SECTION 6 – GUIDANCE OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

6.0 Development Permit Areas

The City welcomes innovative design solutions to achieve high quality urban environments that are walkable, safe and environmentally sustainable. The intent of Development Permit Area objectives and guidelines are to provide direction for the form and character of development and the protection of watercourses.

Statutory Context

Subject to the provisions of Sections 919.1 1(a), 1(b), 1(d), 1(e), 1(f), 1(h), 1(j) and Sections 920 2(a), 2(b), 2(c), of the Local Government Act, new development, as described and defined in the City's Zoning Bylaw, within the development permit areas identified in this Chapter will be subject to issuance of a Development Permit.

Area of Application

Development Permit Areas have been established for:

- The "Austin Heights Neighbourhood Centre" area, as identified on Schedule E.
- The "Watercourse Protection" area applies to all lands within 30 metres of the high water mark or top-of-bank of a watercourse.

Development Permit Guidelines outlined in Section 8 of the SWCAP also apply to all Commercial, Multi-family and Neighbourhood Attached Residential areas.

6.1 Austin Heights Neighbourhood Centre

This Development Permit Area addresses the overall goal to revitalize the commercial core. The objectives address objectives for the form and character of high-density mixed-use development, the promotion of energy conservation and the establishment of objectives to promote the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

6.1.1 Objectives

Form and Character:

1. **Active Frontages:** Ensure all new development fosters an active and vibrant public realm in the neighbourhood core with an emphasis on the pedestrian experience.
2. **Building Siting & Form:** Ensure building siting and form establishes strong street definition, considers privacy for residents and effectively transitions building forms.
3. **Parking, Vehicle Access and Loading:** Ensure parking, loading, vehicle access and utility infrastructure does not detract from the quality of the public realm.
4. **Landscaping and Building Finishing:** Promote landscaping and building finishing that complements the public realm and reduces impervious surfaces.
5. **Signage:** Recognize the importance of sensitive sign integration that considers the pedestrian perspective.

Original Adoption April 4, 2011 – Bylaw No. 4196, 2011

Energy Efficiency and Reducing GHG emissions:

6. **Energy Efficient Building Forms:**
   i. Encourage energy efficiency and conservation in the design of new development;
   ii. Encourage building and site design that works to reduce overall community greenhouse gas emissions.

Landmark Buildings:

7. Promote design excellence for landmark buildings that is driven by external appearance, and not just by internal functions and layout.
8. Ensure the look of a landmark building is considered from distance sites and/or approaches into the neighbourhood.

6.1.2 Design vision

- **Austin Avenue** is a high-density, mixed-use and transit oriented corridor with a range of active commercial uses including retail and office with residential located above. A strong streetwall is proposed to define the street along with an improved public realm. A contemporary built form and character that emphasizes pedestrian access while accommodating large format commercial uses is proposed for this street.
- **Ridgeway Avenue Walk** is envisioned to be a distinct character area in the heart of the neighbourhood: a vibrant mixed-use, pedestrian focused, "shared street" with special streetscape and building character elements to distinguish it from the rest of the commercial core. As Shown on Schedule C.
- **Central Vista Walk and the Secondary Pedestrian Walks** are a series of north-south mid-block walkways and plazas to increase pedestrian connectivity through the neighbourhood. These spaces increase the opportunity for shops, cafes and restaurants to spill out into pedestrian areas. The "Walks" incorporate public art and a variety of streetscape elements, pedestrian amenities and are framed by adjacent buildings with active ground floor uses. As Shown on Schedule C.

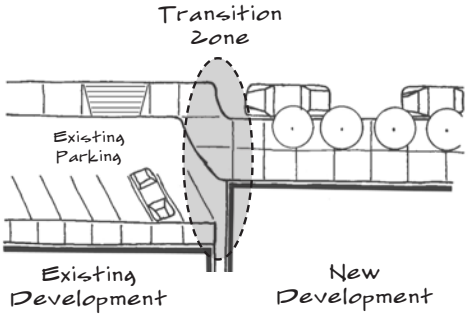
6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives

A. ACTIVE FRONTAGES - ALL DEVELOPMENTS

To achieve the objectives for fostering active, vibrant and pedestrian oriented streets and public spaces, new development must meet the intent of the following:

1) Provide frontage improvements for all streets in the neighbourhood commercial core in accordance with the Austin Heights Street Standards, once adopted by Council, and amended from time to time.

2) Ensure incremental frontage improvements associated with new development provides a safe and functional transition with adjacent existing development, considering both pedestrian and vehicle access. Proponents will be expected to demonstrate transition and mitigation measures at the time of application.

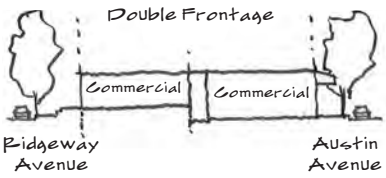


6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

3) Incorporate building design elements that enhance rear lanes for pedestrian safety and establish an effective interface with adjacent uses. Consider active uses and pedestrian design elements such as lighting, integrated building access, high quality landscaping and screening of service/utility functions.

B. ACTIVE FRONTAGES - COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

To achieve the objectives for active, vibrant and pedestrian-oriented streets new development must meet the intent of the following:



Some parcels front both Austin Avenue and Ridgeway Avenue and should provide active uses on both streets.

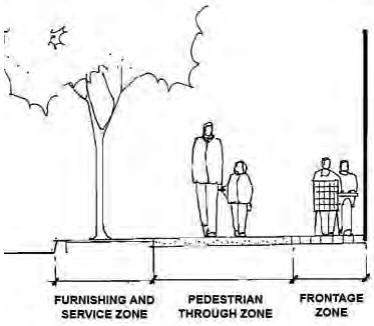
1) Provide continuous and street oriented at-grade commercial or civic uses for all ground level frontages identified on Schedule B as *MANDATORY COMMERCIAL STREET FRONTAGE*. Well integrated breaks are appropriate for ground level lobby entrances to residential uses located on upper storeys, provided they are carefully designed to respect the continuous store-front character of the street. Breaks in the continuous frontage can also be considered for access to concealed vehicle parking or loading in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.1.2 (F).

2) Provide continuous and ground-oriented employment living or residential uses in the first floor of all buildings along frontages identified on Schedule B as *RESIDENTIAL* OR *EMPLOYMENT LIVING* STREET FRONTAGE. Breaks in the continuous frontage can also be considered for access to concealed vehicle parking or loading in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.1.2 (F).

3) Provide continuous and ground-oriented commercial, employment living, residential or highly transparent residential amenity uses in the first floor of all buildings along frontages identified on Schedule B as SECONDARY ACTIVE STREET FRONTAGE. Breaks in the continuous frontage can also be considered for access to concealed vehicle parking or loading in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.1.2 (F).

4) Consider building designs that create flexibility for future employment living uses, as defined in the Zoning Bylaw, for frontages designated on Schedule B as "*RESIDENTIAL* OR *EMPLOYMENT LIVING* STREET FRONTAGE".

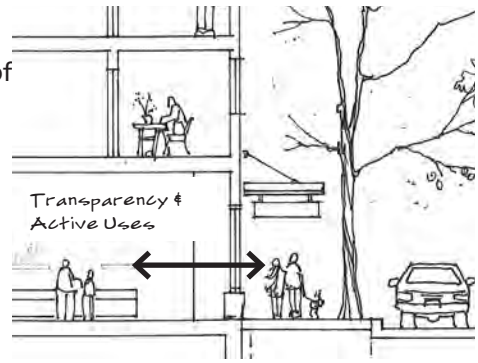
5) Locate café/restaurant patios and/or outdoor display in the frontage zone adjacent to the building to ensure a clear pedestrian through zone on the sidewalk.



Sidewalk Zones

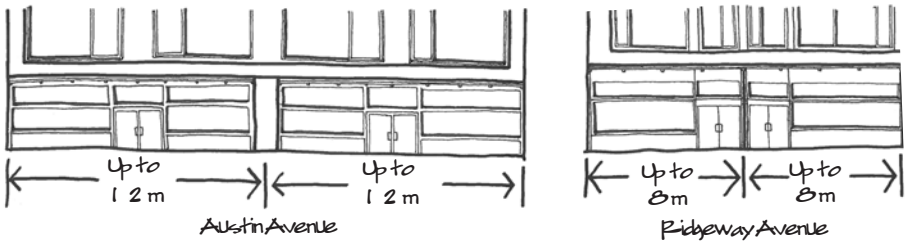
6) Design all street frontages to ensure access to off-street parking, servicing and loading areas minimize the negative impacts on the pedestrian realm and continuity of the active building frontages.

7) Incorporate windows to achieve a high degree of transparency at ground level to ensure casual surveillance of the street.



6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

8) Design building facades along *MANADATORY COMMERCIAL STREET FRONTAGES* to have the appearance of small individual shop fronts. Consider store front treatments that do not appear wider than 12 metres, except along Ridgeway Avenue, where 8 metre maximum widths are preferred to support the pedestrian oriented street character.

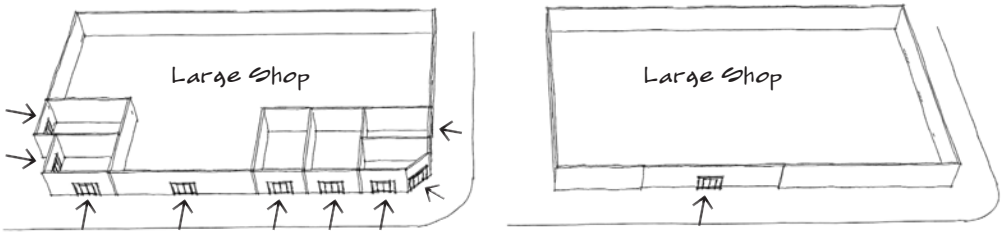


9) Commercial entrance doors should be recessed to ensure that the door swing does not intrude into the sidewalk.

10) Break-up the long facades of large commercial units with small shops addressing the public realm that wrap the larger commercial unit.

THIS **NOT THIS**

Commercial uses wrapping the corner



11) Wrap commercial uses around the corner of building frontages designated MANDATORY COMMERCIAL STREET FRONTAGE.

12) Incorporate additional building setbacks or corner cuts where a development fronts an intersection to provide space for public plazas. Outdoor seating for cafés and restaurants, outdoor display and other active uses is strongly encouraged in these locations, particularly for south facing corners with good solar exposure.

Public Realm refers to all those parts of the built environment which allow public access. It encompasses: all streets, squares and other rights of way, open spaces and parks; and semi-public spaces.

13) At corners, design architectural features and finishing and locate pedestrian entrances in a manner that responds to the visual prominence of intersections.

14) Step buildings with at-grade retail frontage along the north-south slope in a manner that creates a strong visual and physical connection with the public realm. Individual shop entrances should have a direct at-grade connection to the public realm.

15) Provide continuous weather protection along the first storey of *MANDATORY COMMERCIAL STREET FRONTAGES*. Awnings and canopies should be placed to respect the facade architecture and fenestration (placement of windows and doors) patterns of the building.

16) Avoid ground level blank walls. Consider unique design features (i.e. living wall, artistic treatment, architectural elements) for all blanks walls.

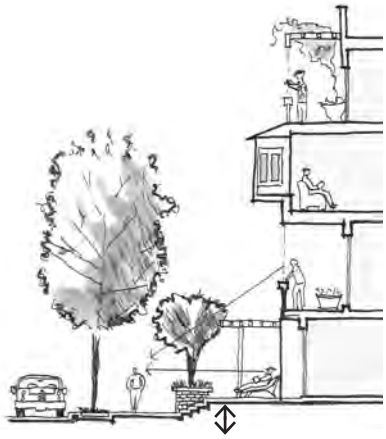
Original Adoption April 4, 2011 – Bylaw No. 4196, 2011

6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

C. ACTIVE FRONTAGES - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT LIVING USES

To achieve the objectives for active, vibrant and pedestrian oriented residential and employment living frontages, new development must meet the intent of the following:

1) Orient all dwelling units at or near grade toward the street or public pedestrian mews with direct access from an individual entrance.
2) Step ground oriented residential units down the north-south slope to maintain a strong connection with the public realm.
3) To ensure a degree of privacy while maintaining natural surveillance of the street, design ground floor residential units to be slightly elevated above the sidewalk.
4) Clearly delineate the separation between public and private space along streets and pedestrian corridors while allowing for natural surveillance of the public realm.



D. BUILDING SITING & FORM - ALL DEVELOPMENTS

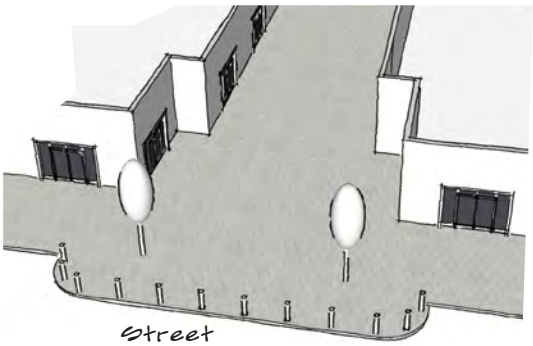
To achieve the objectives for strong street definition and effective transition of building forms, new development must meet the intent of the following:

1) Design buildings fronting Ridgeway Avenue, between Nelson Street and Marmont Street, with a consistent 2 to 3 storey street wall (building facade). Above that height buildings should step-back to allow sunlight penetration to street level.

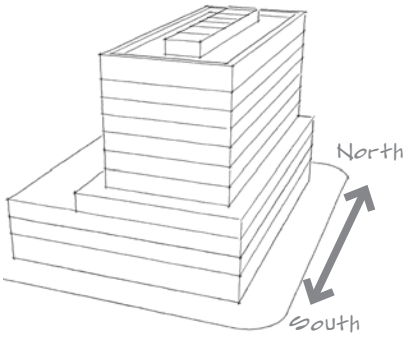
2) Design buildings fronting Austin Avenue with a consistent 3 to 4 storey street wall (building facade). Above that height buildings should step-back to allow sunlight penetration to street level.

6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

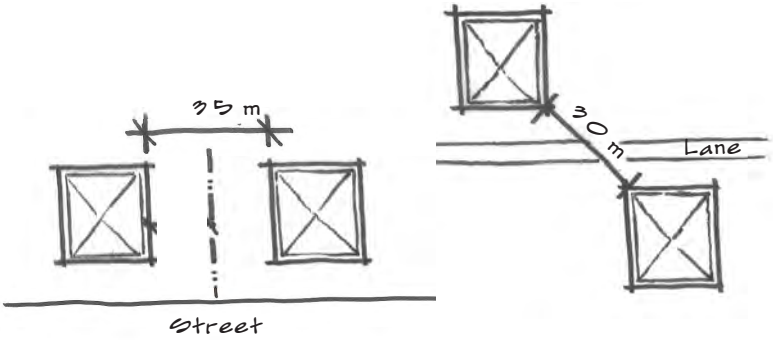
3) Design plazas and pedestrian mid-block walkways to ensure adequate space for access, pedestrian circulation and sunlight penetration while providing sufficient space for café seating, outdoor display and landscaping, where appropriate.



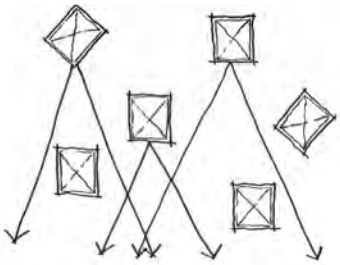
4) Orient the wide portion of buildings north-south, minimizing the width along the east-west elevation to reduce shadowing and maximize solar penetration at the street level.



5) Where possible, maintain a minimum distance of 35 metres (30 metres diagonally) between towers (above 4 storeys) to minimize shadowing and to ensure adequate light, air, access, views and privacy for residents.



6) Space towers within the commercial core diagonally to avoid towers facing directly into each other.



6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

7) Design the primary entrance to all residential buildings in a manner that establishes a strong and visible street presence with direct sight lines into the lobby.

E. PARKING, VEHICLE ACCESS, LOADING AND UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

To achieve the objective of supporting effective integration of parking, loading, vehicle access and utility infrastructure in a manner that does not detract from the public realm, new development must meet the intent of the following:

1) Conceal all off-street parking within a building or underground. Separate at-grade or above-grade parking from any street, lane or pedestrian corridor with an active use (e.g. residential or commercial). Concealed parking directly adjacent to a lane is acceptable if it is appropriately screened and does not negatively impact adjacent uses.

2) Provide access to off-street parking and loading from the lane. Where a lane does not exist or cannot be provided, locate and design off-street parking access, service and loading areas in a manner that:

   - Minimizes disruption to the continuity of the building frontage, pedestrian movement zone and public realm; and
   - Minimizes the negative impacts of vehicle entrance ramps and service areas through treatment such as enclosure, screening, finish materials, lighting location and orientation, and landscaping.

3) Allow for the provision of on-street parking within the public right-of-way.

4) Design loading and service areas to be concealed within commercial and mixed-use buildings.

5) Avoid access to off-street parking and loading along Ridgeway Avenue Walk, as shown on Schedule C, to achieve the important pedestrian character of that street.

6) Locate utility boxes, ventilation equipment or other at grade mechanical equipment underground or in a discrete and screened location as not to negatively impact the public realm.

7) Where feasible, relocate overhead utilities to underground ducts on adjacent street frontages. Where relocating overhead utilities to underground is not feasible, provide underground ducting infrastructure along these frontages to support future relocation.

F. LANDSCAPING AND BUILDING FINISHING - ALL DEVELOPMENTS

To achieve the objective of integrating landscaping and building finishing that complements the public realm and reduces impervious surfaces, new development must meet the intent of the following:

1) Avoid exposed building and parking structure foundations. If unavoidable, design them in a manner consistent with the building finish, or screen exposed foundation with appropriate landscaping.

6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

2) Encourage permeable paving materials to reduce rainwater run-off on driveways, pathways and other hard surfaces on-site, and/or consider grading of hard surfaces towards landscaped areas.

3) Select and locate lighting in a manner that maximizes pedestrian safety while not resulting in glare, light pollution or nuisance to residents or adjacent properties.

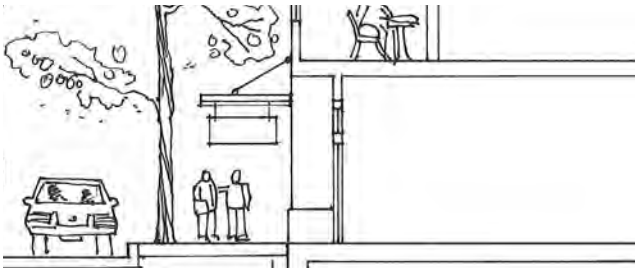
4) Design roof tops on low rise portions of a building in a manner that considers views from above and utilizes the space for active uses where appropriate. Consider design that incorporates landscaping, vegetation, and stormwater management.

5) Design underground parking structures to minimize conflicts with landscaping features and tree pits.

G. SIGNAGE - COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE

To achieve the objective of sensitively and effectively integrating commercial signage, consider the following:

1) Where appropriate, incorporate under awning/canopy pedestrian oriented signage.

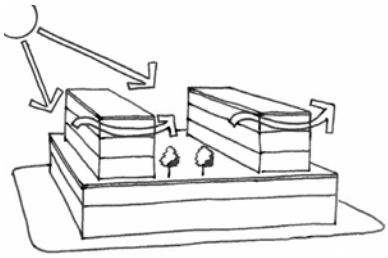


2) Not withstanding any provision of the Sign Bylaw, No. 3873, 2008, architecturally coordinate all signs and signage with the overall design of the building and landscaping.

H. ENERGY EFFICIENT BUILDING FORMS AND SITING

To achieve the objectives of encouraging energy efficient buildings, consider the following:

1) Explore residential unit designs with at least two exterior walls to maximize daylight access and passive cooling/ventilation. This can be accomplished by incorporating a mews or central courtyard in between residential uses and designing buildings with natural ventilation.



6.1.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives cont'd

2) Where possible, coordinate landscape materials and building siting to provide shade from direct sunlight during the hot summer hours, while allowing sunlight penetration into the building in winter.

3) Explore the incorporation of renewable energy generation technologies to meet a portion of lighting, water or space heating demand (e.g. solar thermal hot water, solar thermal voltaic, ground source heat pump.)

I. LANDMARK BUILDINGS

To achieve the objectives for landmark buildings consider the following design parameters:

1) Appropriate response to topography;
2) Appropriate transition in scale and integration with adjacent buildings;
3) Appropriate street level character;
4) Appropriate scale and step-back from the street at higher elevations;
5) Consideration of views and vistas to and from key sites and within the neighbourhood;
6) Consideration of the impact of the building on transportation, infrastructure shadowing, wind and views effects;
7) Consideration of documentary images demonstrating how the proposed building fits into the landscape;
8) A smaller or uniquely shaped floor plate;
9) An oblique or customized building orientation;
10) The use of high-quality finishes and exterior cladding materials.
11) A tailored building (base, shaft, top), with appropriate proportions of each part;
12) A distinctive profile for the upper part of the building;
13) Attractive and publicly accessible spaces, art, and/or other amenities at the ground level;
14) The design of all ground-level frontages to ensure a vibrant public realm with active uses to foster pedestrian activity;
15) Enhancement of the building's corner location;
16) Appropriate screening of all mechanical equipment.

6.2 Watercourse Protection

Three protected watercourses lie within the plan area: Nelson Creek, Como Creek and Booth Creek, as shown on Schedule A. The sections of these watercourses located within the plan area provide fish habitat for resident fish in the plan area as well as downstream water flows, food and nutrients.

6.2.1 Objectives

The objective of the Watercourse Protection Development Permit area is to ensure the review of proposed development activities adjacent to watercourses, in accordance with the Zoning Bylaw's RAR provisions, where the proposed development does not trigger a subdivision, rezoning or development/ development variance permit.

6.2.3 Guidelines to Achieve Objectives

1) *DEVELOPMENT* within 30 metres of the high water mark or top-of-bank of a watercourse (the Riparian Assessment Area, as shown on Schedule A) triggers a Watercourse Protection Development Permit and a review under the Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR) provisions under Section 523 of the Zoning Bylaw, No. 3000, 1996.

2) The Watercourse Protection Development Permit can also facilitate modification of the applicable regulations to further achieve the enhancement and protection of watercourses.