

CHAPTER FOUR



Many of the properties within *Downtown*, the *Centres* and along the *Avenues* are designated *Mixed Use Areas*, encouraging a broad range of commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses. Flexibility is provided for future redevelopment in these areas to accommodate increases in population and jobs along transit lines.

Toronto's industrial districts and suburban office parks are designated *Employment Areas*, reflecting the broad objective of retaining our *Employment Areas* as places of business and developing and intensifying job growth within these areas, especially those areas that can be reached by transit. Another location for future job growth for a maturing City and region are *Institutional Areas*, where our hospitals, university and college campuses, and key government centres can reinforce the new economy linkages needed to sustain Toronto's economic future.

The *Regeneration Areas* designation is applied to areas with significant vacant lands and/or buildings and in need of revitalization as a means of fostering growth and physical change. *Regeneration Areas* policies will attract investment, fill the buildings and bring new life to the streets.

4.1 NEIGHBOURHOODS

Prevailing Building Types

Many zoning by-laws currently permit only single detached houses. The type of dwellings permitted varies among neighbourhoods and these detailed residential use lists are contained in the established zoning by-laws which will remain in place and establish the benchmark for what is to be permitted in the future. If, for example, an existing zoning by-law permits only single detached houses in a particular neighbourhood and the prevailing (predominant) building type in that neighbourhood is single detached dwellings, then the Plan's policies are to be interpreted to allow only single detached dwellings in order to respect and reinforce the established physical character of the neighbourhood, except where the infill development policies of Section 4.1.9 would be applicable. While most *Neighbourhoods* will have one prevailing building type, some may have more. For example, multiples may prevail at the edge, along major streets, while singles prevail in the interior, along local roads.

Toronto's hundreds of *Neighbourhoods* contain a full range of residential uses within lower scale buildings, as well as parks, schools, local institutions and small-scale stores and shops serving the needs of area residents. Lower scale residential buildings in Toronto's *Neighbourhoods* consist of detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes and townhouses as well as interspersed walk-up apartments that are four storeys or less.

Over the past half-century, scattered high-rise apartment buildings were constructed in the midst of otherwise low scale residential neighbourhoods. The existing higher scale apartments are recognized but no new ones are permitted in areas designated as *Neighbourhoods*.

More recently, as the economy has changed, thousands of Torontonians have begun working from their homes, creating valuable economic activity, enhancing safety by providing "eyes on the street", and reducing trips to work. These home occupations are provided for in *Neighbourhoods* across the City.

Historical development patterns have also added to the variety of local educational uses in *Neighbourhoods*. Policies regarding the suitable integration of schools within the context of *Neighbourhoods* are an important consideration for ensuring quality of life.

Policies

1. *Neighbourhoods* are considered physically stable areas made up of residential uses in lower scale buildings such as detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes and townhouses, as well as interspersed walk-up apartments that are no higher than four storeys. Parks, low scale local institutions, home occupations, cultural and recreational facilities and small-scale retail, service and office uses are also provided for in *Neighbourhoods*.

Low scale local institutions play an important role in the rhythm of daily life in *Neighbourhoods* and include such uses as: schools, places of worship, community centres, libraries, day nurseries and private home daycare, seniors and nursing homes and long-term care facilities, public transit facilities, utility and telecommunications installations, and public services and facilities provided by the local, provincial and federal governments.

2. Schools will provide open space for outdoor student activities and landscaping and will be designed and operated to limit noise, privacy and traffic impacts on neighbouring residents.
3. Small-scale retail, service and office uses are permitted on properties in *Neighbourhoods* that legally contained such uses prior to the approval date of this Official Plan. New small-scale retail, service and office uses that are incidental to and support *Neighbourhoods* and that are compatible with the area and do not adversely impact adjacent residences may be permitted through an amendment to the Zoning By-law, where required, on major streets shown on Map 3, with the exception of portions of streets which have reversed lot frontages. To maintain the residential amenity of *Neighbourhoods*, new small-scale retail, service and office uses will:
 - a) serve the needs of area residents and potentially reduce local automobile trips;
 - b) have minimal noise, parking or other adverse impacts upon adjacent or nearby residents; and
 - c) have a physical form that is compatible with and integrated into the *Neighbourhood*.
4. Apartment buildings legally constructed prior to the approval date of this Official Plan are permitted in *Neighbourhoods*.



Development Criteria in Neighbourhoods

The stability of our *Neighbourhoods'* physical character is one of the keys to Toronto's success.

While communities experience constant social and demographic change, the general physical character of Toronto's residential *Neighbourhoods* endures. Physical changes to our established *Neighbourhoods* must be sensitive, gradual and generally "fit" the existing physical character. A key objective of this Plan is that new development respect and reinforce the general physical patterns in a *Neighbourhood*.

Scattered throughout many *Neighbourhoods* are properties that differ from the prevailing patterns of lot size, configuration and orientation. Typically, these lots are sites of former non-residential uses such as an industry, institution, retail stores, a utility corridor, or are lots that were passed over in the first wave of urbanization. In converting these sites to residential uses, there is a genuine opportunity to add to the quality of *Neighbourhood* life by filling in the “gaps” and extending streets and paths. Due to the site configuration and orientation, it is often not possible or desirable to provide the same site standards and pattern of development in these infill projects as in the surrounding *Neighbourhood*. Special infill criteria are provided for dealing with the integration of new development for these sites, and for intensification on existing apartment sites in *Neighbourhoods*.



5. Development in established *Neighbourhoods* will respect and reinforce the existing physical character of the neighbourhood, including in particular:

- a) patterns of streets, blocks and lanes, parks and public building sites;
- b) size and configuration of lots;
- c) heights, massing, scale and dwelling type of nearby residential properties;
- d) prevailing building type(s);
- e) setbacks of buildings from the street or streets;
- f) prevailing patterns of rear and side yard setbacks and landscaped open space;
- g) continuation of special landscape or built-form features that contribute to the unique physical character of a neighbourhood; and
- h) conservation of heritage buildings, structures and landscapes.

No changes will be made through rezoning, minor variance, consent or other public action that are out of keeping with the physical character of the neighbourhood.

The prevailing building type will be the predominant form of development in the neighbourhood. Some *Neighbourhoods* will have more than one prevailing building type. In such cases, a prevailing building type in one neighbourhood will not be considered when determining the prevailing building type in another neighbourhood.

6. Where a more intense form of development than the prevailing building type has been approved on a major street in a *Neighbourhood*, it will not be considered when reviewing prevailing building type(s) in the assessment of development proposals in the interior of the *Neighbourhood*.

7. Proposals for intensification of land on major streets in *Neighbourhoods* are not encouraged by the policies of this Plan. Where a more intense form of residential development than that permitted by existing zoning on a major street in a *Neighbourhood* is proposed, the application will be reviewed in accordance with Policy 5, having regard to both the form of development along the street and its relationship to adjacent development in the *Neighbourhood*.

8. Zoning by-laws will contain numerical site standards for matters such as building type and height, density, lot sizes, lot depths, lot frontages, parking, building setbacks from lot lines, landscaped open space and any other performance standards to ensure that new development will be compatible with the physical character of established residential *Neighbourhoods*.
9. Infill development on properties that vary from the local pattern in terms of lot size, configuration and/or orientation in established *Neighbourhoods* will:
 - a) have heights, massing and scale appropriate for the site and compatible with that permitted by the zoning for adjacent and nearby residential properties;
 - b) provide adequate privacy, sunlight and sky views for residents of new and existing buildings by ensuring adequate distance and separation between building walls and using landscaping, planting and fencing to enhance privacy where needed;
 - c) front onto existing or newly created public streets wherever possible, with no gates limiting public access; and
 - d) locate and screen service areas and garbage storage to minimize the impact on existing and new streets and residences.
10. Where development is proposed on a site with an existing apartment building in *Neighbourhoods*, the new development must be grade-related and must also meet the criteria regarding infill development in *Apartment Neighbourhoods*.

4.2 APARTMENT NEIGHBOURHOODS

Rental apartment and condominium buildings already contain almost half of the dwelling units in Toronto at the millennium. Many of these buildings are clustered in areas already developed as apartment neighbourhoods. In these established *Apartment Neighbourhoods*, improving amenities, accommodating sensitive infill, where it can improve the quality of life and promoting environmental sustainability are key considerations. Residents in *Apartment Neighbourhoods* should have a high quality urban environment, safety, quality services and residential amenities.

Apartment Neighbourhoods are distinguished from low-rise *Neighbourhoods* because a greater scale of buildings is permitted and different scale-related criteria are needed to guide development. Built up *Apartment Neighbourhoods* are stable areas of the City where significant growth is generally not anticipated. There may, however, be opportunities for additional townhouses or apartments on underutilized sites and this Plan sets out criteria to evaluate these situations.