SCHEDULE 5 - URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Town of Halton Hills

Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines

Brook McIlroy/

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Steeles Avenue and Hornby Road, Aug 2015

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1.0 Introduction

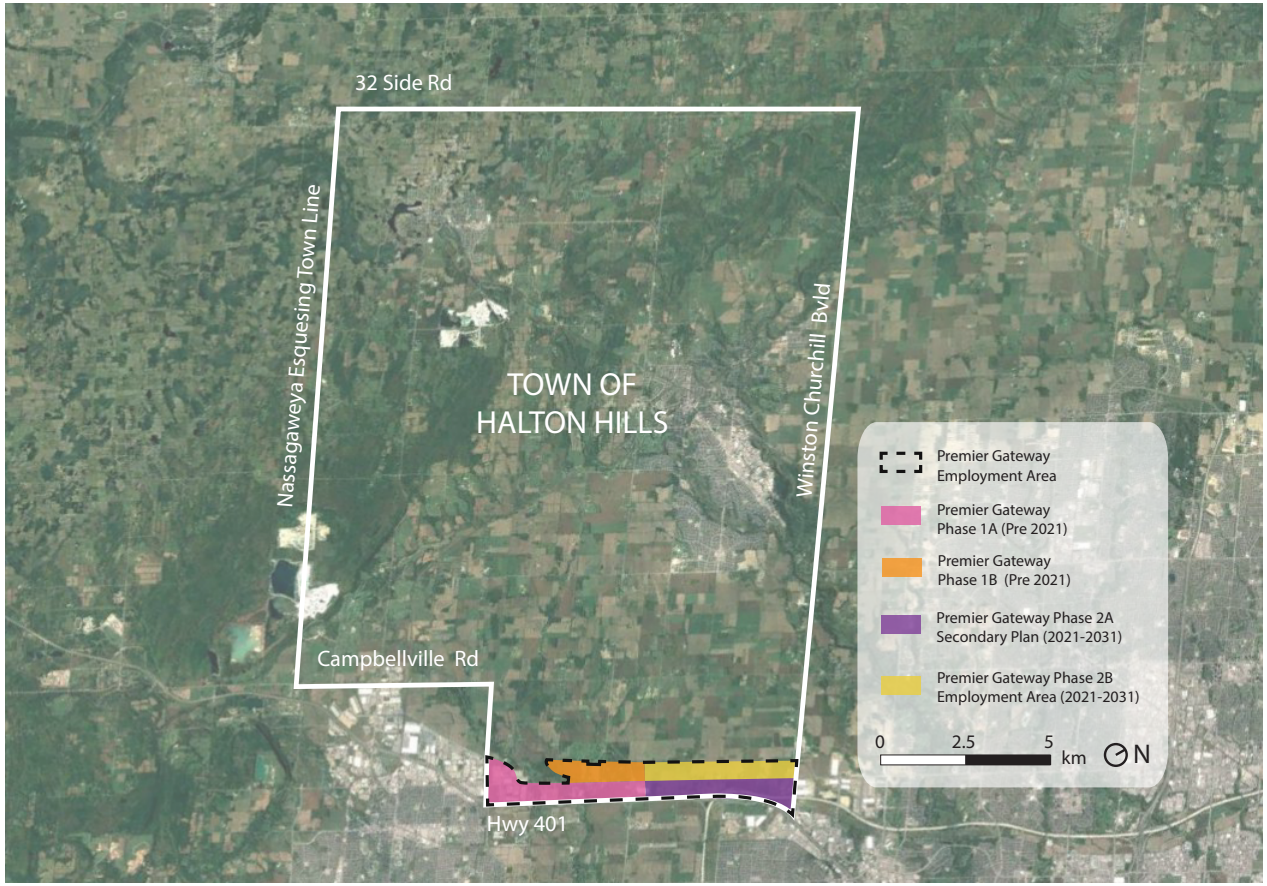
The Halton Hills Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines (2020) reflect the results of a comprehensive review of the applicable zoning standards in Zoning By-Law 00-138 and the 401 Corridor Integrated Planning Project Design Guidelines (2000). The Premier Gateway Employment Area is located between Highway 401 and Steeles Avenue, as well as along the north side of Steeles Avenue; and between the Town of Milton in the vicinity of James Snow Parkway, and the City of Brampton at Winston Churchill Boulevard.

The guidelines are applicable to the Phase 1A, 1B and 2A areas.

These urban design guidelines support the vision and objectives in the Halton Region Official Plan, and the Halton Hills Official Plan, in particular the policies related to the Premier Gateway Employment Area, as well as the regulations of the Premier Gateway Zoning By-Law. The urban design guidelines aim to fulfill the Town's vision and objectives for the Premier Gateway Employment Area, in order to ensure high quality development with a strong visual identity. The intent of the guidelines is to establish a planning framework that will help the area thrive as a dynamic, accessible, and economically competitive employment area that reflects high-quality urban design aesthetics and sustainable development practices appropriate for this area.

1.1 The Premier Gateway Employment Area

The Premier Gateway Employment Area is identified as the Town's prestige employment area where large scale employment growth is directed. As the "gateway" to the Town, a high standard of design is required for new office, warehousing, manufacturing and commercial development. The Premier Gateway Employment Area is a competitive employment area based on its locational advantages, including access to Highways 401 and 407, rail, and the airport.



Map of the Premier Gateway Employment Area

General Policy and Regulatory Direction

Halton Region Official Plan (ROPA 38)

The Halton Region Official Plan presents a vision for Halton Region's growth and development to the year 2031. The document includes policies that enforce the Region's desire for economic competitiveness, protection and preservation of natural and agricultural areas, sustainable development, and the creation of healthy communities.

The Official Plan primarily designates the Premier Gateway Employment Area as "Urban Area" with an "Employment Area" overlay designation. The key objective of the Employment Area designation is to provide "opportunities for a fully-diversified economic base, including maintaining a range and choice of suitable sites for employment uses which support a wide range of economic activities and ancillary uses, and take into account the needs of existing and future businesses"(Section 77.1(2)). In addition, the three main tributaries of the Sixteen Mile Creek that cross the area are designated as "Regional Natural Heritage System".

Halton Hills Official Plan

The Halton Hills Official Plan, as amended by Official Plan Amendment Nos. 10, 21, and 30 and 31 A &B[1] establish a vision for the land use and development of the Town, for the planning horizon of 2031. The Official Plan provides direction on managing growth and development in the Town of Halton Hills, and states that development should demonstrate high-quality built form, site design, and landscape design. The document identifies the Premier Gateway Employment Area as the only employment area that can accommodate large-scale employment growth (Section D3.3). Sections D3.5 and D6.4 and Schedule A8 of the Official Plan provide detailed policy direction and designations with respect to the Premier Gateway Employment Area.

[1]Official Plan Amendment Nos. 10, 21, 30 and 31 A & B have been adopted by the Town of Halton Hills. As of November 2020, OPAs 21, 30 and 31 A & B have not yet been approved by the Region of Halton.

TOWN OF HALTON HILLS
OFFICIAL PLAN

Premier Gateway Phase 1B Secondary Plan

The Premier Gateway Phase 1B Employment Area Secondary Plan is a comprehensive secondary plan that provides land use designations and policies for certain lands on the north side of Steeles Avenue. The Secondary Plan area includes Lot 1, bounded by Steeles Avenue, Sixth Line, Eighth Line, and a line parallel to, and approximately 1.2 kilometres north of, Steeles Avenue. North of this, the Plan identifies an additional Lot 2 which includes approximately 75 hectares of land for employment uses that form part of the Premier Gateway Employment Area.

Premier Gateway Zoning By-Law Review

The Zoning By-Law 00-138 for the Premier Gateway Employment Area was created in 2000 as a standalone by-law to implement the direction in the Official Plan regarding the design of new development, and to ensure consistency with the area's urban design guidelines. The 2020 update of this document updates several standards related to setbacks, employee parking, commercial vehicle waiting spaces, loading docks, and minimum landscaping requirements, and will integrate these policies into a comprehensive zoning by-law.

1.2 Purpose of the Guidelines

The Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines establish the physical design framework for the area, to ensure that new built form demonstrates sustainability and high-quality design that reflects building practices that are appropriate for the area. These guidelines contain an Urban Design Vision, a detailed set of Guiding Principles, and guidelines that will establish urban design parameters for the Premier Gateway Employment Area. The guidelines have been prepared to provide guidance to developers, Town staff, and the public on the desired physical development.

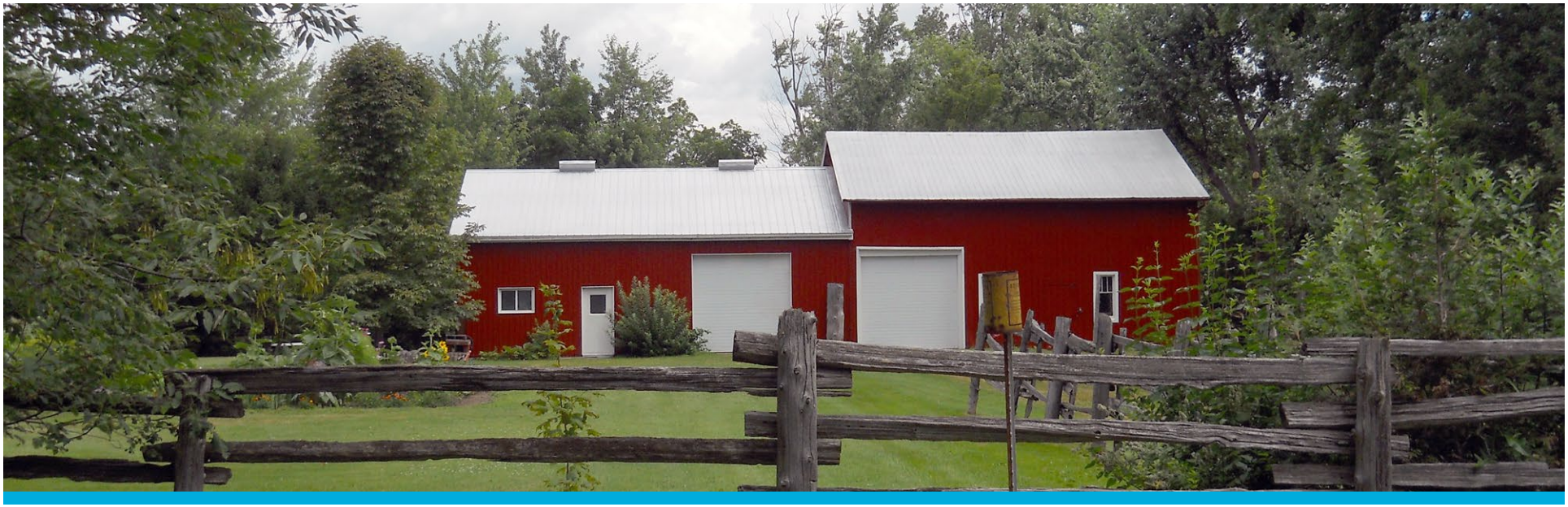
1.3 How to Use the Guidelines

The Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines provide guidance for consideration by developers and land owners designing developments within the Premier Gateway Employment Area. The Guidelines will also be used by Town staff to evaluate development applications. The objective of the guidelines is to provide direction related to site plan design, built form design, sustainability, Greenlands, Major Parks & Open Space, and to provide strategies for implementation. These aspects are interrelated and should be referenced in their entirety in the design and review of all projects.

The document contains general guidelines that apply to Phase 1A, 1B and 2A lands within the Premier Gateway Employment Area. Additional directions for Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road and the Gateway Areas are found within relevant sections to provide further insight on the design of these key areas.

Existing greenfield lands

2.0 Vision and Guiding Principles



2.1 Land Use Plan

Phases 1A and 2A of the Premier Gateway Employment Area includes four land use designations: Prestige Industrial Area; Gateway Area; Greenlands; and Major Parks & Open Space. Phase 1B includes four land use designations: Prestige Industrial Area; Business Commercial Area; Residential Special Policy Area, and Natural Heritage System

The Official Plan designates most of the Premier Gateway Employment Area as "Prestige Industrial Area". The other major designation is "Gateway Area". Lands in this designation are found south of Steeles Avenue on the west side of Winston Churchill Boulevard, north of Highway 407; surrounding the intersection of Trafalgar Road and Steeles Avenue north of Highway 401; and on the east side of the Town boundary, east of James Snow Parkway, north of Highway 401.

Within Phase 1B, the other major destination is the "Business Commercial Area," which is found north of Steeles Avenue surrounding its intersections with Hornby Road and Trafalgar Road.

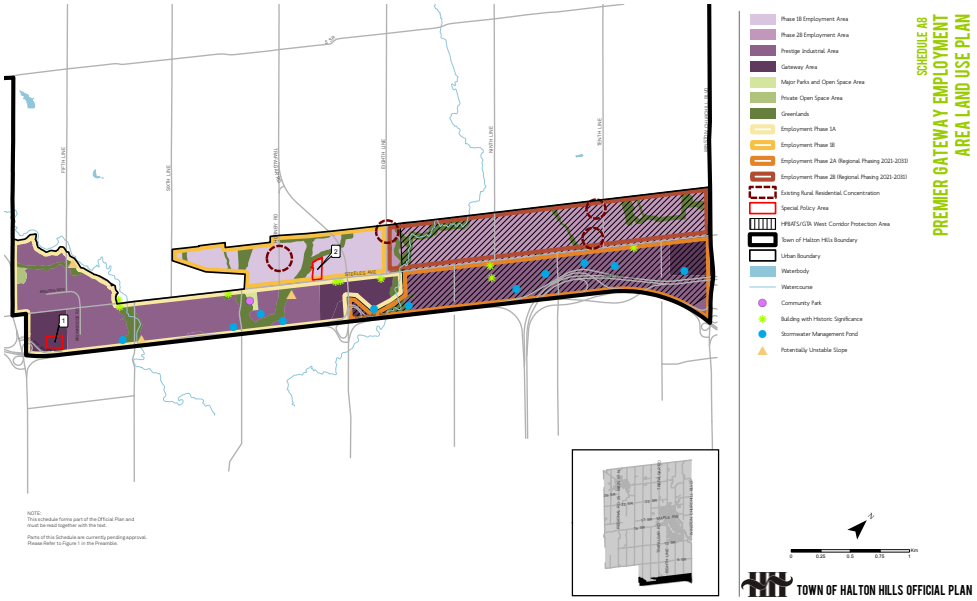
The three main tributaries of the Sixteen Mile Creek that cross the area in a north-south direction are designated as "Greenlands" or "Natural Heritage System". In addition, Hornby Park, a Community Park at Sixth Line and Steeles Avenue is designated "Major Parks & Open Space."

A number of buildings along both sides of Steeles Avenue are identified as "Building with Historic Significance," or "Cultural Heritage Resource," as well as along Hornby Road. In addition, a listed heritage cemetery is located at the northwest corner of Steeles Avenue and Eighth Line.

2.2 Urban Design Vision

The Premier Gateway Employment Area should reflect the vision and policy framework established in the Halton Hills Official Plan. The Urban Design Vision, as identified in Section D3.5 of the Official Plan is focused on accommodating "a range of industrial, office, commercial and institutional uses on full municipal services." With respect to design, the development is to be "comprised of visually attractive buildings in aesthetically pleasing and sustainable environments....natural systems are a central element in helping to define the Corridor." In addition, design of development is to be representative of the area's location as one of the gateways into the Town of Halton Hills and is to be "sensitive to the character of the area."(Section D3.5.1).

Building on the specific directions in the Official Plan, as well as Provincial and Regional policy, the Premier Gateway Employment Area should reflect an urban character, including animated and comfortable streetscapes, support for public transit and alternative transportation, and buildings that address primary streets. New developments should aim to incorporate cultural and natural heritage, and should provide physical and visual connections to Greenlands and Major Parks & Open Space. Gateway Areas should be given special architectural and landscaping treatments to create aesthetically pleasing and prominent entrances into the Premier Gateway Employment Area and the Town as a whole.



Premier Gateway Employment Area Land Use Plan, As Amended by OPA's 10 and 21

Draft Land Use Plan for Phase 1B Secondary Plan, Premier Gateway Employment Area

2.3 Guiding Principles

The Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines are premised on the following Guiding Principles, which reflect the Urban Design Vision for the area:

1. Enhance Natural Features

a. Preserve and enhance natural features through sensitive planning and design.
b. Provide physical and visual connections to Greenlands and Major Parks & Open Space.
c. Integrate stormwater facilities into site design.
d. Use Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in the site design process.

2. Achieve a Strong Visual Identity for Trafalgar Road and Steeles Avenue

a. Encourage a strong visual identity for Trafalgar Road and Steeles Avenue, through urban design, site planning, building design and landscaping.
b. Design buildings to address Trafalgar Road and Steeles Avenue, with a strong secondary elevation on Highways 401 and 407 (where appropriate).
c. Design Trafalgar Road and Steeles Avenue with a comfortable pedestrian-focused streetscape design that supports a multi-modal environment accommodating pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, with appropriate sidewalks or multi-use pathways, street furniture, lighting, and landscaping.

3. Develop Nodes at the Three Gateway Areas

a. Focus the highest-quality development within the three Gateway Areas, located along Steeles Avenue where it intersects with Winston Churchill Boulevard, Trafalgar Road, and James Snow Parkway.
b. Enhance development within the three Gateway Areas through features such as:
   - Taller, articulated building elements including towers and other features to create a prominent architectural presence;
   - Enhanced softscape and hardscape treatments, including street trees, vegetation, and unique paving;
   - Coordinated street furniture such as benches, lighting, waste receptacles, and bicycle racks;
   - Wayfinding and branding elements including banners, flags, and signage to reinforce entrances into the Premier Gateway Employment Area; and
   - Public art in areas with the highest visibility.

4. Ensure a High Quality of Built Form and Landscape Development

a. Encourage high-quality built form and landscape development that reflects sustainable building practices including:
   - Transit-supportive design that results in more efficient development, with access to transit and active transportation;
   - Streetscape design that facilitates goods movement while at the same time being pedestrian-oriented, which includes buildings that address main streets, reduced building setbacks, and active uses at-grade in Gateway Areas; and
   - Enhanced softscape and hardscape landscaping treatments along major streets.

b. Provide for the provision of buffering and other measures to allow for a high quality environment for existing transitional uses.

5. Provide Flexible Development to Accommodate Evolving Needs

a. Provide a framework of roads, including private roads, and infrastructure that facilitates goods movement and allows for maximum flexibility of development lot sizes, thereby accommodating the evolving needs of employment developments.

6. Encourage the Protection and Adaptive Reuse of Heritage Elements

a. Encourage the protection of identified heritage structures and their grounds, where feasible.

b. Provide for the interface of new development and heritage elements with appropriate buffers and other transitional elements between them.

c. Encourage the appropriate adaptive re-use of heritage structures within new developments.

7. Encourage the Construction of Sustainable Buildings

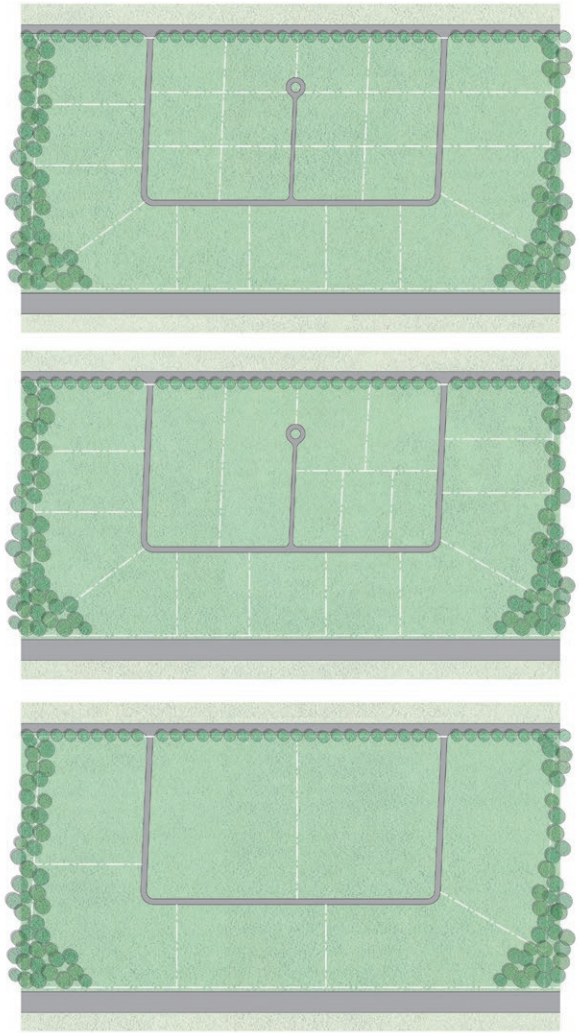
a. Promote the integration of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

b. Use Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in the site design process.

c. Adhere to the Town of Halton Hills' Green Development Standards Study.

d. Integrate white roof practices into the design of built form.

Flexibility of Lot Division



3.0 Site Plan Design Guidelines

The design and organization of sites within the Premier Gateway Employment Area should promote safe and efficient circulation for multimodal transportation, including vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. The design of front yards and boulevards should be high-quality and pedestrian-supportive, resulting in comfortable, accessible, and attractive streets.

Buildings and main entrances should be located to frame and address public streets and should provide access to public open spaces. Pedestrian pathways should be clearly demarcated through landscaping, lighting, and signage, and should facilitate safe movement.

3.1 Block Layout and Street Design

Special Streets and Gateway Areas

The Premier Gateway Employment Area contains several streets that should be given the highest design attention due to their role as major corridors and gateways. These include:

Special Streets

Steeles Avenue: The main (east-west) corridor within the Premier Gateway Employment Area.

Trafalgar Road: The major (north-south) corridor through the Premier Gateway Employment Area and the major Gateway Area to the Employment Area and the Town from Highway 401.

Highway 401 Frontage: The lands located at the southern boundary of the Premier Gateway Employment Area along Highway 401, south of Steeles Avenue.

Gateway Areas

Steeles Avenue, at Winston Churchill Boulevard: A major Gateway Area located at the eastern boundary of the Employment Area, north of Highway 407.

Steeles Avenue, at Trafalgar Road: A major Gateway Area located in the centre of the Employment Area, with access from Highway 401.

Steeles Avenue, at James Snow Parkway: A major Gateway Area located at the western boundary of the Employment Area, with access from Highway 401.

These streets will significantly contribute to the character of the Premier Gateway Employment Area. Where appropriate, the guidelines provide specific direction for these areas.

3.1.1 Boulevards, Sidewalks, and Pedestrian Crossings

Design Guidelines

General

- Public boulevards for future local streets other than Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road and within Gateway Areas, should be a minimum of 4.5 metres wide including a minimum 2.1 metre sidewalk, and should be provided on both sides of arterial and collector streets (existing and proposed).
- Sidewalks and walkways should be continuous, universally accessible, barrier-free and clearly designated.
- Sidewalk surfaces should be constructed of poured, brushed concrete, in accordance with Town standards.
- A minimum landscape strip of 3.0 metres should be provided within the public boulevard to accommodate street trees and landscaping.
- A continuous row of street trees is encouraged within the minimum landscape strip. All trees should have access to a minimum of 15 cubed metres of good quality soil (can be shared).
- Amenities like street furniture, wayfinding signage, lighting fixtures, and street trees should be incorporated in public boulevards throughout the Premier Gateway Employment Area.
- Curb ramps must provide barrier-free connections between the roadway and the boulevard.
- Mid-block pedestrian crossings with pedestrian activated signals should be included on long blocks.

Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

- Public boulevards should be a minimum of 6 metres with a minimum 2.1 metre sidewalk, and should be provided on both sides of Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road.
- Boulevard materials should incorporate higher-quality materials to demarcate these important locations.
- Gateway Areas should include distinct wayfinding and branding elements including banners, flags, and signage, as well as lighting standards and other street furniture, to reinforce their role as the entrances into the Premier Gateway Employment Area, and to create a distinct visual presence from Highways 401 and 407.
- Gateway Areas should include public art installations in the areas with the highest visibility.
- Special paving treatments for pedestrian crossings should be used in Gateway Areas to demarcate these important locations, and to facilitate safe pedestrian movement.

3.2 Building Location and Orientation

Design Guidelines

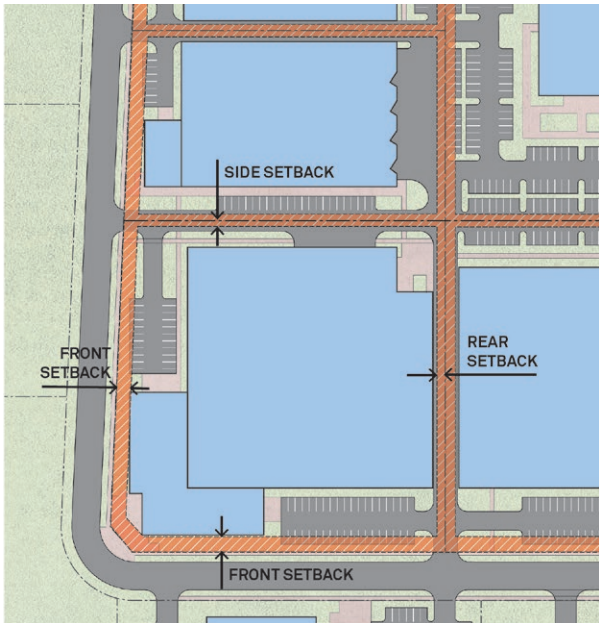
General

- Buildings should generally be located close to the front property line to define the street edge.
- Buildings should generally occupy a minimum of 60% of the total lot frontage.
- Industrial buildings should locate offices and entrance elements towards streets and intersections.
- Site development should be as efficient as possible including minimizing setbacks and maximizing building coverage. The minimum required development setback from Highways 401 and 407 should reflect the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) minimum requirements.
- Site layout and building orientation should be designed to maximize solar gain, the capture of solar energy through building elements like windows, as a form of passive heating for built form.
- Building orientation should respect existing sensitive land uses.

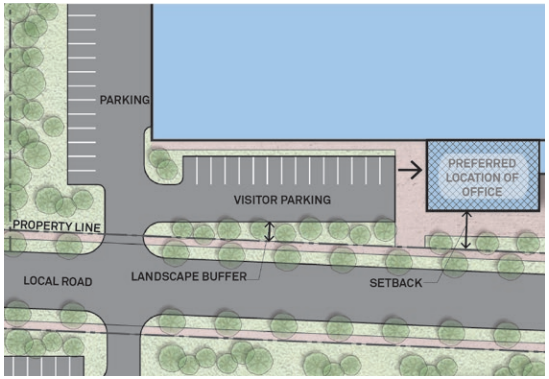
Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

- Buildings on lots at the intersection of Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road shall be oriented to the intersection, and entrance elements shall be encouraged to front on both Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road to enhance this major Gateway Area.
- Where a building has a frontage on Steeles Avenue or Trafalgar Road and a local street, office and entrance elements are encouraged to front both on Steeles Avenue or Trafalgar Road and the adjacent local streets to engage the corner.

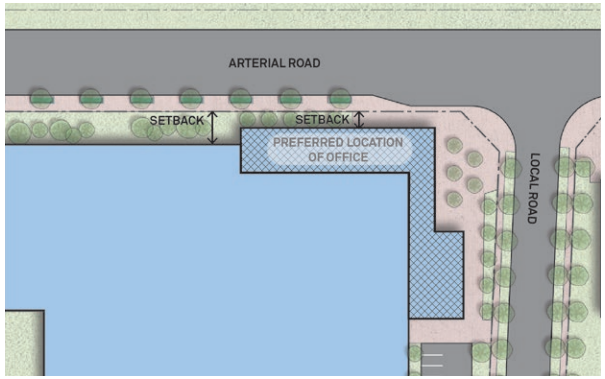
Typical Street Setbacks



Orientation of Entrance Towards the Street



Setbacks from Arterial Roads



3.3 Open Space and Landscaping

Design Guidelines

General

- Where on-site open spaces are provided, or where development abuts public open space, buildings should be located to frame and address these open spaces. At least 50% of open spaces should be fronted by public streets and/or active building edges.
- High standards for planting density, quality and variety at main building facades on public street frontages, and in landscape buffers shall be applied, meeting or exceeding the applicable Halton Hills standards.
- Use of low maintenance, drought resistant, non invasive plants and trees native to Halton Region shall be encouraged for at least 50% of landscaped areas. For a list of native species refer to *Conservation Halton Landscaping and Tree Preservation Guidelines*, Appendix 1 or the *Credit Valley Conservation Plant Selection Guideline*.
- On-site open spaces are encouraged to provide outdoor amenity space for employees in accessible areas.
- The design of parking areas for employee and customer parking should include landscaped islands and strips to screen the parking and mitigate the impact of paved areas.
- There should be a significant minimum landscape buffer provided where industrial uses abut residential uses. This buffer shall consist of plantings such as high shrubs and dense tree coverage that obscure views of industrial developments from the adjacent residential development.
- The perimeter of parking lots should be heavily landscaped with a minimum 3.0 metre buffer that includes a range of trees and vegetation.
- A landscape buffer of 15 metres is required adjacent to the historic sites of St. Stephen's Church and the historic house south of the church.
- The setback required by the Ministry of Transportation (from Highways 401 and 407) should be landscaped.
- Open space and landscape design should adhere to the principles of Low Impact Development (LID).

Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

- Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road and Gateway Areas should incorporate unique softscape and hardscape landscaping treatments that distinguish these important areas, including feature paving, planters, trees, shrubs, and other vegetation.

3.4 Access and Circulation

Design Guidelines

General

- Access to development sites on major arterial roads such as Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road should be provided from local streets and/or private streets to minimize intersections and entrances.
- Joint access driveways between adjacent development lots should be encouraged where possible.
- Access for trucks (i.e. for servicing and loading) should not conflict with general passenger vehicle circulation. Separate entrances are encouraged where possible.
- Provide pedestrian connections from buildings to parking, public transit, and public spaces.
- Pedestrian walkway paving treatments should be clearly articulated and should differ in material and appearance from vehicular routes.
- The implementation of clear signage will assist orientation on public walkways and through public spaces.
- Tree planting and other landscaping must not be an obstacle to the barrier-free path of travel.

Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

- New street connections to Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road shall generally be limited to a minimum interval between intersections of 120 metres and shall utilize existing or relocated streets where possible. This requires approval of the Region and must be supported by a traffic study.

Typical Individual Access Driveways

Recommended Driveway with Joint Access Easement

3.5 On-Site Parking

3.5.1 Surface Parking

Design Guidelines

- Parking should generally be located at the rear or in the interior side yard of the building. However, parking in yards abutting Highway 401 and 407 shall be limited with a significant landscape buffer between the parking area and the highway right-of-way, a portion of which can be in the required minimum MTO setback.
- Parking between the primary building elevation and the public street is discouraged.
- Opportunities to reduce the total number of parking spaces required within each site should be explored including shared parking between users and provision of formal parking to serve identified initial employees with reserve unpaved areas available, should the nature of the use change in the future.
- Large areas of surface parking for employees and customers should be broken-up through landscaping islands and pedestrian pathways to minimize their visual impacts.
- Dedicated pedestrian walkways should be incorporated through surface parking areas for employees and customers and defined through differentiated paving materials and landscaping. The amount of landscaping should be proportionate to the overall parking lot size.
- Where large surface parking areas are provided, including parking areas for trucks, opportunities to integrate Low Impact Development (LID) technologies should be implemented, including permeable paving and bioswales.
- Parking and access design should mitigate potential pedestrian and vehicular conflicts through clearly demarcated circulation routes, pavement marking, and signage.
- Pick-up and drop-off areas should be designed to not interfere with pedestrian circulation.
- Site and parking area design should address hydrant location and snow storage.
- On larger sites, way-finding signage should be included in all parking areas.

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3.5.2 Structured Parking

Design Guidelines

- Where a significant amount of parking is required for employees and customers, structured parking is preferable to surface parking.
- Above-grade parking structures fronting onto public streets and public open space should avoid the presence of blank facades, including providing active uses along the facades in those areas where feasible, and a range of approaches including landscaping, public art and architectural detailing.
- Access to structured parking should be from secondary streets or the interior of blocks. Pedestrian entrances should be visible and accessible, accessed from public streets or near main building entrances.
- Street trees and pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided on all boulevards flanking a parking structure.

3.5.3 Bicycle Parking

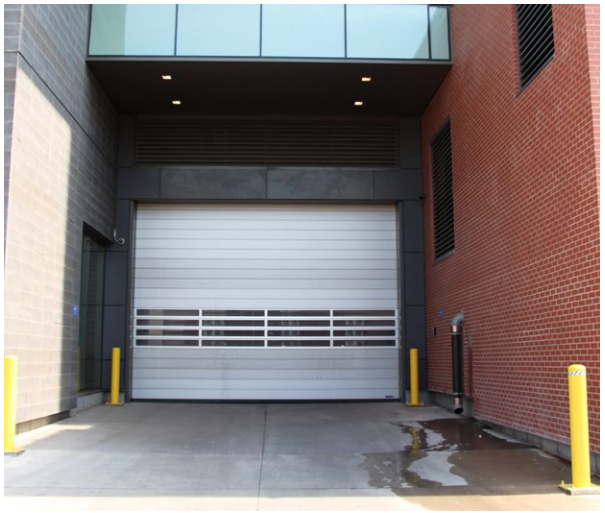
Design Guidelines

- Locate visitor bicycle spaces in visible and accessible locations at-grade, near building entrances and pedestrian walkways.
- Locate employee bicycle parking in a weather protected secure area with controlled access.
- The design of bicycle racks should not impede pedestrian movement and snow clearing.
- Bicycle lockers are encouraged, particularly for large office or industrial developments.

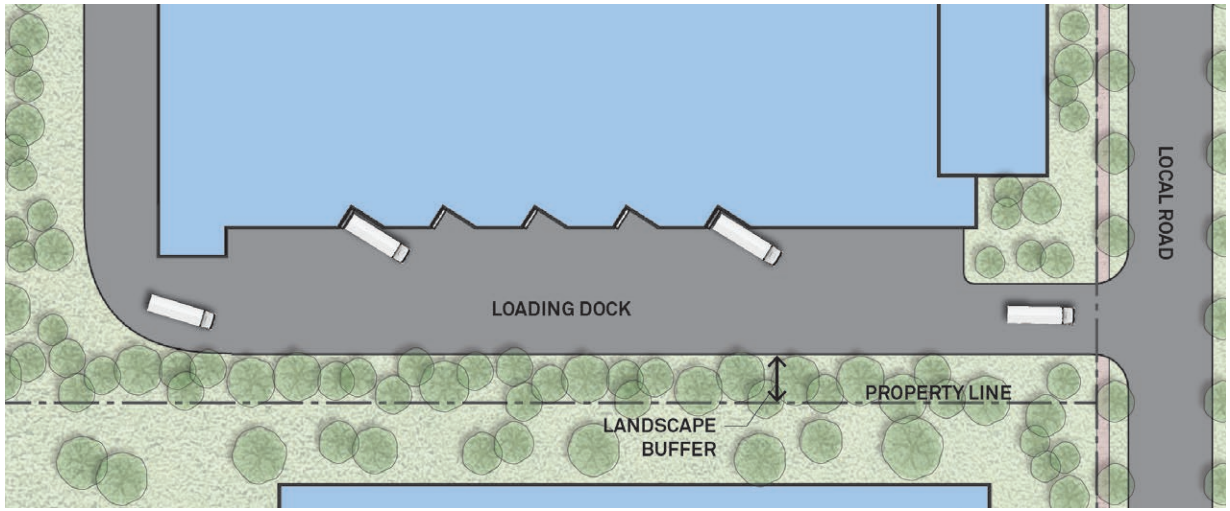
3.6 Servicing, Loading and Storage

Design Guidelines

- Service, loading, and garbage areas should be located within main building structures, where possible, or in separate enclosed buildings where it is not possible to locate them in the main building.
- Loading, service, and garbage storage areas should not face Steeles Avenue or Highway 401, and should be in areas of low visibility such as the interior side or the rear of buildings. Wherever site planning constraints necessitate loading areas in visually prominent locations, they shall be screened with architectural elements.
- The coordination of service areas for delivery, loading and garbage pick-up is encouraged, to reduce the number of entrances along public streets and within parking areas.
- Outdoor garbage containers should be limited and screened by wall features or incorporated into built form, as should feature significant landscaping. These areas must be compatible with building design and materials.
- Service areas should be separated from pedestrian amenity areas, open spaces, and walkways.
- When occupied, loading areas should not impede on-site vehicular circulation.



Landscaping Buffer for Loading Areas



3.7 Stand-Alone Signage

Design Guidelines

General

- Permitted signage types must comply with the Halton Hills Sign By-Law.
- Signage along Highway 401 must comply with MTO standards.
- Free standing signs and site signs should generally be limited to a single free standing monument sign with graphic consistency.
- For free standing and site signs, where the principal frontage of a site exceeds 100 metres, one additional site sign should be permitted for every additional 80 metres of frontage in excess of 100 metres.
- Front lit signage, back lit individual block letter signs and/or logo signage is required, particularly those that face the public street or are parallel to a pedestrian walkway.
- Electronic messages on digital signage with visible effects during the message transition, including fading, flashing, or motion are discouraged for safety reasons.
- To reduce the impacts of light pollution, the illumination of signage is discouraged during off-peak hours.

Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

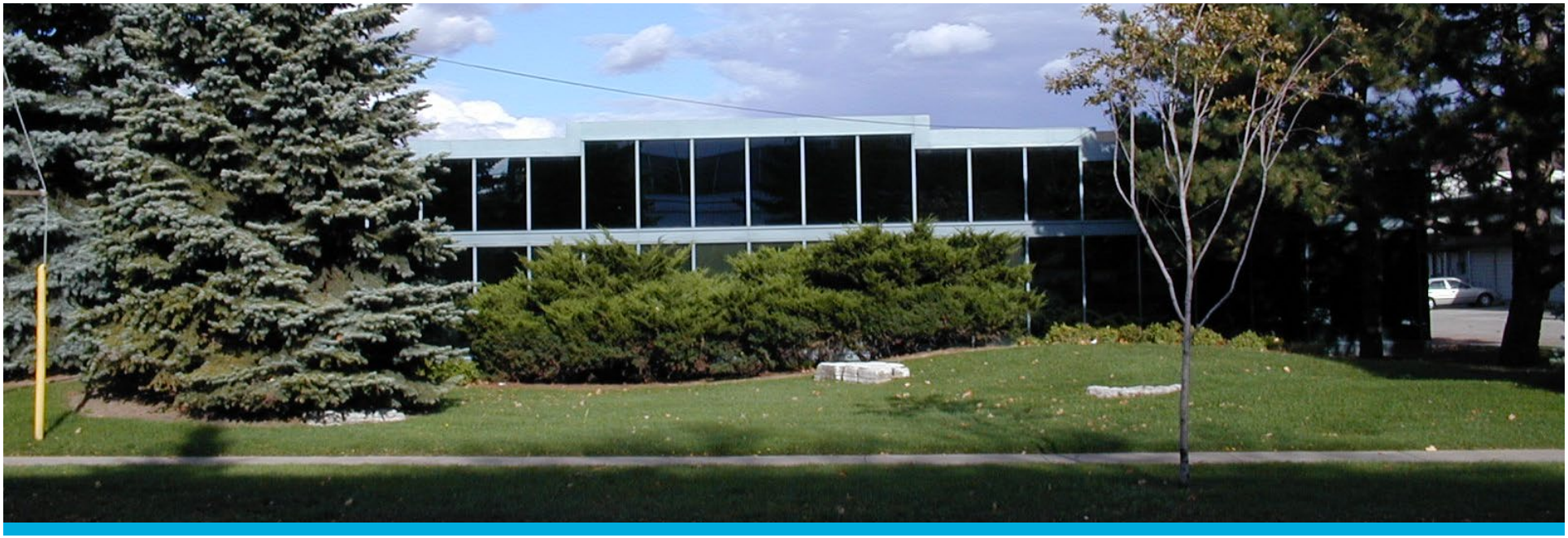
- As part of a broader gateway design strategy, a signage feature may be erected to identify Gateway Areas as entry points to the Town of Halton Hills. The feature should be well-integrated into a broader gateway feature, including landscaping, seating and/or public art, and be of a scale that is visible from Trafalgar Road, Winston Churchill Boulevard, James Snow Parkway, or Steeles Avenue.

3.8 On-Site Lighting

Design Guidelines

- All pedestrian and parking areas shall be well lit to promote safety, security and comfort during hours of office use.
- Pedestrian-scale light standards or illuminated bollards should be used in employee and customer parking areas, along pedestrian walkways, and other pedestrian zones.
- Accent lighting to emphasize built forms and landscape elements is encouraged.
- The design and location of lighting must consider the impacts of light pollution, energy efficiency, and other potential negative impacts. The mitigation of light pollution is particularly important where commercial and industrial uses abut residential areas.
- Light emitting diodes (LEDs), solar power, road reflectors and other alternative lighting and energy sources should be encouraged for energy efficiency and should be dark sky compliant.
- Lighting shall comply with applicable Town standards.

4.0 Built Form Design Guidelines



Built form within the Premier Gateway Employment Area should frame public streets and open spaces and create a well defined street edge. Buildings located within Gateway Areas should be distinguished by special architectural treatments.

4.1 Height and Massing

Design Guidelines

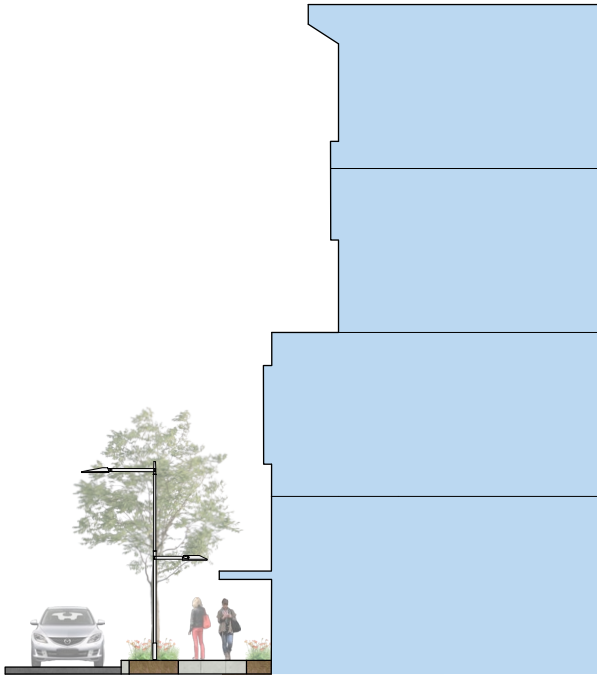
General

- The maximum building height permitted within the Premier Gateway Employment Area ranges from 2 to 8 storeys.
- Building massing within, and between, developments should be varied and may incorporate stepbacks, changes in height, or strategic setbacks of sections of the building.
- All roof top mechanical units are to be screened in all directions. Such screening shall be compatible with building design in form, materials and colour.

Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

- Where taller buildings are proposed in the Premier Gateway Employment Area, they should be concentrated at the key Gateway Areas, as well as along Highway 401, Highway 407 and Trafalgar Road.
- Consideration may be given to increased height limits beyond 6 storeys for buildings within Gateway Areas based on review of a specific development.
- Gateway Areas should feature appropriate massing, building projections, recesses at grade, lower storey design and open space treatments to reinforce the prominence of these locations.

Taller buildings should be varied through the use of stepbacks and changes of height, and should feature open space treatments at grade.



4.2 Street-Oriented Design

Design Guidelines

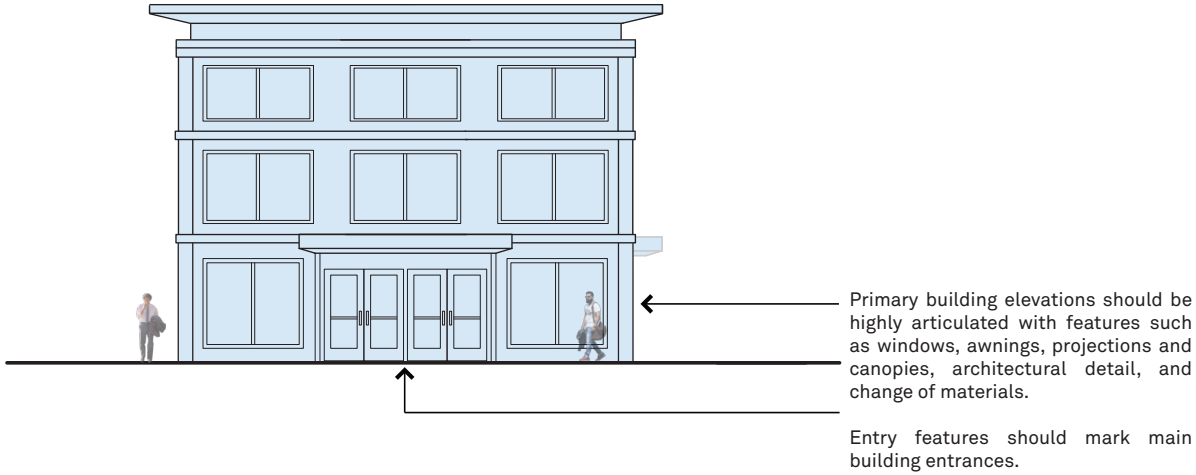
General

- Buildings should generally be designed and oriented to address Steeles Avenue and other local roads. Where a building has frontage on Highways 401 or 407, it should be treated as a highly-visible secondary elevation as outlined in Section 4.3.
- Buildings and main entrances should be designed to create a consistent street edge and frame adjacent streets, as well as amenity spaces, and parking areas.
- Primary building elevations are those elevations that face a public street. Blank facades along the length of a public street are to be broken up. Primary building elevations should be designed with significant architectural features that articulate horizontal and vertical elements of the building face, including windows, awnings and canopies, projections and recesses, architectural detail, and change of materials.
- Buildings that have frontage on public streets should emphasize architectural elements that promote pedestrian comfort. These may include the use of canopy structures and arcades.
- Exterior building materials should be low maintenance and visually appealing.

Steeles Avenue, Trafalgar Road, and Gateway Areas

- Buildings fronting on Steeles Avenue and Trafalgar Road that include office uses should be encouraged to locate such uses at-grade adjacent to the street, and should provide a significant number of windows in order to establish a strong connection to the street.

Primary Building Elevations

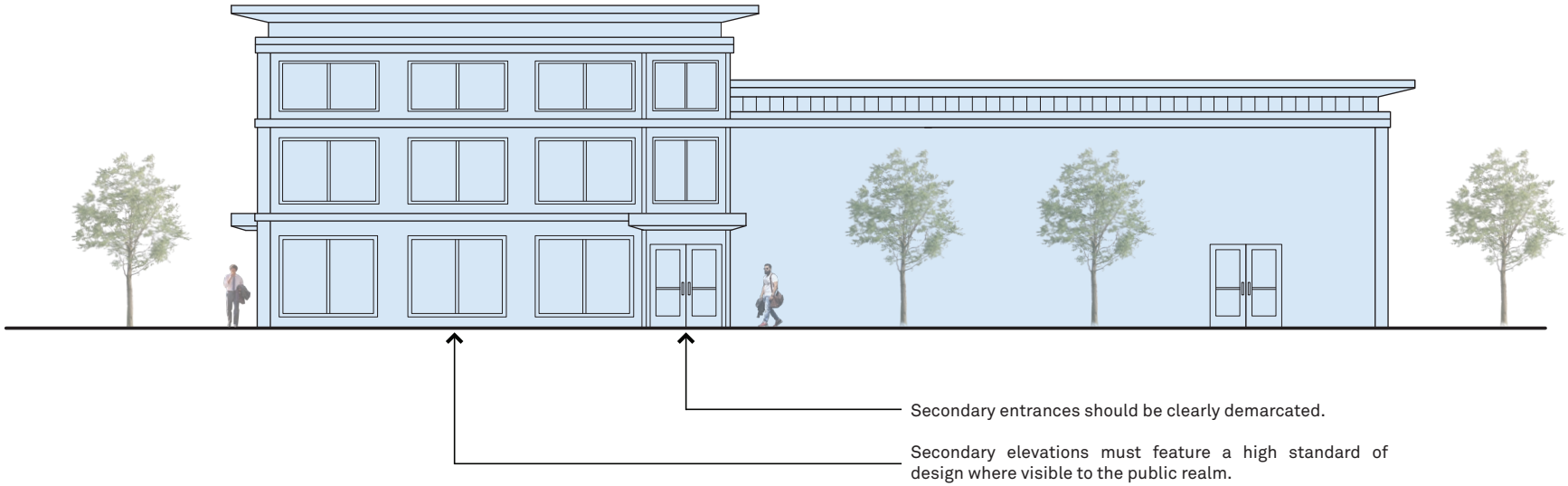


4.3 Secondary Elevations

Design Guidelines

- Secondary building elevations are those elevations that do not face a public street. Such elevations should complement the primary building elevation, and where visible to the public, should feature a comparable level of design and be articulated by horizontal and vertical building elements including windows, projections and recesses, and architectural detail.
- Where a building has a secondary frontage on Highways 401 or 407, a significant amount of articulation is encouraged to create visual interest, and may include building projections, material variations, windows, signage, and interior active uses (i.e. offices, common space).
- Where secondary entrances are provided within secondary elevations, they should be clearly demarcated.
- Exterior building materials should be low maintenance and visually appealing.

Secondary Building Elevations



4.4 Heritage

Design Guidelines

- Where feasible, the preservation and imaginative integration of historic structures within the context of commercial and industrial development is encouraged.
- The design of new structures should be compatible with neighbouring heritage sites and structures. However, the artificial application of historical building styles to modern construction methods is to be discouraged.

St. Stephen's Church

4.5 Access and Entrances

Design Guidelines

- Main building entrances should be located along the primary building elevation.
- Architectural features to emphasize entry areas and other special building areas and relieve large expanses of solid wall are encouraged. Considerations may include canopies, awnings, double-height windows, or taller architectural elements. Entrances shall be appropriate to building scale and form.
- Building entrances should be barrier-free, and should incorporate ramps, automatic doors, and other elements that contribute to accessibility.
- Main building entrances must be accessible by public walkways and/or pedestrian sidewalks.

4.6 Signage and Lighting

Design Guidelines

- Signage and lighting design should adhere to the relevant by-laws for the Town of Halton Hills and MTO.
- Signage should be integrated into building design to reduce clutter.
- Accent lighting to emphasize built forms and landscape elements is encouraged.
- Rooftop signs are not encouraged.
- Signage on sites adjacent to a highway should be of a scale appropriate to the speed and scale of the highway environment. On sites adjacent to Highways 401 and 407, the size limits of signage on building facades facing the highways may be increased to a total surface area of no more than 20% of the building wall face.
- Electronic messages on digital building signage with visible effects during the message transition, including fading, flashing, or motion are discouraged for safety reasons.
- To reduce the impacts of light pollution, the illumination of digital signage is discouraged between off-peak hours.
- Light emitting diodes (LEDs), solar power, road reflectors and other alternative lighting and energy sources should be encouraged for energy efficiency.

Existing Building Signage within the Premier Gateway Employment Area

5.0 Environment and Open Space Guidelines

The protection and regeneration of the natural landscape should be encouraged through site planning and design.

5.1 Sustainability

Design Guidelines

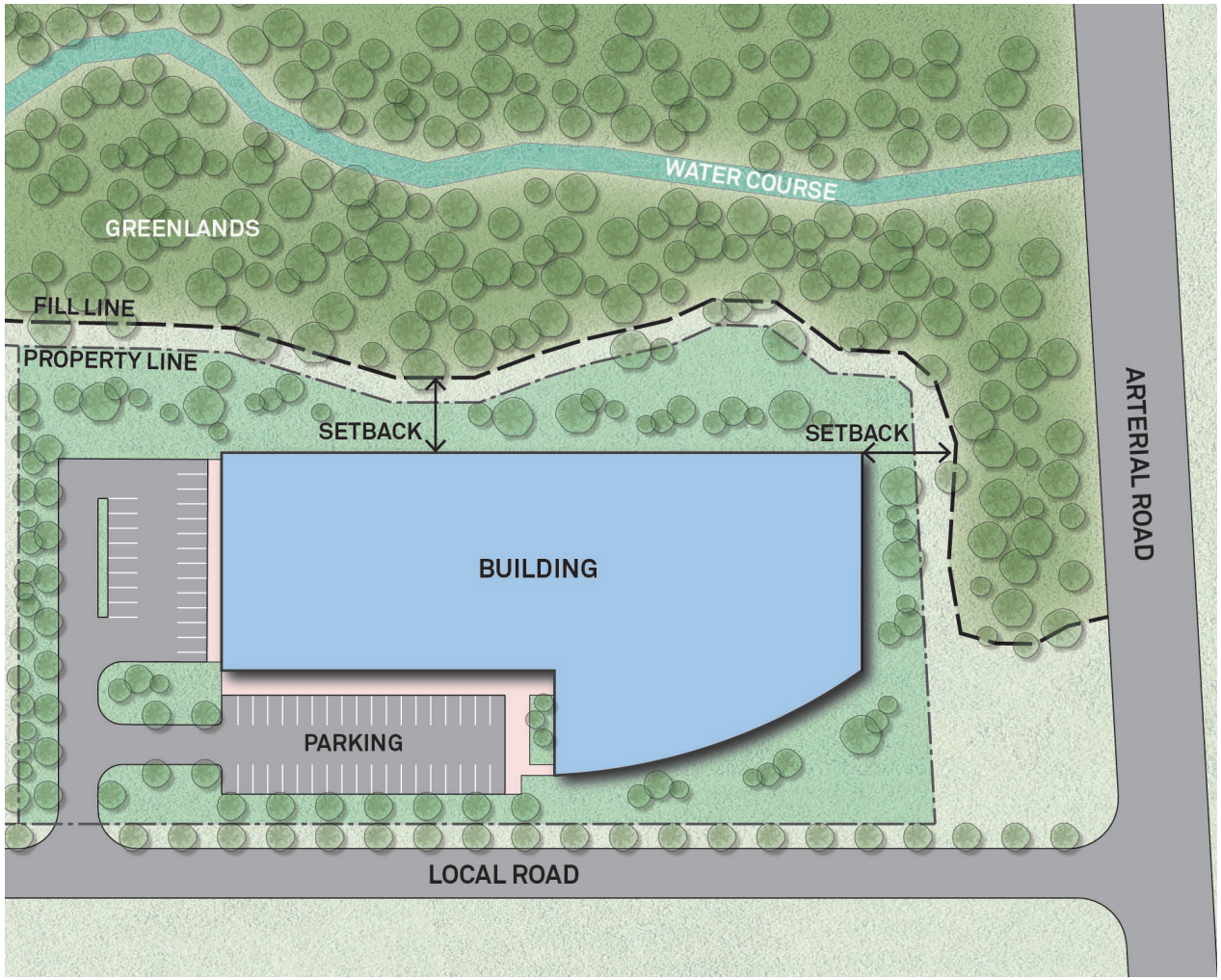
- Sustainable site and building design and construction techniques in new development that reduce energy and water consumption, and improve air quality, water quality, and waste management should be encouraged and promoted.
- In addition to the protection and enhancement of trees and other natural features in the Greenlands and Major Parks & Open Space designations, additional trees should be planted on sites and public streets as part of the development process.
- Pedestrian, cycling, and transit should be promoted to encourage alternatives to automobile use.
- The use of recycled materials for building construction is encouraged.
- Construction of solar-ready buildings should be encouraged including consideration of required roof loads, as appropriate.
- Use Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in the site design process to reduce impermeable surfaces and stormwater runoff.
- Integrate white roof practices into the site and built form design to contribute to reduced energy use.
- Built form should be oriented to maximize exposure to natural light.

5.2 Greenlands

Design Guidelines

- Contribute to the preservation and enhancement of lands in the Greenlands designation through sensitive site planning and design including:
  - Prohibiting the planting of non-native and invasive species particularly adjacent to the top of bank of valleys and ravines or natural features.
  - Providing naturalized buffers between development and Greenlands.
  - Providing physical and visual connections to lands in the Greenlands designation.
  - Encouraging outdoor uses and facilities such as picnic areas, patios, employee recreation facilities and pedestrian areas in locations adjacent to Greenlands so that these natural features may act as amenities for users.

Site Planning Near Greenlands



5.3 Major Parks & Open Space

Design Guidelines

- Provide strong pedestrian and recreational pathways to connect parks and open spaces to the natural lands, as part of a pathway system that connects to the Sixteen Mile Creek system. In addition, provide physical and visual connections from parks to adjacent public streets and other features.
- Provide built elements such as trellises or pavilions to act as landscape markers that define the focal importance of parks and provide passive recreational elements.

View of Hornby Park

5.4 Stormwater Management Ponds

Design Guidelines

- Stormwater management ponds should be integrated into developments using sustainable design strategies.
- Where appropriate, stormwater management ponds should be considered important site amenities and should be accessible and visible to employees and site visitors.
- Edges of stormwater management ponds abutting Greenlands should remain naturalized.

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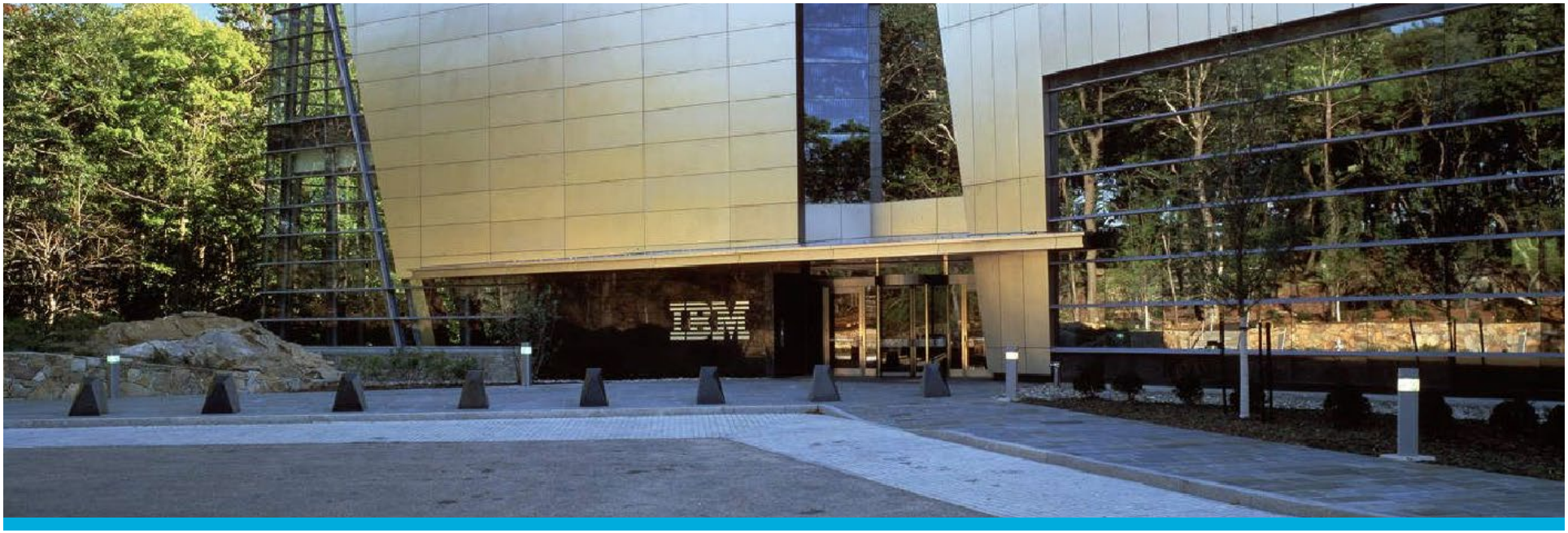
6.0 Implementation



The Premier Gateway Employment Area Urban Design Guidelines are to be utilized in conjunction with the Official Plan and Zoning By-law to act as a framework for development implementation.

These guidelines should be considered a flexible tool to illustrate both the general and site specific framework. The urban design guidelines aim to fulfill the Town's vision and objectives for the Premier Gateway Employment Area, in order to ensure high-quality development with a strong visual identity.

The intent of the guidelines is to establish a planning framework that will help the area thrive as a dynamic, accessible, and economically competitive employment area and that reflects urban design aesthetics and sustainable development practices appropriate for this area. They are not to be viewed as requirements forcing adherence to all guidelines. Specific plans for site development and individual buildings will vary, and this diversity is encouraged.

6.1 Review and Approvals Process

The guidelines will be utilized at the various review stages of development approvals, from Draft Plan of Subdivision through to Site Plan Approvals. In addition, they offer a review function for design input from the municipality into detailed design at the building permit stage.

Applications for approvals for specific properties within the Premier Gateway Employment Area must demonstrate how their planning and design fulfills the Urban Design Vision and Guiding Principles, and the specific guidelines applicable to the application. Third party peer review may be required for large projects.

The process involves the following stages:

1. Draft Plan of Subdivision

Applications requesting approval for Draft Plan of Subdivision should be evaluated in the context of these guidelines. Specific review should be given to the applicable guidelines within Site Plan Design Guidelines, Built Form Design Guidelines, and Environment and Open Space Guidelines.

Applications should provide a description of how the Draft Plan of Subdivision implements the applicable guidelines for the site in question.

2. Site Plan Review

Applications for Site Plan Approval will be subject to review of these guidelines and the Town's applicable planning, construction and engineering requirements.

Applications should provide a description of how the development implements the guidelines within both their general and site specific context. Applications shall be assessed with respect to the Site Plan Design Guidelines, Built Form Design Guidelines, and Environment and Open Space Guidelines.

3. Building Permit

Building permits will be reviewed for confirmation that individual developments will be implemented in accordance with Site Plan Approvals and with the design intent of the guidelines for built form and landscaping.

6.2 Partnership Opportunities

To assist in the implementation of the guidelines, the Town of Halton Hills should consider potential partnership opportunities with other governmental bodies, agencies, and key stakeholders to realize shared goals and to uphold the document's Urban Design Vision. Partnership opportunities may include:

The Ministry of Transportation:

- The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) is responsible for establishing setbacks from Highway 401 and 407. Continued cooperation and engagement between the Town of Halton Hills and MTO is required to ensure that all design guidelines reflect a shared vision for these highways and abutting land uses.

Developers, land owners, business owners, employees, and residents:

- The Town should monitor the implementation of the urban design guidelines on an ongoing basis to ensure that it results in development that implements the Urban Design Vision and reflects a high quality of design.

6.3 Urban Design Review Process

This document **should be reviewed** every five years and updated where required to reflect changes to building design standards, sustainable design, and the Premier Gateway Employment Area's existing and emerging context.

Updates to the guidelines must reflect the intent of the Official Plan and the Zoning By-Law, and should reflect the overall Urban Design Vision and Guiding Principles established for the area.

Steeles Avenue and Sixth Line South