



# City Design

## WHAT IS CITY DESIGN?

189\_ The design of our city is shaped by both its natural setting and its built form. The built form includes elements such as streets, streetscapes, public spaces, landscapes and buildings. City design is about planning the built form to create positive relationships between these elements, which influence how we navigate and experience the City.

## WHY IS CITY DESIGN IMPORTANT TO OUR FUTURE?

190\_ The way in which our neighbourhoods, buildings, streetscapes, public spaces and landscapes are designed will play a major role in supporting and shaping the image of our city and creating a sense of place that is unique to London. The image held of a city is an increasingly important asset in a globally competitive world for attracting investment, high-quality jobs, and a skilled labour force. A captivating city design creates and maintains value. Young professionals, knowledge-based workers, and those with highly-sought-after skills often choose to locate in cities that are exciting, authentic, and walkable, and businesses want to locate in cities that can attract and retain this type of workforce.

191\_ City design also helps us to create pedestrian and transit-oriented environments that support our plans for integrating mobility and land use. It helps us to offer a high quality of life in London and it also allows us to develop neighbourhoods, places and spaces that function more effectively and safely for everyone.

192\_ Our vision of creating an exciting, exceptional and connected London by 2035 will rely heavily upon the way that we design our city over the next 20 years.

## WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

193\_ In all of the planning and development we do and the initiatives we take as a municipality, we will design for and foster:

1. A well-designed built form throughout the city.
2. Development that is designed to be a good fit and compatible within its context.
3. A high-quality, distinctive and memorable city image.
4. Development that supports a positive pedestrian environment.
5. A built form that is supportive of all types of active mobility and universal accessibility.
6. High-quality public spaces that are safe, accessible, attractive and vibrant.
7. A mix of housing types to support ageing in place and affordability.
8. Sustainably designed development that is resilient to long-term change.
9. Healthy, diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods that promote a sense of place and character.



## HOW ARE WE GOING TO ACHIEVE THIS?

194\_ To achieve our City Design objectives all planning and development applications, public projects and all relevant by-laws shall conform with the following City Design policies relating to:

1. Character
2. Street Network
3. Streetscapes
4. Public Space
5. Site Layout
6. Buildings

195\_ Design guidelines may be adopted for specific areas, or for the city as a whole, to provide further detailed guidance for the implementation of the City Design policies of this Plan.

196\_ *Policy Deleted.*

### CHARACTER

197\_ The built form will be designed to have a sense of place and character consistent with the planned vision of the place type, by using such things as topography, street patterns, lotting patterns, streetscapes, public spaces, landscapes, site layout, buildings, materials and cultural heritage.

198\_ All proposals for new neighbourhoods will be required to establish a vision to guide planning for their character and sense of place.

199\_ All planning and development proposals within existing and new neighbourhoods will be required to articulate the neighbourhood's character and demonstrate how the proposal has been designed to fit within that context. The Our Tools chapter and the Residential Intensification policies in the Neighbourhoods Place Type chapter of this Plan provide further guidance for such proposals.

200\_ Heritage designated properties should be integrated into the design of new neighbourhoods to contribute to their character.

201\_ New neighbourhoods should be designed with consideration for the character of existing landscapes and topography. The street network and civic infrastructure will be established in consideration of this goal.

202\_ Buildings and public spaces at key entry points into neighbourhoods will be designed to help establish a neighbourhood's character and identity.

203\_ Neighbourhoods should be planned to include one or more identifiable and accessible focal points that contributes to the neighbourhood's character and allows for community gathering.

204\_ Natural heritage is an important contributor to the character of an area and influences the overall street network. Neighbourhoods should be designed to preserve or create views to natural heritage features and landmarks through lotting patterns, street patterns, or building placement.

205\_ Public art should be integrated into public spaces such as streets, parks, squares and forecourts, and on the property of public institutions and facilities to help establish character and sense of place.

206\_ Public art may be integrated into privately-owned spaces that are visible or accessible to the public. Subject to the Culturally Rich and Diverse City policies of this Plan, the City will encourage public art in such locations.

207\_ The use of exterior signs and other exterior advertising devices within the city will be regulated through a sign by-law, and sign guidelines may be prepared for use in the review of site plan and sign permit applications.

208\_ Signs will be designed as an integral part of development and will be compatible with the architectural style of the building and the existing and planned character of the surrounding area.

209\_ Signage will not be lit to a level that will adversely impact the amenity of surrounding residential properties or the design of streetscapes.

210\_ Trees should be recognized as important features of a neighbourhood's planned character and sense of place.





## STREET NETWORK

211\_ The City's street network will be designed to ensure high-quality pedestrian environments, maximized convenience for mobility, access to focal points and to support the planned vision for the place type.

212\_ The configuration of streets planned for new neighbourhoods will be of a grid, or a modified grid, pattern. Cul-de-sacs, deadends, and other street patterns which inhibit such street networks should be minimized. To ensure connectivity and integration with existing and planned neighbourhoods, new neighbourhood street networks will generally be designed to have connections to existing and future neighbourhoods.

213\_ Street patterns will be easy and safe to navigate by walking and cycling and will be supportive of transit services.

214\_ Municipal walkways will not be considered an alternative means for establishing necessary street connections when designing new neighbourhoods. Municipal walkways may be considered in neighbourhoods to provide for additional connections for active forms of mobility.

215\_ Rear laneways may be permitted in new neighbourhood design to allow for building frontages that contribute to quality pedestrian oriented streetscapes.

216\_ Street networks, block orientation, lot sizes, and building orientation should be designed to take advantage of passive solar energy while ensuring that active mobility and other design criteria of this chapter are satisfied.

217\_ Neighbourhood street networks and block sizes will be designed to ensure connectivity and support transit and active mobility. Infrastructure and amenities to support transit and active mobility will be incorporated.

218\_ Street networks should be designed to support connections to transit and other neighbourhood amenities within a ten minute walk.

219\_ Neighbourhood street networks will support the delivery of emergency services.

220\_ Neighbourhoods should be designed with a diversity of lot sizes to support a range of housing choices, mix of uses and to accommodate a variety of ages and abilities.



## STREETSCAPES

**221\_** The design of streetscapes will support the planned vision for the place type and will contribute to character and sense of place. The parameters for street character are defined in Table 6 - Street Classification Design Features of the Mobility chapter of this Plan.

**222\_** A coordinated approach will be taken during the planning and design of streetscape improvements, including the coordination of signage, sidewalks, cycling pathways, tree planting, lighting, parking areas, landscaping and building face improvements, and adjacent public spaces as applicable.

**222A\_** The proportion of building and street frontages used for garages and driveways should be minimized to allow for street trees, provide for on-street parking and support pedestrian and cycling-oriented streetscapes.

**223\_** Street design standards will be adopted to reflect pedestrian, cycling, and transit priorities within neighbourhoods.

**224\_** The paved portion of streets within neighbourhoods should be as narrow as possible, while meeting required design standards, to

calm traffic and emphasize the priority of the pedestrian environment. Street rights-of-way should be of adequate size to accommodate all services within an efficient space and allow sufficient room for street tree planting and the long-term growth of mature trees.

**225\_** Curb extensions, narrow streets, and on-street parking may be used, among other techniques, for traffic calming.

**226\_** Low Impact Development should be incorporated into the design of streetscapes consistent with the planned character of the neighbourhood and street.

**227\_** On-street parking will be permitted on Neighbourhood Connectors and Neighbourhood Streets, unless there are specific limitations imposed by City Council.

**228\_** Neighbourhood streets and all infrastructure will be planned and designed to enhance safety by implementing the principles of *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design*, encouraging greater levels of passive surveillance, and providing sidewalks of sufficient width to support planned levels of activity.

229\_ Except in exceptional circumstances, rear-lotting will not be permitted onto public streets and side-lotting will be discouraged on Civic Boulevards and Urban Thoroughfares.

230\_ Retaining walls will only be permitted along street frontages where it can be demonstrated that they will not have a negative impact on the public realm.

231\_ Switch boxes, transformers, electrical and gas meters, ground-mounted air conditioning units and other above-ground or building-mounted mechanical equipment should be located away from building frontages, entrances, street intersections, and public spaces.

232\_ Infrastructure and utilities will be designed in consideration of, and to support, the existing or planned character of streetscapes and neighbourhoods.

233\_ Wherever possible, utilities should be located underground to reduce their visual impact.

234\_ Wherever possible given the legislative requirements for the separation of utilities, utility installations will be consolidated or co-located to reduce the impact on the public realm and associated surface treatments.

235\_ Landscaping should be used to define spaces, highlight prominent features and landmarks, add visual interest, define pedestrian areas, delineate public and private spaces, add comfort and improve health, offer visual screening, and improve the aesthetic quality of neighbourhoods.

236\_ All streets, and the associated infrastructure, should be designed to include space for appropriately sized street trees with tree canopy coverage that will provide for pleasant pedestrian environments and enhanced aesthetics, afford cooling to adjacent buildings, improve air quality, and offer habitat for urban wildlife.

237\_ Treescapes should be recognized as important features of a neighbourhood's planned character.

238\_ In conformity with the Forest City policies of this Plan, neighbourhoods will be designed, planted, and maintained with robust street tree planting to create high-quality treescapes.

239\_ Opportunities will be explored for supporting pollinators and food production through landscaping and street tree planting.

240\_ Landscaping features that provide amenities for pets should be considered when designing streetscapes.

241\_ Noise wall policies found in the Our Tools part of this Plan will govern proposals for noise walls in association with new development. Noise walls in association with road widenings will be avoided where possible. Where such walls are necessary, innovative design techniques will be used relating to the materials, texture, colour, lighting, variability and overall design composition to mitigate impacts on the pedestrian environment and streetscape.

## PUBLIC SPACE

242\_ Public spaces will be designed to support the planned vision of the place type by enhancing views and vistas, providing places to meet and gather, and establishing connections.

243\_ Public facilities, parks, trails, seating areas, play equipment, open spaces and recreational facilities should be integrated into neighbourhoods to allow for healthy and active lifestyles.

244\_ Public spaces will be located and designed to help establish the character and sense of place of the surrounding area and, where applicable, the positive image of our city.

245\_ Public art, seating areas, enhanced landscaped areas, ceremonial tree planting, and monuments should be incorporated into the design of neighbourhoods and positioned in prominent locations to enhance views or vistas.

246\_ Public spaces should be designed and located as part of, and to support, the active mobility network.

247\_ Public spaces should be located and designed within neighbourhoods to ensure access, visibility, safety, and connectivity to the adjacent street network. To accomplish these objectives, public spaces within neighbourhoods should have wide exposure to public streets.

248\_ Public spaces should be designed to accommodate tree growth to assist in achieving the goals of the Forest City chapter of this Plan.



249\_ Neighbourhoods will be designed with a high-quality public realm, composed of public facilities and public spaces such as parks, squares, sitting areas and streets.

250\_ Neighbourhood parks may be designed to provide space to support food systems, including food growing, composting, neighbourhood markets and other neighbourhood-based activities.

251\_ The public realm and public buildings will be designed to meet federal, provincial and municipal accessibility requirements. Municipal properties will meet the *City of London Facility Accessibility Design Standards*.

## SITE LAYOUT

252\_ The site layout of new development should be designed to respond to its context and the existing and planned character of the surrounding area.

253\_ Site layout should be designed to minimize and mitigate impacts on adjacent properties.

254\_ Site layout, and the corresponding building design, should respond to the topography of a site.

255\_ Site layout will promote connectivity and safe movement for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists between, and within, sites.

256\_ Buildings should be sited so that they maintain and reinforce the prevailing street wall or street line of existing buildings. Where a streetscape has not been built out, buildings should be sited with regard for the planned street wall or street line.

257\_ The siting of buildings and layout of sites should preserve or create views of landmarks and natural features from public spaces.

258\_ The layout and grading of a site should retain and incorporate desirable trees.

259\_ Buildings should be sited with minimal setbacks from public streets and public spaces to create an inviting, active and comfortable pedestrian environment.

260\_ Projecting garages will be discouraged.

261\_ Buildings at corner sites should be oriented towards the higher-order street classification.

262\_ Where high-rise buildings may block or impair emergency radio system signals, radio infrastructure may be required to be installed to ensure proper signal strength.

263\_ *Policy Deleted.*

264\_ The drive aisles for drive through facilities should not be located between the street and the face of the building in the front or exterior side yard. These facilities should not interfere with direct pedestrian access to the building from the sidewalk, compromise pedestrian safety, reduce the ability to provide on-site landscaping adjacent to the street, or have a negative impact on the pedestrian amenity of the streetscape.

265\_ Drive through facilities shall address matters such as pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation, access and parking, built form, streetscape, heritage resources, potential impacts on adjacent land uses, landscaping and signage.

266\_ Loading, garbage and other service areas will be located so that they will not have a negative visual impact from the street or detract from pedestrian connections.

267\_ *Policy Deleted*

268\_ Sites shall be designed to provide a direct, comfortable and safe connection from the principle building entrance to the public sidewalk.

269\_ Buildings should be sited to minimize the visual exposure of parking areas to the street.

## > PARKING

**270\_** The location, configuration, and size of parking areas will be designed to support the planned vision of the place type and enhance the experience of pedestrians, transit-users, cyclists, and drivers.

**271\_** The *Zoning By-law* will establish automobile parking standards, ensuring that excessive amounts of parking are not required. Requirements may be lower or may not apply within those place types and parts of the city that have high accessibility to transit or that are close to employment areas, office areas, institutions and other uses that generate high levels of attraction. (OPA 68)

**272\_** The impact of parking facilities on the public realm will be minimized by strategically locating and screening these parking areas. Surface parking should be located in the rear yard or interior side yard.

**273\_** Parking structures should be integrated into the design of buildings to ensure the public realm is not negatively affected. Structured parking will be screened.

**274\_** Opportunities for sharing and consolidating parking to meet parking demand will be encouraged in the Downtown, Transit Village, and Shopping Area Place Types, and in transit station areas and commercial areas along Urban Corridors. Where sharing of parking occurs through a development agreement, a reduction in on-site parking requirements may be accommodated. (OPA 68)

**275\_** To reduce the visual impact of parking, make efficient use of land, to provide for outdoor amenity space, and promote active uses on street-facing facades, parking for large buildings,







such as high-rise residential buildings, office buildings, and mixed-use buildings should be located underground or integrated within the building design.

276\_ Where structured parking is located adjacent to a street, the ground floor facing the street should be occupied by active uses such as commercial, office, or residential uses to avoid creating non-active street frontages.

277\_ Surface parking lots should be designed to include a sustainable tree canopy at 20 years of anticipated tree growth.

278\_ Surface parking located in highly-visible areas should be screened by low walls and landscape treatments.

279\_ Lighting of parking areas will be designed to avoid negative light impacts on adjacent properties.

280\_ Adequate bicycle parking facilities will be required for all development to encourage cycling as a viable form of transportation. Covered and secure forms of bicycle parking should be incorporated into multi-unit residential, large-scale commercial or retail, institutional, and recreational developments.

281\_ Large surface parking lots shall be designed with areas dedicated for pedestrian priority to ensure safe pedestrian connectivity throughout the site.

282\_ Surface parking areas will be designed to incorporate landscape areas for visual amenity, to assist with stormwater management, and reduce the heat island effect.

283\_ Surface parking areas should be designed to incorporate low impact development measures to address stormwater management.

## BUILDINGS

**284\_** All planning and development proposals will be required to demonstrate how the proposed building is designed to support the planned vision of the place type and establishes character and a sense of place for the surrounding area. This will include matters such as scale, massing, materials, relationship to adjacent buildings, heritage impact and other such form-related considerations. The Our Tools chapter and the Residential Intensification policies in the Neighbourhoods Place Type chapter of this Plan provide further guidance for such proposals.

**285\_** To support pedestrian activity and safety, large expanses of blank wall will not be permitted along the street edge.

**286\_** Buildings should be designed to achieve human-scale relationships that are comfortable for pedestrians.

**287\_** Within the context of the relevant place type policies, the height of buildings should have a proportional relationship to the width of the abutting public right-of-way to achieve a sense of enclosure.

**288\_** Buildings fronting onto public spaces should establish an edge to provide definition, and a sense of enclosure around, the public space.

**289\_** High and mid-rise buildings should be designed to express three defined components: a base, middle, and top. Alternative design solutions that address the following intentions may be permitted.

1. The base should establish a human-scale façade with active frontages including, where appropriate, windows with transparent glass, forecourts, patios, awnings, lighting, and the use of materials that reinforce a human scale.
2. The middle should be visually cohesive with, but distinct from, the base and top.
3. The top should provide a finishing treatment, such as roof or a cornice treatment, to hide and integrate mechanical penthouses into the overall building design.

**290\_** Buildings located on corner sites should address the corner through building massing, location of entrances, and architectural elements.

**291\_** Principal building entrances and transparent windows should be located to face the public right-of-way and public spaces, to reinforce the public realm, establish an active frontage and provide for convenient pedestrian access.

**292\_** High-rise buildings will incorporate a podium at the building base, or other design solutions to reduce the apparent height and mass of the building on the pedestrian environment, allow sunlight to penetrate into the right-of-way, and reduce wind impacts.

**293\_** High-rise buildings should be designed to minimize massing, shadowing, visual impact, and the obstruction of views from the street, public spaces, and neighbouring properties. To achieve these objectives, high rise buildings should take the form of slender towers. High rise buildings should not be designed with long axes where they create an overwhelming building mass.

**294\_** In conformity with the Green and Healthy City policies of this Plan, buildings should incorporate green building design and associated sustainable development technologies and techniques.

**295\_** Residential and mixed-use buildings should include outdoor amenity spaces.

**296\_** Rooftop utility equipment should be screened from view and integrated into the overall building design.

**297\_** In the design of buildings, consideration should be given to the need for installing emergency service communications infrastructure. Where needed, this infrastructure should be integrated into the overall design of the building.

**298\_** Design measures relating to building height, scale and massing should be used to provide a transition between development of significantly different intensities, considering the existing and planned context.

**299\_** Civic buildings should be designed as landmarks to establish character and a sense of place.





300\_ Buildings and associated structures will be designed to accommodate weight loads of emergency vehicles and services.

#### > MATERIALS

301\_ A diversity of materials should be used in the design of buildings to visually break up massing, reduce visual bulk and add interest to the building design.

302\_ Materials should be selected for their scale, texture, quality, durability, and consistency within their context.

303\_ For commercial, office and institutional uses, transparent glass should be used on the majority of the ground level façades facing a public right-of-way to provide views into and out of the space and enhance the pedestrian environment.

304\_ Efforts should be made to design buildings and use materials that minimize bird strikes on high-rise buildings.

305\_ Where new development is being constructed adjacent to heritage designated properties, building materials should be sympathetic to the materials and architectural style of the heritage property.

#### URBAN DESIGN PEER REVIEW PANEL

306\_ City Council may appoint an Urban Design Peer Review Panel, made up of urban design experts, who will provide advice to development applicants, Planning Staff and Council through the evaluation of planning and development applications. Such evaluation will be based upon the policies of this Plan and any relevant guideline documents that have been adopted by Council.