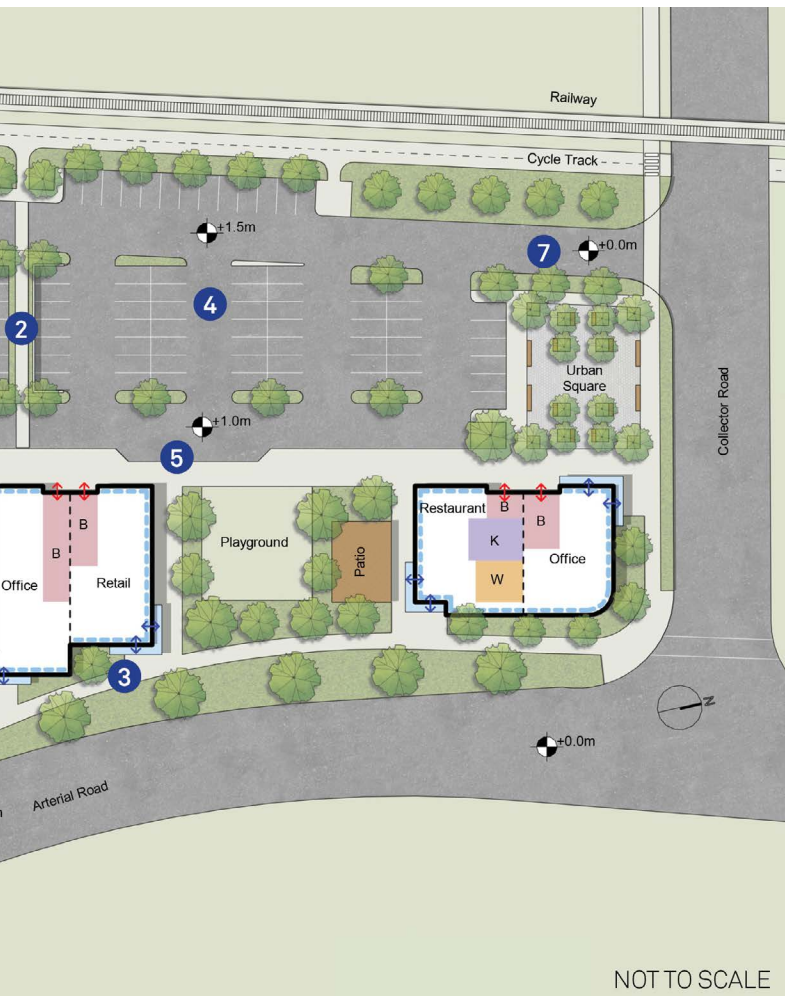
Mixed-use development with high quality landscaping.

3.0 Site Organization & Design

Demonstration Plan: Large Commercial Site with Grade Changes



Site Section of Commercial Site with elevation change (Not to Scale)



The preceding diagram demonstrates an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design standards for a large commercial site with changes in natural grade. In this case, the grade changes are reconciled through both the stepping of multi-storey buildings, and the stepping of parking areas. This ensures that all building entrances are located at equal grade with the adjacent pedestrian walkway.

- 1 Grade changes across the site are reconciled through a combination of stepped parking pads and stepped buildings, to ensure all entrances are located at equal grade with the adjacent pedestrian walkway
- 2 Pedestrian connections provide clear paths from the public right-of-way to building entrances and site interior
- 3 Buildings are set along the street edge and provide adequate space for pedestrians and landscaping
- 4 Surface parking is located at the rear of the property
- 5 Pick-up, drop-off, and loading area zones are provided for convenience and ride-hailing services
- 6 Storage and loading area is screened and located to the rear of the building
- 7 Shared driveways and parking lots reduce access points and reduce conflicts with pedestrians

Introduction

Site organization relates to the location and organization of components on a site, including buildings, parking, access and circulation, storage and loading, and landscaping. Site organization contributes to the overall function of the site and its integration with the surrounding community, while considering impacts on the environment and stormwater systems.

High quality site organization and design should be informed by:

- Best practices in sustainable site design and landscape design;
- A positive relationship between buildings and adjacent public and private streets;
- A balanced approach to the siting and organization of built form and open space;
- A minimized visual impact of parking, loading, storage and servicing on the public realm;
- Priority to people arriving by foot, bicycle, or transit;
- Thoughtful integration of accessible site design, to ensure ease of access to commercial and mixed-use buildings; and
- A clear understanding of site constraints, including the location of existing trees and grading, existing and future utilities placement, mitigating noise and odour impacts, and adhering to engineering and other technical requirements.

The following section outlines general urban design standards related to site organization for the development or redevelopment of commercial and mixed-use sites within the City of Guelph.

3.1 Sustainable Site Design

Objective: Site design and building development should support energy efficiency and water conservation (OP, 8.1). Sustainable site design can also assist in planning for resilience in extreme weather events. All designs must be in accordance with the City of Guelph's sustainability objectives, including those outlined in the Stormwater Management Master Plan (2012), Water Efficiency Strategy (2016), Natural Heritage Action Plan (2018) and Community Energy Initiative Update (2018).

Some site designs may qualify for a reduction in the stormwater service fee. Visit the City's website on [Stormwater Management](#) for more details.



High quality, landscaped building frontage (Cheyenne West Edge).

Standards:

- 3.1.1. The design of site and building development will support energy efficiency and water conservation through the use of alternative energy systems or renewable energy systems, building orientation, sustainable building design, low impact stormwater infiltration systems, drought-resistant landscaping, water efficient fixtures and similar measures (OP Policy 8.1.1).
- 3.1.2. The use of landscape-based stormwater management planning and practices (also referred to as Low Impact Development) is encouraged including rainwater harvesting, green roofs, blue roofs, bioretention, permeable pavement, infiltration facilities and vegetated swales in the design and construction of new development, where site conditions and other relevant technical considerations are suitable (OP Policy 6.4.5). These systems should be placed where limited runoff from salt and/or snow storage may occur to reduce the impact to water quality. For example, permeable pavement is best suited for lower traffic areas like perimeter parking lots. Infiltration of “clean water” from roofs through bioswales, etc. is encouraged.
- 3.1.3. Building location and orientation should maximize exposure to natural light and consider microclimate effects.
- 3.1.4. Encourage the parceling of larger sites into smaller drainage areas to enhance the ability to implement Low Impact Development, to allow for improved stormwater management, to improve site accessibility, and to increase infiltration water quality. This approach should incorporate tree planting and pedestrian circulation.
- 3.1.5. New development shall be integrated with the existing topography where possible to maintain the physical character of the area and minimize the amount of grading and filling required (OP Policy 8.1.2).
- 3.1.6. Sites with significant grade changes should be stepped to provide incremental grade changes for ease of pedestrian access as well as assisting with servicing and stormwater management.
- 3.1.7. The use of green, blue, and white roofs to reduce energy consumption is encouraged as appropriate.
- 3.1.8. Integrate indigenous plant species that are drought and salt resistant as the predominant type of landscaping (OP Policy 8.17.2).
- 3.1.9. Site design should promote alternative modes of transportation including walking, cycling and public transit.

Did You Know?

A Blue Roof is: a low impact development roof design strategy where stormwater is detained and then slowly released over time through the use of flow control devices or structures.

A Green Roof is: an extension of an above grade roof on top of a building structure, which allows vegetation to grow on top. Green Roofs may act as a Common Amenity Area while also providing a stormwater function and other environmental benefits.

A White Roof is: a roof painted with solar reflective white coating to reflect sunlight. They minimize the amount of heat that is absorbed through exposed roof surfaces of buildings to reduce cooling costs and save energy.

3.2 Parking, Access & Circulation

Objective: The siting and organization of parking, access, and circulation should be considered in relationship to buildings and other site components (OP, 8.12 and 8.13). Site organization should create barrier-free and efficient circulation for people walking, cycling and driving, and appropriate transitions between the public and private realm. The appearance of parking should not dominate the visible edges of a site.

3.2.1 General Standards

Standards:

- 3.2.1.1. Provide for alternative modes of transportation on commercial and mixed-use sites, including pedestrian pathways, and bicycle facilities; the integration of transit on sites should be considered as appropriate.
- 3.2.1.2. Shared driveways are encouraged to reduce access points and reduce conflicts with people travelling on foot or by bike (OP Policy 8.13.1). Consolidate vehicular site access points (e.g. through shared access between sites) to optimize curb cuts and minimize the interruption of the boulevard for pedestrians, landscaping, and furnishings.
- 3.2.1.3. Integrate clearly demarcated pedestrian walkways into overall site design. Pedestrian systems shall incorporate landscaping, pedestrian scale lighting, and be defined by distinct materials and/or raised walkways (OP Policy 8.13.5).
- 3.2.1.4. Walkways should be provided directly from parking areas and municipal sidewalks to the main entrance(s) of the building(s). These walkways should be well articulated, safe, accessible and integrated with the overall network of pedestrian linkages in the area to create a comfortable walking environment. Landscaping should enhance the walkway (OP Policy 8.12.4).
- 3.2.1.5. Pedestrian walkways should have a minimum width of 2.0 metres.
- 3.2.1.6. Cycle tracks at grade with pedestrian walkways should have a minimum width of 3.0 metres.
- 3.2.1.7. Building entrances should be aligned with the grade of adjacent sidewalk or public walkways.
- 3.2.1.8. The integration of separated, protected cycling paths along or through sites is encouraged when adjacent or in proximity to existing or planned cycling infrastructure.
- 3.2.1.9. Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations should be provided on commercial and mixed-use sites.
- 3.2.1.10. Underground or structured parking is encouraged to reduce or eliminate the need for surface parking (OP Policy 8.12.2).
- 3.2.1.11. Underground parking is recommended for mixed-use development where possible.
- 3.2.1.12. Convenience retail parking should be located at the rear or side of the development.
- 3.2.1.13. Underground parking does not require a street setback although it should not impede soil volumes required for street tree planting (e.g. medium trees).



Landscaped commercial surface parking lot featuring public walkway, trees, and various plantings.



Retail building with outdoor patio seating, landscaping and accessible ramp.



Surface parking lot with landscaped pedestrian walkway and clearly marked pedestrian crossings.



Surface parking lot with landscaped pedestrian walkway and pedestrian amenities.

- 3.2.1.14. For underground and above-grade parking structures, driveway access and ramp locations shall be located to reduce conflicts with people walking and cycling, and minimize negative impacts on the streetscape (OP Policy 8.12.10).
- 3.2.1.15. Ensure that accessible ramps and pedestrian walkways are provided for sites with significant grade changes, from the public right-of-way to building entrances, parking, and drop off areas.
- 3.2.1.16. Parking for mixed-use buildings should separate residential parking from parking allocated to other uses.
- 3.2.1.17. Accessible parking spaces shall be the closest parking spaces, with minimal traffic flow crossing, to the primary building entrances for commercial and mixed-use sites.
- 3.2.1.18. Designating pick-up and drop-off zones or short-term (15 minute) parking for ride hailing and similar service providers is encouraged.
- 3.2.1.19. The design of Commercial Building sites shall comply with the design standards outlined in the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), and the regulations in the Ontario Building Code (OBC). Development is strongly encouraged to meet the standards outlined in the Guelph Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM).
- 3.2.1.20. Areas for snow loading should not impede general accessibility of people walking, cycling or driving, and should not block sight lines.

3.2.2 Structured Parking

Standards:

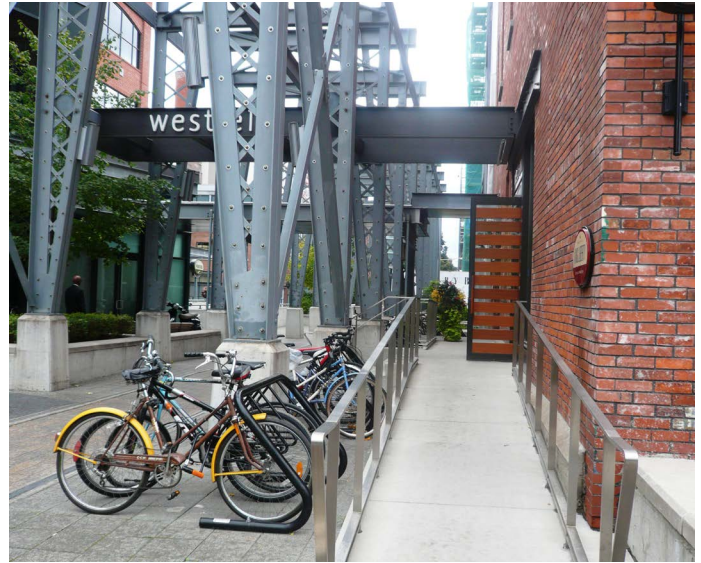
- 3.2.2.1. Vehicle entrances to structured parking should be contained within the building mass or in an enclosed pavilion, and should include garage doors.
- 3.2.2.2. Above-ground parking structures shall be designed to provide well-articulated façades facing streets. Street-related uses on the ground level of a parking structure should be provided where appropriate and feasible to contribute to an active pedestrian realm and to screen the parking structure (OP Policy 8.12.7).
- 3.2.2.3. Above the second floor, parking structures should be shielded from exterior view through architectural screening or other methods.

3.2.3 Surface Parking

Standards:

- 3.2.3.1. Building placement in combination with landscaping shall be used to screen surface parking areas (OP Policy 8.12.1).
- 3.2.3.2. Surface parking areas should generally be located at the rear or side of buildings and not between the front of a building and the street. Where permitted adjacent to the public realm, surface parking areas shall be designed in a manner that contributes to an attractive public realm by providing screening and landscaping. Generously sized landscape strips incorporating combinations of landscaping and/or decorative fencing or walls should be provided adjacent to the street edge to provide aesthetically pleasing views into the site while screening surface parking areas (OP Policy 8.12.1).

- 3.2.3.3. Do not locate surface parking along the front or exterior side yard of a commercial or mixed-use property.
- 3.2.3.4. Surface parking located adjacent to arterial roads should not exceed 25% of the length of front and exterior lot lines.
- 3.2.3.5. Surface parking areas shall not be permitted immediately adjacent to the corners of an intersection (OP Policy 8.12.3).
- 3.2.3.6. Surface parking lots should be set back a minimum of 3 metres from any adjacent lot line.
- 3.2.3.7. Landscape buffer strips around surface parking lots should be a minimum of 3 metres in width.
- 3.2.3.8. Surface parking areas adjacent to ground-related residential uses should be separated by a landscape strip incorporating combinations of landscaping and/or decorative fencing or walls (OP Policy 8.12.8).
- 3.2.3.9. Large surface parking areas should be divided into smaller and defined sections through the use of appropriately-sized landscaped strips, islands and/or pedestrian walkways (OP Policy 8.12.5).
- 3.2.3.10. Surface parking areas are encouraged to be designed to support redevelopment and retrofitting, and to enable the transition to structured or underground parking as site development evolves (OP Policy 8.12.12).



Bicycle parking adjacent to accessible building entrance.

3.2.4 Bicycle Parking

Standards:

- 3.2.4.1. Bicycle parking shall be provided and conveniently located in close proximity to building entrances. Sheltered bicycle parking should be integrated into the built form (OP Policy 8.12.6).
- 3.2.4.2. Additional bicycle facilities (including cargo-bicycle parking, fix-it stations and tire changing facilities) are encouraged for commercial and mixed-use sites.
- 3.2.4.3. The location of bicycle storage should not impede pedestrian movement, accessibility or snow clearing.
- 3.2.4.4. Do not place bicycle parking in waste bin areas, loading bay areas, or other back-of-house areas.



Left and Right: Hard and soft landscaping treatment of commercial building site, including plantings, trees, and special paving (Holst Architecture).

3.3 Landscaping

Objective: Landscaped open space includes a range of hard and soft landscaping treatments that provide a diversity of colour, texture and plant materials (OP, 8.17). It should create visual interest, pedestrian comfort and a sense of enclosure at street level.

3.3.1 General Standards

Standards:

3.3.1.1. Soft landscaping should consist of an open area with enough soil volume that supports the healthy growth of vegetation with little irrigation. This may also include green roofs, green walls, ground cover, and raised planters.

3.3.1.2. The selection of plant materials:

- a. shall provide for diversity of species (OP Policy 8.17.2vi);
- b. shall be appropriate to site conditions (OP Policy 8.17.2ii);
- c. is encouraged to be of indigenous stock and from locally grown sources (OP Policy 8.17.2iv); and,
- d. is encouraged to promote naturalization and reduce the use of sod (OP Policy 8.17.2vii).

3.3.1.3. Where new development is planned in close proximity to Natural Heritage Systems, exclusively use indigenous plant materials for landscaping treatments.

- 3.3.1.4. Green roofs and blue roofs are strongly encouraged. A green roof, blue roof, or combination of both may count towards a maximum of 30% of the total landscaped open space requirement. A green roof allows vegetation to grow on top of a structure. Blue roofs allow for the capture and slow release of stormwater. Both provide environmental benefits and stormwater management.
- 3.3.1.5. Permeable paving does not count towards soft landscaping requirements.
- 3.3.1.6. Planting design should contribute to the creation of a high quality public realm, especially along building façades facing a public street, and should include consideration for quality of material, variety of species, year round interest and aesthetic appeal of the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 3.3.1.7. Landscape design on commercial sites should consider existing grade transitions and use landscape elements to aid in creating a gradual transition between elevations. Site grading, including parking areas, should approximate existing natural grade changes and meet property boundaries at the adjacent natural grade, where possible. Leveling of grade across sites and the use of tall retaining walls is discouraged.

- 3.3.1.8. Landscaping treatments should contribute towards stormwater management (OP Policy 8.1.1). The use of bioswales and low impact development is encouraged. However, these systems should be placed where limited runoff from salt and/or snow storage may occur to reduce the impact to water quality.
- 3.3.1.9. Landscaping treatments should provide visual interest at all times of the year through a mix of trees, and plantings that flower, change colour or lose leaves at different times.

3.3.2 Landscaped Buffer Strips

Standards:

- 3.3.2.1. Where required, landscaped buffer strips shall consist of plant material that will form a visual barrier at maturity, in combination with other strategies such as fencing (OP Policy 8.17.5).
- 3.3.2.2. Landscaped buffer strips should be a minimum of 3 metres wide where there is a transition between land uses.
- 3.3.2.3. Landscaped buffer strips around surface parking lots should be integrated into site design.
- 3.3.2.4. Where landscaped buffer strips must meet requirements for healthy and vibrant tree growth and engineering functions (e.g. bioswales, catch basins), they may be required to be wider than the minimum 3 metres.



Tree planting and landscaping on a Commercial Building site (Bloor-Yorkville BIA).

3.3.3 Tree Planting

Standards:

- 3.3.3.1. Development and redevelopment of commercial and mixed-use sites are strongly encouraged to preserve existing trees, as well as associated soil profiles and existing grading, in an effort to minimize impacts to tree health. In situations where existing trees cannot be retained, the development may be subject to compensation (as per the Private Tree Protection Bylaw).
- 3.3.3.2. Tree planting within continuous, open soil trenches is preferred. Soil cells or other technologies may be required to meet soil volume requirements.
- 3.3.3.3. Trees should be located in key areas, including along walkways and within surface parking areas. One tree should be planted for every 8 parking spaces within the parking field.
- 3.3.3.4. Standards for minimum soil volumes can be found in the City of Guelph's [Tree Technical Manual](#) (2019). Where trees share soil volume, a lower volume may be considered.
- 3.3.3.5. Trees may be grouped or evenly spaced throughout surface parking areas. Groupings of trees are preferred to ensure adequate soil volumes and promote sustainable irrigation practices, with a minimum soil depth of 1000mm, or deeper as required to accommodate larger root balls.



Well landscaped mid-block pedestrian connection through surface parking lot (Map Architectes).



Mid-block connection adjacent to commercial building frontages and landscaping.

3.4 Mid-Block Connections

Objective: To ensure that mid-block connections are created within sites to support connected and comfortable mobility for people arriving by foot or bicycle, and those using mobility aids.

Standards:

- 3.4.1. Where appropriate, provide mid-block connections to facilitate site permeability and non-vehicular access, especially within Large Commercial Sites.
- 3.4.2. Mid-block connections used to facilitate both cycling and walking should be a minimum of 3.0 metres in width.
- 3.4.3. Mid-block connections should connect sites to a public right-of-way.

- 3.4.4. Mid-block connections should include lighting features, landscaping, seating, and signage, as appropriate to provide safe, year round use and comfort.
- 3.4.5. Mid-block connections should be designed as barrier free connections and should not be impacted by vehicles overhanging the sidewalk. They should also be clear from furniture waste bins, light standards, bike racks, or other urban elements to ensure an adequate width to navigate the space.



Hardscaped urban square with special paving treatment, trees, and grasses.



Hardscaped urban square with special paving, informal concrete seating, and public art installation (Brook McIlroy).

3.5 Open Spaces & Urban Squares

Objective: To encourage the development of open spaces and urban squares to create a high-quality and animated public and private realm.

Standards:

- 3.5.1. Open spaces and urban squares will be framed by buildings with ground-floor uses that provide activity throughout the day (OP Policy 8.20.1).
- 3.5.2. Hard and soft landscape elements and features within open spaces and urban squares shall be designed to define and articulate activity areas, circulation, entry points, seating and gathering areas, as well as the relationship between adjacent buildings and the streetscape (OP Policy, 8.20.3).
- 3.5.3. Open spaces and urban squares should have a defined character and should include unique paving, landscaping, seating, lighting, and shade trees or structures.

- 3.5.4. Open spaces and urban squares should be designed for all-season use. Opportunities to animate these spaces with seasonal events is encouraged.
- 3.5.5. Consider microclimate effects through the orientation, location, and landscaping of open spaces and urban squares. Provide a balance of sun, shade, and protection from the wind.
- 3.5.6. All seating and street furniture in open spaces and urban squares should be barrier free and should adhere to the requirements in the Facility Accessibility Design Manual.
- 3.5.7. Where street furniture (e.g. picnic tables) is provided in publicly accessible areas, a minimum of 20%, and not less than one, should be accessible and adhere to the Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM, 4.3.1.6).
- 3.5.8. The incorporation of publicly accessible drinking fountains in urban squares and open spaces is encouraged where appropriate.



Public art as the focal piece of a plaza, fronted by at-grade commercial uses (Jeff Hitchcock).



Public art and seating installation along a main street area (Brook McIlroy).

3.6 Public Art

Objective: Encourage the integration of public art into the design of commercial and mixed-use sites to contribute to community vitality.

Standards:

- 3.6.1. Public art is encouraged to be sited in high use areas including open spaces, urban squares, public parks, plazas, curb extensions, and mid-block connections.
- 3.6.2. Public art is encouraged in privately owned open spaces such as quads, courtyards, and forecourts.
- 3.6.3. Public art can include temporary and permanent installations and can consist of murals and canopies. Public art should conform with the Sign By-Law.

- 3.6.4. Public art may include functional and decorative elements of a site, such as benches, bus shelters, water features, light standards, or other open space and streetscape amenities.
- 3.6.5. Public art in public spaces should be visible and accessible from the adjacent public right-of-way.
- 3.6.6. The siting of public art should minimize driver distractions and sight line obstructions.
- 3.6.7. Public art should be durable and low maintenance and should be incorporated with the site's landscape design where possible.
- 3.6.8. Development that attracts significant pedestrian traffic is strongly encouraged to include public art in the design of the building and/or site (OP Policy, 8.21.2).



Pedestrian-scale commercial building signage and display areas along a main street area.



Wayfinding and informational signage in commercial district attached to building façade.

3.7 Site Signage, Display Areas & Wayfinding

Objective: To ensure that the design and siting of site signage, display areas and wayfinding contribute to a high quality public realm.

Standards:

- 3.7.1. Signage should be incorporated into the building façade design of new commercial and mixed-use development (OP Policy 8.14.3).
- 3.7.2. Signage can include wayfinding and directional signage, informational signage and commercial signage. A coordinated approach to site signage and wayfinding is encouraged to reduce visual clutter and to ensure that signage is easy to understand.

- 3.7.3. Commercial signage should be displayed at a consistent height on building façades such as at the top of the ground floor. Signage shall generally not be permitted on the top of buildings or poles (OP Policy 8.14.4).
- 3.7.4. Commercial building signage should be visible from the public realm.
- 3.7.5. Signs, display areas and lighting should be compatible in scale and intensity to the proposed activity and tailored to the size, type and character of a development or the space to be used (OP Policy 8.14.1). Signage should not impede pedestrian circulation or vehicle sight lines.



Pedestrian-scale outdoor display area.



Outdoor retail display area with fruit

- 3.7.6. Where outdoor display areas are associated with a large building, the use of landscape elements such as plantings, decorative fencing and architectural elements such as façade extensions and canopies shall be incorporated for effective integration with the overall development (OP Policy 8.15.1).
- 3.7.7. Well designed, pedestrian-scaled outdoor display areas that contribute to a comfortable and safe public realm may be permitted in areas of high pedestrian traffic provided that safety and accessibility are not compromised (OP Policy 8.15.2).

- 3.7.8. On sites where the outdoor sale and display of large items in the front yard is permitted (e.g. vehicles, hot tubs), outdoor sales and display areas may be located within 21 metres of the property line abutting the street, and the front yard setback may be increased to a maximum of 21 metres.
- 3.7.9. Large commercial or mixed-use building sites should integrate wayfinding as appropriate in key areas, including parking areas and parks and open spaces.



Pedestrian scale lighting adjacent to public walkway and building edge.



Pedestrian scale lighting featured attached to a building wall.

3.8 Lighting

Objective: Lighting is to be provided at levels sufficient for building identification and safety (OP, 8.16).

Standards:

- 3.8.1. Incorporate lighting along public walkways, along building frontages, and in parking areas to ensure pedestrian safety and comfort. Lighting along public walkways should be pedestrian scaled.
- 3.8.2. Lighting of buildings and sites shall be provided at levels sufficient for building identification and safety (OP Policy 8.16.1).

- 3.8.3. All building and site lighting shall be oriented and shielded to minimize the infringement of light and the creation of glare on adjacent properties or public roads. Outdoor lighting should incorporate energy efficiencies such as sensors and timers and direct light away from the night sky (OP Policy 8.16.2).
- 3.8.4. Adequate pedestrian-scaled lighting to accent walkways, steps, ramps, transit stops and other features should be provided (OP Policy 8.16.3).
- 3.8.5. Use LED lighting with a colour temperature of 3000K or less. The use of bright, blue tone lights is discouraged.
- 3.8.6. Lighting Plans for all commercial buildings submitted as part of a site plan approval are to adhere to the City's [Lighting Guidelines for Lighting Plans](#).



Example of community entrance signage integrated into fencing.



Example of neighbourhood lighting and signage feature in a landscaped area.

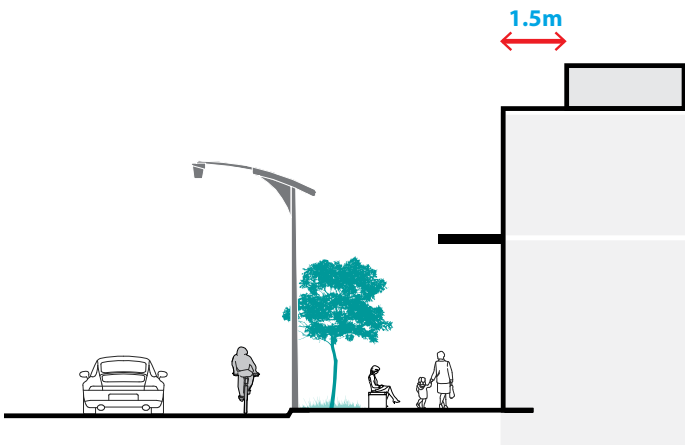
3.9 Gateways

Objective: To create gateways as formal entrance ways into key areas of the City and to create a strong sense of place.

Standards:

- 3.9.1. Major gateways will be located in visually prominent sites located at major entry points into the city (OP Policy 8.4.2).
- 3.9.2. Minor gateways are to be located at prominent intersections which are neighbourhood-scaled gateways or at secondary entry points into the city (OP Policy 8.4.3).
- 3.9.3. Major gateways should include prominent signage, enhanced lighting, intensive landscaping (e.g. seasonal floral displays, tree planting), public art and other types of public realm enhancements. Adjacent redevelopment should be designed to support the function of the gateway.

- 3.9.4. Minor gateways should include a smaller scale of public realm enhancements, such as landscaping, public art, lighting and appropriately-scaled wayfinding cues.
- 3.9.5. Where a commercial or mixed-use development is located at the intersection of major streets, the development or redevelopment of each corner property are considered minor gateways and development will incorporate neighbourhood-scale gateway features. Generally this shall be accomplished through high-quality built form and may include pedestrian linkages into the site at the intersection (OP Policy, 8.4.7).



Rooftop mechanical equipment setback from the public realm.



Example of landscape screening of exterior storage areas.

3.10 Rooftop Mechanical & Mechanical Systems

Objective: To ensure that rooftop mechanical equipment is incorporated appropriately into building design.

Standards:

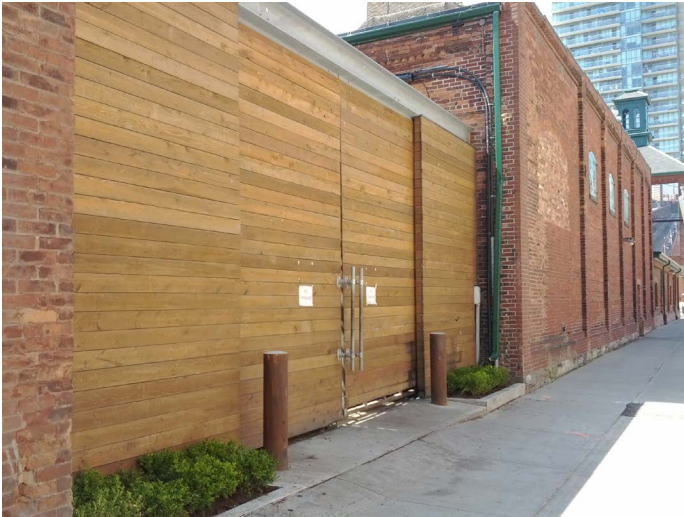
- 3.10.1. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be set back a minimum of 1.5 metres from the building mass and should fit within established angular planes for the property to minimize their visibility from the public realm.
- 3.10.2. Buildings will be designed to completely screen rooftop mechanical equipment from public view (OP Policy 8.6.7).

3.11 Servicing & Loading

Objective: To locate areas for servicing, storage and loading efficiently, and minimize their impact on the aesthetic quality and function of their sites.

Standards:

- 3.11.1. Coordinate servicing, storage areas, and loading with parking locations to ensure efficient use of space, and to minimize the disruption or removal of existing trees and valuable landscaping.
- 3.11.2. Loading bays, waste service areas and building utilities/mechanical equipment should be located within a building. If permitted outside a building, they shall not be located immediately adjacent to an intersection, will be directed away from a public street, park, river, public open space or residential area, or adequately screened if this is not possible (OP Policy 8.13.6).



Example of architectural screening of servicing, storage areas and loading.

- 3.11.3. Where outdoor storage is permitted, it shall not be located between a building and a street edge, or a building and the intersection of streets (OP Policy 8.13.7).
- 3.11.4. Ensure site design includes adequate space for waste vehicles and containers, including set out locations. Set out locations should not block sidewalks, bicycle parking, fire routes, or accessible parking.
- 3.11.5. Ensure the safe design of circulatory routes for servicing, storage areas and loading to discourage backing in or out from a public road.
- 3.11.6. Cluster and screen servicing areas including gas metres and hydro. The appearance of these areas should be minimized but should be accessible and not visible from the public right-of-way.

4.0 General Standards for Commercial Buildings

Introduction

Commercial uses can be incorporated in a variety of building types and scales of development, through new development and redevelopment of existing sites.

Commercial Buildings are intended to provide a range of retail, office and commercial uses to meet daily needs in a variety of building formats, including along main streets, embedded within neighbourhoods, and within larger site developments. The design and layout of Commercial Building sites should encourage alternative modes of transportation such as walking, cycling and the use of public transit. They should contribute to a vibrant public realm through active uses along the street.

High quality Commercial Buildings will be shaped by:

Building massing, scale and transitions: Massing and scale relates to the bulk, height and shape of a building. Transitions refer to the relationship of a building to adjacent land uses to ensure appropriate access to light, view and privacy. Commercial Buildings should provide appropriate transitions to other buildings, low-rise neighbourhoods, institutional uses, cultural and natural heritage, parks and open spaces. This may be done through considerations given to building orientation, setbacks, stepbacks, angular plane, relationship to grade, and land uses.

Ground floor and street edge design: The relationship of building uses along the public street, should contribute to a vibrant public realm through appropriate ground floor uses and public amenities that are barrier free and publicly accessible.

Building articulation, façade design and materials:

The design of the building façade or face contributes to the character of communities. Specific elements of façade design include the use of specific materials, colour palettes and design elements such as doors, windows, and canopies. Façade design should be compatible with the local context and contribute to urban design excellence.

Interior building layout: Interior building layouts for commercial uses can contribute to a vibrant public realm or make the achievement of the exterior building design standards difficult to achieve. The design of the interior building layouts should promote public safety and allow for visibility and direct accessibility from the public realm into interior commercial uses.

Planning for building resiliency: Planning buildings for their long-term viability and maximizing their flexibility of use over time to accommodate changes in use and tenancy.

Guelph's Commercial Buildings include the following building typologies:

1. Main Street Buildings;
2. Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings;
3. Vehicle Oriented Uses;
4. Mixed Use Buildings; and
5. Large Commercial Sites.



Low-rise mixed-use building with commercial uses at street level.



Low-rise commercial building adjacent to public sidewalk (GBL Architects).

The following section outlines general built form standards for the development or redevelopment of Commercial Buildings within the City of Guelph. Built form standards specific to the Commercial Building typologies are identified in subsequent sections of this document. The demonstration plans provided in these sections demonstrate best practices in internal building layout that facilitate high quality building and site design.

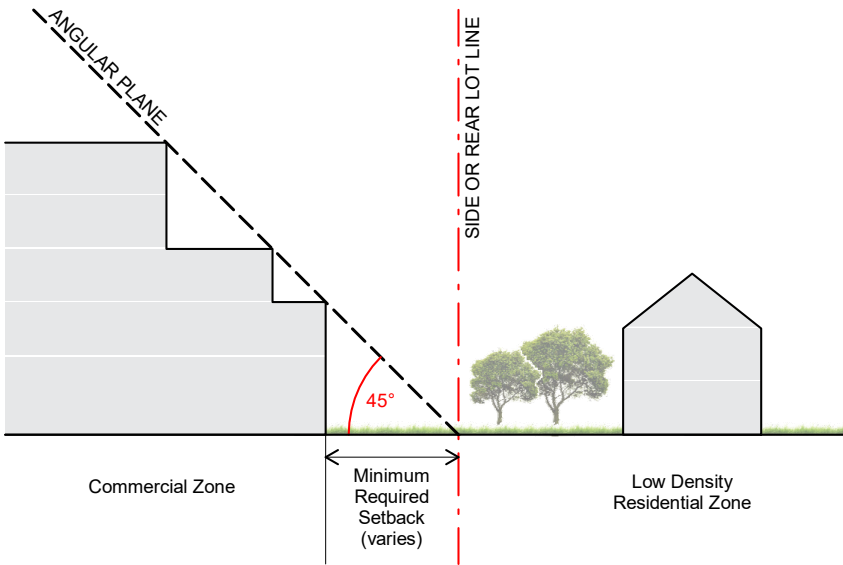
The design of mixed-use buildings should adhere to the recommendations in this document as relevant; guidance from the [Built Form Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings and Townhouses](#) should also be followed where residential uses are being proposed as part of the mixed-use development.

4.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions

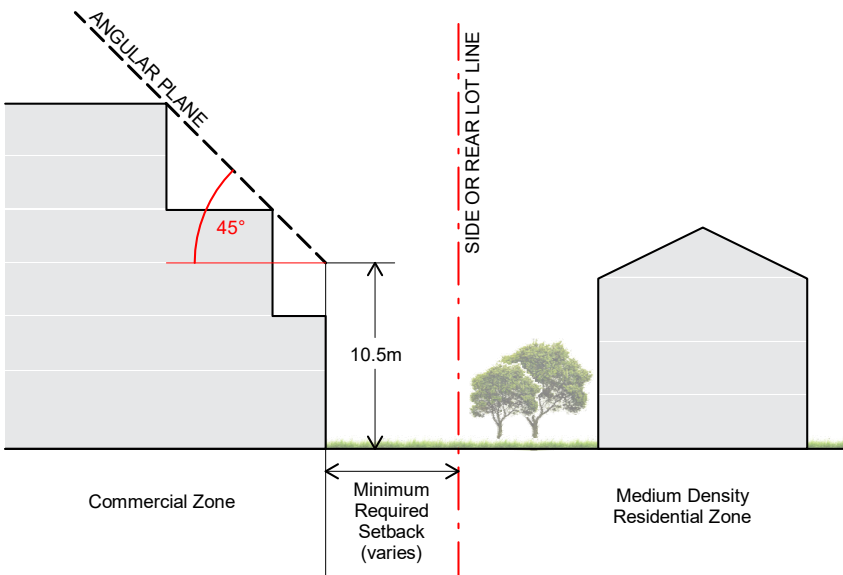
Standards:

- 4.1.1. New development should provide appropriate transitions in height and massing to adjacent lower rise built form where a change in building use occurs, or when adjacent to residential and institutional uses.
- 4.1.2. The maximum building length of Commercial Buildings should not exceed 75 metres where buildings are located within 15 metres of the front or exterior side lot lines, to encourage pedestrian scale buildings and to reduce shadowing impacts.
- 4.1.3. Generally, a minimum building height of 2 storeys is encouraged to provide definition to streets and open spaces (OP Policy 8.6.13).

- 4.1.4. The creation of false upper buildings floors is discouraged, but may be supported where the design/engineering for the building allows the upper floors to be inserted in the future.
- 4.1.5. The front yard setback and/or exterior side yard setback of a Commercial Building should generally be a minimum of 3 metres from the corresponding property line. The front yard and/or exterior side yard setbacks should respond to adjacent street typology and function.
- 4.1.6. When the City deems that additional space for landscaping is required, the minimum front yard setback and/or minimum exterior side yard setback may be 6 metres from the corresponding property line. The front yard and/or exterior side yard setbacks should respond to adjacent street typology and function.
- 4.1.7. Where a Commercial Building site abuts a low density residential area, a transitional 45 degree angular plane should be applied at the shared property line, to ensure that the impacts of height, overlook and shadow are mitigated.
- 4.1.8. Where a Commercial Building site abuts a medium density residential area, a transitional 45 degree angular plane should be applied beginning 10.5 metres above average grade at the required minimum setback, to ensure that the impacts of height, overlook and shadow are mitigated.
- 4.1.9. Commercial Buildings and mixed-use buildings above 4 storeys should incorporate a minimum stepback of 1.5 metres between the fourth and fifth floors to ensure the appropriate scale and massing of the building and to secure usable patio space. Stepbacks must relate to the existing context, planned use of adjacent properties, and must consider transitioning uses.
- 4.1.10. Commercial Buildings exceeding 6 storeys in high-rise forms should have a massing composed of a podium, middle, and top (OP Policy 8.9.1i).
- 4.1.11. Buildings should use the existing natural grade and be designed to complement adjacent developments where possible.
- 4.1.12. For buildings within 15 metres of a property line, and where buildings are located on a site with variable topography, access to all commercial units should be provided at the established grade of the adjacent sidewalk and street. Where a minor grade differential exists between the sidewalk and the access doorway, a single run accessible route should be provided directly between the nearest sidewalk and the access doorway with a slope no steeper than 1:25 and a cross slope no steeper than 1:50 (FADM, 4.1.4).
- 4.1.13. Light wells are encouraged in the design of Commercial Buildings to provide opportunities for natural light.



Recommended Angular Plane Transition when Commercial Building is adjacent to a Low Density Residential Zone



Recommended Angular Plane Transition when Commercial Building is adjacent to a Medium Density Residential Zone

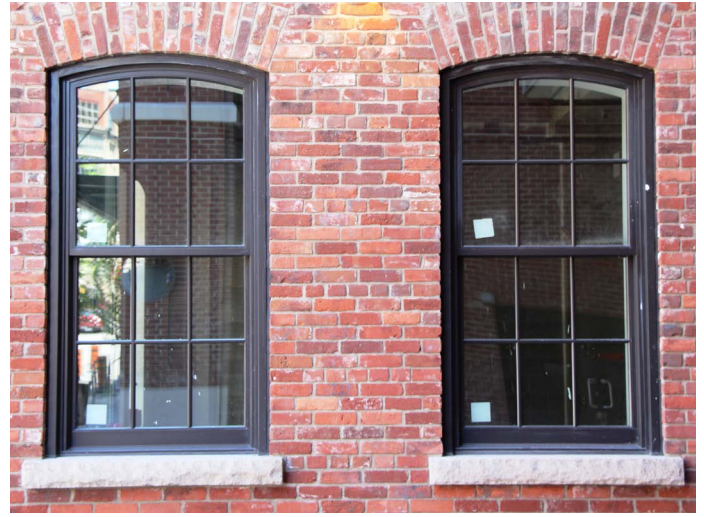


Well-defined and animated street edge along retail building frontages (Sasaki).

4.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design

Standards:

- 4.2.1. The principal entrances of commercial and mixed-use buildings shall be oriented toward the street and provide direct user entrances from adjacent streets and walkways. Blank façades facing a street, open space or park shall not be permitted (OP Policy 8.6.2).
- 4.2.2. Commercial Buildings should address a public right-of-way and set the building back adequately to provide landscaping and active uses at grade where possible, including patios and spill over retail. Commercial and mixed-use buildings should be consistently located close to the street edge and sidewalk (OP Policy 8.6.3).
- 4.2.3. Corner buildings shall address both streets by providing two articulated façades facing the street (OP Policy 8.6.4).
- 4.2.4. Create a consistent building streetwall height along public right-of-ways to create a comfortable public realm.
- 4.2.5. Windows and doors adjacent to public right-of-ways should not incorporate vinyl coverings or other signage treatments and adhere to the Sign By-Law.
- 4.2.6. Include transparent windows and/or active entrances along the ground floor façades of corner buildings that face a public street or urban square. Do not use highly reflective or mirrored glass.
- 4.2.7. Where appropriate, a building's first storey shall generally be taller in height to accommodate a range of non-residential uses (OP Policy 8.6.10). Ground floor heights of Commercial Buildings should be a minimum of 4.5 metres to accommodate a range of non-residential uses over time. Where a continuous streetwall has been established, new buildings should align with the predominant streetwall height and design.



Examples of varying building façade articulation and material use, including vertical articulation of the façade through colour and window design (left), and red brick façade with arched windows (right).

4.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials

Standards:

- 4.3.1. Infill Commercial Buildings in areas with a strong, established street character should complement the existing character through façade design, material use, and building articulation.
- 4.3.2. Articulate the base of Commercial Buildings through design elements such as front doors, front canopies, overhangs, patios, and a rhythm of shop fronts.
- 4.3.3. Blank façades facing a street, open space or park shall not be permitted (OP Policy 8.6.2) and should be avoided through the design of active façades with building entrances and unobstructed transparent glazing at grade.
- 4.3.4. Long building façades that are visible along a public street will incorporate recesses, projections, windows or awnings, colonnades and/or landscaping along the length of the façade to reduce the mass of such façade (OP Policy 8.6.8).
- 4.3.5. Buildings adjacent to the street edge and at sites with high public visibility shall be designed to take into account their high public visibility by incorporating elements such as increased height, roof features, building articulation and high quality finishes and windows (OP Policy 8.6.5).
- 4.3.6. Large buildings will incorporate architectural elements which will reduce the visual effects of flat roof lines (OP Policy 8.6.11).

- 4.3.7. The design of all Commercial Buildings and storefronts shall be in keeping with the character and identity of the community and its immediate context. This may require alternative or enhanced standard of corporate or franchise design. Buildings shall reflect the community and immediate context through features such as façade articulation, massing, architectural style, vertical windows, appropriate signage, building materials and exterior finishes (OP Policy 8.6.9).
- 4.3.8. A range of high-quality materials for façade design are encouraged to promote visual diversity in texture and colour, reflecting varied built form materials used in Guelph, including brick and stone.
- 4.3.9. The use of large areas of vinyl and Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFS) are strongly discouraged.
- 4.3.10. All buildings should be finished with prominently natural and durable materials such as stone and brick. Generally, replica materials such as pre-cast concrete panels made to look like stone or brick are not recommended within the first 3 storeys of a building, especially within signature areas (e.g. along Gordon Street and within the older built-up area).
- 4.3.11. Primary building elevations (those that interact with a main street frontage) should feature a high-quality of design, and may include canopy structures and arcades.
- 4.3.12. Employ 'bird-friendly' design. Designs should avoid the use of untreated reflective glass and reduce light pollution in the night sky. The use of visual markers on design surfaces (e.g. fritted glass, fenestration patterns) is strongly encouraged.

Interior Building Layout Guidelines

While internal layout plans are generally not required to be submitted as part of the development approval process, interior building layout has a connection with the exterior building façade and the achievement of other standards, such as building entrance locations and clear glazing standards. To recognize this, this section is entitled “Guidelines” rather than “Built Form Standards” found in the balance of the document.

The following identify key internal layout guidelines to consider in overall building design for Commercial Buildings:

Guidelines:

- Where possible, locate back-of-house uses, including enclosed kitchens, storage, washrooms, offices, and service spaces toward the centre of the commercial unit and adjacent to demising walls, in order to achieve maximum visibility into the space from the perimeter and surrounding public realm.
 - Locate pedestrian entrances adjacent to public rights-of-way, at equal grade with the adjacent sidewalk.
 - Where appropriate, expose certain back-of-house uses such as commercial kitchens to increase visual permeability through the space and to provide visual animation to adjacent public spaces.
 - Where possible, locate restaurant seating adjacent to clear glazing at the perimeter of the space.
- Where commercial spaces can be accessed by multiple pedestrian entrances, locate point-of-sale kiosks in a central area to allow inbound and outbound pedestrian traffic from all entrance points.
 - Take advantage of clear glazed frontages in retail spaces by exposing and displaying retail goods at the perimeter.
 - In mixed-use buildings, where appropriate, locate active transportation amenities such as stairwells and bike storage rooms at the building perimeter, with generous clear glazing for visual safety and daylighting.



Demonstration plan of commercial site identifying relationship between internal building layout and site and building design

4.4 Building Resiliency

Standards:

- 4.4.1. Buildings should be designed to achieve long-term viability and maximize flexibility in use over time. This can be achieved through the use of structural systems that allow interior partitions and mechanical services to be moved and rearranged to accommodate changes in tenancy, and through the use of generous floor-to-floor heights that accommodate a range of uses and mechanical systems above and below the occupied space.
- 4.4.2. Buildings should be designed to allow upgrading and replacing of components and systems with shorter life cycles, without requiring demolition of the core structure. From shortest to longest life span, these include interior finishes and furnishings; interior partitions and space layouts; heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and plumbing services; and building envelope components.
- 4.4.3. Site and building design should support and facilitate future intensification and redevelopment including strategies for building expansions (e.g. ensuring that upper storey volumes can be infilled to create additional floor area) (OP Policy 8.6.14).

5.0 Main Street Buildings

Demonstration Plan: Main Street Area



Legend

- B Back-of-House Uses
- K Kitchen/Service Uses
- W Public Washroom Uses
- Public Entrance Location
- Service Entrance Location
- Potential Active Frontages
- T Transit Stop
(provide a direct and accessible path)

The preceding diagram demonstrates an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design standards for a main street area. In this case, a continuous street wall is achieved by locating buildings between 1.5 metres and 3.0 metres from the front property line. Wide sidewalks, cycling infrastructure, and landscaping within the right-of-way create a pedestrian-friendly urban condition.

- 1 Public entrances are located along the street in a regular rhythm along narrow, active frontages
- 2 Servicing, loading, and back-of-house uses are provided at the rear of the building
- 3 On-street parking spaces are provided for short to mid-term parking
- 4 Shallow setbacks along the majority of the building frontage maintains an overall consistent street wall edge while allowing for limited exterior patio space and architectural articulation of buildings along the street edge



Main Street Area with pedestrian seating and street trees.



Main Street Building with retail uses, street trees, and landscaping adjacent to the sidewalk.

Introduction

Main Street Buildings are multi-storey buildings fronting a street, and typically contain retail or service uses on the ground floor. Office, service, or retail uses may be located on upper building levels. Main Street Areas should contribute to a safe and vibrant public realm (OP Policy, 9.4.2.6) and should encourage active modes of transportation, including walking, cycling and public transportation (OP Policy 5.8.11). Main Streets have been identified within the City's Mixed-Use nodes through Guelph's [Urban Design Concept Plans](#), which have been endorsed by Council.

In addition to the specific built form standards identified in this section, building design for Main Street Buildings should follow guidance provided in the General Standards for Commercial Buildings, as relevant.

5.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions

Standards:

- 5.1.1. The front yard setback of Main Street Buildings should be a minimum of 1.5 metres and a maximum of 3 metres to create a street-oriented public realm. Up to 25% of the building's façade may be located at a setback up to 6 metres to accommodate architectural articulation, exterior patios and entrance recesses.

5.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design

Standards:

- 5.2.1. Main Street Buildings are strongly encouraged to include ground floor retail and service uses (office uses should be limited and residential uses should be provided primarily above commercial uses) (OP Policy 9.4.2.6ii-iv). Spill over retail, patios, seating, and other public spaces at grade are encouraged, though may be subject to an Encroachment Agreement.
- 5.2.2. Include clear and transparent windows and/or active entrances along ground floor façades. Do not use highly reflective or mirrored glass.
- 5.2.3. Create a rhythm and spacing of building entrances and appropriately sized storefronts to encourage pedestrian activity (OP Policy 9.4.2.6v).

- 5.2.4. Encourage a consistent building streetwall height along roads to create a comfortable public realm.
- 5.2.5. Ensure a rhythm and spacing of building entrances and appropriately sized storefronts to encourage pedestrian activity (OP Policy 9.4.2.6v). To achieve this, the maximum distance between building entrances should be 12 metres.
- 5.2.6. Ensure surface parking areas are not located between buildings and the street. On-street parking spaces along the right-of-way may be integrated for short to mid-term parking where appropriate.
- 5.2.7. Provide frequent spacing of bike racks in the public right-of-way as part of the streetscape design.

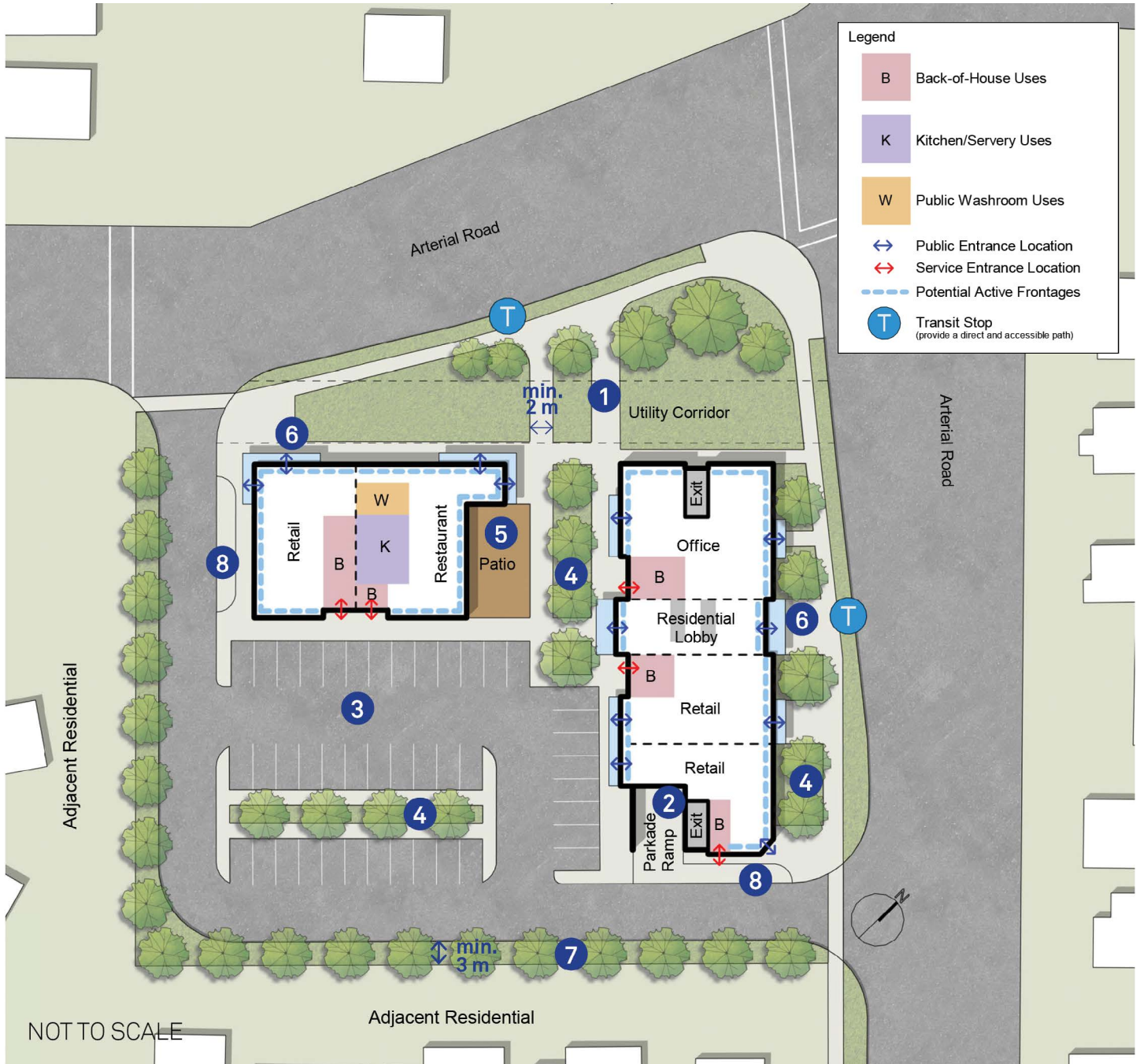
5.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials

Standards:

- 5.3.1. Encourage the use of robust façade materials that can accommodate higher levels of pedestrian activity and use. Appropriate materials include stone, brick, and clear, unobstructed glass.

6.0 Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings

Demonstration Plan: Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Site



The preceding diagram demonstrates an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design standards for a neighbourhood scale commercial site. In this case, a multi-level residential building with underground parking and ground-floor commercial uses complements other retail and restaurant uses on the site.

- 1 Walkways are provided throughout the site for pedestrian circulation, connecting municipal sidewalks and parking areas to building entrances
- 2 Underground parking is provided in mixed-use buildings with residential units. Driveway access is located to reduce pedestrian conflicts and minimize impacts on streetscape
- 3 Surface parking is located at the rear of the property
- 4 Landscaping enhances walkways and public sidewalks
- 5 The patio is located away from adjacent residential, and maximizes sun exposure
- 6 Principal building entrances are located toward the street
- 7 A landscape buffer is provided
- 8 Pick-up, drop-off, and loading area zones are provided for convenience and ride-hailing services



Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Building with at-grade retail.



Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Building with at-grade retail, street trees, shrubs, and walkways to the public sidewalk.

Introduction

Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings provide retail and service uses within a convenient walking distance of residential areas. Uses within these buildings should serve the daily needs of residents (OP, 9.4.4). They are conducive to mixed use development with commercial or retail uses on the ground floor. Sites containing Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings should be designed to minimize the need to mitigate noise to adjacent uses and should adhere to the City's Noise Control Guidelines (2018).

Building design for Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings should follow guidance provided in the General Standards for Commercial Buildings, as relevant.

6.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions

Standards:

- 6.1.1. Provide appropriate transitions between Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Buildings and adjacent residential, institutional and park uses through architectural massing, landscaping, and screening.
- 6.1.2. Where a retrofit of a larger Neighbourhood Scale Commercial Building site with large surface parking lots is proposed, infill buildings facing the street should be created where viable to create an improved pedestrian realm.
- 6.1.3. Where a commercial or mixed-use development is located in proximity to residential and institutional uses, the following urban design strategies will be employed to ensure compatibility:
 - a. using building massing and placement to reduce the visual effects of flat roof lines, blank façades or building height by means such as appropriately stepping back, terracing or setting back buildings;
 - b. appropriately locating noise-generating activities within a building or structure and away from sensitive receptors;
 - c. incorporating screening and noise attenuation for roof-top mechanical equipment and other noise generating activities situated in proximity to sensitive receptors;

- d. providing perimeter landscape buffering incorporating a generously planted landscape strip, berming and/or fencing to delineate property boundaries and to screen the commercial or employment use from the adjacent use; and
- e. designing exterior lighting and signage to prevent light spillage onto the adjacent property (OP Policy 8.7.1). For further information see the City's [Lighting Guidelines for Lighting Plans](#).

6.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design

Standards:

- 6.2.1. Built form should address the public right-of-way.
- 6.2.2. Active uses that will generate noise such as restaurant patios should not be placed near adjacent residential and institutional uses.
- 6.2.3. The placement of patios to maximize their sun exposure (e.g. south facing patios) and improve pedestrian comfort is encouraged.
- 6.2.4. Provide landscaping and trees along building and site edges and throughout the site, as feasible.

6.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials

Standards:

- 6.3.1 Building design should be compatible with the architectural character of adjacent built areas (OP Policy 9.4.4.10iii).

7.0 Vehicle Oriented Uses

Demonstration Plan: Vehicle Oriented Uses



The preceding diagram demonstrates an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design standards for a site with vehicle-oriented uses. In this case, a drive-through restaurant, a car wash, and a retail building attached to a fueling station are organized on a site adjacent to both commercial and residential uses.

- 1 Buildings address the public realm with active façades, at-grade entrances, and massing that reinforces the street edge
- 2 A weather protected canopy is provided over the fueling area.
- 3 Drive Through Facilities including Car Washes are located to the rear of the site.
- 4 Stacking Lanes for Drive Through Facilities including Car Washes are set back from public street frontages and intersections
- 5 Pedestrian routes are demarcated with differential paving when crossing through driveways and Drive Through Stacking Lanes
- 6 Loading area is located to the rear of the building, and does not block sidewalks
- 7 Storage and Refuse area is screened and located to the rear of the building
- 8 A landscape buffer is provided
- 9 Surface parking located adjacent to the arterial road does not exceed 25% of the length of front and exterior lot lines



Examples of Vehicular Oriented Uses including a drive through (left, Foodtable Network) and a car wash (right, Fematics).

Introduction

Vehicle Oriented Uses facilitate the use and storage of private automobiles (OP, 8.10), and include Service Stations, Drive Through Facilities, and Car Dealerships.

In addition to the specific built form standards identified below, the design of Vehicle Oriented Uses should follow guidance provided in the General Standards for Commercial Buildings, as relevant.

7.1 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions

Standards:

- 7.1.1. Provide appropriate transitions between Vehicle Oriented Uses and adjacent residential, institutional and park uses through architectural massing, landscaping, and screening.

7.2 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design

Standards:

- 7.2.1. Ensure a clear separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic to ensure ease of use and safety of movement for pedestrians (OP Policy 8.10.1iv).
- 7.2.2. Buildings containing Vehicle Oriented Uses should reinforce the street edge and contribute to a high quality public realm and streetscape (OP Policy 8.10.1.ii and iv).
- 7.2.3. Ensure that pedestrian or active transportation connections from public sidewalks to building entrances do not cross drive-through facilities, including stacking lanes.
- 7.2.4. Where a pedestrian connection crosses a drive-through facility within a site, the pedestrian pathway should be clearly marked for drivers by signage indicating a pedestrian crossing, and by distinctive paving or treatment on the surface of the pedestrian pathway in accordance with the FADM.
- 7.2.5. Ensure that Vehicle Oriented Uses do not impede enjoyment of or access to adjacent outdoor amenity areas, urban squares or open spaces.

7.3 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials

Standards:

- 7.3.1. The façades of Vehicle Oriented Uses should exhibit high quality design and materials and complement the urban design and architectural character of other buildings on the site and the area.
- 7.3.2. Where incorporated into mixed-use buildings or a Large Commercial Site, the design of Vehicle Oriented Uses should complement the urban design and architectural character of the predominant uses on the site.
- 7.3.3. Signage for Vehicle Oriented Uses should be integrated into the architectural and/or landscape design of the site.



Service Station fronted by landscaping treatment and with a direct pedestrian connection from the public right-of-way (Google).



Service Station including commercial building and fueling area covered by canopy (Summum Développement Immobilier).

7.4 Additional Standards for Service Stations

A Service Station is a place related to the retail of automotive fuel and other auto-related products. It does not include automotive detailing and repair operation.

Standards:

- 7.4.1. Minimize impacts of odour and noise by establishing a minimum setback of 15 metres for fuel station pump islands abutting residential, institutional and park uses. In addition to the minimum setback, further mitigation strategies may be required to address these issues.
- 7.4.2. Weather protected canopies should be provided over fueling areas of Service Stations.
- 7.4.3. The integration of the Service Station canopy with the main building is encouraged.

- 7.4.4. Lighting Plans will be required as part of a site plan approval and should adhere to the City's [Lighting Guidelines for Lighting Plans](#), including specific guidelines for Service Stations.
- 7.4.5. Service Stations shall be designed to:
 - a. reinforce the street edges by locating the principal building at or near the street edge with direct pedestrian access into the building from the street edge;
 - b. ensure that the principal building does not present a blank façade to the street by appropriately incorporating elements such as clear glazing, openings, and architectural treatment, materials and detailing; and
 - c. address building massing, materials and scale as well as issues specific to service station uses including canopies, pumps and islands for gas bars, ancillary buildings and structures, signage and lighting (OP Policy 8.10.3ii,iii, and iv).



Landscaped buffer for stacking lane of Drive Through Facility (Cross 2 Design Group).

7.5 Additional Standards for Drive Through Facilities

A Drive Through Facility dispenses products or services through an attendant, a window, or an automated machine to persons remaining in vehicles in a designated stacking lane(s), which may or may not include an order box and menu boards, but does not include a parking facility. A Drive Through Facility includes the speaker box, pick up window and corresponding stacking lane. A more complete definition is included in Section 10.1.1 Implementation- Definition Updates. An automatic car wash is a type of Drive Through Facility.

Standards:

7.5.1. Locate stacking and drive-through lanes in rear or side yards and away from intersections. Stacking and drive-through lanes shall not be located between the building and the fronting street to minimize the impact on pedestrians (OP Policy 8.10.2i).

7.5.2. A minimum setback of 15 metres is required between Drive Through Facilities and residential, institutional, and park uses, to minimize impacts of noise, light and activity levels. In addition to the minimum setback, further mitigation strategies may be required to address these issues.

7.5.3. A landscaping buffer of a minimum of 3 metres in width should be provided between a stacking lane and adjacent areas.

7.5.4. Double stacking lanes are discouraged on Commercial Building sites. Where unavoidable, the combined double stacking lane should be bordered by a high quality landscaping buffer 3 metres in width on both sides, as a separation between the stacking lanes and adjacent areas.

7.5.5. Ensure that accessible parking and circulatory routes are not interrupted by Drive Through Facility stacking lanes.



Car Dealership with landscaping and pedestrian walkway (Ciocca).

- 7.5.6. Car washes should be set back a minimum of 15 metres when adjacent to a residential, institutional or park use. In addition to the minimum setback, further mitigation strategies may be required to address these issues.
- 7.5.7. Car wash stacking lanes should be set back from public street frontages and intersections to prevent conflicts between the circulation of vehicles, and people walking or cycling.
- 7.5.8. Where a car wash is permitted as part of a service station, the car wash building will be oriented away from the street edge while still maintaining appropriate setbacks, landscaping and allowing for adequate automobile queuing (OP Policy 8.10.3v).

7.6 Additional Standards for Car Dealerships

A Car Dealership is a retail establishment that sells vehicles. The provision of automotive maintenance services is often included in Car Dealerships.

Standards:

- 7.6.1. Car Dealerships should incorporate landscaping along the principal building entrance.
- 7.6.2. Car Dealerships should provide barrier free access into primary building entrances.
- 7.6.3. The retail display of vehicles along the primary building frontage is permitted between landscaping buffer and the building face.



Street-related Car Dealership with significant façade glazing, adjacent to street trees and public sidewalk (Google).

- 7.6.4. Downward facing building and site lighting is required for Car Dealerships to minimize light pollution on adjacent properties. Lighting Plans will be required as part of a site plan approval are to adhere to the City's [Lighting Guidelines for Lighting Plans](#) including specific guidelines for Car Dealerships.
- 7.6.5. Automotive repair facilities associated with Car Dealerships should be set back a minimum of 15 metres from adjacent residential, institutional, and park uses to minimize odour and noise impacts. In addition to the minimum setback, further mitigation strategies may be required to address these issues.

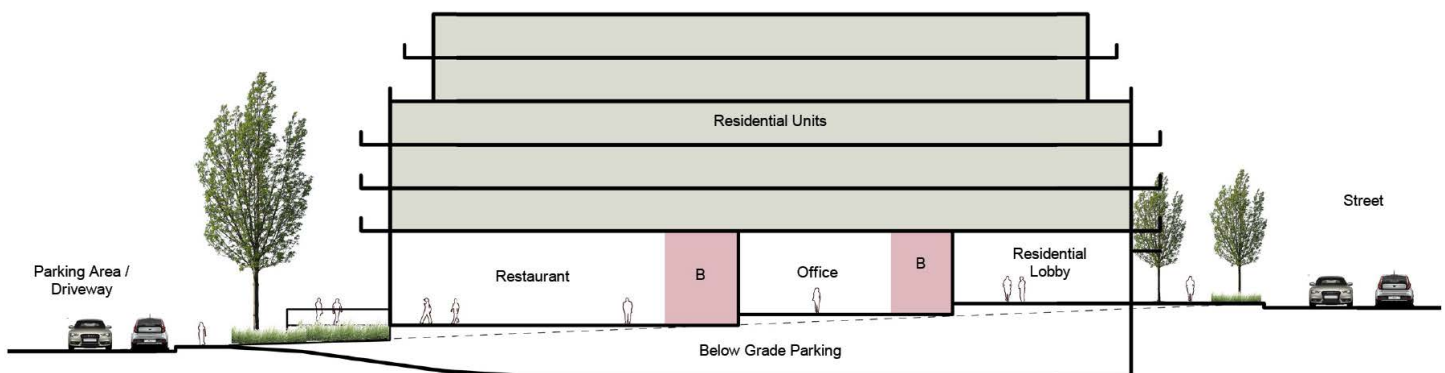
8.0 Mixed Use Buildings

Demonstration Plan: Mixed Use Buildings



The preceding diagram demonstrates an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design standards for a mixed-use site. In this case, a multi-level residential building with underground parking and ground-floor commercial uses complements other retail, office, and restaurant uses on the site. A grade change across the site is reconciled through a stepped ground floor on the mixed-use building.

- 1 Buildings address the public realm with active façades, at-grade entrances, and massing that reinforces the street edge
- 2 Corner buildings address both sides of the streets with active ground floor facades.
- 3 Surface parking is located at the rear of the property
- 4 Landscaping enhances walkways and public sidewalks
- 5 Pick-up, drop-off, and loading area zones are provided for convenience and ride-hailing services
- 6 Shared driveways and parking lots reduce access points and reduce conflicts with pedestrians
- 7 At-grade retail uses provide entrances from public right-of-way
- 8 Underground parking is provided in mixed-use buildings with residential units. Driveway access is located to reduce pedestrian conflicts and minimize impacts on streetscape
- 9 A landscape buffer is provided



Site Section of Mixed Use site with elevation change (not to scale)



Mid-rise mixed-use building with commercial uses at grade (Westbrook Properties).



Mid-rise mixed-use building with commercial uses at grade.

Introduction

Mixed-use buildings contain more than one use and may include retail, service, office and residential uses either horizontally or vertically within one building. Mixed-use buildings should contribute to pedestrian oriented and transit supportive communities (OP, 9.4d).

The design of mixed-use buildings and sites should follow general guidance provided in Site Organization & Design and the General Standards for Commercial Buildings, as relevant; guidance from the [Built Form Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings and Townhouses](#) should also be followed where residential uses are being proposed as part of the development.

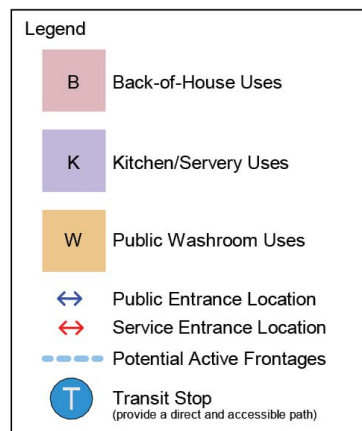
9.0 Large Commercial Sites

Demonstration Plan: Large Commercial Site



The preceding diagram demonstrates an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design standards for a large commercial site. In this case, a large grocery store is located at the rear of the site with remaining buildings located at the street edge. Pedestrian and cyclist access is prioritized through a connected network of pathways.

- 1 Pedestrian connections provide clear paths from public right-of-way to building entrances and site interior
- 2 Primary building frontages incorporate pedestrian amenities including landscaping and seating
- 3 Surface parking is located at the rear of the property
- 4 Building articulation provides sight lines and pedestrian access routes into the site from intersections and pedestrian crossings
- 5 Pick-up, drop-off, and loading area zones are provided for convenience and ride-hailing services
- 6 Shared driveways and parking lots reduce access points and reduce conflicts with pedestrians
- 7 Major driveway entrances are defined by landscaping on either side of the driveway
- 8 Protected cycling path is provided along site
- 9 Large surface parking area is divided into smaller defined sections through landscape strip and walkway





Large Commercial Site with comprehensive internal street network, landscaping, and complementary building massing and design (City Centre).



An internal commercial street on a Large Commercial Site with retail buildings, a pedestrian boulevard, and public realm amenities (Arie Macherie).

Introduction

Large Commercial Sites face complex issues due to considerations required for both site and building design on a larger scale. These sites have to consider the interface with the public street and its relationship to internal site configuration. These sites should be designed as a cohesive development, and consider how site design, building design, landscaping and connections work together on the site and how they fit into the adjacent context.

Large Commercial Sites have the capacity to accommodate more than one building on a site and typically contain a mix of buildings fronting the public right-of-way and/or internal roads. These sites may be part of a new development or may involve the redevelopment of existing lands. Large Commercial Sites may also contain Main Streets as shown in the [Urban Design Concept Plans](#). The City will identify Large Commercial Sites on a site by site basis to determine whether the Standards for Large Commercial Sites are applicable to a given site.

In addition to the specific built form and site design standards identified below, the design of Large Commercial Sites should follow the general guidance provided in Site Organization & Design and General Standards for Commercial Buildings, as relevant.

9.1 Site Organization & Design

Standards:

- 9.1.1. Site design for Large Commercial Sites should consider how the siting of buildings, internal roads and open spaces can be used to solve grading issues and transitions across a site and to the public right-of-way to ensure site accessibility. Breaking down a large site into smaller sections, particularly where there are varied topographical changes on a site, will minimize the need for elements like retaining walls, and stairs, and contribute to overall site accessibility.
- 9.1.2. Large Commercial Sites shall extend, establish or reinforce a modified grid-like street network that connects with the existing urban fabric of streets, open spaces and developed areas; is highly interconnected; and responds sensitively to natural or other established features (OP Policy 8.2.3i, ii, and iii). Utilities and other services should be aligned with the established block structure. A grid street network will help facilitate further development and redevelopment over time.
- 9.1.3. Private roads and internal driveways required for site circulation shall be designed to be comfortable for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. They should be physically defined by raised curbs and, where appropriate, landscaped where they intersect with a parking area or driveway. Internal driveways or roads will be used to divide large sites into a grid of blocks and roadways to facilitate safe pedestrian and vehicular movement. Internal driveways will be designed to interconnect with adjacent properties to create an overall cohesive and integrated circulation network (OP Policy 8.13.3).
- 9.1.4. Shared driveways are encouraged to reduce access points and reduce conflicts with pedestrians (OP Policy 8.13.1). Consolidate vehicular site access points to optimize curb cuts and minimize the interruption of the boulevard for pedestrians, cyclists, landscaping, and furnishings.
- 9.1.5. Well-articulated and distinct pedestrian walkways should be placed along a building street frontage and linked to public boulevards, public sidewalks, transit stops, trail systems and other pedestrian systems (OP Policy 8.13.4).
- 9.1.6. Major driveway entrances to Large Commercial Sites should be defined by landscaping on either side of the driveway and/or by landscaped medians (OP Policy 8.13.2).

9.2 Building Massing, Scale & Transitions

Standards:

- 9.2.1. Large Commercial Sites should create appropriate building transitions between different buildings on a site, as well as transition appropriately to adjacent uses.

9.3 Ground Floor & Street Edge Design

Standards:

- 9.3.1. Prioritize safe pedestrian and cyclist connections from the public right-of-way to primary building entrances, and throughout the site.
- 9.3.2. New buildings on Large Commercial Sites should have appropriate setbacks from the front property line to define the street edge and provide adequate space for pedestrians, cyclists and boulevard landscaping.
- 9.3.3. Intersections of major streets shall be emphasized by placing buildings in close proximity to the intersection and ensuring that building entrances are visible from that intersection (OP Policy 8.6.6). Corner sites may include building setbacks at strategic locations to provide outdoor seating and plaza areas for pedestrians while keeping in mind sight line safety requirements.

- 9.3.4. When adjacent to a public street, buildings should be oriented towards the street and ground floors should contain active uses at grade such as cafes, restaurants, boutiques, offices and waiting areas.
- 9.3.5. Primary building frontages should incorporate pedestrian amenities including landscaping, display windows, seating, and pedestrian-scaled lighting.
- 9.3.6. Use clear and transparent windows and/or active entrances along ground floor façades to promote visibility between indoor and outdoor uses. Do not use highly reflective or mirrored glass.
- 9.3.7. Where multiple buildings on a site are proposed, buildings adjacent to the public right-of-way should create a consistent streetwall.

9.4 Articulation, Façade Design & Materials

Standards:

- 9.4.1. Where multiple buildings on a site are proposed, complementary building design and materials should be used to create a cohesive development.
- 9.4.2. Design building façades to express individual businesses through building elevation, recesses and projections, entrances, signs and canopies.

9.5 Site Evolution

Where Large Commercial Sites will be built out in distinct phases over time, a Phasing Plan should also be included as part of a complete planning application. A Phasing Plan identifies each phase and its expected timeline (if known), and illustrates how the overall site's state, at the completion of each phase, meets the guidelines or objectives contained in this document. The Phasing Plan should include the replacement of, or addition of, buildings, road and pedestrian networks, parking, and open spaces. The Phasing Plan should include 2D plans and a written description of the changes as part of each subsequent phase of development.

A Phasing Plan will be required to demonstrate the following for each phase of development:

- A cohesive urban design concept for the project;
- Thoughtful building and site design that is compatible with adjacent surroundings;
- Connected existing and new private roads with the public street grid;
- Strategic design of private internal roads so they may evolve into public rights-of-way;
- Logical, safe and efficient connections for people walking, cycling, driving through the site;
- Direct connections from the site to adjacent public transportation such as bus stops;
- Coordination of high quality landscaping treatments within and on the periphery of the site in interim phases and the final phase; and
- Coordination of site utilities.

The creation of a Phasing Plan will ensure a shared vision is reached for the site at all phases of completion, between the applicant, the City, and other relevant parties during the development application process.

Standards:

- 9.5.1. As the retail landscape continues to evolve, some Large Commercial Sites currently containing large format commercial retail buildings or retail malls may become candidates for intensification and redevelopment with the introduction of new mixed-use buildings. Full redevelopment of these sites may occur over several decades and require multiple phases of development. A Phasing Plan will be required where existing Large Commercial Sites will evolve in phases over an extended period of time.

Demonstration Plan: Phased Evolution of a Large Commercial Site

The following diagrams demonstrate an example site plan that achieves the intent of the urban design guidelines for the phased evolution of a Large Commercial Site. In this case, through three phases, a large-format retail site is transformed into a walkable, mixed-use complete community.

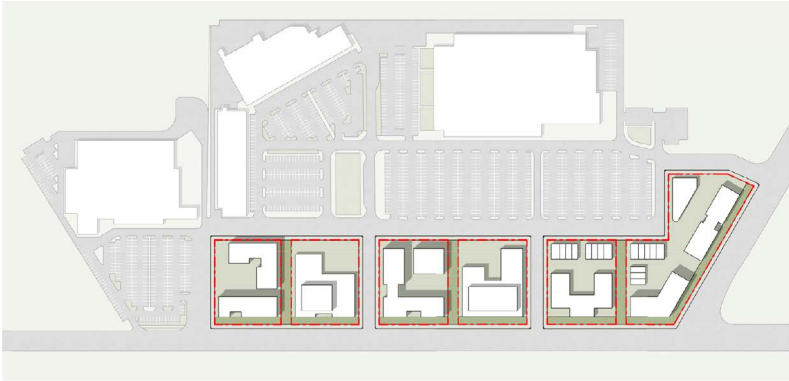
- The single-use retail site is transformed over time into a walkable, mixed-use complete community with diverse housing, working, shopping, recreation, and civic uses, and a network of green open spaces
- A regular street network grid and connected pedestrian routes are established throughout the site and connected to existing and planned circulation routes
- Development parcel dimensions are based on walkable, pedestrian-scaled blocks
- Higher density and higher intensity developments including employment uses are located in proximity to public transit stops, usually along arterial roads



Existing Large Format Retail Site Plan



Mixed-Use Complete Community Site Plan



Phase 1 Mixed-Use Development Parcels



Phase 2 Mixed-Use Development Parcels



Phase 3 Mixed-Use Development Parcels

10.0 Implementation

Introduction

The implementation of the Commercial Built Form Standards can be addressed through identifying changes to technical requirements including the City's Zoning By-Law, and by creating a framework for the review of the Standards that is coordinated with changes to relevant municipal policies and guidelines and feedback from the Community.

10.1 Zoning By-Law Updates

The City of Guelph is currently undergoing a review of the existing Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864 as part of its Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review. Recommendations within the Commercial Built Form Standards will inform changes to existing zoning, but may be implemented incrementally after further studies or after modifications to the review and approvals process.

The standards identified in this document do not supersede the regulations of the existing or future Zoning By-Law.

10.1.1 Definition Updates

The following definitions reflect terminology used to inform the recommendations within the Commercial Built Form Standards. The introduction of new terminology and updates to existing terminology should be considered as part of the City's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review.

1. Drive Through Facility

Current Definition in Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864:

There is currently no definition for Drive Through Facility within Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864.

Proposed Definition: The definition for Drive Through Facility should match that identified in the City of Guelph's Downtown Zoning By-Law (2017)-20187, which states: "Drive Through Facility" means a Place Used to provide or dispense products or services through an attendant, a window, or an automated machine to persons remaining in Vehicles in a designated stacking lane(s), which may or may not include an order box and menu boards, but does not include a Parking Facility.

2. Landscaped Open Space

Current Definition in Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864:

"Landscaped Open Space" means the area of a Lot which is at grade and Used for the growth and maintenance of grass, flowers, trees, shrubbery, natural vegetation and indigenous species and other landscaping and includes any buffer strip, surfaced walk, surface patio, swimming pool or similar area, but does not include any access Driveway, ramp, Parking Area or any open space beneath, above or within any Building or Structure.

Proposed Definition: "Landscaped Open Space" means the area of a Lot Used for the growth and maintenance of grass, flowers, trees, shrubbery, natural vegetation and native species and other landscaping and includes any buffer strip, surfaced walk, surface patio, green roof, swimming pool or similar area, but does not include any access Driveway, ramp, Parking Area or any open space beneath or within any Building or Structure. "Landscaped Open Space" must contribute towards stormwater management, tree canopy cover, and biodiversity.

3. Green Roof

Current Definition in Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864:

There is currently no definition for a Green Roof within Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864.

Proposed Definition: A “Green Roof” means an extension of an above grade roof on top of a building structure, which allows vegetation to grow on top. Green Roofs may act as a Common Amenity Area while also providing a stormwater function and other environmental benefits.

10.1.2 Regulation Updates

Future changes to the City’s Zoning By-Law through the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review should incorporate relevant direction from the Commercial Built Form Standards. The following recommendations for commercial uses should be reviewed as part of the review of Zoning By-Law (1995)-14864:

Site Design

- Permit up to a maximum of 30% of the area developed as a green roof, blue roof, or combination of both, to be applied towards the landscape open space requirements on each site.
- Prohibit surface parking within 15 metres of the corner lot line of all intersections in commercial zones.
- Limit surface parking to the side and rear yards in commercial zones.
- Limit surface parking to a maximum 25 percent of the length of the exterior lot lines adjacent to arterial roads for commercial zones.

- Where buildings cannot be accommodated adjacent to a street, a 3 metre landscape buffer strip adjacent to the street line should be required for all commercial zones where the buildings are not located within 6 metres of the street line.
- No parking space should be permitted closer than 3 metres to any lot line.
- Identify a minimum width of 3 metres for the required buffer strip between commercial uses and residential, institutional, park, wetland or urban reserve uses.
- On sites where the outdoor sale and display of large items in the front yard is permitted, outdoor sales and display areas may be located within 21 metres of the property line abutting the street, and the front yard setback may be increased to a maximum of 21 metres.

Building Design

- Restrict the ground floor area of mixed-use buildings to non-residential uses, except for lobbies and other similar residential uses that must be located on the ground level.
- Apply a 45 degree angular plane to all commercial zones where the side or rear lot lines are adjacent to low and medium density residential designations. Where there is a transition between medium density residential and a Commercial Building, it is recommended that the 45 degree angular plane be measured from 10.5 metres above the average elevation at the required minimum setback.

- Limit Commercial Building lengths to 75 metres for buildings that are located within 15 metres of the front or exterior side lot lines. This will allow for larger Commercial Buildings to be located on the interior of the site.
- Establish a minimum height of 7.5 metres for buildings that are located within 15 metres of the front or exterior side lot line adjacent to arterial and collector roads and Main Streets.
- Where commercial uses abut an arterial or collector road, a minimum of 40% of the surface area of the first Storey façade measured from the Finished Grade up to a height of 4.5 metres, should be comprised of a Transparent Window and/or Active Entrances.
- Establish a minimum front and exterior side yard setback of 3 metres.
- In certain locations (to be determined by staff), establish a minimum front and exterior side yard setback of 6 metres to accommodate additional landscaping.
- The minimum first storey height of a commercial building should be 4.5 metres.

Vehicle Oriented Uses

- Where permitted, Drive Through Facilities should be set back a minimum of 15 metres from lands zoned to permit residential, institutional and park uses.
- Lanes of Drive Through Facilities should be prohibited from locating in front or exterior side yards.
- Drive Through Facility stacking lanes should be prohibited from being located between a building and the public right-of-way.
- A setback of 15 metres should be required for fuel station pump islands from properties zoned to permit residential, institutional and park uses.
- Car washes should be set back 15 metres from lands zoned to permit residential, institutional, and park uses.

10.2 Next Steps

10.2.1 Review and Consultation

This document should be reviewed every five years and updated in coordination with the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law. During this time, updates to the Commercial Built Form Standards should be informed by meaningful public consultation occurring throughout several points in the review process.

The document should be subject to City review, and staff should maintain an ongoing file that records deviations from the Commercial Built Form Standards and Zoning By-Law for proposed and approved development. This information should be used to inform the five year review.

In addition to the five year review, the City should provide regular community updates (e.g. set at a three year interval) to discuss the status of the Commercial Built Form Standards, including successes and challenges experienced since their implementation.

10.2.2 Urban Design Awards

As recommended in the City's Urban Design Action Plan, the City should consider implementing city-wide urban design awards that specifically recognize successful commercial projects that uphold the key standards of the Commercial Built Form Standards and Official Plan policy. This will allow for increased public awareness about the importance of the City's policy framework, and provide clear examples of how the standards should be implemented.

11.0 Glossary

Blue Roof: A low impact development roof design strategy where stormwater is detained and then slowly released over time through the use of flow control devices or structures.¹

Façade Articulation: The design of the building façade or face which may include the use of specific materials, colour palettes and design elements such as doors, windows, and canopies.

Ground Floor Design: The relationship of building uses along the public street. The relationship between built form and the street should contribute to a vibrant public realm through appropriate ground floor uses and public amenities. Also called street edge design.

Large Commercial Site: A Large Commercial Site can typically accommodate more than one building on a site and a mix of buildings fronting the public right-of-way and/or internal streets. These sites may be part of a new development or may involve the redevelopment of existing lands.

Low-Rise Building: A building up to four storeys in height.

Main Street Buildings: A type of multi-storey Commercial Building fronting a street, which typically contain retail or service uses on the ground floor. Office, service, or residential uses may be located on upper building levels. Main Street Buildings should contribute to a safe and vibrant public realm and should encourage alternative modes of transportation, including walking, cycling and public transportation.

Massing: The combined effect of the bulk, height and shape of a building.

Mid-Rise Building: A building between four and six storeys in height.

Scale: Relative size of a building as perceived by pedestrians, which is a product of multiple factors including size, height, bulk, massing, material use and context.

Servicing Area: A space provided within or outside of a building for building-related services and utilities such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment, electrical equipment, ducts, pipes, conduits, etc.

Site Organization: Relates to the location and organization of components on a site, including buildings, parking, access and circulation, storage and loading, and landscaping. Site organization contributes to the overall function of the site and its integration with the surrounding community.

Streetwall: The streetwall is the condition of enclosure along a street created by the fronts of buildings, and enhanced by the continuity and height of the lower façades. Upper levels, when set back, have less impact on the streetwall. A consistent streetwall to maintain a comfortable, pedestrian-scale enclosure in proportion to the right-of-way width.

Tall Building: A building above six storeys in height.

Transitions: The relationship of a building to adjacent land uses to ensure appropriate access to light, view and privacy. This may be done through considerations given to building orientation, setbacks, stepbacks, angular plane, relationship to grade, and land uses.

¹Sustainable Technologies Evaluation Program, <https://sustainabletechnologies.ca/home/urban-runoff-green-infrastructure/low-impact-development/blue-roofs/>

Vehicle Oriented Uses: A type of Commercial Building that facilitates the use and storage of private automobiles, and include Service Stations, Drive Through Facilities, and Car Dealerships.

White Roof: A roof painted with solar reflective white coating to reflect sunlight. They minimize the amount of heat that is absorbed through exposed roof surfaces of buildings to reduce cooling costs and save energy.²

²White Roof Project, <http://www.whiteroofproject.org/faq>

