

## Broadway Commercial Area Design Plan

# Design Guidelines

---

### 1. Building Expression

Buildings should reinforce a base, middle, and top in their design.

- Base – Within the first three storeys of a building, a clearly defined base will contribute to the quality of the pedestrian environment by providing animation, transparency, and articulation.
- Middle – The body of the building should contribute to the physical and visual quality of the overall streetscape.
- Top – The roof should be distinguished from the rest of the building and designed to contribute to the visual quality of the streetscape.

### 2. Orientation and Placement

Buildings can enhance the pedestrian environment by creating a sense of enclosure. This is achieved by framing the street with parallel aligned buildings and providing the appropriate levels of animation and use.

- All buildings should orient to the street with clearly defined entry points that directly access the sidewalk.
- A minimum of 70% of the front building line shall be located within 1.0 metre of the front property line.

### 3. Street Wall

The street wall has the greatest impact on the character of the street experience. The key design objectives for street walls in the Broadway Area ensure visual continuity, pedestrian scale, animation and design quality.

- A street wall of a new building should align with those of neighbouring buildings or have the same setback as the predominant buildings on the block.
- The height of the street wall should be consistent with historic heights of no greater than 3 storeys and no less than 2 storeys.
  - Levels above the street wall should be set back to reinforce a low-rise interface with the sidewalk.
- The height of ground-level floors should be visually prominent and no less than 4.5 metres for commercial and 4.0 metres for residential uses.

#### **4. Heritage Contexts**

Where a new building is proposed along Broadway Avenue adjacent to a heritage significant building, its design should complement, rather than detract from, the character of the older building.

##### **General Guidelines**

- New buildings should avoid historical misrepresentation by not replicating past architectural styles.
- New buildings should consider and respect the scale, material and massing of adjacent heritage significant buildings.

##### **Façade Articulation**

- New buildings should respect the pattern of façade division by ensuring the horizontal and vertical architectural orders, including windows and entries, are aligned with neighbouring heritage buildings or the established pattern on the block.

##### **Façade Materials**

- New buildings should consider materials and colours evident in existing heritage significant properties.
- Building materials should be chosen for their functional and aesthetic quality. Exterior finishes should exhibit quality of workmanship, sustainability, permanence, and ease of maintenance.

#### **5. Corner Sites**

Corner buildings have a greater visual prominence given that they front onto two streets and frame intersections. To enhance the distinction of new buildings at Key Corner Sites, modest exceptions to setbacks and height restrictions should be permitted to encourage massing and designs that accentuate the visual prominence of the site.

- New developments on all corner sites should orient to both street frontages.
- Corner entrances should be encouraged wherever possible to address the two street frontages.

#### **6. Storefronts**

Well proportioned and designed storefronts can provide animation and visual interest at the sidewalk.

- To reflect the existing character and context, storefronts should generally have a frontage in the range of 7.5 metres but not greater than 15 metres.
- Where frontages are greater than 7.5 metres, they should articulate narrow storefronts in the design of the facade.
- Storefronts should have a minimum of 75% glazing to maximize visual animation.
  - Clear glass should be used for windows and doors along the street-level façade. Dark tinted, reflective or opaque glazing should be discouraged for storefronts.
- Storefront entrances should be highly visible and clearly articulated. Entrances should be located at or near grade.
- Storefront signage should be consistent with the signage guidelines, but add diversity and interest to the street.

- Weather protection for pedestrians is encouraged through the use of awnings and canopies.

## **7. Residential Street Access Units**

Where retail is not required, and residential uses are proposed at-grade, the following guidelines apply:

- Residential uses at-grade should include individual units accessed from the street.
- Appropriate front yard privacy measures should be considered such as setbacks, landscaping, and porches.
- Access to the individual units should be clearly visible, and the scale, rhythm and articulation of the street wall should be consistent with the residential character of adjacent neighbourhoods. Grade-level units should be designed to accommodate live-work opportunities and potential conversion into commercial or retail uses.

## **8. Roof Treatment**

The design of the roof can make an impact on the character of the streetscape, especially from great distances. Roofs are also seen from other buildings of equal or greater height.

- The expression of the building top and roof should be clearly distinguished from the rest of the building through treatments such as stepbacks, change in materials, cornices lines, and overhangs.
- Mechanical penthouses should be integrated with the architectural treatment of roofs and/or screened from view.
- Green roofs should be encouraged.

## **9. Above-Grade Parking**

Wherever possible, parking for new developments should be provided at the rear or below-grade and accessed off the rear lane. However, where parking is provided above-grade within the base building, the following guidelines address the design and quality of such structures.

- Direct access for parking, loading, and service areas from the street should be discouraged.
- Where an above-grade parking facility fronts on a street, the ground-level frontage should incorporate retail, public or other active uses.
- Above-grade parking structures should be designed in such a way that they reinforce the intended built character and blend into the streetscape.

## **10. Material & Architectural Quality**

New developments should ensure excellence in architectural design and in the use of high-grade materials, particularly at street-level. A key objective of the Broadway 360° Development Plan is to achieve a balance between consistencies in design quality and street interface, while enabling individual expression in new developments. Key guidelines for architectural and material quality include:

- The Broadway area has a rich history of development that is reflected in the Prairie-style 'main street' buildings that are constructed in a variety of materials. New developments should seek to contribute to this mix and variety.

- Building materials should be chosen for their functional and aesthetic quality and exterior finishes should exhibit quality of workmanship, longevity, sustainability and ease of maintenance.
- Building materials recommended for new construction include brick, stone, wood, glass, in-situ concrete and pre-cast concrete.
- In general, the appearance of building materials should be true to their nature and should not mimic other materials.
- Vinyl siding, plastic, plywood, concrete block, darkly tinted and mirrored glass and metal siding utilizing exposed fasteners should be discouraged.

### **11. Sidewalk Cafes**

Sidewalk cafés enhance the vibrancy of street life, further enable social interaction, and are major destinations in the warmer months.

Sidewalk cafés should be encouraged throughout the Broadway Area provided there are no conflicts with adjacent land uses and they are able to be accommodated within the existing sidewalk width dimensions without encumbering pedestrians.

- Where permitting, small sidewalk cafés should be encouraged along streets with narrower sidewalks as well.
- Sidewalk cafés should be designed to contribute and integrate into the streetscape.
- Curb bump-outs should be encouraged at all corners to provide for additional sidewalk café opportunities.
- Rear yard and roof top patios should be directed to properties that are not directly adjacent to residential neighbourhood.

### **12. Building Lighting**

The image and experience at night is an important aspect of any mixed-use area

- Attractive landscape and architectural features can be highlighted with spot-lighting or general lighting placement.
- Heritage and institutional buildings, as well as landmark elements such as public art, steeples or distinctive rooflines, should be illuminated.
- Subtle night-lighting of retail display windows should be encouraged.

### **13. Signage**

Signage plays an important role in the overall image of any area. Signs should contribute to the quality of individual buildings and the overall streetscape. This includes compatibility with heritage buildings, where appropriate. High quality, imaginative, and innovative signs are also encouraged.

- The maximum signage area for storefront signs should be no more than 25% of the business storefront.
- Back lit illuminated rectangular sign boxes are discouraged.
- Signage should not obscure windows, cornices or other architectural elements.
- Signage should aid pedestrians and drivers in navigating the area, especially at night.
- Billboards, super boards, and roof mounted signs are not permitted.

## 14. Sustainable Design

Conservation of natural resources and systems should be a primary consideration in the planning, design, and construction process. To achieve this, all proposed projects should strive for sustainable building practices. This includes public as well as private development, and encompasses streets, parks, and buildings.

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction should not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work should be differentiated from the old and should be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, height, proportion and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

### List of Terms

**Animation** concerns spaces that have an animated quality; liveliness; movement; activity.

**Articulation** is the emphasis or accentuation of different parts of a building so that they are distinct and stand out clearly.

**Building setback** is the distance at-grade (ground level) that the building is set back from the property line.

**Building setback** is the distance, above the base building, that the remaining portion of the building (building cap) is set back from the face of the base building.

**Cornice** is a decorative molding that crowns a building.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** is the ratio of gross floor area of the building divided by the site area.

**Glazing** is the part of a wall or window that is glass.

**Mechanical Penthouse** is the covering or enclosure on the roof of a building that houses mechanical systems or equipment for the building.

**Rhythm**, in architecture, is the repetitive or alternating use of visual elements to create a pattern.

**Transparency** refers to the degree to which people can see or perceive what lies beyond the street edge, often through windows, doors, fences and landscaping.