

Urban Design Program Review

Planning and Development Committee

Date: December 9, 2024

Information and Recommendation Report



CELEBRATE

Introduction

- The report emphasizes the City's commitment to achieving good urban design, and provides an overview of:
 - The Urban Design Program and its value,
 - The City's approach to urban design and its regulatory regime,
 - Recent provincial legislation and the impact to the Urban Design Program.
- The report acknowledges that over time, conditions change, and priorities shift, so, it is important to review the urban design guidelines periodically.



What is Urban Design and Why is it important?

Urban design is the process of shaping the physical layout and appearance of cities.

The primary goal of urban design is:

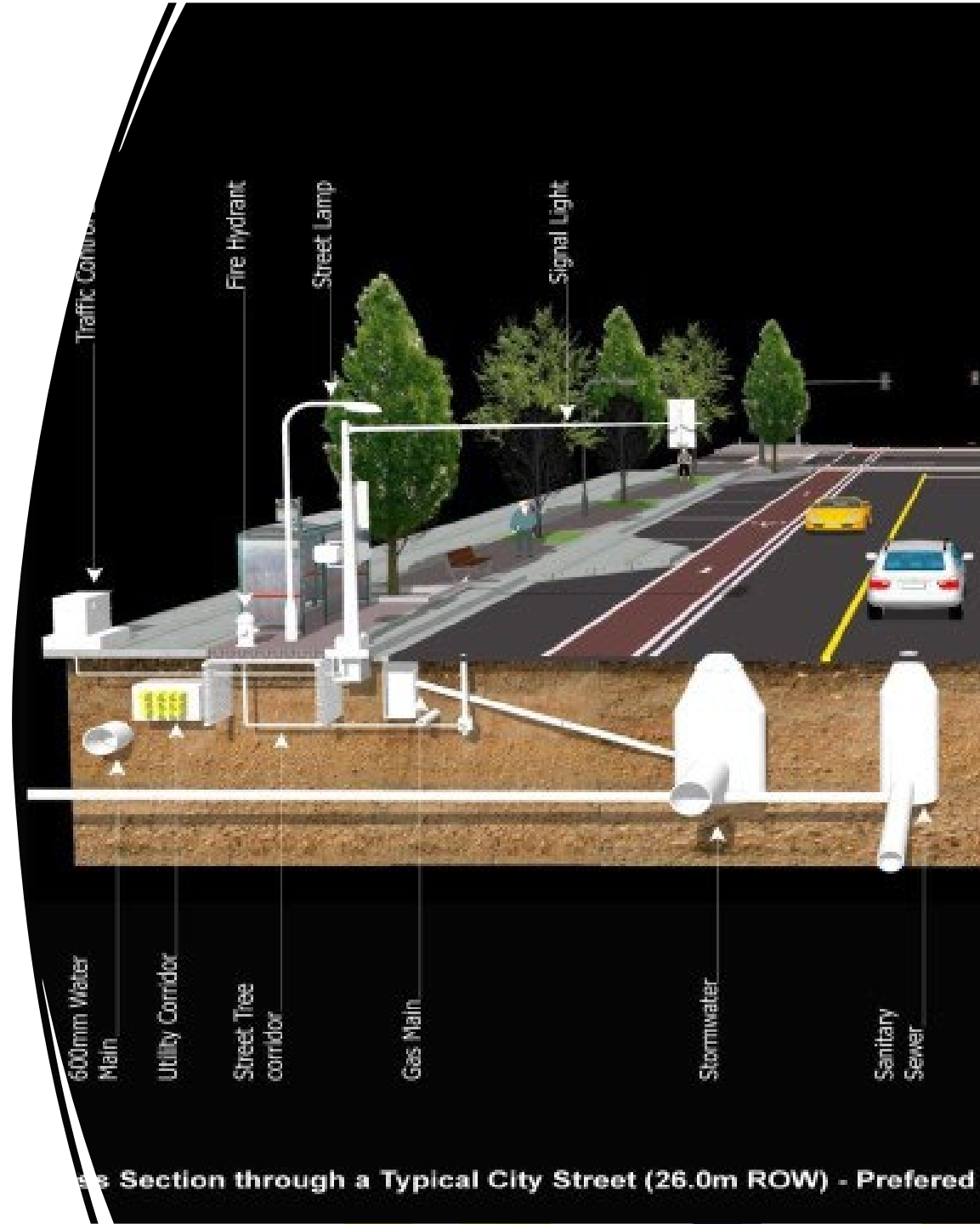
- enhance the **quality of life** for residents,
- promote **social interaction**,
- **support economic activities** while considering factors like mobility, accessibility, and the natural environment.



What is one of the city's primary focus?

The **public realm** is the most visible part of the City's urban environment and is a priority focus of the Urban Design Program.

Given all the **competing utility components** within the streetscape, the primary aim of urban design is to ensure that there is **a coordinated approach** to the boulevard treatments which prioritizes the human experience.



How is urban design currently regulated?

Official Plan



9 Build a Desirable Urban Form

9.1 Introduction

Urban form refers to the physical layout and design of the city. Urban design is the art of shaping the interaction between people and places through the arrangement, appearance and functions of cities. It addresses the natural and built environments and influences the processes that lead to successful cities. Or, more succinctly, how do buildings fit together to make quality spaces.

The focus of this chapter is on the achievement of a sustainable urban form for Mississauga, based on the

urban system and city structure, with high quality urban design and a strong sense of place that is culturally vibrant, attractive, livable and functional, and protects or enhances natural and built heritage features. It is organized on the basis of Intensification Areas where growth will be directed and other areas where limited growth will occur.

Mississauga envisions that growth will be directed to Intensification Areas comprised of the Downtown, Major Nodes, Community Nodes, Corporate Centres, **Intensification Corridors** and **Major Transit Station Areas**. Established residential Neighbourhoods, the Natural Heritage System and valuable cultural heritage



Figure 9-1: Mississauga will direct growth to Intensification Areas while protecting existing neighbourhoods. This concept plan illustrates how the Hurontario/Dundas area can be redeveloped to achieve a vibrant, pedestrian friendly destination that is rich in character.



How is urban design currently regulated?

Zoning By-law

Part 4 - Residential Zones

4.15 RA1 TO RA5 ZONES (APARTMENTS)

4.15.1 RA1 to RA5 Permitted Uses and Zone Regulations

All **buildings** and **structures** shall comply with the provisions contained in Parts 1 to 3 and Section 4.1 of this By-law, and the **uses** and zone regulations specified within the applicable zone column contained in Table 4.15.1 - RA1 to RA5 Permitted Uses and Zone Regulations.

Table 4.15.1 - RA1 to RA5 Permitted Uses and Zone Regulations
(0325-2008), (0308-2011), (0174-2017), (0181-2018/LPAT Order 2019 February 15)

Column	A	B	C	D	E	F
Line 1.0	ZONES	RA1	RA2	RA3	RA4	RA5
8.0	MINIMUM FRONT AND EXTERIOR SIDE YARDS					
8.1	For that portion of the dwelling with a height less than or equal to 13.0 m			7.5 m ⁽³⁾		
8.2	For that portion of the dwelling with a height greater than 13.0 m and less than or equal to 20.0 m			8.5 m ⁽³⁾		
8.3	For that portion of the dwelling with a height greater than 20.0 m and less than or equal to 26.0 m			9.5 m ⁽³⁾		
8.4	For that portion of the dwelling with a height greater than 26.0 m			10.5 m ⁽³⁾		

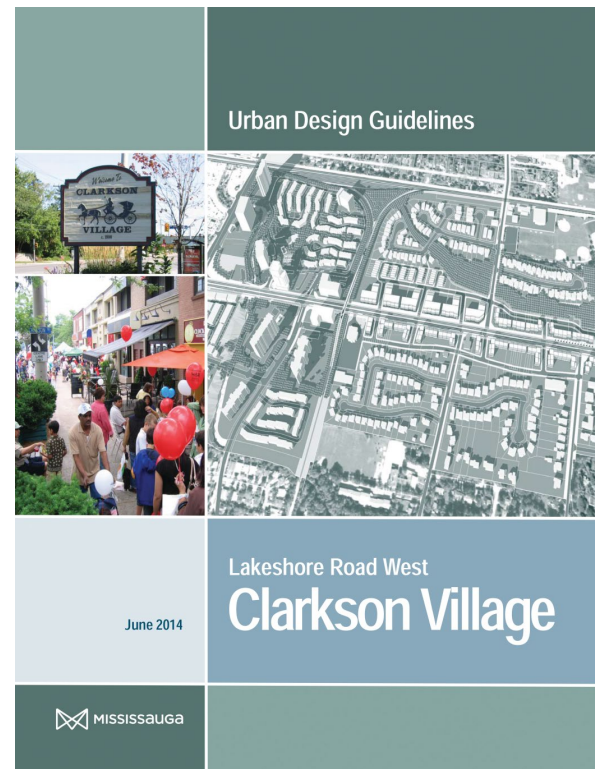
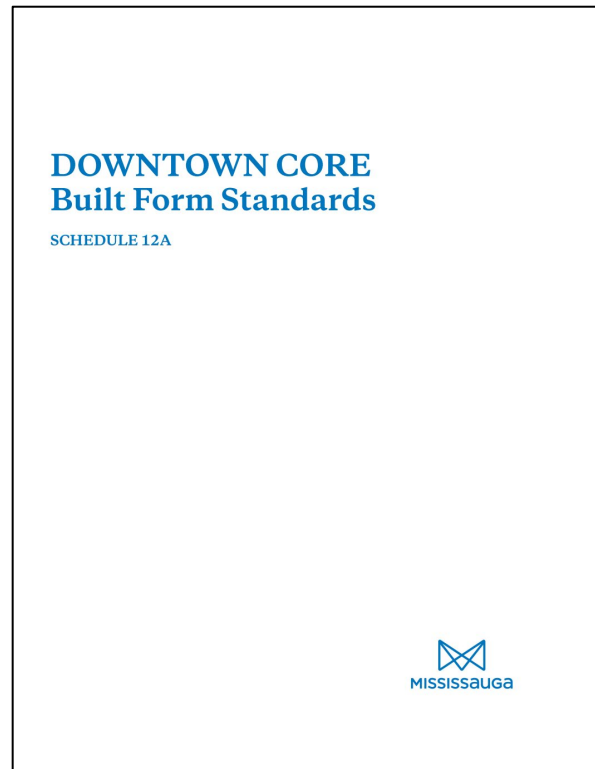
Table 4.15.1 continued on next page

Part 4 - Residential Zones

Column	A	B	C	D	E	F
Line 1.0	ZONES	RA1	RA2	RA3	RA4	RA5
Table 4.15.1 continued from previous page						
9.0	MINIMUM INTERIOR SIDE YARD					
9.1	For that portion of the dwelling with a height less than or equal to 13.0 m			4.5 m ⁽³⁾		
9.2	For that portion of the dwelling with a height greater than 13.0 m and less than or equal to 20.0 m			6.0 m ⁽³⁾		
9.3	For that portion of the dwelling with a height greater than 20.0 m and less than or equal to 26.0 m			7.5 m ⁽³⁾		
9.4	For that portion of the dwelling with a height greater than 26.0 m			9.0 m ⁽³⁾		
9.5	Where an interior side lot line , or any portion thereof, abuts an Apartment, Institutional, Office, Commercial, Employment, or Utility Zone, or any combination of zones thereof			4.5 m ⁽³⁾		

How is urban design currently regulated?

Urban Design Guidelines





How is urban design currently regulated?

Urban Design Terms of References

Urban Design Terms of Reference	
Updated July 2024	Pedestrian Wind Comfort and Safety Studies
	<small>Approved by Council, September 10, 2014 Council Resolution #: 0167-2014</small>

Urban Design Terms of Reference	
Updated July 2024	Standards for Shadow Studies
	<small>Approved by Council, September 10, 2014 Council Resolution #: 0167-2014</small>

Terms of Reference Streetscape Feasibility



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Introduction

As outlined in the Official Plan, Section 9, Build A Desirable Urban Form, Mississauga will transform the public realm to create a strong sense of place and civic pride. A distinct character for each community will be created or enhanced through streetscape elements. Developments will contribute to pedestrian oriented streetscapes and have an urban built form that is attractive, compact and transit oriented. The public realm and the development interface with the public realm will be held to the highest design standards.

The requirement to provide a Streetscape Feasibility Study for all frontages of the proposed development will be identified by the Development and Design Division of the Planning and Building Department at a pre-application Development Application Review Committee (DARC) Meeting. The study is a requirement for rezoning applications to be deemed complete.

Appendix A Amended Boulevard Treatment Area illustrates the subject areas that correspond with the City's Intensification Areas set out in the Official Plan.

Purpose

A Streetscape Feasibility Study is a requirement of all *Rezoning* applications subject to Section 9 of the Official Plan and the Amended Boulevard Treatment Areas identified in the June 2016 Amended Boulevard Treatment Council Report. The purpose of the Streetscape Feasibility Study is to evaluate the adequacy of the proposed building setback by confirming that an appropriate boulevard treatment can be accommodated within the public right-of-way along the frontages of the developments in accordance with City Policies. If the below-grade space required for the street tree corridor and above-grade space required for the street tree canopy cannot be accommodated within the municipal boulevard, the proposed building will require either an additional setback from the property line to accommodate the requirement or a relocation strategy for the conflict in question.

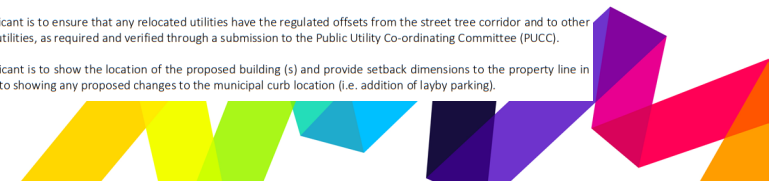
The Study will confirm that both the below-grade and above-grade requirements for the street tree corridor can be met including any associated setbacks and/or utility relocations necessary to accommodate the corridor. The street tree corridor will accommodate the proposed Amended Boulevard Treatment, to be designed and detailed through the Site Plan Application process. The Amended Boulevard Streetscape Drawing Submission Requirements for the subsequent Site Plan process are provided in *Appendix C Amended Boulevard Streetscape Drawing Requirements*.

Criteria

The Study will verify that a 2 m wide below-grade trench to accommodate the street tree corridor and above-grade street tree canopy clearance (see Figure 1: Street Tree Corridor) can be provided within the public right-of-way, otherwise the utility locations will be modified to accommodate this objective. The proposed 2 m wide by 2 m minimum deep unencumbered area for the street tree corridor shall be located a minimum of 0.75 m from the back of the municipal curb for the length of the development. Underground utilities that conflict with the street tree corridor will have to be relocated or the building will be required to be set back further from the property line.

The applicant is to ensure that any relocated utilities have the regulated offsets from the street tree corridor and to other existing utilities, as required and verified through a submission to the Public Utility Co-ordinating Committee (PUCC).

The applicant is to show the location of the proposed building (s) and provide setback dimensions to the property line in addition to showing any proposed changes to the municipal curb location (i.e. addition of layby parking).



How does Ontario's Planning Act regulate urban design?

Prior to **Bill 23** (the More Homes Built Faster Act), the Planning Act enabled cities to create an Urban Design program through Official Plan policies, Zoning By-law regulations and by adopting and utilizing Urban Design Guidelines and Design Reference Notes.

Section 41 (Site Plan) of the Planning Act allowed municipalities a certain amount of control over matters related to **exterior design** including the **character, scale appearance** and **design features** of buildings and their sustainable design.



Bill 23

(Chapter 21 of the Statutes of Ontario, 2022)

An Act to amend various statutes, to revoke various regulations and to enact the Supporting Growth and Housing in York and Durham Regions Act, 2022

The Hon. S. Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing



How does Ontario's Planning Act regulate urban design?

Bill 23 received royal assent on November 28, 2022. Several amendments were made to the Planning Act which has impacted the City's approach to urban design.

- exempt all buildings containing 10 or less dwelling units from site plan approval
- Site plan control is also permitted to apply to land on adjoining roads under the City's jurisdiction only to the extent that the appearance impacts matters of **health, safety, accessibility, sustainable design** or the protection of adjoining lands.



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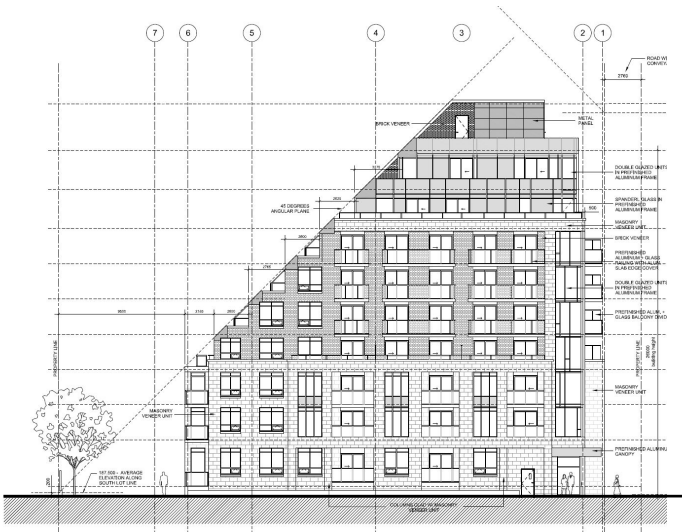
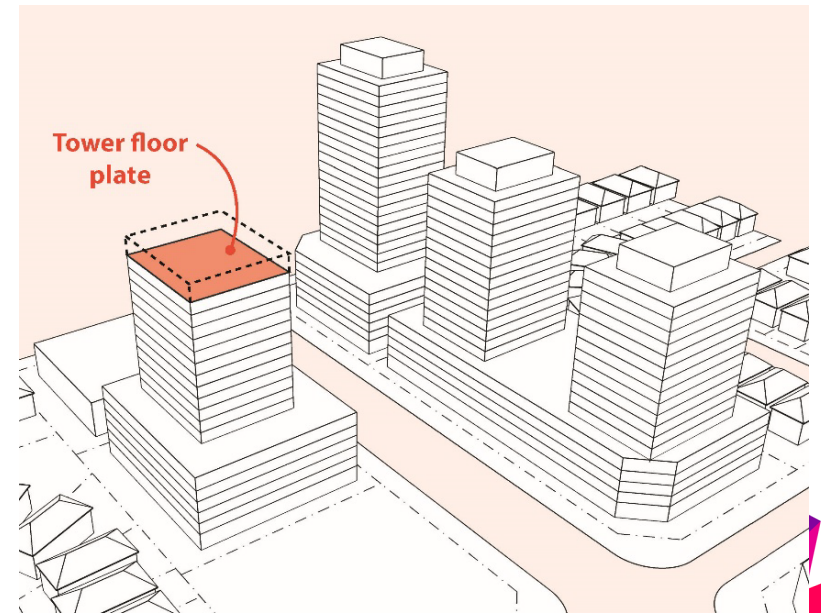
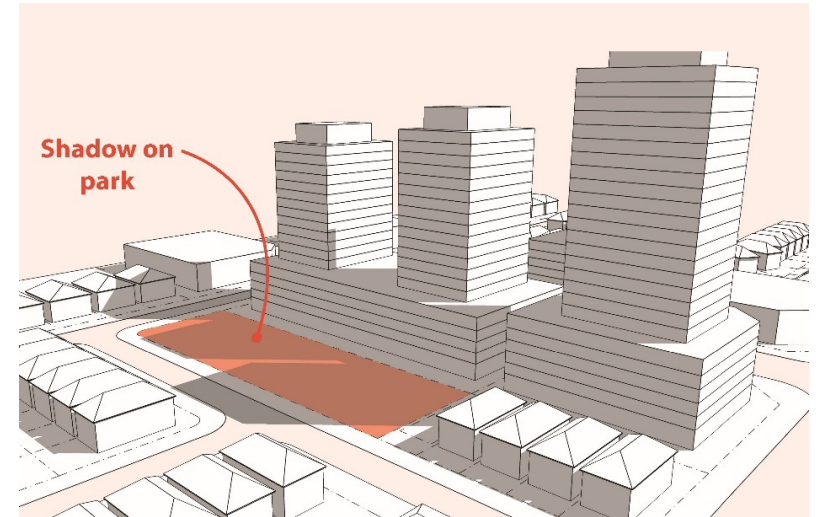
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What we heard - developer concerns

Some developers have expressed concerns with **angular planes**, **floor plate sizes**, **shadow studies** and other policies, by-laws, standards and design guidelines



The Review Process



- The report recommends retaining a consultant to:
 - Undertake a review of the City's current Urban Design Guidelines, Design Reference Notes, applicable Official Plan policies (existing and proposed) and applicable zoning regulations
 - Undertake a review of best practices to identify leading urban design practices and assess the City's existing urban design program against these to identify gaps or potential changes that should be considered.



The Review Process



- **The consultant will:**

- Establish a development industry-focused working group to provide technical input on the existing and new Urban Design Program and regulatory tools.
- Conduct a series of community engagement exercises to inform the City's Urban Design Program in the context of a climate and housing crisis and urban equality.



The Review Process



- The consultant will:
 - Provide detailed recommendations on changes to the Urban Design Program, which may include Official Plan policies, Zoning By-law regulations, Urban Design Guidelines and Design Reference Notes.



The Review Process



- **The consultant will:**
 - Conduct one-on-one consultations with utility providers, internal departments, professional stakeholders to understand the organizational barriers to achieving the City's streetscape vision and goals, and to identify new service delivery models that may reduce barriers and accelerate development approvals.
 - Make recommendations on the feasibility of developing a Public Realm and Streetscape Team.



Recommendation

Recognizing the positive impact that the City's Urban Design Program has on the local **quality of life, social interaction,** and **economic development,** a periodic review of the city's urban design vision and its regulatory framework is **appropriate** and **valuable.**

Staff recommend retaining a consultant to undertake a review of the City's existing **Urban Design Program.** The review will ensure that the City grows in a healthy, meaningful and sustainable way, while supporting the ability of the development industry to **provide much needed housing.**



Thank You

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