

The background image is a faded photograph of a city street. On the left, a building has a sign that says 'CRUSH'. Several people are walking on the sidewalk, and a bicycle is parked on the right. The overall scene is a typical urban environment.

City of Hamilton
Presentation to Planning Committee
July 5, 2011

City of Toronto
Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study



Presentation Outline

1. Toronto's Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings
2. Performance Standards
3. Study Outcomes

The Study

City of Toronto with

Brook McIlroy Planning + Urban Design/Pace Architects

E.R.A. Architects

Quadrangle Architects

Urban Marketing Collaborative

Study Purposes:

1. Implement the Official Plan
2. Expedite development along the Avenues
3. Standardize “Best Practices” from Avenue Studies to-date
4. Encourage development of more & better-designed Mid-Rise Buildings



The Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study

Objectives of the Study:

- a) Identifying characteristics of appropriate growth while recognizing the importance of protecting neighbourhoods
- b) Identifying a mid-rise built form appropriate for different conditions
- c) Recommending amendments to City's regulatory framework - Zoning By-laws and Urban Design Guidelines based on Performance Standards
- d) Recommending changes to City processes and procedures – e.g. development application review
- e) Categorizing the Avenue segments where growth is encouraged

Consultation

- Interviews with developers and architects
- Interdivisional Team – e.g. Affordable Housing Office, Fire Services, Legal Services, Parks, Forestry & Recreation, Solid Waste Management, Toronto Parking Authority, Transportation Services, etc.
- Workshops and meetings with Core Team (planning & urban design staff)
- Public sessions in each of the four Districts
- Staff held meetings with Councillors



The Avenues Vision

- New businesses & residents
- Well framed, beautiful tree-lined streets
- Improved transit
- Multiplicity of at-grade uses
- Re-energized streets
- Streetscape & public realm investments
- Vibrant community life



Mid-rise buildings are the most appropriate development form for growth on Toronto's Avenues.

Mid-Rise Buildings

How mid-rise building heights are determined:

- 1:1 building height to R.O.W. width ratio (maximum)
- Most Avenues fall within 20, 27, 30 or 36m R.O.W. width
- 10.5 metre & 3-storey minimum height
- 3 -11 storeys
- Number of storeys varies with building use



The Case for Mid-Rise Urbanism

- Iconic cities associated with a mid-rise built form
- This form is embraced by popular culture
- Includes the avenues of London, Paris, Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Barcelona, and Milan
- Appropriate form for neighbourhood centres





Paris



Copenhagen

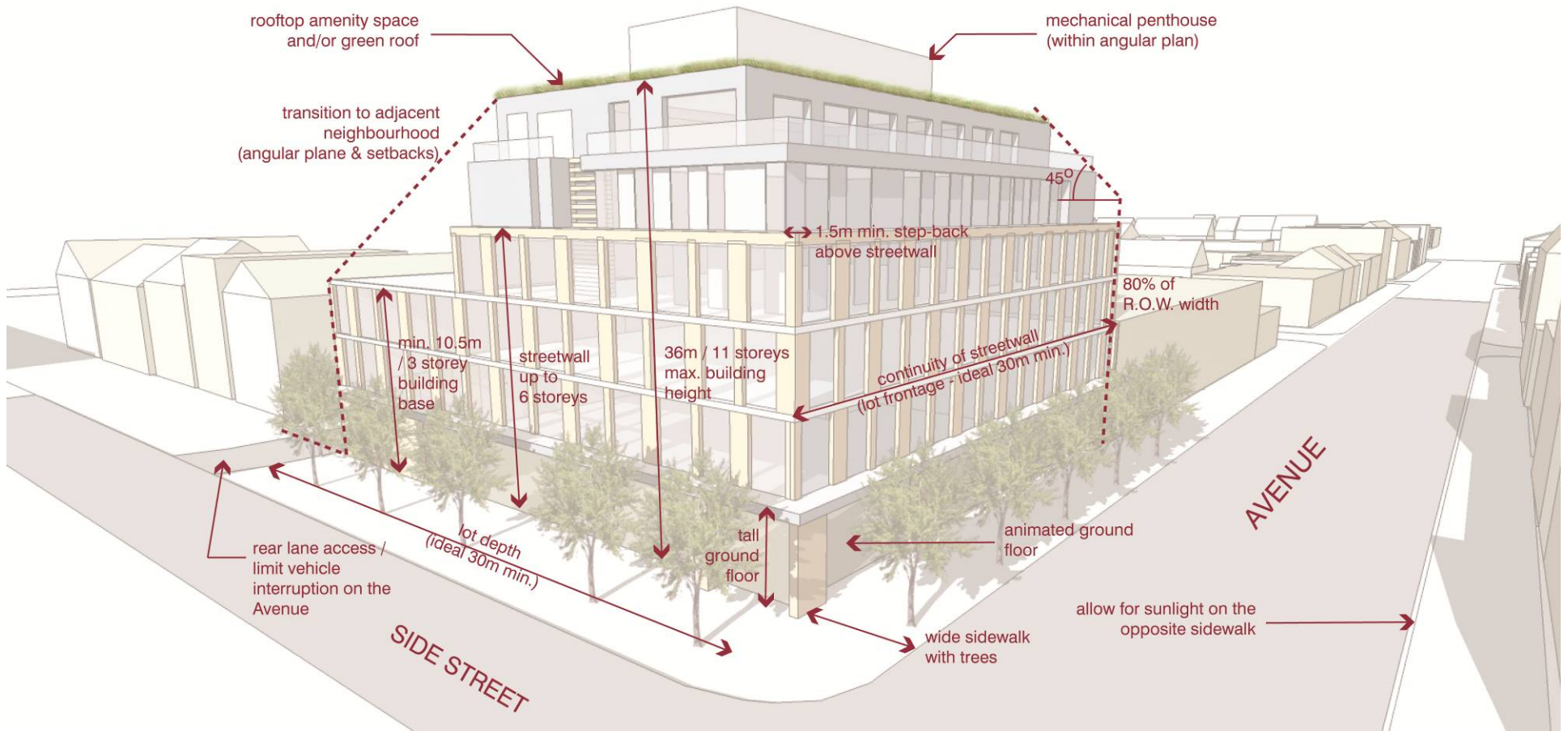


Toronto



Toronto

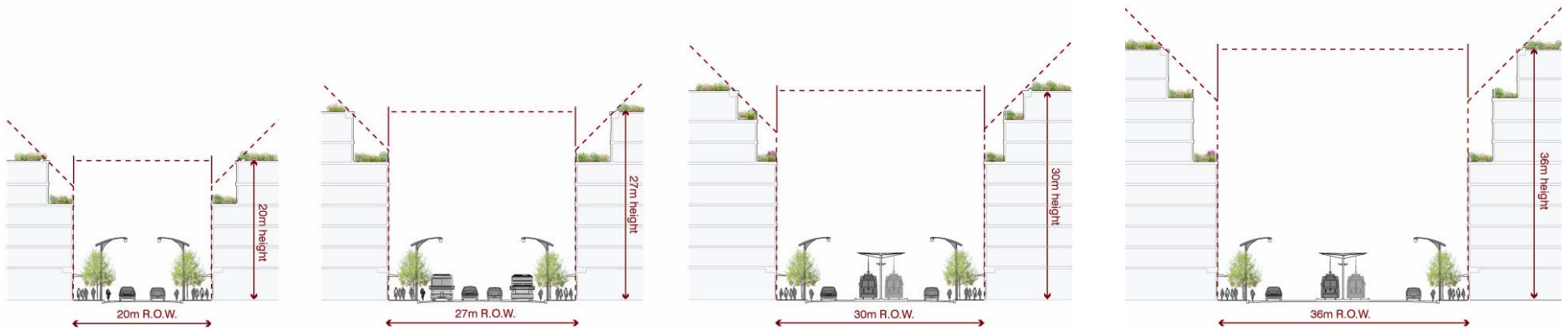
20 Performance Standards



Some Performance Standards will form the basis of new Zoning By-laws and some will be implemented as Urban Design Guidelines.

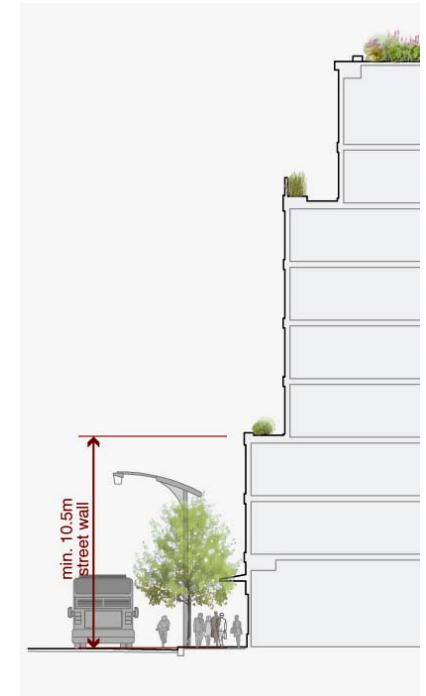
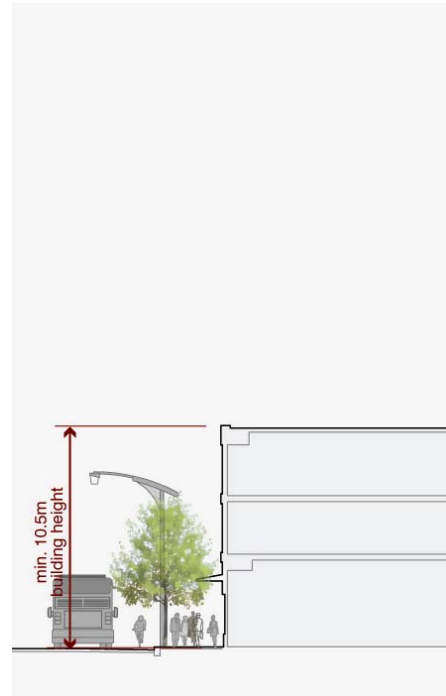
Maximum Allowable Height

- Maximum height of buildings will be equal to the width of the Avenue (R.O.W. width)
- Maximum height may only be achieved if the built form demonstrates compliance with all applicable Performance Standards



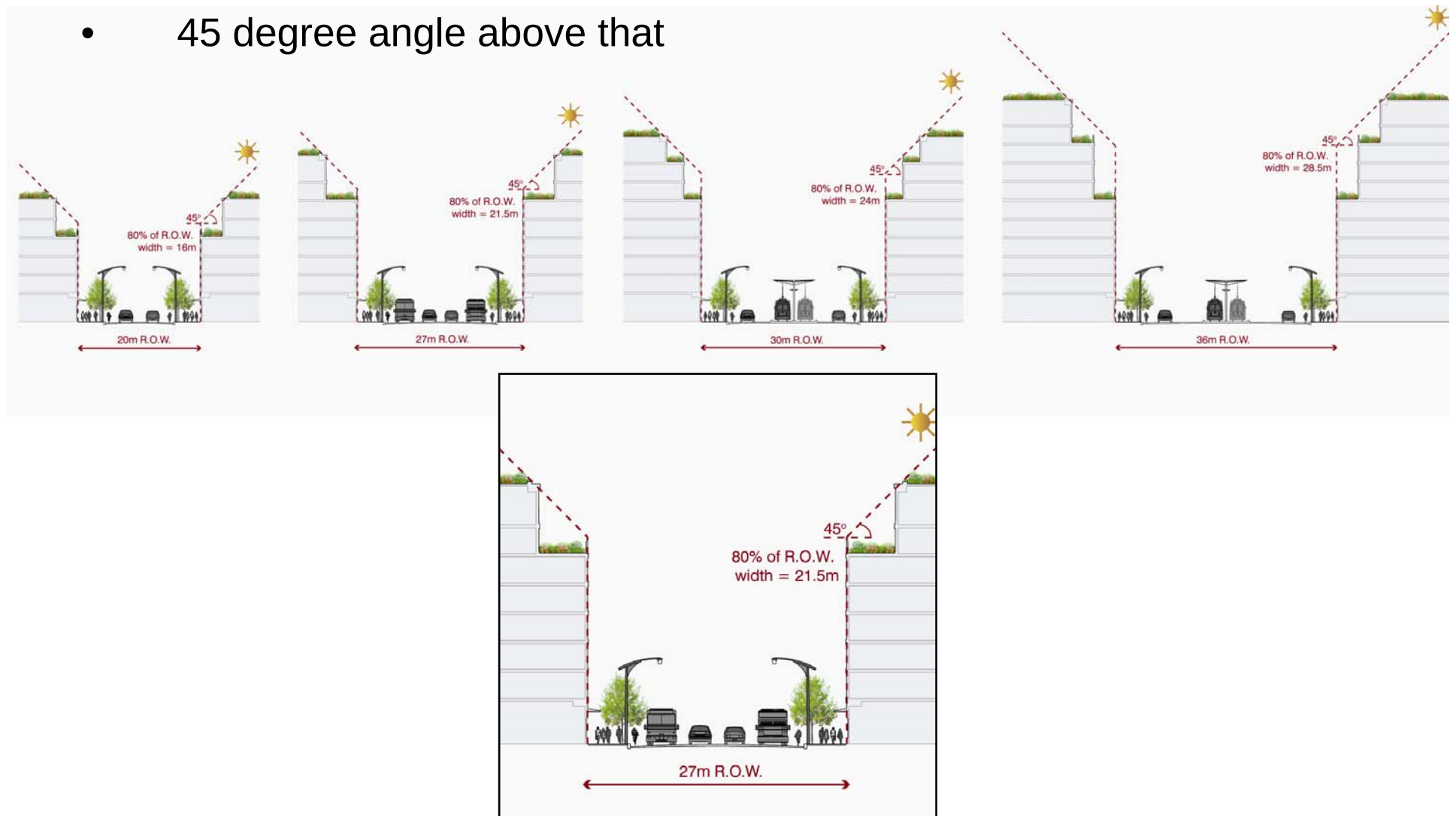
Minimum Building Height & Street Wall

- All new buildings on the Avenues must achieve a minimum height of 10.5 metres (up to 3 storeys) at the street frontage



Front Angular Plane

- Up to a maximum of 80% of the R.O.W. width
- 45 degree angle above that



Front Angular Plane - Sunlight on Sidewalks



Pedestrian Perception Zones & “Human Scale”

In addition to step-backs at the top of mid-rise buildings...

- Buildings taller than 6 storeys should have a “Pedestrian Perception” step-back, to mitigate the impact of height





30m ROW - Before

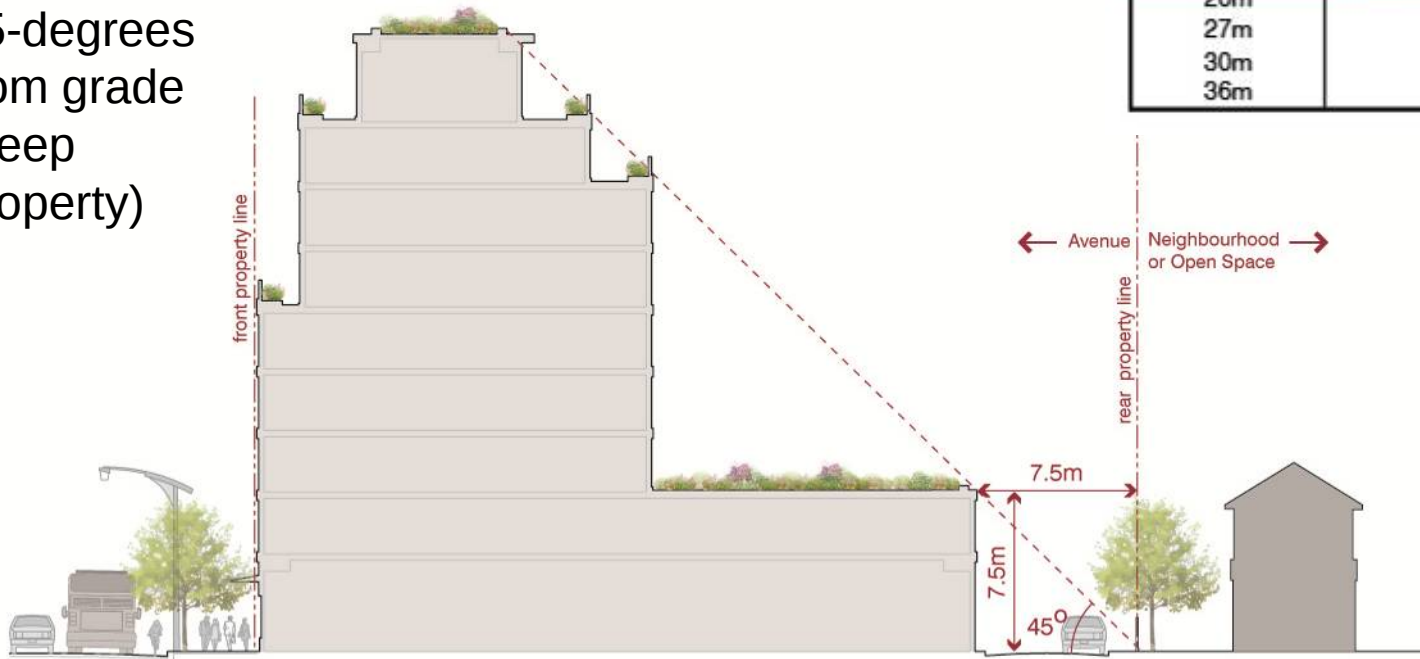


30m ROW - After

Rear Transition to Neighbourhood

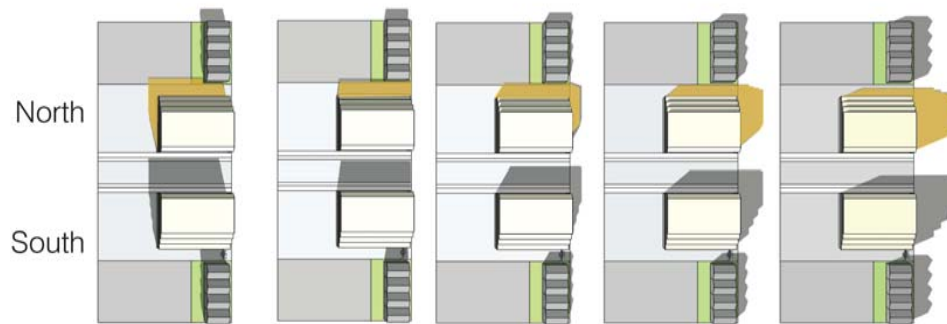
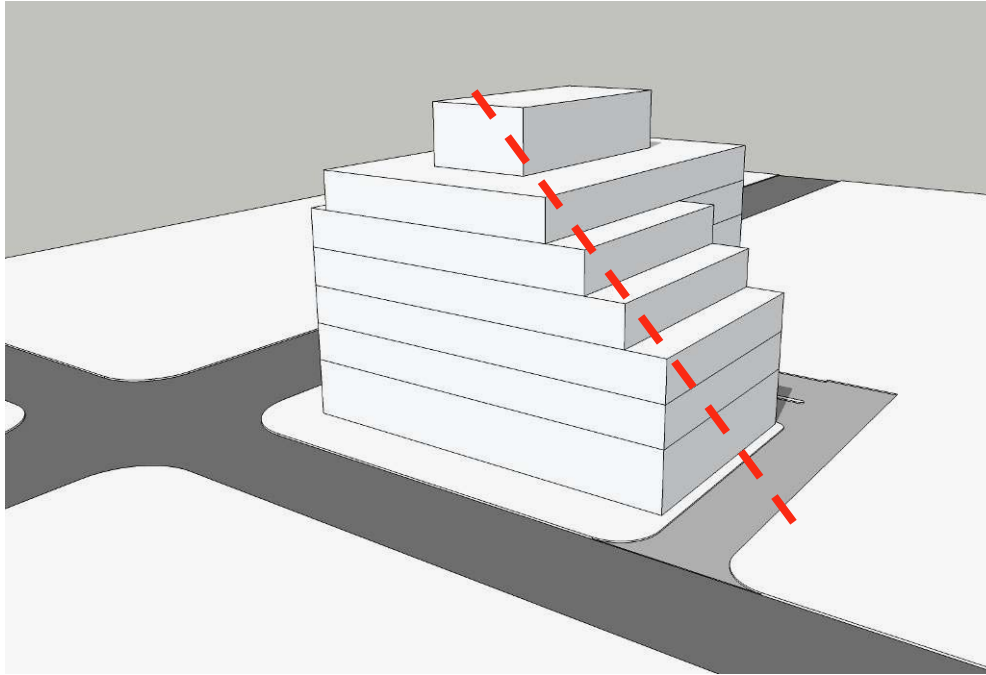
- 45-degree angular plane taken from the property line at-grade - This is more restrictive than the MCR & could be used for Neighbourhood & Open Space adjacencies (**deep lots**)
- The rear transition between an Avenue property and a Neighbourhood should use the MCR regulations (**shallow lots**)

45-degrees
from grade
(deep
property)

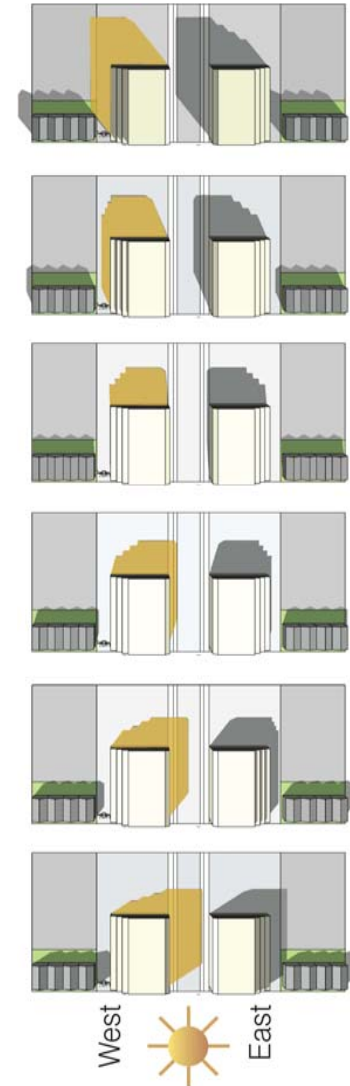


R.O.W. Width	Lot Depth
	Ideal Minimum
20m	37.5m
27m	42.5m
30m	46.5m
36m	52.5m

Rear Transition to Neighbourhood



East-west street on March 21st – 11:00 – 4:00



North-south street on Sept. 21st:
9:00 – 2:00



27m ROW - Before

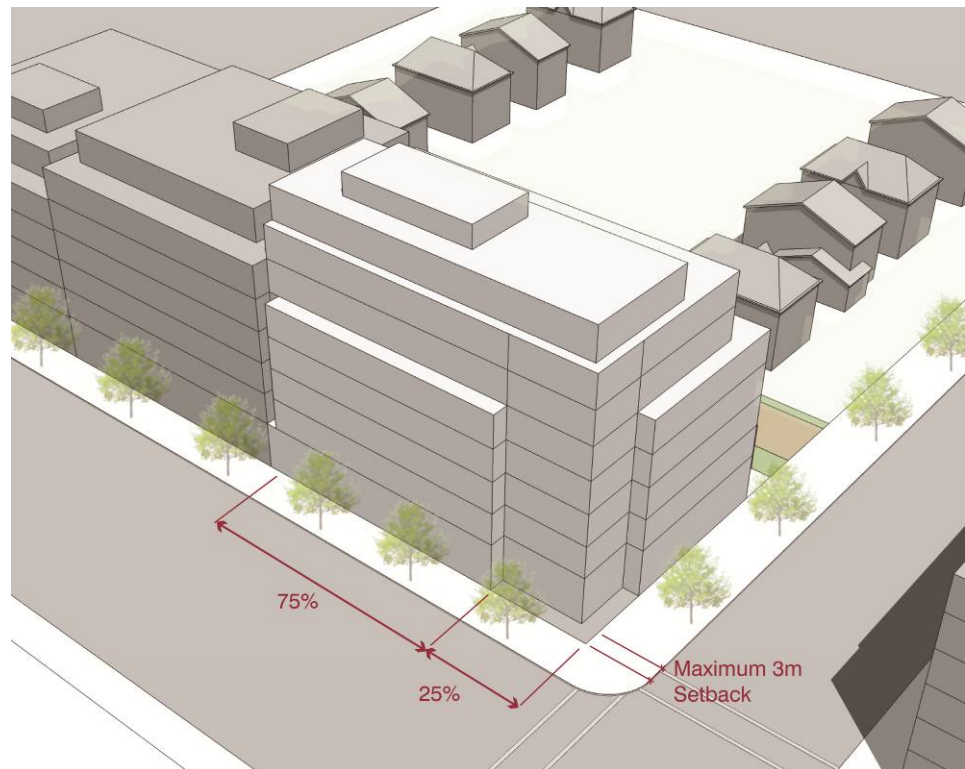




Angular Planes & Shadows

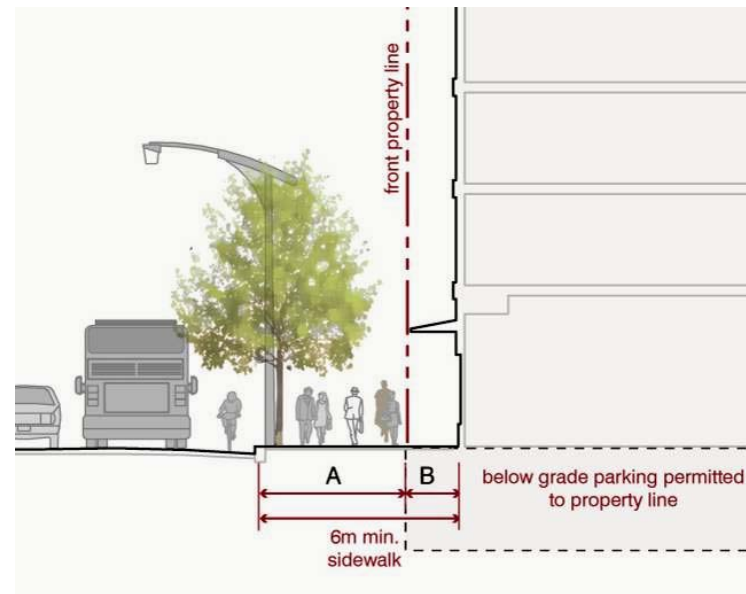
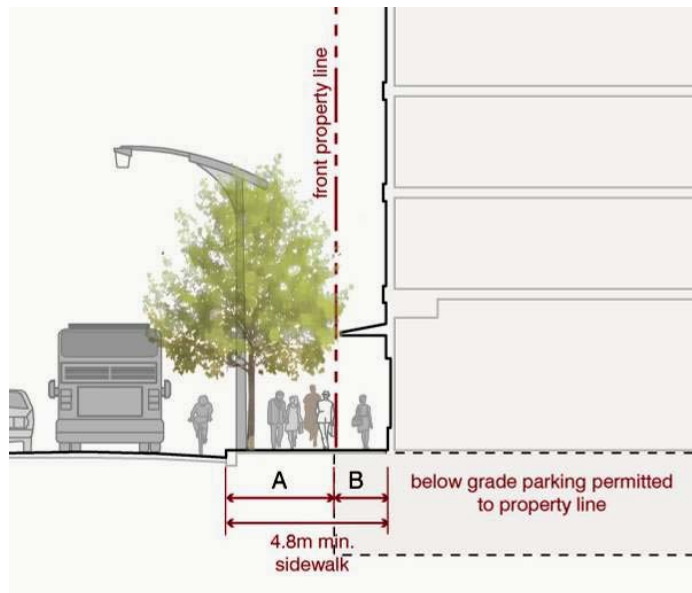
Front Façade Alignment

- Mid-rise buildings should define a street wall (minimum height 10.5 metres) by generally building to the front property line or applicable setback lines



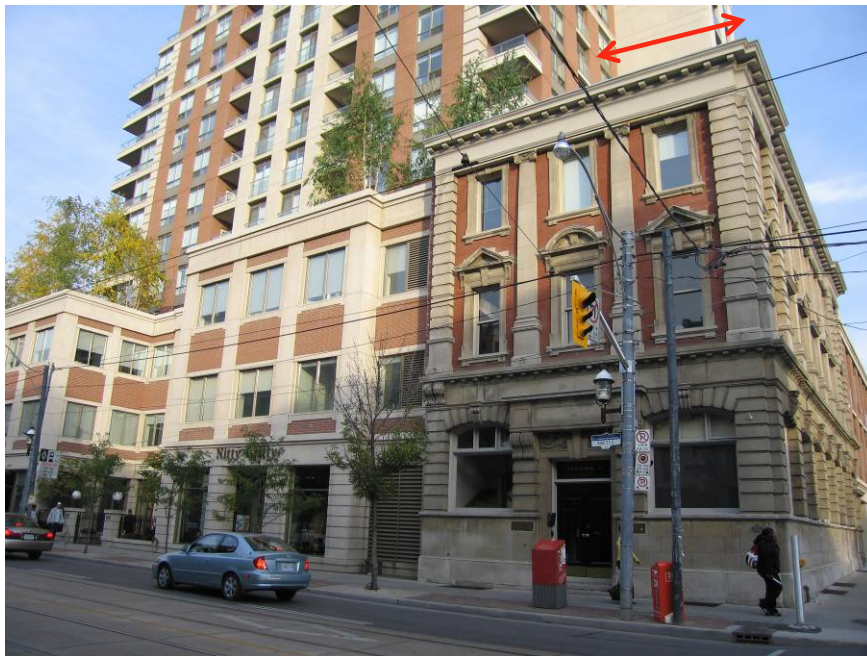
Minimum Sidewalk Zones

- Mid-rise buildings may be required to be setback at-grade to provide a minimum sidewalk zone
 - 20 - 30m R.O.W.s should provide min. sidewalk dimension of 4.8m
 - R.O.W.s greater than 30m should provide min. sidewalk dimensions of 6m
 - Avenues on Transit City routes may require additional setbacks



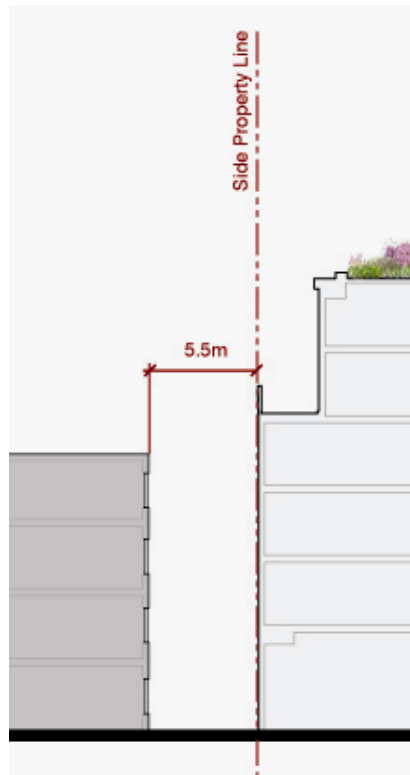
Side Property Setbacks & Upper Storey Step-backs

- The base of Mid-Rise buildings should be built to the side property lines.
- Upper storeys should step-back:
 - To increase sky-views and sunlight access to the sidewalk
 - “Porous” street walls are encouraged above the 10.5m street wall



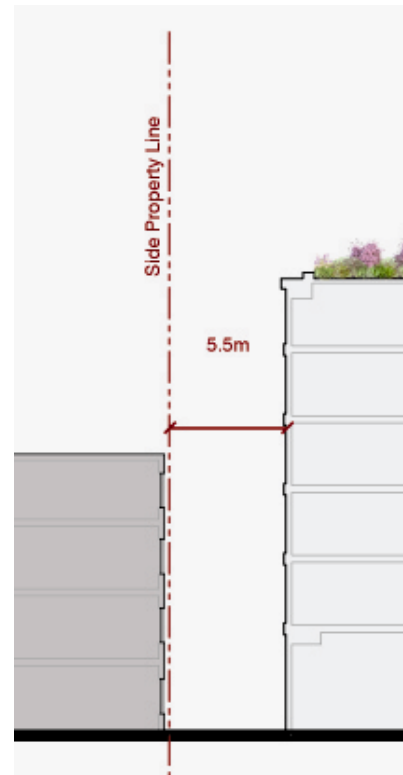
Side Property Setbacks

- Side property setbacks may be required where adjacent properties have openings/windows.



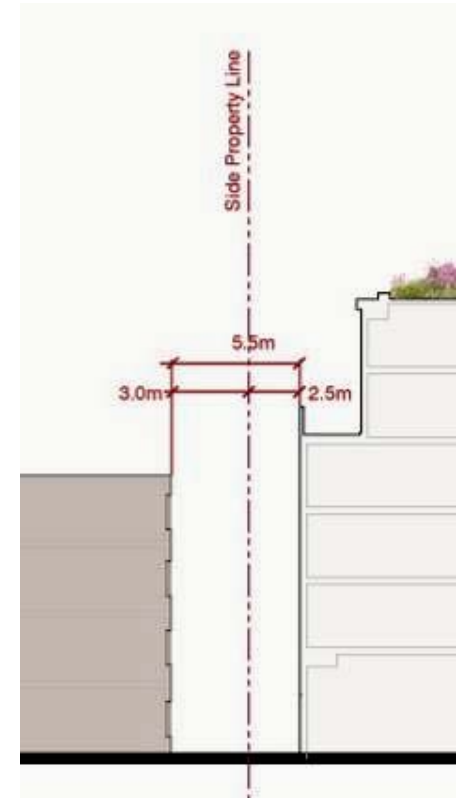
Existing building with side windows

New building (no side windows)



Existing building with side windows

New building (side windows permitted)



Existing building with side windows

New building (some side windows)

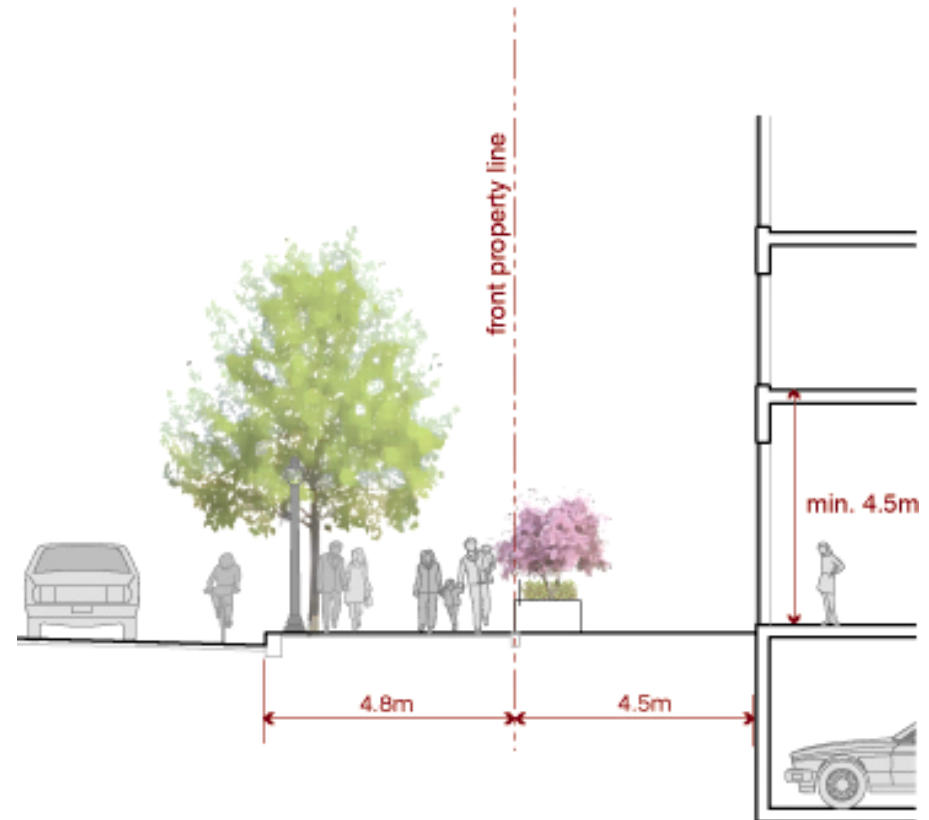
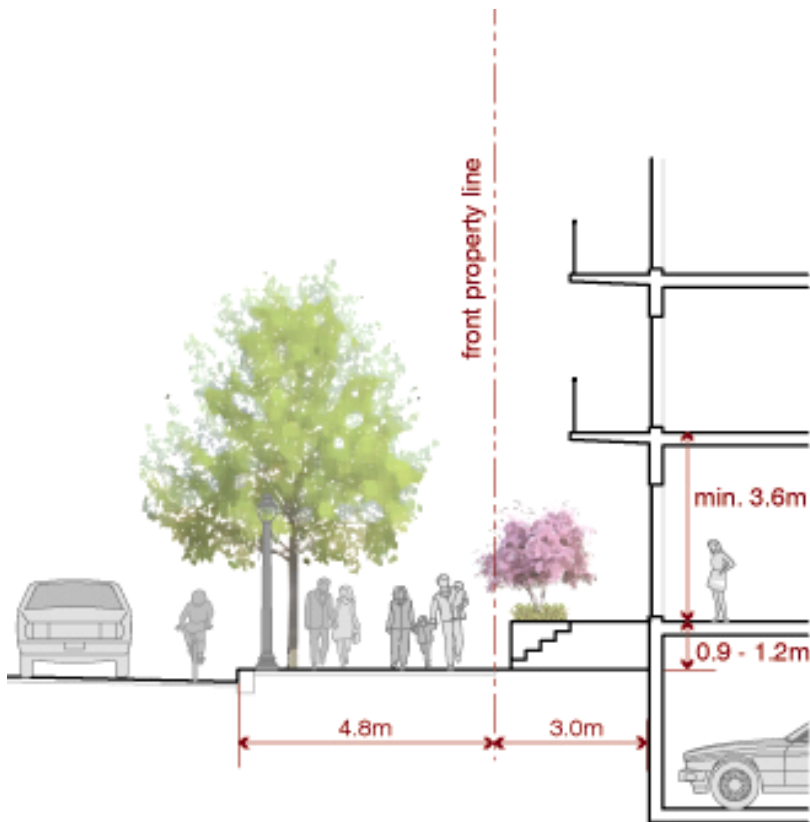
Streetscapes

- Avenue streetscapes should provide the highest level of urban design treatment to create beautiful pedestrian environments and great places to shop, work and live
- Streetscape design is guided by the City of Toronto Streetscape Manual which addresses the five main elements of the street - paving, street trees, medians, lighting and street furniture



Residential Uses At-Grade

- Where ground floor residential uses are permitted fronting onto the Avenue, design standards are required including setbacks, raised ground floors & landscape buffers.



Façade Design & Articulation

- Mid-rise buildings will be designed to support the public and commercial function of the Avenue through well articulated and appropriately scaled facades.



Design Quality

- Mid-rise buildings will reflect design excellence and green building innovation utilizing high-quality materials that acknowledge the public role of the Avenues



Heritage

- New development on the Avenues should be sensitively integrated with heritage buildings and within the context of Heritage Conservation Districts



Typical downtown Avenue - today



Typical downtown Avenue - interim



Typical downtown Avenue – long term



Implementation Tools

Recommendations

- Updated zoning and guidelines from the Performance Standards
- Review the Official Plan's Avenues, review Land Uses
- Design Review Panel should review all Avenue developments

Implementation tools should:

- Provide incentives for achieving mid-rise buildings on the Avenues
- Expedite the review and approval process
- Create better certainty for developers and for the public



Thank you

www.toronto.ca/planning/midrisestudy.htm