

6.0 BUILDING CENTRETOWN

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6.1 Land Use

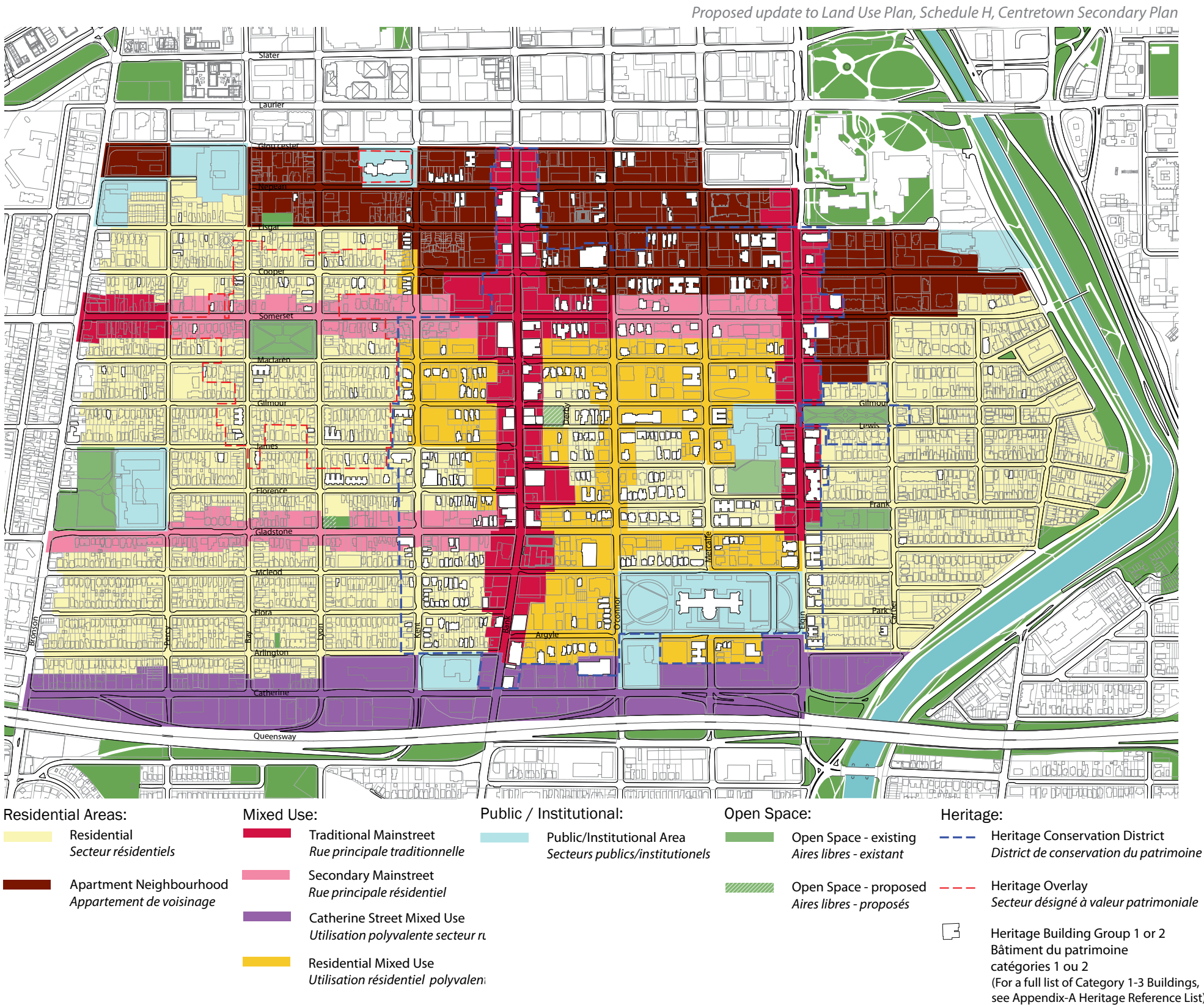
Centretown has evolved into a one of Ottawa’s most diverse communities – both in terms of the types of residents that call it home as well as the types of space/uses that residents and businesses occupy. Reflecting this diversity, Centretown currently supports 17 official land use designations in its Secondary Plan, including: high, medium and low profile residential; major open spaces; public and institutional uses; parking; and a spectrum of commercial designations, amongst others.

Demonstrating the importance of heritage to the area, three of Centretown’s land use designations are qualified with a ‘heritage’ status, including: heritage residential, heritage commercial and heritage public / institutional. When defining land use designations, it unusual to mix built form qualities – such as heritage – with land uses. This risks creating unnecessary sub-categories for land uses that may result in an additional layer of complexity within the planning framework. Typically, heritage issues are best addressed through zoning and/or a heritage conservation designations (which Centretown is already subject to). Heritage issues are regulated through Parts IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Centretown’s land use designations, when coupled with its challenging zoning, its Heritage Conservation District Plan and the supporting Heritage Overlay, contributes to a complex planning framework. In an effort to introduce a less complicated and more coherent vision for Centretown, it is recommended that the land use designations for Centretown be simplified and reduced to eight specific designations, across four general land uses:

- 1. Residential Areas:**
 - Residential
 - Apartment Neighbourhood
- 2. Mixed Use:**
 - Traditional Mainstreet
 - Secondary Mainstreet
 - Catherine Street Mixed Use
 - Residential Mixed Use
- 3. Public / Institutional:**
 - Public / Institutional
- 4. Open Space**
 - Open Spaces

Mixed Use areas reflect the land use pattern identified in Section 2.3.



1. Residential Areas

Residential areas contain a variety of dwelling types, ranging from single detached to row housing to high-rise apartments. Residential areas are dominated by residential land uses, but also support some ancillary uses.

Recognizing the diversity of residential building types in Centretown, residential land use designations have been designed to reflect existing and planned conditions, including the taller apartment form that dominates the northern portion of Centretown, the mixed-use central portion and the lower-rise house-form typologies on the shoulders of the community (west of Kent Street and east of Elgin Street). Within these areas designated as ‘Residential’, significant change is not expected. In the zone dominated by taller buildings, designated as ‘Apartment Neighbourhood’, compatible intensification is permitted on underutilized and vacant sites. Designations include:

Residential

The Residential designation applies to areas where significant change is not anticipated. Although dominated by residential uses, other uses present may include open spaces, institutional uses (including places of worship and academic facilities), community services, cultural and recreation facilities. Maximum building heights will be limited as set out in Section 6.2.

Proposals for significant intensification are not encouraged in Residential Areas. Infill may be considered if it supports an appropriate and compatible height, massing and scale with the surrounding context. The prevailing building type will be the predominant form of development.

Apartment Neighbourhood

Across Centretown, more than 75% of dwelling units are contained in low-, mid- and high-rise apartment buildings. Apartment neighbourhoods are comprised of residential uses in larger-scaled buildings. Although dominated by residential uses, other uses present may include parks and open spaces, limited commercial uses, institutional uses (including places of worship and academic facilities), community services, cultural and recreation facilities. The majority of these apartment buildings are clustered in the northern portion of the area north of Somerset between Cartier and Kent Streets.

Compatible intensification can occur on underutilized and vacant sites in Apartment Neighbourhoods. Locating and massing new buildings to minimize impacts and provide transition to lower-scale areas is essential. Maximum building heights will be limited, as identified in Section 6.2.

2. Mixed Use

Today, Centretown supports more jobs than residents. As such, the area is already an important destination for local and regional employment. To retain the significant social, environmental and economic benefits offered by mixed-use communities, and to direct this type of growth towards areas best able to accommodate employment and commercial growth (and away from those areas less well suited), a Mixed Use category includes the following designations: Traditional Mainstreet; Secondary Mainstreet; Catherine Street Mixed-Use Area; and Residential Mixed Use. The majority of Centretown’s future retail, commercial and employment growth will be directed to these Mixed Use areas. Uses may include residential, offices, retail, recreational, community and cultural, institutional and open spaces.

Not all Mixed Use designations will support the same level of growth. Levels of intensification will vary across each of the mixed-use designations, with greatest intensity occurring along Catherine Street and to a lower degree along Traditional Mainstreets and Secondary Mainstreets. Commercial uses will predominate along Mainstreets and Catherine Street, with residential uses being more common within Residential Mixed Use areas.

Traditional Mainstreet

These areas shall include retail shops and other commercial uses that will appeal to both the local and regional markets. Pedestrian-oriented active commercial uses are required at-grade. Uses can be accommodated in a single-use or mixed-use building. Office-type commercial operations and residential uses shall be permitted above the ground level and at the rear part of the ground level. These designations recognize existing land use and the importance of the major transportation routes. Maximum building heights will be limited. Mainstreet areas are linear in form and restricted to Bank, Elgin (north of Gladstone) and portions of Somerset Street.

Secondary Mainstreet

Both Gladstone Avenue (west of Bank), and portions of Somerset are designated as Secondary Mainstreets. Although dominated by a residential character today, as important connectors between Bronson and Bank streets, the intention is that over time these streets could support a more mixed-use /commercial character than they do today. As such, at grade uses (including retail, office, cultural and institutional uses) will be permitted, but not required. Residential uses, including building lobbies, are also permitted. Ideally, uses will be housed in a mixed-use building with a strong street presence, supporting access from the street. Along these streets, it will be essential that new developments are compatible in form and function and transition appropriately to the adjacent Residential area.

Catherine Street Mixed Use Area

This designation accommodates a variety of uses that require a larger format/ floorplate, including residential, commercial, office, retail (including big box format), open space, hotels, apartment hotels, bulk good outlets, wholesale operations and several other commercial operations which serve the special needs of travellers and commuters as well as the special needs of the residents of the city. Uses can be accommodated in a single-use or mixed-use building. Active commercial ground related uses are encouraged. Development will be encouraged to create a buffer between the Queensway and the residential areas. Maximum building heights will be limited as set out in Section 6.2 and appropriate transition to the lower-rise Residential Area is essential.

Residential Mixed Use

These areas shall include low- to mid-rise residential, small-scale office (professional services), minor retail, open spaces, institutional and public uses. Ground floor commercial uses are not mandatory. Commercial uses should be accommodated in a mixed-use building, however, residential must be the dominant use within the building with the exception of a building containing legally established non-residential uses existing at the time of adoption of Official Plan Amendment 117. The expansion of legally established non-residential uses shall be subject to appropriate limits.. Any non-residential use is restricted to the first two floors. Commercial uses cannot occupy more than 50 per cent of the building’s gross floor area. Stand-alone, retail and office uses are not permitted although they can be integrated into mixed use buildings. Restaurant uses are not permitted and should be directed towards Traditional and Secondary Mainstreets. Although residential will be retained as the predominant use, the Residential Mixed Use designation formally recognizes what many already consider to be a mixed-use area.

3. Public / Institutional

These areas shall include a wide variety of public uses including schools, parks, public utility installations, municipal facilities, community and health centres and places of worship.

4. Open Space

This category includes two designations: *Open Space - Existing* and *Open Space - Proposed*. The *Open Space - Existing* designation retains in full the policies from the current *Major Open Space Area* designation. This area includes the landscaped lands adjacent to the Rideau Canal owned by the National Capital Commission. This area shall provide open space and may include recreational facilities to meet the needs of both the residents of Centretown and the National Capital Region. *Open Space - Proposed* includes new parks and open spaces, as proposed in Section 5.2.

6.2 Building Approach

6.2.1 Where Should High-Rise Buildings Go?

Centretown is a focus for intensification in Ottawa. Provincial and municipal plans strongly endorse intensification in urban neighbourhood such as Centretown that are well supported by transit, social services and amenities, employment opportunities and offer a diversity of housing choice. In addition, an increasing number of people are choosing to live in close proximity to their work and recreational choices. In these urban locations, residential intensification is increasingly taking the form of multi-unit housing, often in the form of high-rise buildings.

Not only do high-rise buildings respond to policy efforts and market trends, they can also contribute to a more socially sustainable city by providing a diversity of housing choices and a broad range of affordability. Dense, well-designed, mixed-use urban environments can help create active and interesting streets, are better able to support high frequency public transit and allow people to walk to their daily destinations such as work, shopping and entertainment.

Where should high-rise buildings go in Centretown?

At present, Centretown supports a broad mix of building types, ranging from single houses to high rises. The development pattern that these buildings create is distinct: low-rise buildings are generally located east of Elgin Street and west of Kent Street, apartment buildings taller than ten storeys are situated north of Cooper Street, while south of Cooper Street between Kent and Elgin is more mid-rise with five to nine storey buildings. The most central portion of Centretown supports several heritage pockets where development is typically no taller than four storeys.

The general height pattern for Centretown is to be retained with zones for high, mid and low-rise developments. Tall residential buildings (ten storeys and above) should be restricted to two zones: the Catherine Street Corridor and the Apartment Neighbourhood (generally north of Cooper Street but dipping down as far as MacLaren Street in some locations).

In the Apartment Neighbourhood buildings must not exceed the National Capital Commission's established height controls that are in effect north of Gloucester Street. Thus, in this location between Kent and Elgin, it may be appropriate for buildings to be as tall as 27 storeys (83m). Two lower height zones at the southern edge (between Kent and Elgin) provide a gradual transition to the mid-rise area. To provide a varied skyline and create transition between height zones, heights south of the 83 metre

area step down from 83m to 65m (21 storeys) to 50m (16 storeys) before reaching the Mid-Rise area where the maximum height is 30m (9 storeys), as shown in the map to the right.

Between Bay and Kent, just south of the core, building heights could be 55m (18 storeys) and transition to a Mid-Rise area up to 30m (9 storeys) adjacent to Low-Rise area. South of Lisgar, between Elgin (excluding property fronting Elgin) and the Canal, heights should be up to 65m (21 storeys), and step down to a Mid-Rise 30m adjacent to Low-Rise areas.

The second location where taller buildings should be directed to is along the Catherine Street Corridor. In this location, it may be appropriate for buildings to be as tall as 50 to 77 metres (16 to 25 storeys). Taller structures should be located between Cartier and Kent Streets and along the Queensway, where the existing context is taller and transit is strongest.

Zones identified as Mid-Rise should support a maximum height ranging from 17 to 30 metres / 5 to 9 storeys, with no building exceeding nine storeys. Appropriate building height is subject to built form context. Low-Rise zones should not exceed approximately four storeys (12m to 14.5m).

Specific heights in excess of the current permissions may be negotiated under Section 37 of the Planning Act up to the intentions of the CDP

based upon the considerations outlined below. Final heights must reflect the intentions of the CDP with regard to maximum building heights and location of tall buildings. Appropriate building heights should take their cues from:

- the existing built form context
- recent development application approvals
- federal height controls (see below)
- providing appropriate transition to lower-rise areas
- creating a varied skyline through building height variation.

In addition to the above, the City may also permit buildings to exceed the maximum height limits, negotiated under the Tall Landmark Building provisions under very specific circumstances (refer to section 7.2). As a mixed-use, inner city community in the nation's capital, Centretown may be an appropriate location for developments that, through their design and public uses, establish true civic or national landmarks. "Tall Landmark Buildings" are those that make both significant and exceptional contributions to the public realm and overall identity of Centretown.

A Tall Landmark Building will be subject to the provisions of Section 37 of the Planning Act in accordance with the Council approved Section 37 Guidelines for determining value uplift.

Federal Government Height Regulations:

Building height regulations intended to protect the visual integrity of Ottawa's most symbolic structures – the Parliament Buildings and the spire of the Peace Tower – were first introduced in Ottawa in 1910 and remain in place to this day. Although Centretown falls outside the formal height controls, it is suggested that the height plane control mechanism be extended as far south as Cooper Street to ensure that any future development in this location is sensitive to the intentions of the controls and integrates with adjacent built form.

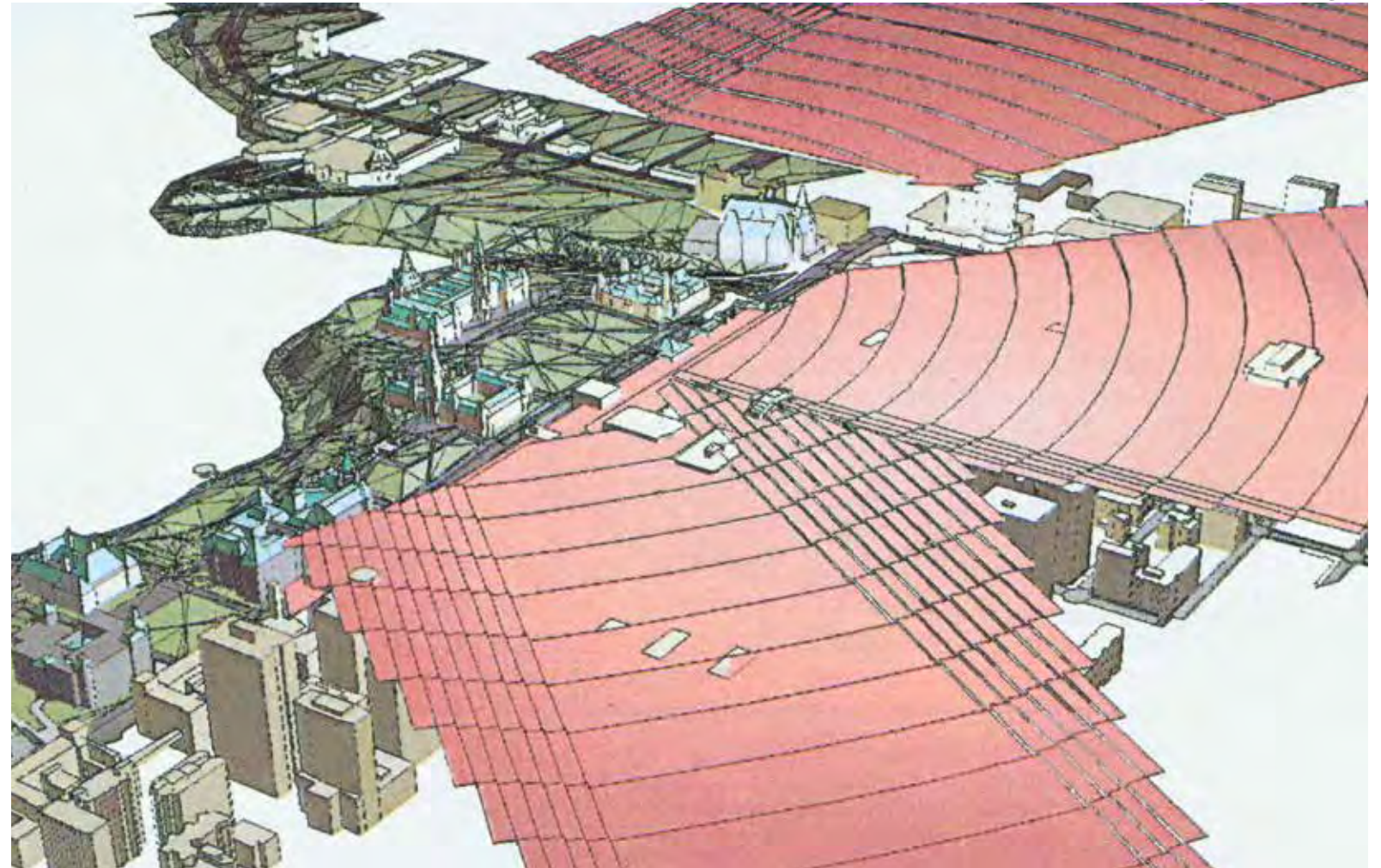
If proponents of particular development applications within Centretown wish to pursue building heights up to the maximum identified in this CDP, the specifics of these requests must be reviewed and approved in the context of the "Ottawa Views" study, which was prepared for the National Capital Commission and the City of Ottawa, and which addresses the "Visual Integrity and Symbolic Primacy of the Parliament Buildings and other National Symbols", as implemented by the City of Ottawa Official Plan and the City of Ottawa Comprehensive Zoning By-law; and shall also adhere to any design guidelines (see below).

Granting Additional Height:

It is important to appreciate that not all sites are suitable for tall buildings. Any development proposal accessing additional height beyond the as-of-right must prove that the site is appropriate for a tall building and that the design of the building is compatible with the area's context and meets the design standards for tall buildings. As a planning control, these tests should be undertaken as part of the City's rezoning process. Final heights must reflect the intentions of the CDP with regard to general building heights and location of tall buildings.

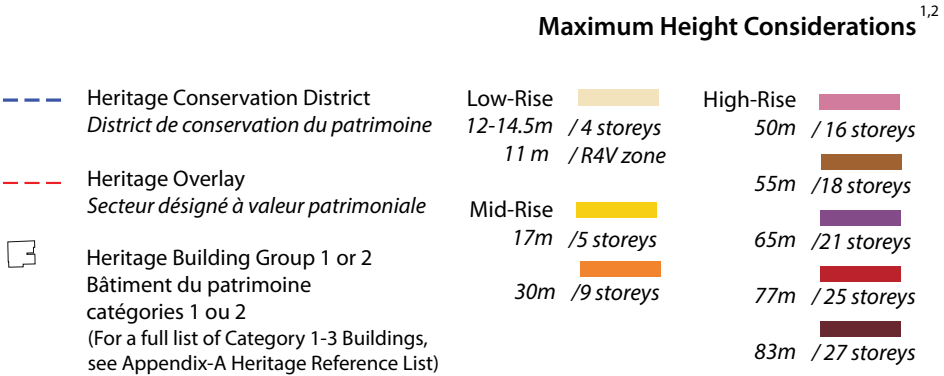
In addition, increases in height and density in excess of the existing zoning deemed suitable through a rezoning process may be considered by the City under Section 37 of the Planning Act as well as the Tall Building Landmark provisions described above. Section 37 secures identified community benefits when permitting such increases in height and/or density (refer to Section 7.2 for additional details on Section 37). Tall Landmark Building provisions ensure that any proposed taller buildings are true civic or national landmarks that make both significant and exceptional contributions to the public realm when permitting such increases in height and/or density (refer to Section 7.2 for additional details).

NCC Height Control Regime



Centretown is one of Ottawa’s oldest and most well established neighbourhoods. Its long history has resulted in the community being populated with dozens of important heritage structures. These buildings help to define the character of the neighbourhood and contribute to its identity in the city. Protecting these assets is an important goal of the Community Design Plan. To help achieve this, the map below highlights all the Group 1 and Group 2 heritage buildings from the Centretown Heritage Conservation District study. Protecting these structures must be a priority. All Group 1 and 2 heritage structures must be preserved and sensitively integrated into any new development proposal. Group 3 and 4 buildings will be assessed at the time of application. When new development is proposed on sites adjacent to or containing these heritage assets, specific design guidelines must be met. Section 6.4 and Section 6.6 present design guidelines to help ensure that the best of Centretown’s heritage assets are preserved and/or appropriately integrated into new development opportunities.

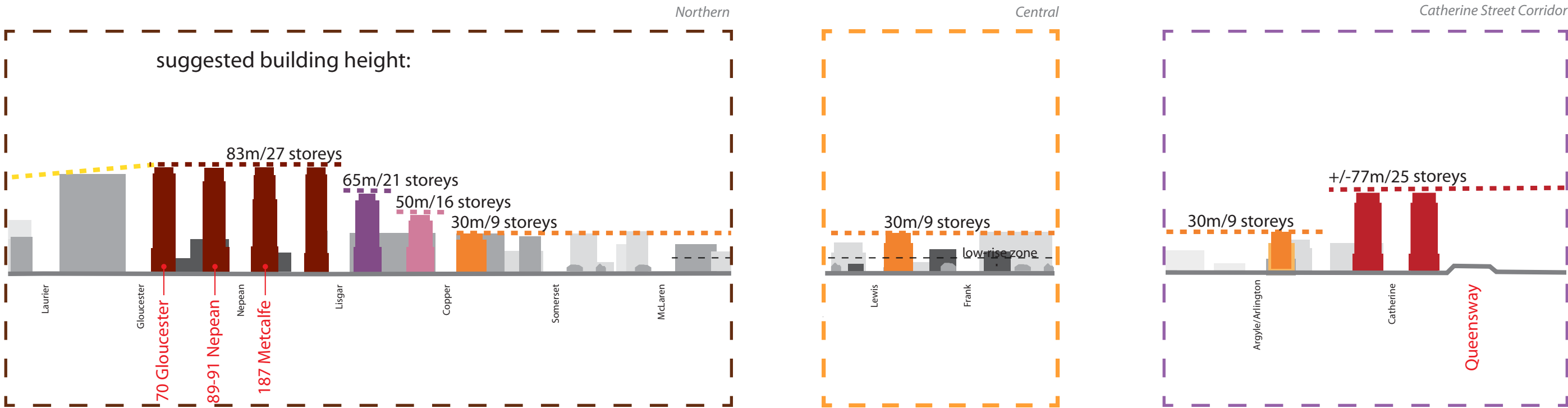
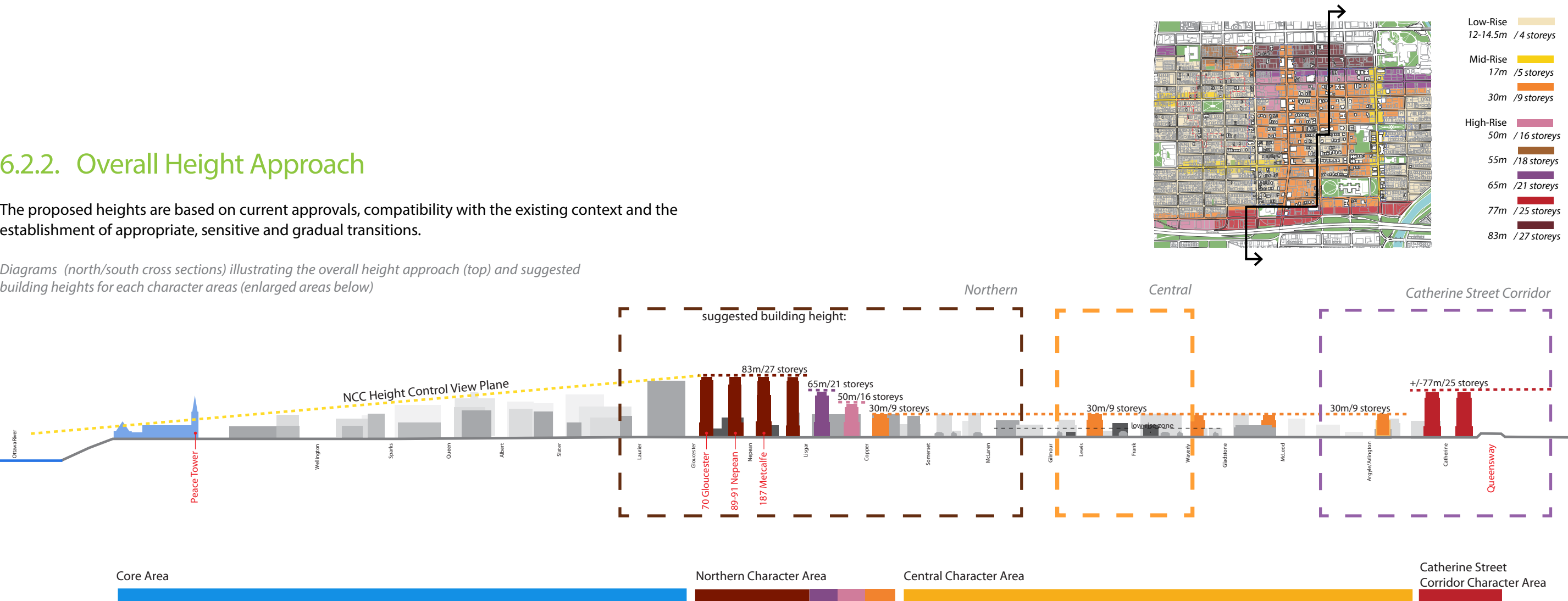
Maximum Height Considerations, highlighting Group 1 and Group 2 Heritage Structures



6.2.2. Overall Height Approach

The proposed heights are based on current approvals, compatibility with the existing context and the establishment of appropriate, sensitive and gradual transitions.

Diagrams (north/south cross sections) illustrating the overall height approach (top) and suggested building heights for each character areas (enlarged areas below)



6.3 Built Form

6.3.1 General Approach

Built form guidelines for Centretown need to recognize the wide mix of building types and substantial differences in density and height already present in the neighbourhood. In recognition of these variances, this section provides both general design guidelines that should be considered by all developments regardless of their location, as well as more focussed guidelines that are specific to a location and/or building typology. Guidelines presented will help ensure that new developments relate appropriately to their context and contribute to the creation of a positive sense of a place.

In Centretown, narrow road rights-of-way and a narrow block pattern creates some unique development challenges particularly for high-rise buildings. Streets are typically very narrow at only 18.3 metres or less – meaning that separation between buildings is quite small and the area for public realm is limited. Blocks are typically between 60.9 to 68.9 metres in depth, and in a few locations they are less than half of this ('half block'). In the absence of a dual-fronted building, these half blocks create poor street relationships on those sides where the rear of the building is exposed to the street.

Today, the quality of architecture/built form in Centretown is mixed. However, with ongoing development interest in the community there is a significant opportunity to obtain better quality architecture, more responsive and appropriate building design and a more positive contribution to the character of Centretown. New buildings must contribute to the creation of a positive sense of place and enhance the livability of the community. Canyon streets, with slab buildings built end-to-end are no longer acceptable. New buildings must support active frontages, be of a human scale at grade and promote a safe and visually stimulating environment. New buildings must preserve access to light; reduce shadow impact; appropriately transition with existing heritage and neighbourhood; and maintain privacy with existing buildings.

Existing City Guidelines

The City of Ottawa has developed a series of design guidelines to help produce great buildings in the city. Key urban design guideline documents include:

- o Urban Design Guidelines for Low-Medium Density Infill Housing (updated 2009)
- o Urban Design Guidelines for Development along Traditional Mainstreets
- o Urban Design Guidelines for High-Rise Housing

These Design Guidelines must be considered when proposing a new development in the City of Ottawa. The guidelines presented in the remainder of this chapter have been crafted to augment and refine these existing guidelines, to respond more specifically to the Centretown context.

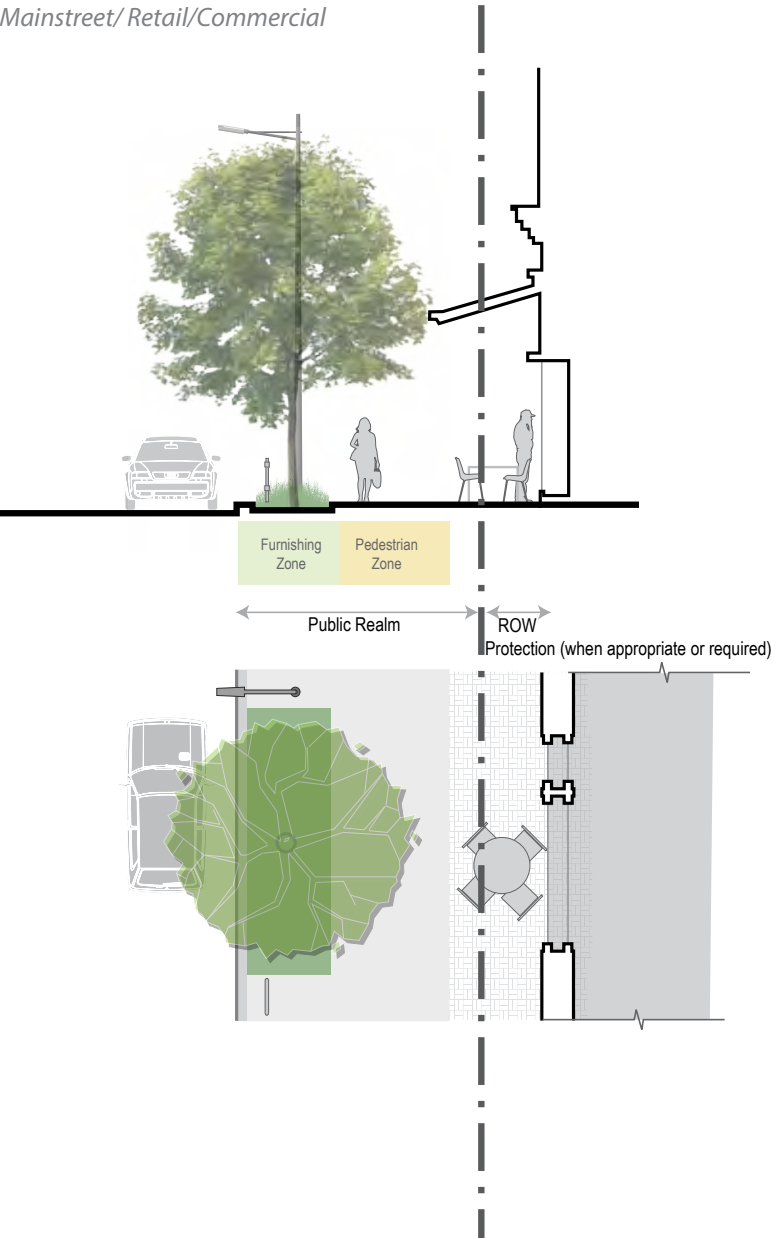


6.3.2 Creating A Positive Ground Floor Experience

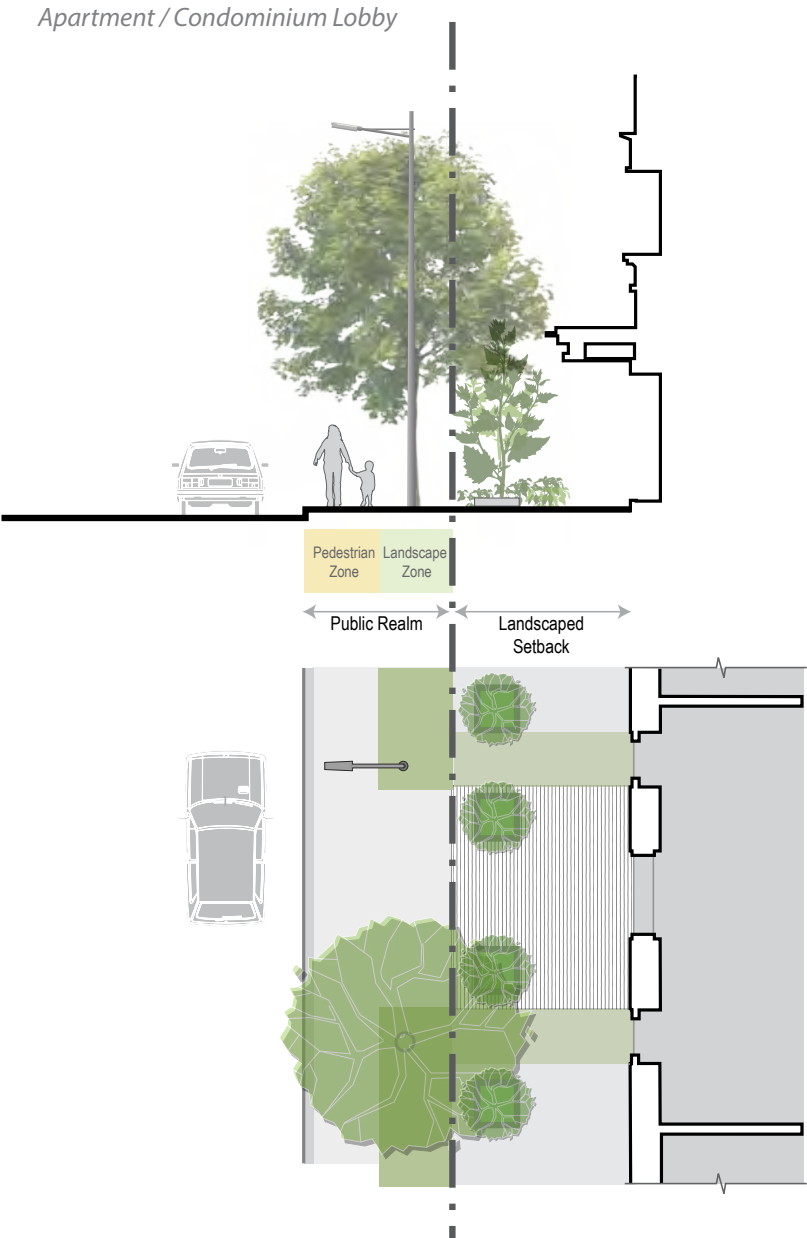
How a building relates to the street and the sidewalk is crucial to ensure a positive and safe experience. New buildings must contribute to the making of great streets in Centretown. The ground floor, whether it is for a commercial, mixed-use or residential, needs to animate the street. Such active frontage can be achieved with entrances, transparency, material treatment, windows, porches, facade articulations, etc.. Ground floor uses must locate parking, utility rooms, garbage rooms, etc. at the rear of the building so as to not create blank walls. Buildings must contribute to the streetscape with landscaping and tree planting. Except for main streets and Metcalfe street, building should generally be setback 3 m from the street ROW. A reduced setback can be considered if a curb to building face dimension is 7.0 to 7.5 m to permit proper landscaping and tree planting and if it doesn't negatively impact the overall character of the street. Building fronting Metcalfe Street should have greater landscaped setback, approximately 5 m, to reinforce the existing character of this unique street.

The diagrams below illustrate the general ground floor approach that a development should adhere to when addressing the street.

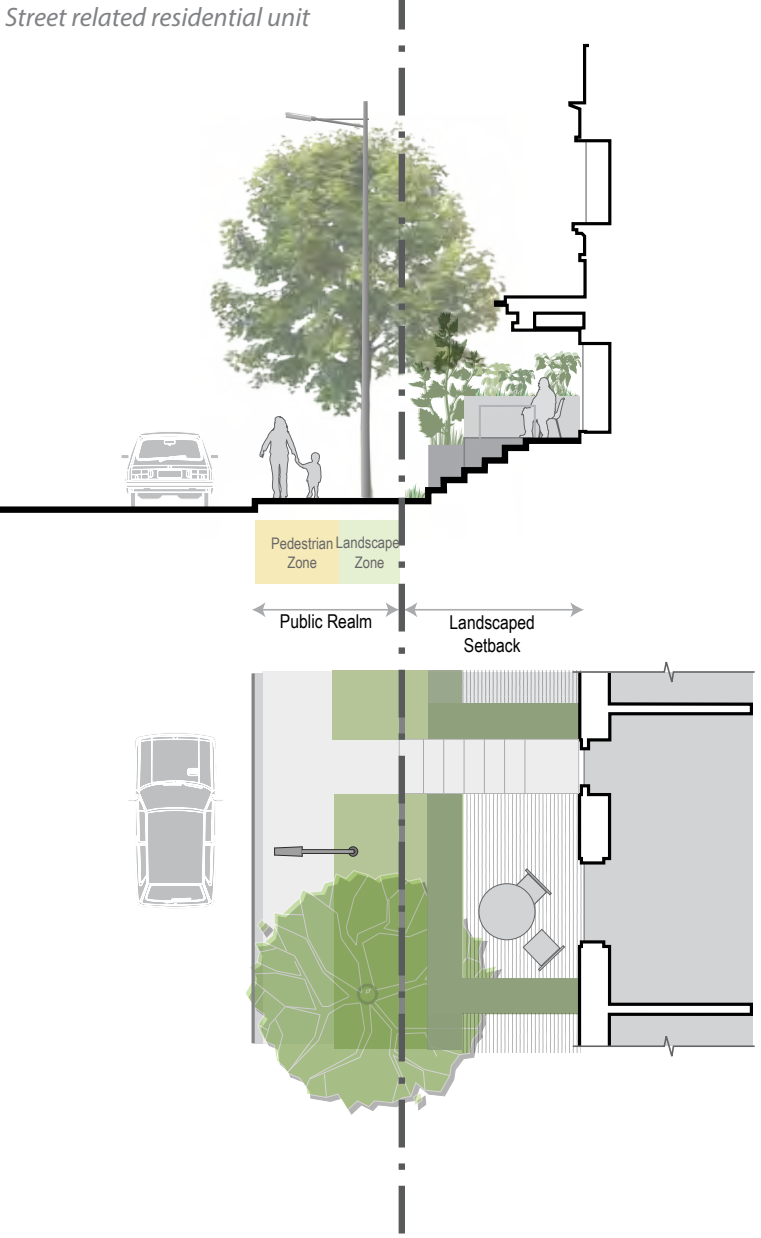
Mainstreet/ Retail/Commercial



Apartment / Condominium Lobby



Street related residential unit



6.4 Built Form Guidelines

The Centretown CDP supports an approach to intensification that balances various building forms including:

- > low-rise infill
- > mid-rise infill
- > high-rise infill; and
- > special areas

6.4.1 Low Rise

Within Centretown, low-rise infill – considered as buildings four storeys and less - is permitted anywhere. Low-rise infill is permitted on single or consolidated lots and can be detached, townhouse or multiple unit residential; or 'house form' commercial buildings.

The following general guidelines shall apply to low-rise infill in Centretown.

- i. Respect and contribute to the overall character of the area.
- ii. Align low-rise infill with adjacent buildings and respect the existing overall street setback. Strategic setback or protrusions may be appropriate at entrances, balconies, bay windows or porches to articulate the façade and create architectural interest.
- iii. Avoid blank walls. If necessary, a blank wall must be well articulated and use materials that are consistent with the overall building image. Blank walls fronting a street are not permitted.
- iv. Give equal consideration to all facades that fronts onto streets.
- v. Provide ground level access to individual units, where applicable, to animate the street.
- vi. Raise residential ground floors by 0.9-1.2m from the ground to provide privacy for residents while promoting safe streets by providing 'eyes on the street'. Sunken units, situated below an 'over elevated' ground floor are discouraged.
- vii. For multiple units or house form commercial buildings, access to parking and servicing should be provided through a shared access or a recessed garage entrance. A sloped driveway is permitted for a shared garage/servicing entrance. Multiple individual front garages and sloped driveways are not permitted.
- viii. If located within the Centretown Heritage Conservation District, existing guidelines should be considered.

Low-Rise Residential Infill: Single Unit



Low-Rise Residential Infill: Multiple Units



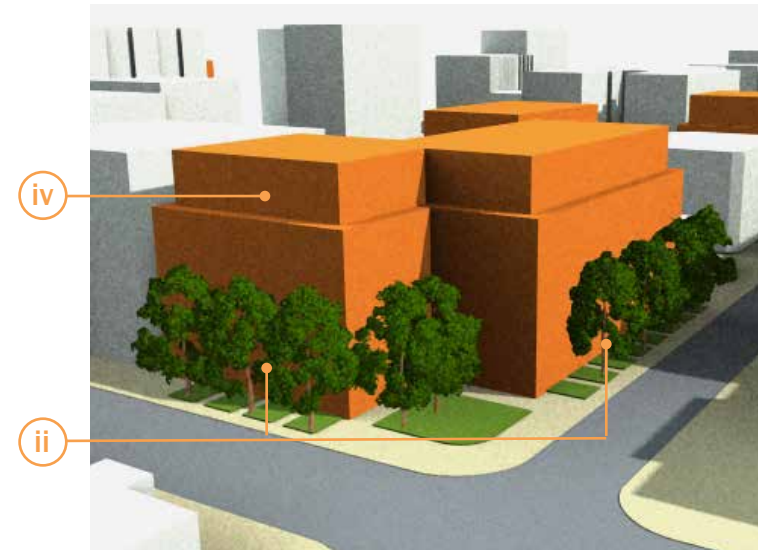
6.4.2 Mid-Rise

Mid-rise infill is considered to be those buildings between five and nine storeys. Mid-rise infill buildings are permitted everywhere in the central portion of Centretown except within low-rise infill zones. In addition to general guidelines, some mid-rise infills will also need to respond to the specific character of the following areas: Mainstreet, the Museum of Nature and Metcalfe Street. Guidelines included in this section are also applicable to the 'podium' portion of a tall building (see following section) unless specified.

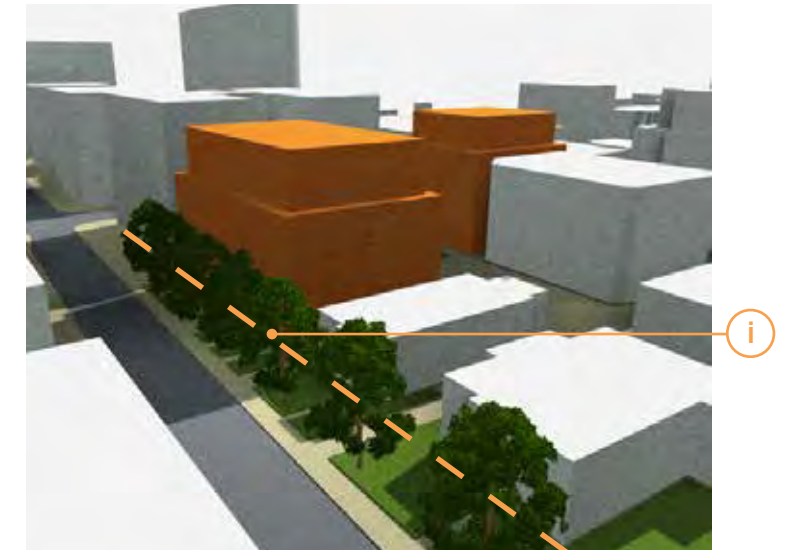
The following guidelines apply to all mid-rise infill in Centretown:

- i. Align infill with adjacent buildings and respect the existing overall street setback. Strategic setbacks may be appropriate at entrances or key location to create architectural interest. In addition, strategic setbacks at corners are encouraged to create small publicly accessible parkettes. Building ground floors fronting these parkettes should be highly transparent and animated.
- ii. Extend infill the length of the site on all street frontages.
- iii. Where a mid-rise building fronts onto two streets, the corner should be given predominance and special treatment/articulation. Both facades should be given equal consideration.
- iv. When higher than 6 storeys, a front (1.5 to 3 m) and sideyard (minimum 3 m) building stepback should be introduced to maintain access to light and support a pedestrian scale. The determination of the stepback location should be based on context, adjacent building relationships, and building proportion. Generally, the building stepback should be introduced above the sixth storey, but can also occur below. To promote well-defined street edges and enclosures, building stepbacks directly above the ground floor will not be permitted.
- v. Avoid blank walls. If necessary, a blank wall must be well articulated. Blank walls fronting a street are not permitted.
- vi. Ground levels units should be well articulated to reduce the scale of the building and introduce a more fine grained rhythm to the street frontage.
- vii. Provide ground level access to individual units, where applicable, to animate the street.
- viii. Raise residential ground floors should be 0.9-1.2m from the ground to provide privacy for residents, while promoting safe streets by providing 'eyes on the street'. Sunken units, situated below an 'over elevated' ground floor are discouraged.
- ix. Inset balconies behind the street wall to reinforce the street edge and public realm. Above the stepback, projected balconies are permitted but are not to exceed the stepback width.
- x. Existing Heritage Conservation District guidelines should be considered for new infill development occurring within the boundaries of the conservation district.

Mid-Rise Infill: Corner site with integration of a parkette



Mid-Rise Infill: mid-block condition



Vancouver



Portland



Rear and Side Yard Setbacks

It is generally not the intent for a building to cover an entire parcel, even in a dense urban neighbourhood. Building setbacks - front, side and rear - provide areas of relief on lots, allowing for privacy, landscape zones, proper streetscaping and appropriate transition to adjacent properties. Setbacks need to be considered in their context - mid-block, corner lots, mainstreets - as well as by the adjacent conditions, including uses, heritage, context and built form qualities.

Corner Parcels

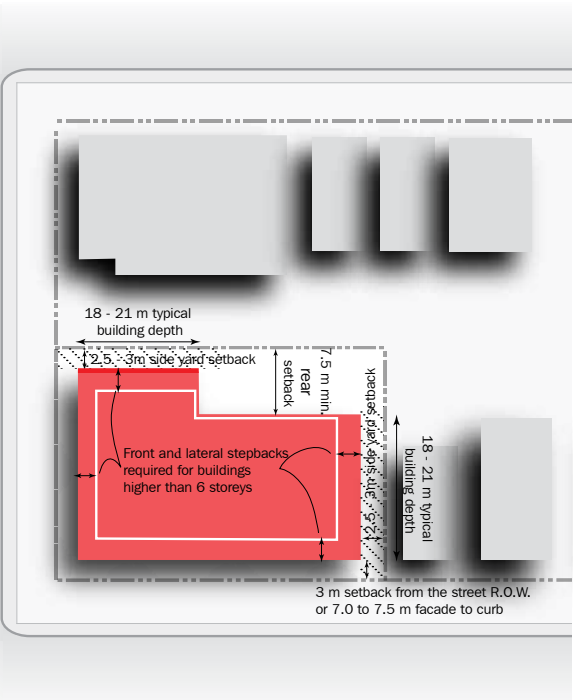
- x. For corner lots, since the intent is to create a strong street edge, buildings should maximize their frontage along both streets. In these cases, a rear setback is still required for the portion of the building behind a typical building depth. As such, along the dual frontages beyond a typical building depth of 18 to 21m, buildings should support a setback of 7.5m from the property line (as illustrated to the right).
- xi When the return of a corner buildings is adjacent to a building with window or door openings, a setback of 2.5 to 3m is required along the first 18m to 21m of the building depth (typical building depth). Beyond this, a 7.5m setback is required from the property line.
- xii When the return of a corner buildings is adjacent to a blank wall or abuts a building with no openings, no setback is required along the first 21m of the building depth. Beyond the first 21m, a 7.5m setback is required from the property line.

Mid-Block Parcels

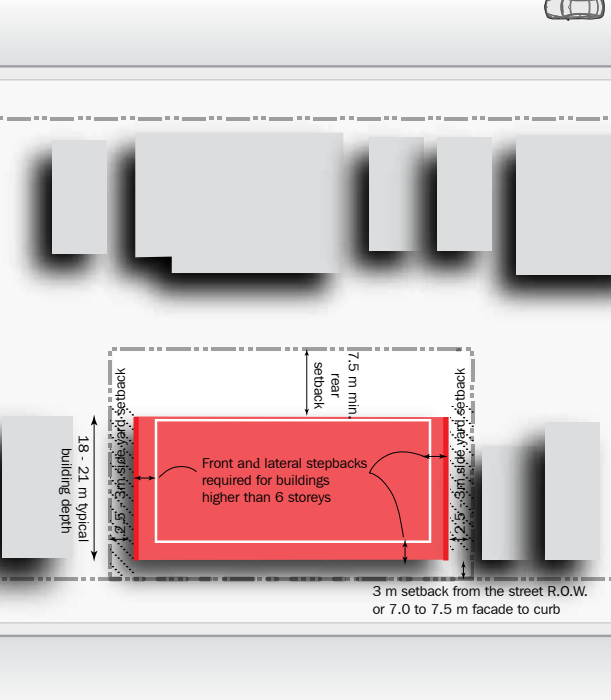
- xiii. Mid-rise buildings must have a 2.5 to 3.0 m setback from the side property line when:
 - a. No future adjacent development is anticipated;
 - b. The new building is adjacent to a heritage property;
 - c. The new building is adjacent to stable low-rise residential;
 - d. The new buiding is in the Metcalfe Street special area.
- xiv. Mid-rise buildings of a typical building depth is permitted to be built with a 0m side setback when:
 - a. Future adjacent development is anticipated;
 - b. The new building is adjacent to a building built to the sideyard property line with openings; or
 - c. The new building is adjacent to a blank wall.

Typical condition where side and/or rear setbacks are required (non-mainstreet condition)

Corner Parcel

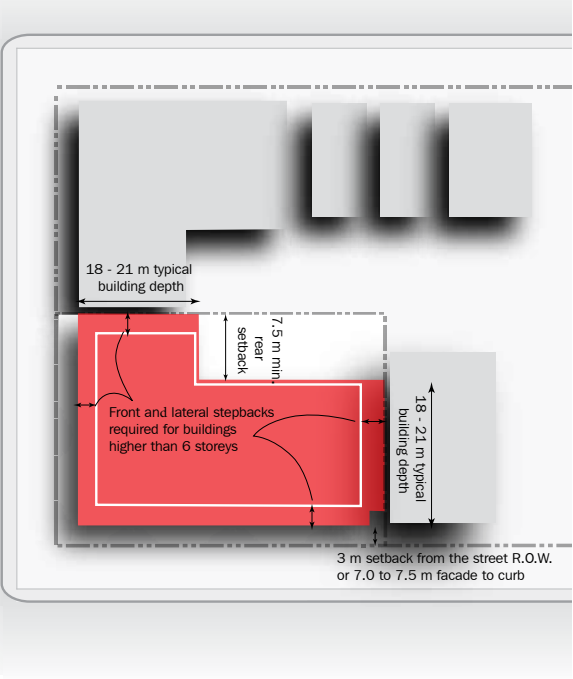


Mid-block Parcel

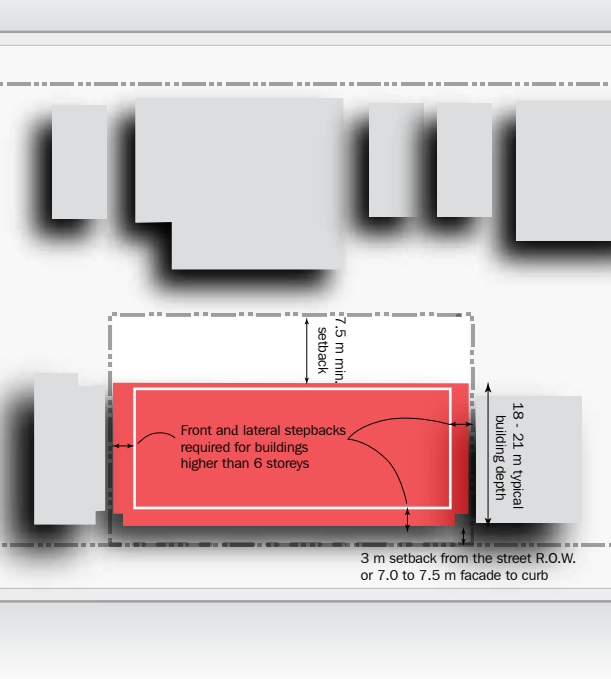


Typical condition where side and/or rear setbacks are not required

Corner Parcel



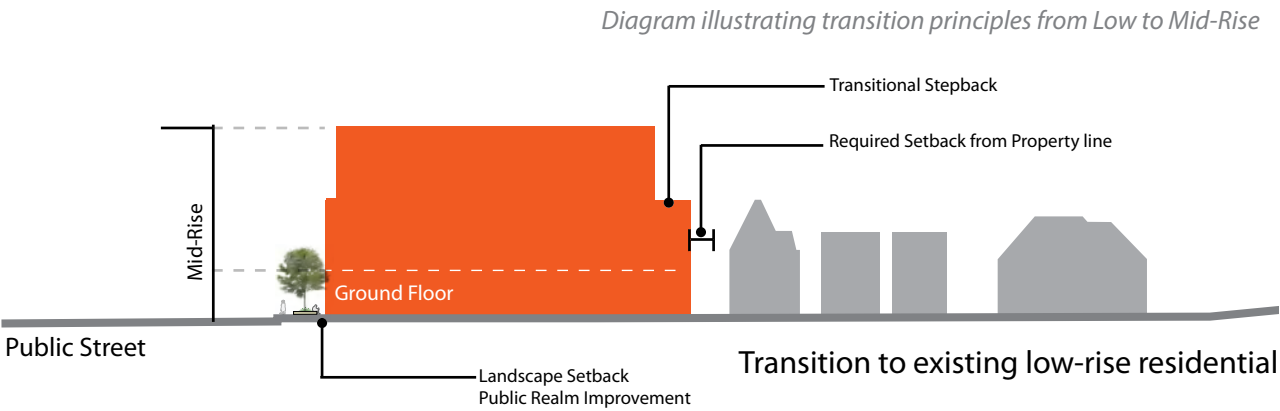
Mid-block Parcel



6.4.3 Mid-Rise Infill Typologies

Transition to Low-Rise Residential Area:

When mid-rise buildings immediately abut a low-rise residential area, the building needs to be set back a minimum of 3 metres from the side property line and 7.5 from the rear property line. The building massing needs to create a smooth and gradual transition with the residential area, and will be designed to respect the built form character of the adjacent neighbourhood without necessarily being the same height. A portion of the building immediately adjacent to the stable low-rise residential area should be no higher than four storeys, transitioning into the mid-rise building (up to nine storeys) as the distance from the neighbourhood increases.



Example of a mid-rise building transitioning to a low-rise neighbourhood



Example of a Mainstreet mid-rise building transitioning to a low-rise neighbourhood



Example of a mid-rise building adjacent to an existing low-rise building



Mainstreet Mid-Rise Infill

It is important for buildings to respect the established character and scale of the mainstreets. Although buildings should be of contemporary design and distinguishable of their own time, they should also be sympathetic and compatible with the character of the area. The following guidelines are specific to mid-rise infill along Traditional Mainstreets (Bank Street and Elgin Street):

- i. Ground floor should be level with the sidewalk and lined with active street-related retail/commercial uses.
- ii. Ground floor façades should be transparent and articulated
- iii. Multiple fine-grained retail units are encouraged.
- iv. The building should have a grained rhythm street frontage to reflect the adjacent building and character of the mainstreet.
- v. Lobbies fronting onto a mainstreet should be limited in width in order to maximize retail uses.
- vi. The minimum ground floor height should be 4.5m floor to floor to encourage flexible retail uses and good visibility to the street.
- vii. Buildings should be built to the adjacent property lines and leave no gaps in the street wall. A front and side setback will still be required for buildings over 4 storeys, as per the general mid-rise guidelines.
- viii. Existing group 1 and 2 heritage buildings must be integrated in the development.
- ix. The lower portions of the building should be respectful of the context and any adjacent heritage elements. This can include, but is not limited to, building stepbacks, cornice lines, façade horizontal and vertical articulations, opening sizes, proportions and rhythms, and building materials.
- x. Taller elements should be clearly differentiated from the building base and should be stepped back at least 3m from the face of the podium facing the mainstreet after the 4th storey. Building recess and material changes can also be considered in addition to the building stepback.

Mainstreet Mid-Rise Infill: Denver



Dublin



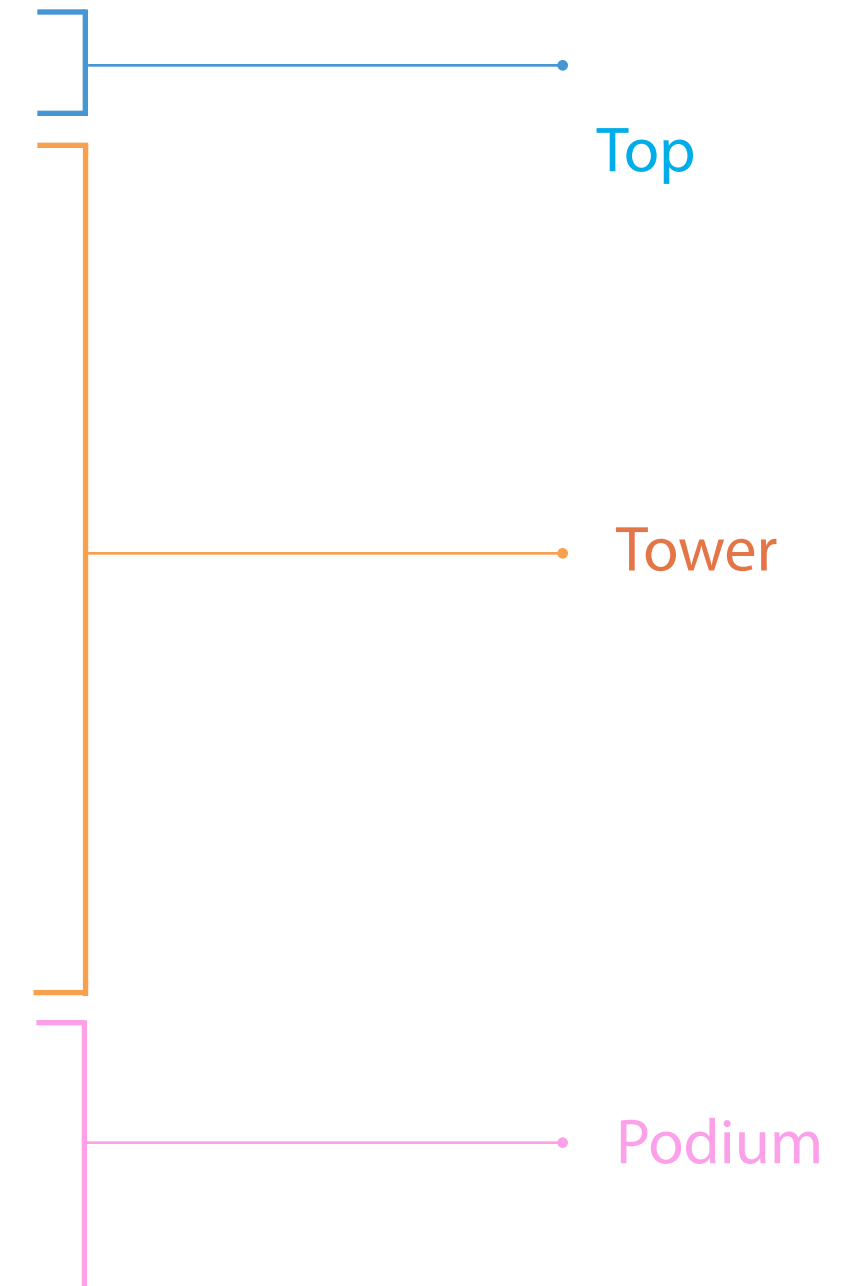
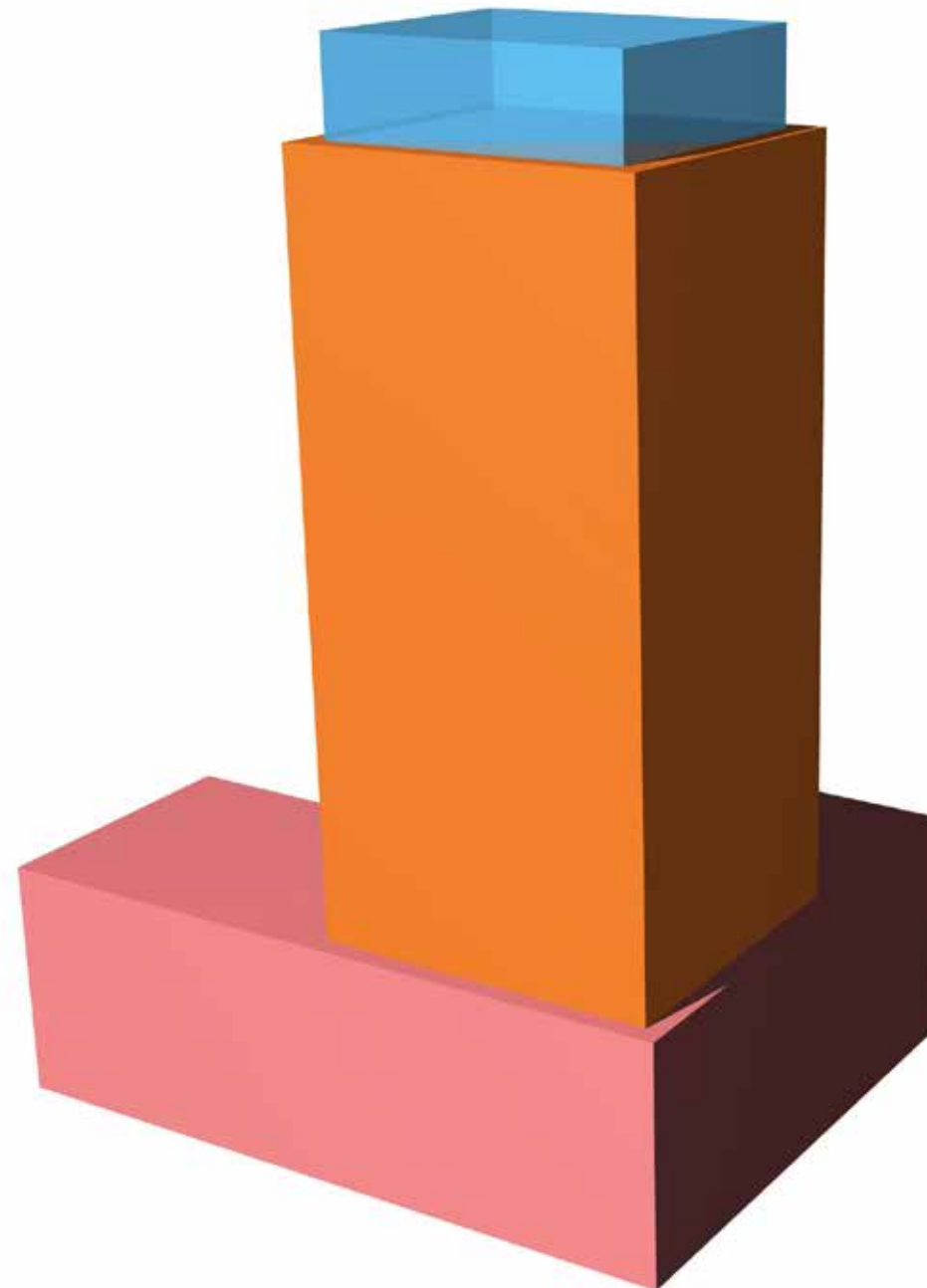
6.4.4 Tall Buildings

Tall buildings are buildings 10 storeys and higher. The CDP establishes policies for tall buildings in the Northern and Catherine Street Corridor character areas (refer to Chapter 3). Tall building policies will also apply to landmark buildings developed in the mid-rise Central Character Area.

It is important to note that the development of tall buildings will be controlled not only through locational restrictions, but also through specific design parameters, including minimum lot size, tower separation distances, setbacks and heritage protection and integration requirements (for Group 1 and Group 2). All tall buildings in Centretown must comply with the general guidelines for podiums and tower design, as presented below. Area-specific guidelines apply to tall buildings along the Catherine Street Corridor.

Tall buildings must be given special attention to produce well-proportioned buildings that can integrate with their surroundings and contribute to the enhancement of the area's image. The CDP details a tall building strategy involving point towers built on podiums. Street-related podiums can support a mix of uses, but must have a pedestrian-scaled façade. The small floorplates of the point towers are required to maintain access to light and minimize shadowing.

Tall buildings are composed of three parts: a podium, a tower and a top. Each plays an important role and should be given special considerations. The following guidelines apply to all tall buildings in Centretown; area specific guidelines will follow.



Podium

The general mid-rise guidelines generally apply to the podium section of a tall building. Additional guidelines include:

- i. The podium height shall not exceed 6 storeys. In residential development, ground-oriented units such as townhouses or townhouse-type units that wrap around a podium, are the preferred approach for defining the base and integrating with existing smaller scale development.
- ii. The general mid-rise transition guidelines (section 6.6.3) should apply to the podium section of a tall building.
- iii. The podium street facade(s) should be well articulated and large blank areas or walls are to be avoided.

Toronto



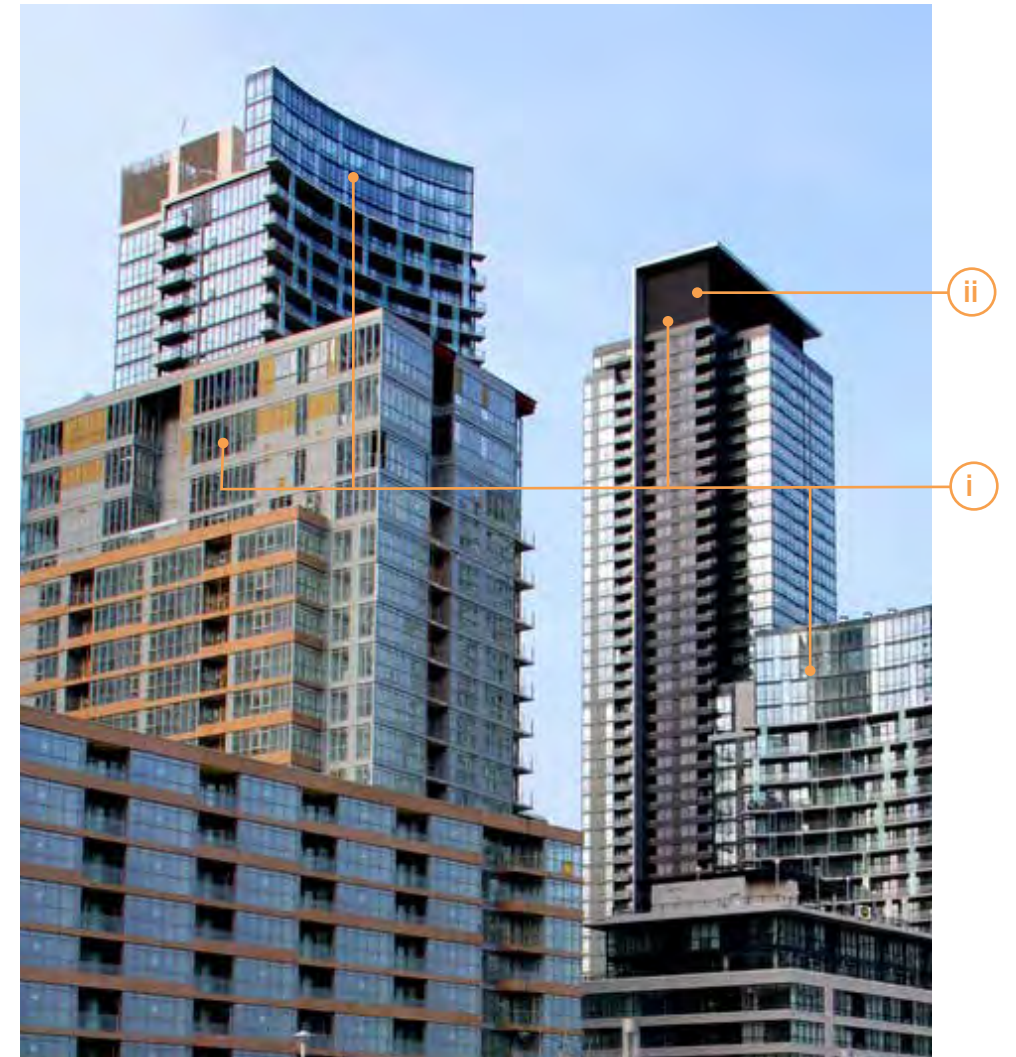
Vancouver



Top

- i. The top portion of a tower or the last few storeys, should contribute to the city skyline with a difference in articulation or special architectural treatment.
- ii. Mechanical penthouses should be architecturally integrated in a manner which is consistent with the overall character of the tower.

Toronto

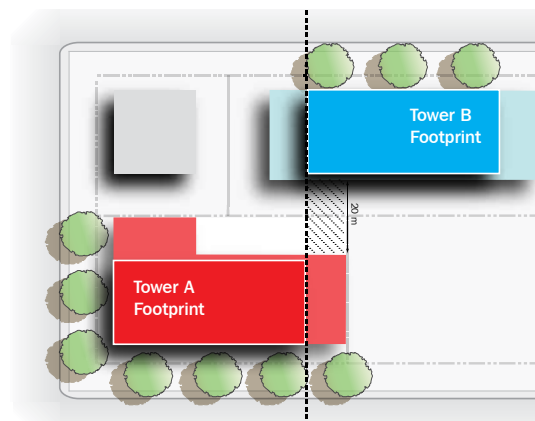


Tower

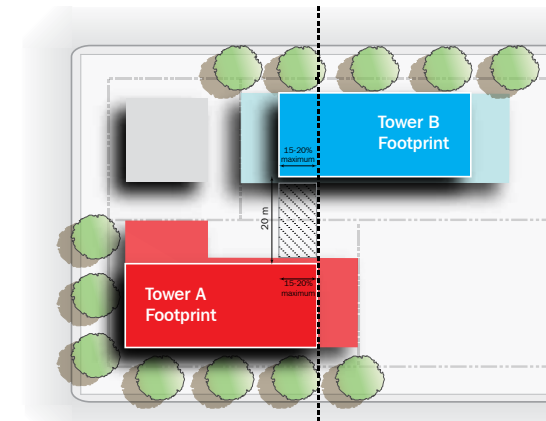
- i. Towers shall sit on a podium. Within the podium section, strategic stepbacks may be appropriate where the tower meets the ground or at entrances to create architectural interest.
- ii. The maximum floor plate of the tower should be approximately 750 square metres.
- iii. The tower should step back, generally a minimum of 1.5m further from the podium façade. Where blocks are very narrow (less than 63m), instead of a stepback, the transition between the base and the tower will be permitted to be achieved through various design techniques such as creating a gap, varying building materials or articulation where the tower meets the podium.

- iv. Towers must be set back a minimum 10 metres from side and rear property lines. A slightly reduced setback from the rear property line of 9m minimum may be considered only on narrow blocks north of Lisgar.
- v. Towers should be staggered from one another, within a same block, property or when situated across a public street.
- vi. The minimum separation distance between towers should be 20 metres. If a slab-style building with a blank wall located on the property line already exists on the adjacent property, guideline iv above applies.
- vii. Tall buildings directly facing each others (not staggered) must be at least 20m apart and should not overlap by more than 15-20% of the lengths of facing façades.

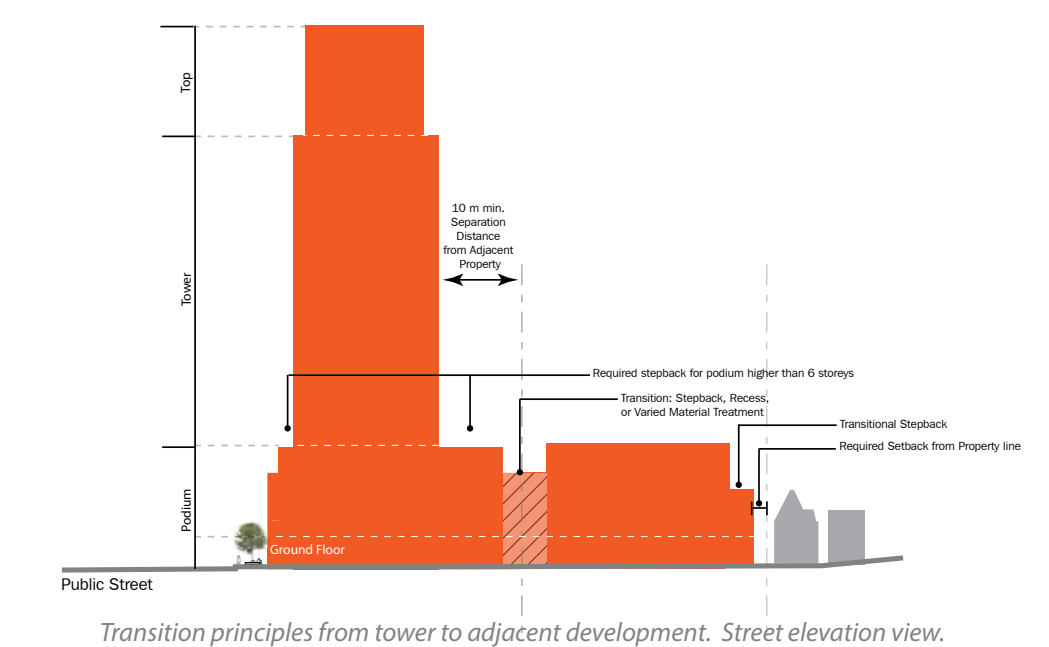
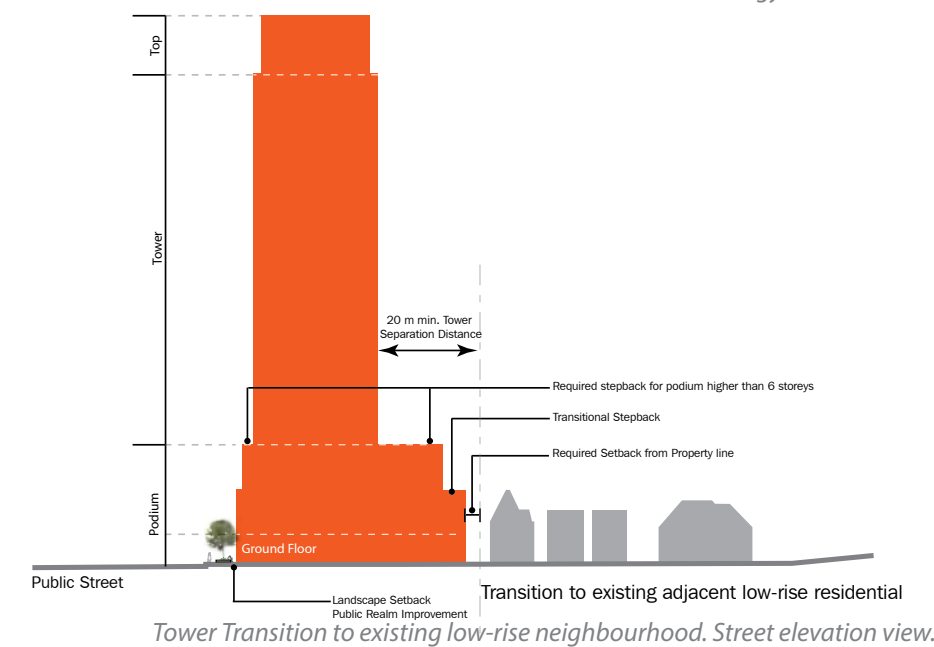
- viii. Towers must be setback 20 metres from adjacent low-rise areas.
- ix. Sites that cannot meet the above tower setback requirements on all sides are not appropriate for tall buildings.
- x. Blank walls are not permitted. In the situation when two towers are partially offset, a small portion of the façade could be blank where the overlap occurs. The blank portion of the façade shall be integrated into the design of the façade in a manner which is consistent with the overall character of the tower.
- xi. Mix of materials, articulation and use of recessed and/or integrated balconies are important design considerations to be explored.
- xii. When a site can accommodate more than one tower, the towers must have different heights to create a more interesting and diverse skyline.



Preferred Strategy: Offset Towers



Maximum Overlap

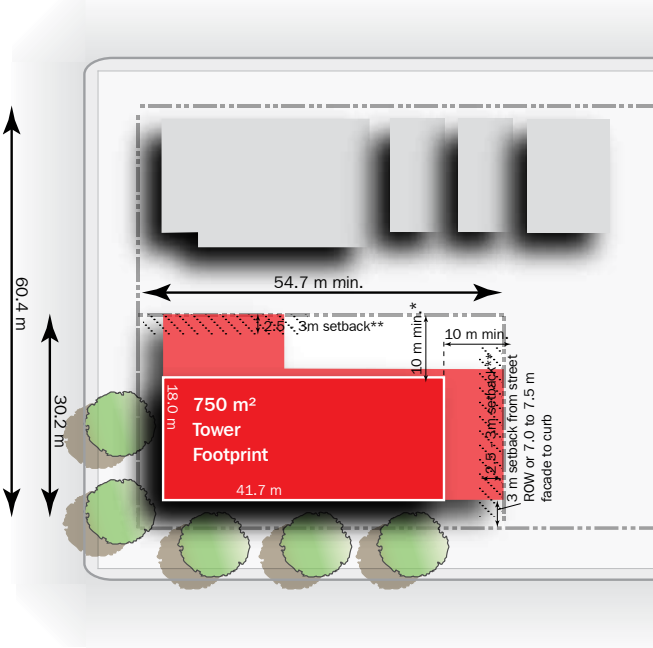


6.4.5 Tall Building Guidelines: Demonstration

750 m² tower on typical shallow block (60.4 m)

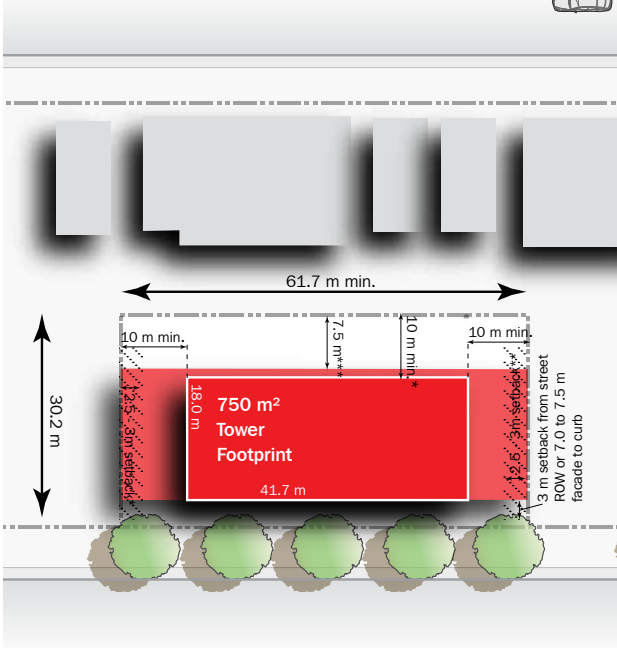
Corner Site

Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,650 m² (+/- 17,750 ft²)



Mid-Block

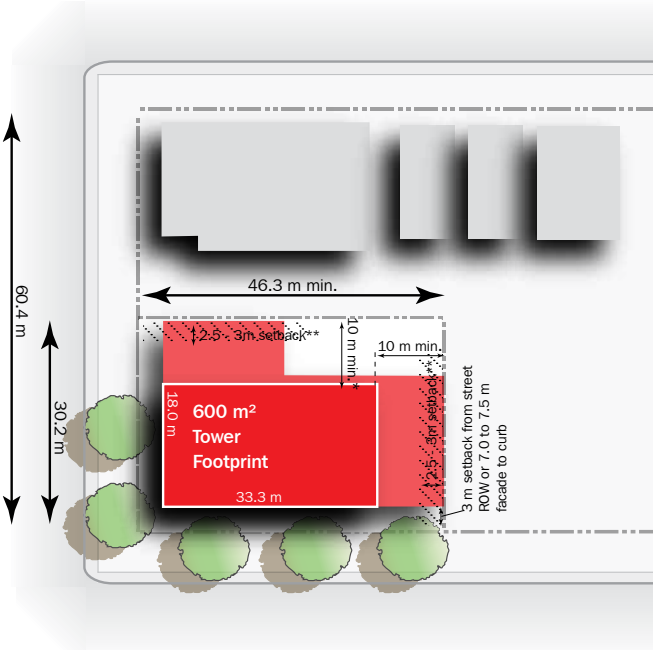
Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,860 m² (+/- 20,010 ft²)



Typical 600 m² tower on shallow block (60.4 m)

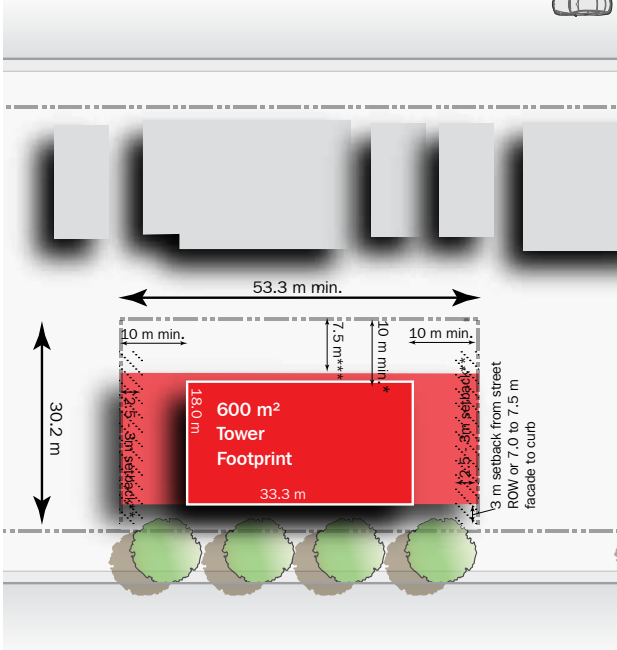
Corner Site

Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,400 m² (+/- 15,060 ft²)



Mid-Block

Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,600 m² (17,320 ft²)



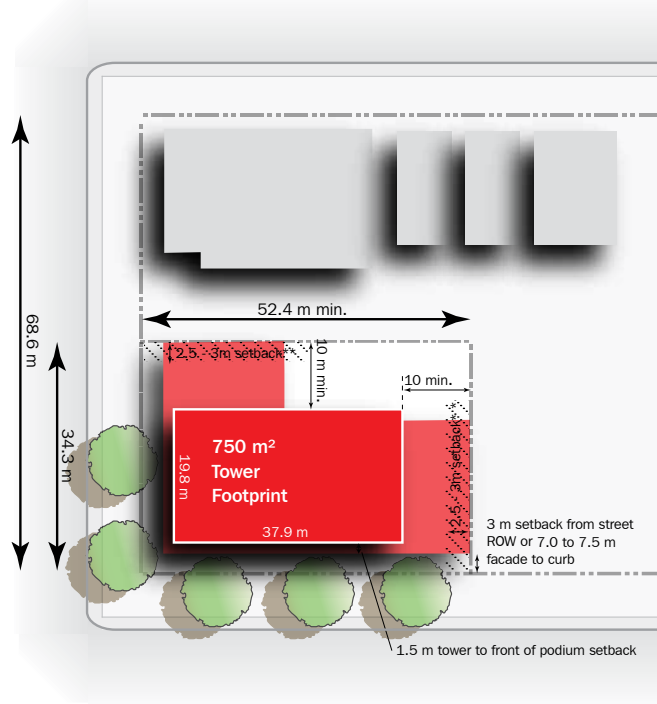
Notes:

- * Minimum tower setback above podium from adjacent properties. 10m is the recommended minimum distance. 9m from the rear property line mid may be considered on the on narrow blocks north of Lisgar
- ** Podium setback required when adjacent to low-rise neighbourhood, heritage property or when no adjacent development is anticipated
- *** Minimum rear yard setback for podium section

750 m² tower on typical block (68.6 m)

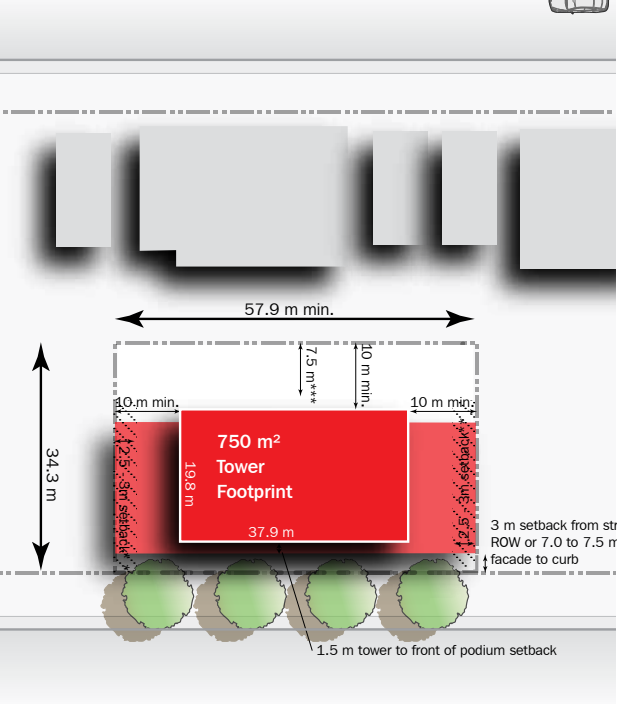
Corner Site

Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,800 m² (19,365 ft²)



Mid-Block

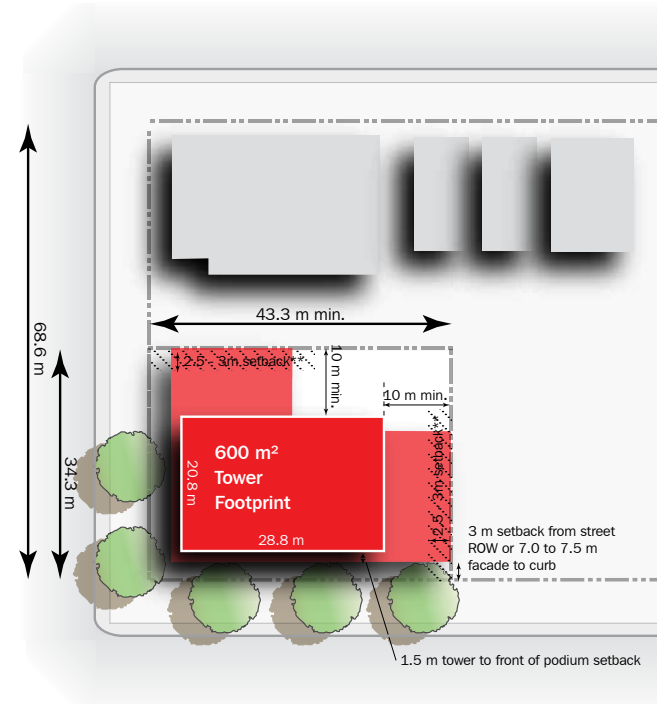
Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,985 m² (21,355 ft²)



600 m² tower on typical block (68.6 m)

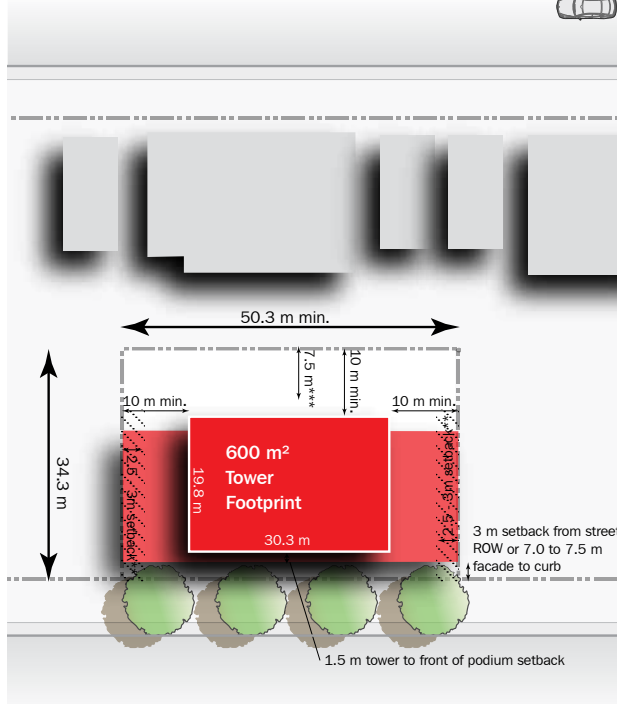
Corner Site

Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,485 m² (+/- 15,975 ft²)



Mid-Block

Minimum Site Area: +/- 1,725 m² (+/-18,560 ft²)



6.4.6 Tall Building Typologies

Catherine Street Corridor

The Catherine Street Corridor is an area where several new projects are anticipated to occur in the future. These projects have the potential to enhance the image of Catherine Street by bringing new life to the street and improving the condition of the public realm.

New developments along this corridor should be designed to minimize shadow and wind impacts on the neighbourhood to the north. The southern edge of Catherine adjacent to Highway 417 can support taller buildings between 16 and 25 storeys in height (50m to 65m). Tall buildings must transition down to a maximum height of seven storeys (mid-rise) along the northern side of Catherine Street west of Lyon Street and on the southern edge of Arlington between Lyon and Bank Streets. The fine grained quality of Arlington and Argyle Streets, both of which are located in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District, should be considered in building design.

The following specific guidelines apply to tall buildings along the Catherine Street Corridor:

- i. New development should be set back 3m from the expanded ROW (Catherine has a 23m ROW protection) in order to provide a pedestrian-oriented streetscape.
- ii. To allow for privacy and sunlight to penetrate into the neighbourhood to the north, the minimum separation distance between towers should be 20 metres. Tall buildings directly facing each other (not staggered) should not overlap by more than 15-20% of the lengths of facing facades.
- iii. The podium should be built to the side property line, leaving no gap at the podium level, to help mitigate the noise impact from the Queensway.
- iv. Ground floor height shall be a minimum of 4.5m to encourage flexible retail/commercial uses and good visibility onto the street. Residential use on the ground floor should be raised by 0.9-1.2m from the ground to provide privacy for residents while promoting safe streets by providing 'eyes on the street'. Sunken units, situated below an 'over elevated' ground floor should be discouraged.
- v. Larger floorplate retail and employment uses are acceptable uses at grade, although ground floor should be highly transparent.



Toronto



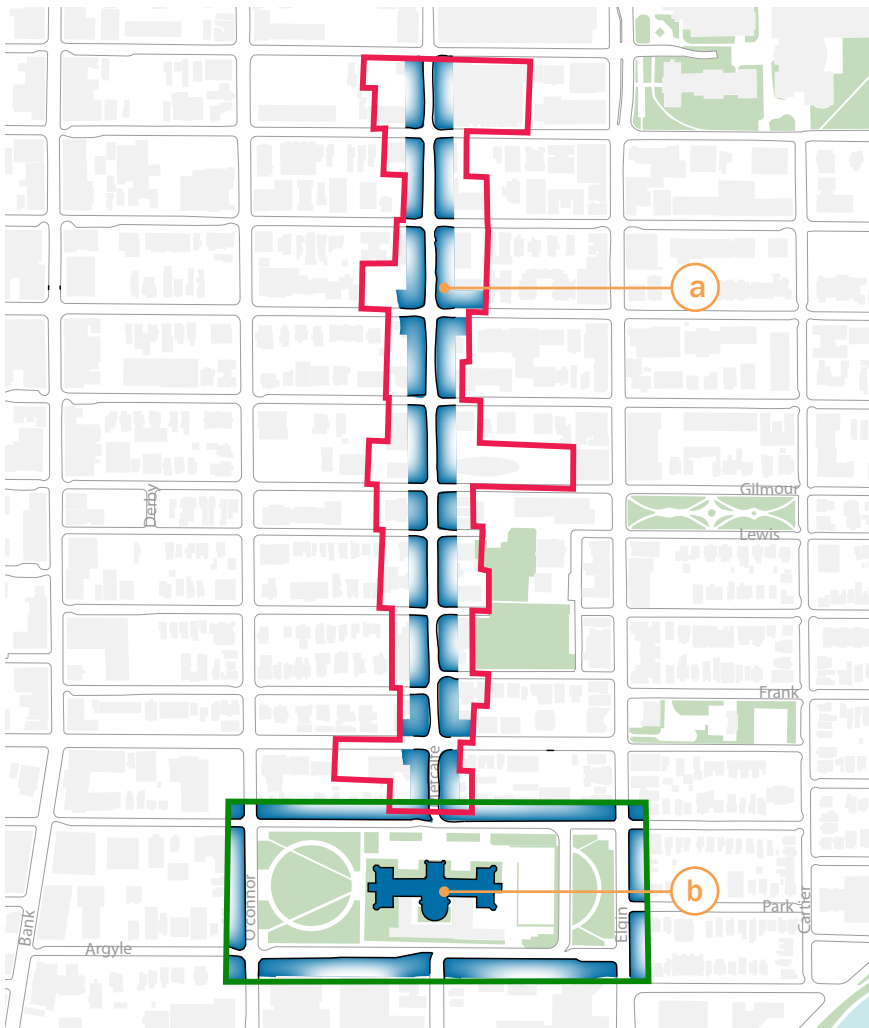
San Diego



6.4.5 Special Areas

The Museum of Nature and Metcalfe Street are unique places within Centretown which must be given special attention in order to preserve their special character. Infill buildings in these areas must demonstrate how they integrate with existing surroundings and contribute to the enhancement of the areas' characters as defined in Chapter 3. Infill buildings surrounding the Museum of Nature must demonstrate how they reinforce the street enclosure surrounding the park while infill on properties with frontage on Metcalfe Street must demonstrate how they reflect the detached building character with generous side yard and front landscaped setbacks. Infill buildings in both areas are to have exemplary architecture. Although both areas do not have uniform height regulations, guidelines for each typology still apply along with the following specific guidelines.

- a. Metcalfe Street area
- b. Museum of Nature area



Museum of Nature Area Infill

The following are guidelines specific to infill on those streets fronting directly onto the Museum of Nature (portions of Elgin, McLeod, Argyle and O'Connor):

- i. Treat infill fronting on to the Museum of Nature as "background" buildings with the highest level of architectural articulation, material treatment and detail.
- ii. Select materials such as stone, brick or glass as the dominant materials and integrate the palette of materials to create a harmonious whole. Stucco is discouraged.
- iii. Plant large canopy tree species within the landscape setback associated with each new development to strengthen the park setting.
- iv. Apply the guidelines contained in Section 6.5 - Heritage Approach and in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study.
- v. Coordinate streetscape improvements associated with new developments to create a uniform setting around the park as per Section 4.5 - Streetscape.



Metcalfe Street Infill

The following are guidelines specific to infill buildings on properties fronting directly onto Metcalfe Street south of Nepean Street:

- i. Treat infill with frontage on Metcalfe Street as detached buildings with generous side yard and front landscaped setbacks.
- ii. Set back buildings approximately 5 metres from Metcalfe Street.
- iii. Set back buildings a minimum of 2.5 to 3 metres from the side property line to create landscaped gaps between buildings.
- iv. Plant the landscape setback associated with each new development with soft landscape such as grass and planting beds, and large canopy tree species to strengthen the street setting.
- v. Treat building elevations, along Metcalfe and side streets with the highest level of architectural articulation (such as including recesses and setbacks), material treatment and detail.
- vi. Apply the guidelines contained in Section 6.5 - Heritage Approach and in the Centretown Heritage Conservation District Study.
- vii. Coordinate streetscape improvements associated with new developments to create a uniform setting around the park as per Section 4.5 - Streetscape.



Ottawa

6.5 Heritage Approach

Once a relatively uniform residential neighbourhood, over the past 40 years, Centretown has undergone significant change. Although the Centretown Heritage Conservation Study (1996) characterizes the neighbourhood as relatively intact ‘low to medium residential scale’ constructed between the 1880s and the 1930s, today this characterization cannot be fully applied to all locations throughout the district. While the Heritage Conservation District Study reinforces the heritage residential scale of the area, when it was written it did not fully recognize the existing mixed-use nature of the area nor did it anticipate the level of growth that Centretown is now experiencing.

Nevertheless, regardless of its evolution from a primarily residential neighbourhood to a more mixed use area, Centretown has retained a large number of important heritage assets. At present, both the Heritage Conservation District designation and the accompanying Heritage Overlay act as the primary tools for such conservation.

The many heritage assets of Centretown are protected under the Ontario Heritage Act, implemented through the Official Plan (Section 4.6.1), as well as through a series of zoning regulations (Section 60 of the Zoning By-law). Within a Heritage Conservation District, zoning regulations and Official Plan policies are valuable tools for encouraging the retention of heritage assets and preventing their alteration. The Community Design Plan was prepared with the understanding that the Heritage Conservation District was not to be amended.

In Centretown, there are two Heritage Conservation Districts (HCD), Minto Park Heritage Conservation District and the Centretown Heritage Conservation District. The former is tightly focused around Minto Park, while the latter is a district that covers almost 40 city blocks and includes every building within its boundaries. In addition to the two formal HCDs, a third area surrounding Dundonald Park is subject to Section 60 of the zoning bylaw (a ‘Heritage Overlay’) but is not recognized as a Heritage Conservation District. The Heritage Overlay provision is an additional layer of regulation imposed ‘over’ zoning to encourage the retention of existing heritage buildings and ensure that redevelopment is in keeping with the historic character of the area.

As the regulations of the Heritage Overlay over-ride the underlying zoning, heritage overlays are a powerful control for heritage districts. However, when it is applied as broadly as it has been in Centretown, some locations get included which perhaps do not merit inclusion (for example, Gladstone Avenue with some auto-oriented uses, parking lots and gas stations). In some cases, the Heritage Overlay can act as a disincentive for investment and improvements within the District. Furthermore, the Heritage Overlay’s restrictions that limit new construction to the footprint, massing and height of what currently exists on site can be inconsistent with other City goals around intensification and Mainstreet development.

It should be noted, however, that the Heritage Overlay allows proposed development to be reviewed in terms of the heritage character of the area and relief from its provision can be granted by the Committee of Adjustment. Within Centretown, where there are conflicts for Group 3 and 4 sites, relief from the provisions of the Heritage Overlay should be considered to encourage the types of development proposed in this CDP.

Centretown would benefit from a more up-to-date, fine-grained Heritage District Plan that would clearly present place-specific objectives for heritage resources/streetscapes within the larger Heritage Conservation District (as well as protect other scattered heritage buildings not caught by the above). This approach would allow for the introduction of a more comprehensive description of the heritage character of specific high value streets/streetscape and/or blocks (as opposed to only providing details on individual buildings). It would allow for the descriptions to be more consistent with what is on the ground and provide clear statement on

future form and heritage character for specific locations within Centretown. It should also include consideration of the CDP policy directions and design guidelines.

A finer grained approach would more clearly define where the specific intact groupings of heritage buildings are on a street-by-street basis. This street-by-street approach would also allow for infill developments based on their relationship to their immediate context and the character of their street.

For each streetscape and / or block, the description should include reference to its:

- overall heritage value and what it had been
- current condition
- urban design vision for how it should evolve to support the City’s goals

The CHCD update should be coupled with a review of the existing classification system to ensure accurate classification of heritage assets. Until such time that the update is complete, the existing district designation shall remain in effect and all proposals will be evaluated according to the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Such updates would offer the ideal opportunity to embed an updated Vision for Centretown, as presented in the latest Secondary Plan and this Community Design Plan. This would help to ensure that there are not conflicting municipal directives and policy positions for the area.

6.5.1 A Design-Led Solution

As Centretown evolves, it will be important that heritage and redevelopment are not placed at odds with one another, but continue to work together for the betterment of the community. Within certain locations of the CHCD, the heritage character can be strengthened and reinforced by good infill and the sensitive design of new buildings/ adaptive re-use of existing buildings.

New development needs to complement and not distract from or diminish the cultural heritage value of a heritage property. The reuse or integration of heritage structures into new development needs to be achieved in a manner that preserves the setting, character and integrity of the asset.

Outlined below are a series of recommendations for how heritage assets can best be retained through integration or reuse within the Centretown Heritage Conservation District.

The existing Centretown Heritage Conservation District (CHCD) study remains a valuable tool for influencing development in Centretown and for protecting those buildings identified as having heritage value. However, to offer more detailed and current guidance on many of the planning issues facing the neighbourhood, the CHCD study would benefit from an update.

Such an upgrading would offer the chance to bring the HCD into conformity with the Ontario Heritage Act and the post-2005 requirement for a heritage conservation district plan.

To undertake an update, the following steps could be followed:

- 1 Agree that the CHCD would benefit from an update and allocate necessary resources to the process.
- 2 Review existing classifications to ensure groupings accurately reflect current conditions on the ground.
- 3 Revise classification of buildings, as needed.
- 4 Consider revising the boundary of the CHCD.
- 5 Reconstitute the boundary of the CHCD, based on above.
- 6 Provide more detailed and up to date descriptions and guidelines for the heritage streetscapes / or blocks, including descriptions of their:
 - > overall heritage value
 - > current condition
 - > urban design vision for how they should evolve
- 7 Develop architectural guidelines for new buildings and additions to existing buildings.

In the future, the Golden Triangle area east of Elgin Street would be a candidate for a Heritage Conservation District Study . This area includes many intact blocks of older low-rise house form buildings and warrants protection from comprehensive redevelopment pressures.



Heritage integration - Residential scale



Adaptive Re-use - Residential

Heritage Integration

Existing heritage assets, especially those of Group 1 and 2, must be protected and properly integrated with new development. The CDP encourages restoration, reuse or integration of heritage structures into new low-rise, mid-rise or high-rise building development.

When integrating a heritage structure into a mid-rise or high-rise building project, the following guidelines shall be applied:

- New development should respect and be sensitively integrated with the heritage building and context and consistent with existing heritage plans and policies. It should be distinguishable and of sympathetic contemporary design which does not detract from or overpower the original building.
- New development should be respectful of key heritage elements. This can include, but is not limited to building stepbacks, cornice lines, façade horizontal and vertical articulations, opening sizes, proportion and rhythm, and building materials. New development should maintain a cornice line consistent with the existing heritage building through appropriate stepback(s).
- Where heritage buildings are low scaled, the podium of a new building will respect and reflect the urban grain and scale, visual relationships, and materials of the surrounding historic building(s).
- Compatible building materials should be used. Creative use of materials is encouraged.



Heritage Integration - Mid Rise Residential

Heritage Context

When adding a new building or additions to existing buildings on a site adjacent to a heritage building or streetscape, the following guidelines shall apply:

- use compatible materials.
- Use stepbacks, front and side, to appropriately transition with adjacent building heights.
- Minimize the use and height of blank walls.
- Inform new development with adjacent building ground floor heights and heritage character to enhance the public realm.
- Modulate façades through the use of vertical breaks and stepbacks in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding heritage structures.
- Cultural Heritage Impact Statements may be required for developments within or adjacent to the CHCD or the Minto Park HCD.
- If a development proposal comes forward that is in excess of the zoning permission on a parcel containing a heritage building, a full rezoning will be required.



Heritage Integration - Mid Rise Residential



Adaptive Re-use and Heritage Integration - Institutional



Heritage Integration - High Rise Residential & Institutional

21 QUESTIONS FOR DESIGN REVIEW

The City of Ottawa’s Urban Design Review Panel is an important tool for helping the City achieve architectural and urban design excellence. This independent panel of design professionals provides an objective peer review of both capital and private sector development projects throughout the City’s Design Priority Areas (which includes most of Centretown between Cartier Street and Kent Street). The goal of Design Review is to look critically at development applications to ensure that they demonstrate design and sustainability excellence. To help determine if this goal is being met, the following design criteria should be considered by City Staff and the Panel:

6.6 Thinking ‘Design’

Context

- 1 Does the development contribute to the overall architectural diversity by not repeating the same building on the same site or adjacent site?
- 2 Does the development appropriately transition to an adjacent low-rise neighbourhood and/or heritage property?
- 3 Is the development complementary to any existing heritage assets on site or on adjacent sites?
- 4 Does the development strive to avoid blank walls?
- 5 Does the development properly address street corners by treating both facades equally?

Building Massing, Articulation & Material Treatment

- 6 Does the overall building massing contribute to the creation of a human-scaled ground floor and base?
- 7 Does the development support appropriate setbacks that are in line with adjacent developments?
- 8 Does the development step back taller portions to maintain access to daylight and privacy?
- 9 Does the development architecturally integrate its mechanical penthouse?
- 10 Does the development use materials, texture and composition in a creative and enduring way?

Public Realm & Landscaping

- 11 Does the development contribute to the creation of a positive sense of place by integrating landscape elements such as street trees, furniture, lighting, soft landscaping and public art in a matter that helps to activate the public realm?
- 12 Does the development’s landscape highlight important architectural features, screen less attractive elements, and add visual interest?

Pedestrian Realm

- 13 Does the development support a safe, animated and positive pedestrian street experience by incorporating multiple ground floor entrances that face the street?
- 14 Does the development have street-related units with direct view from their interior to the street?
- 15 Does the development locate its servicing area to the rear of the building to avoid blank walls and reduce conflict with pedestrian-oriented activities?
- 16 Does the development locate air vents and mechanical equipment away from the public realm to minimise the impact on the pedestrian?
- 17 Does the development accentuate its main entrances to ensure ease of access directly from the street?
- 18 Does the development provide weather protection for residential and retail uses?

Sustainable Strategy

- 19 Does the proposed overall sustainability strategy help to minimize the project’s environmental impacts with strategies such as green roofs?
- 20 Is adequate outdoor amenity space provided for residents?
- 21 Does the development commit to green building technology and green building rating systems such as LEED?

*View looking northwest over Centretown from Museum of Nature.
Blue buildings represent the demonstration of the plan.*



View looking northeast over Centretown from Catherine Street.
Blue buildings represent the demonstration of the plan.

