

Section 8. URBAN DESIGN

Urban design encompasses the arrangement of elements within the built and natural environment that contribute to an individual's "sense of place" and appreciation of that place. It includes the relationship of buildings, landscape elements, and the spaces between them, as well as streetscape features such as sidewalks and boulevard treatment, signage, and building setbacks. Urban design is recognized as having both functional and aesthetic aspects. While good urban design is important throughout the urban and *rural areas* of the City, it has particular relevance as a tool for achieving compatibility between areas containing *cultural heritage resources* and *new development*.

Goal:

To provide a framework for the provision and maintenance of a safe, efficient, and harmonious environment, which recognizes, values and supports the specific aspects of the built and natural environment that contribute to an area's sense of place and significance to the community.

Policies:

Urban Design Guidelines

8.1. The City recognizes the value associated with quality architecture, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, and vibrant neighbourhoods. For these reasons, the City may undertake urban design guidelines for specific types of *development*, for specific areas of the City or for the entire City. Any urban design guidelines that are developed will be used to:

- a. clarify the strategic direction and design objectives of the Official Plan;
- b. complement and enhance any design considerations in *development* applications; and,
- c. assist in the preparation of any future secondary plan, community improvement plan, or other relevant planning documents.

Accessibility and Safety

8.2. The City promotes the provision of barrier free access and safety through the review of *development* proposals, construction of public works, or the preparation and approval of area plans by:

- a. providing for the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and others with special requirements through improved amenities such as parking and washrooms, clear signage, visual or auditory aids, and other means as appropriate;
- b. improving public security through enhanced lighting, visibility of public areas, provision of entrance locations in well-traveled areas, and ease of accessibility for emergency personnel or vehicles;
- c. clearly defining building entrances and avoiding designs that would create areas that are hidden from public view and thus potentially available for criminal activity;
- d. arranging public uses and amenities within a convenient walking distance;

- e. providing adequate walkway widths, visually permeable materials and structures, and landscaping elements that do not obstruct sightlines in the design of streetscapes, transportation facilities, or public buildings and places; and,
- f. promoting safe environments by applying Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts and principles in the design of buildings, site layout and landscaping of *development* sites.

Streetscapes and Public Spaces

8.3. The City maintains or enhances the character of valued streetscapes, community areas and landscapes through the following measures:

- a. preserving human scale in locations that are pedestrian-oriented by controlling building heights, requiring building step-backs, having entrances at street level, and other means as appropriate;
- b. protecting views to the water, City Hall and other *significant* buildings or landscapes;
- c. siting new buildings and structures in a manner that repeats and complements the siting and spacing of existing buildings, structures or landscaped areas in order to continue a pattern that is characteristic of surrounding neighbourhoods and heritage areas;
- d. the strategic use of building separation, landscaping and buffers to mitigate inharmonious elements of the built or natural environment, such as railways, service areas, or incompatible uses;
- e. designing public spaces or requiring the design of common spaces in private projects that have a clear sense of definition, and provide sufficient amenity and security to encourage public use and linkage to other public areas;
- f. preserving and enhancing the context of special buildings, streetscapes, landscapes and sites that have been identified as having particular architectural, historic or cultural value; and,
- g. encouraging innovative methods to minimize the visual impact of utility features, either by containing utility features within streetscape elements or by screening them from view.

New Development

8.4. The City requires the design of new *development* to be visually *compatible* with surrounding neighbourhoods and areas of historic or cultural significance through its site plan control review, preparation of zoning standards, and preparation of urban design guidelines, as appropriate, that address the following:

- a. siting, scale and design of new *development* in relation to the characteristics of the surrounding neighbourhood or the *significant cultural heritage resources* including, scale, massing, setbacks, access, landscaped treatment, building materials, exterior design elements or features;
- b. protecting *natural features and areas* and *cultural heritage landscapes* through the siting, design and review of new *development*; and,

- c. achieving compatibility with a predominant architectural style, street pattern or site arrangement where that style or arrangement forms a valuable component of the existing neighbourhood or the historic or cultural significance of the identified area. Section 2.7 provides additional policy in this regard.

Sign By-law

8.5. The City regulates signage in accordance with the consolidated sign by-law, so that signage complements the streetscape and conforms to any approved streetscape plan. Signage should be harmonious with the type and location of *development*, placed to serve its function, sized appropriately, and not overwhelm the streetscape or dominate the skyline. It is the policy of this Plan to use signage in a manner that protects views to historic sites, *significant* landmarks or vistas of Lake Ontario or other *natural heritage features* or *cultural heritage landscapes*.

Protected Views

8.6. Protected views identified on Schedule 9 on streets that terminate at the water must be preserved by:

- a. restricting or not allowing *development* of buildings and structures that would interrupt sightlines;
- b. requiring that the siting, massing and design of buildings and structures in areas adjacent to protected views maintain the views;
- c. encouraging the *development* of facilities, amenities, signage and design themes at locations where the Waterfront Pathway or the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail meets the protected views, which will enhance the use of this area and appreciation of the view; and,
- d. ensuring that any installation of structures or facilities in public open space areas adjacent to the protected views complements the view.

City Hall

8.7. City Hall is the landmark and symbol of Kingston which is protected by identifying a series of viewpoints and viewplanes as shown on Schedule DH-4 of the Downtown and Harbour Special Policy Area and as set out in the following policies. The City will ensure that *development* will:

- a. maintain and support the scale and character of City Hall Square and be *compatible* with the heritage buildings within the Downtown area east of Bagot Street when new *development* and *redevelopment* is permitted;
- b. protect the silhouette of City Hall, having particular regard for the protection of the dome from incompatible building heights that would mask the silhouette;
- c. prevent shadowing of City Hall Square, particularly the area of Market Square and Confederation Park;
- d. protect the viewplanes shown on Schedule DH-4 in accordance with the policies of Section 10A, the Downtown and Harbour Special Policy Area, by ensuring that new *development* does not obscure or overpower the dome of City Hall; and,

- e. protect the viewplanes or silhouette of City Hall with the use of by-laws allowing bonusing under Section 37 of the Planning Act as set out in Section 9.5.25 of this Plan.

Multiple Building Projects

8.8. New multiple building *development* projects involve a number of separate buildings being built either at one time or in phases on an initial single landholding. It is the intent of Council to review multiple building projects in accordance with the following policies:

- a. in support of any *development* application, and as part of any site plan control application, the proponent of a multiple building *development* project must prepare an overall plan for the total project showing such features as:
 - building footprints and configurations;
 - parking areas and structures and bicycle parking for each building;
 - lands devoted exclusively to each building, and where applicable, the location of *affordable* units in accordance with Section 3.3.10 of this Plan;
 - vehicle and pedestrian access to the project and to each building;
 - *amenity areas* for each building, and associated lighting;
 - public open space areas and access where required;
 - stormwater management schemes;
 - site servicing details;
 - internal vehicular and pedestrian traffic movement;
 - landscaping details, buffering and screening in terms of a multi-level design proposal;
 - any proposed phasing for the project in order of sequence; and,
 - any intended future proposals for land division;
- b. in projects where the phasing of buildings is planned in conjunction with the dedication of public parklands, or the dedication of a public road, Council may require that *development* proceed by way of a plan of subdivision to ensure permanent long-term public access to public parklands, access to each building site, appropriate construction of a public road, and the availability of full services at each phase of the phasing program;
- c. the design of individual buildings within multiple building projects are to be coordinated and mutually *compatible*;
- d. residential multiple building projects are encouraged, where feasible, to incorporate a variety of *compatible* residential building types such as street row housing, townhousing, stacked townhousing, maisonnettes, quadruplexes and various apartment building types in a comprehensive plan;
- e. the maximum permissible density for any residential multiple building project may be calculated comprehensively for the project as

a whole, exclusive of lands required for roads, parks, or other public purposes;

- f.** in residential projects where some form of individual dwelling unit ownership is anticipated for all or a portion of the project, each separate building and land parcel must have frontage on an assumed road and be designed to stand ultimately as an independent project;
- g.** the design of residential multiple building projects must be coordinated in terms of individual resident privacy, *residential unit* views, solar access, *amenity area* access and use, and private and public vehicular and pedestrian access and movement;
- h.** where it is clearly demonstrated by the proponent that the *development* is in the long-term interests of the residents of a residential multiple building project, a ground floor convenience commercial outlet serving the day to day needs of nearby residents, and located within the main walls of one of the residential buildings, may be permitted without amendment to this Plan; and,
- i.** Council must be satisfied prior to any approval that any residential multiple building project will serve the long-term housing and daily needs of the intended residents, and provide a safe, healthy and convenient living environment.

Gateways to the City

8.9. Several arterial roads provide principal entrances to the City for vehicular traffic from Highway 401. These roadways include Gardiners Road, Sir John A. Macdonald Boulevard, Division Street, Montreal Street and Highway 15. Each provides an important entry or “gateway” to the City. Treatment of these roadways is therefore a high priority.

8.9.1. *Development and redevelopment* is intended to be characterized by a high standard of site design consistent with the natural “gateway to the City” image. Site design guidelines that reinforce this approach will include the following requirements:

- a.** buildings are oriented to enhance the relationship of the buildings to the road;
- b.** vehicular parking, except for visitors parking and parking for people with disabilities, are provided on the sides and rear of the buildings;
- c.** joint access or shared driveways are required, in conjunction with parking to the side and rear of buildings, in order to make the area available at the front of buildings for landscaping;
- d.** service areas, including loading, garbage and storage areas, are not exposed to the roads. Where this is not practical, such areas should be screened from public view by appropriate landscaping and/or fencing;
- e.** screening for outdoor storage areas is integrated with the building; and,
- f.** landscaping on the site is planned to ensure a continuous landscaped area between the buildings and the road.

**Implementation
Measures**

8.9.2. Along individual corridors, the City will develop an appropriate streetscape for the corridor through the implementation of public works, site plan control review, and through the effort of individual owners by providing such features as tree plantings, gardens, boulevards, public and private signage, and where feasible, underground utilities.

8.10. The City will implement urban design policies through one or more of the following mechanisms:

- a.** zoning, site plan control review and related guidelines, subdivision design guidelines, urban design guidelines, a sign by-law, guidelines for persons with disabilities, or any other relevant guideline adopted by Council;
- b.** the preparation and implementation of *community improvement plans* and programs, as budget permits;
- c.** the design, construction, and installation of public works or facilities;
- d.** the preparation or approval of heritage conservation district plans, secondary plans or other planning exercises; and,
- e.** consultation with the private sector with respect to *development* applications.