Urban Design Guidelines






DRAFT September 2017

Back to Back and Stacked Townhouses

MISSISSAUGA

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Introduction

The City of Mississauga is at the end of its greenfield development phase. New growth is being accommodated through infill and development on vacant and underutilized sites. Development patterns are becoming more compact, using land and resources more efficiently, while maximizing existing infrastructure and community facilities, and promoting alternative modes of transportation. Traditional forms of housing are becoming less common, as land values rise and market demands shift. Back to Back Townhouses (BBT) and Stacked Townhouses (ST) are becoming increasingly popular throughout the GTA for several reasons:

- Achieve increased densities in a low-rise form of housing
- A sensitive way to transition between low-density and high-density built forms
- Contribute to a diversity of housing choices to meet different needs and preferences
- Less expensive construction methods and reduced maintenance fees allow for a more affordable form of housing
- Viewed as being grade related, with a front door directly to the outside

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that new developments that include BBTs and STs are designed to be compatible with and sensitive to the established context and to minimize undue impacts on adjacent properties. The guidelines are intended to establish a design expectation for landowners, the development industry and the public, to ensure high quality of development that meets the City of Mississauga's minimum development standards. These guidelines shall be read in conjunction with Mississauga Official Plan, the City Zoning By-law, and other City guidelines and standards.

1.2 Urban Design Objectives

The following objectives provide the framework for the design guidelines:

- Ensure compatibility with the existing and planned context
- Design to meet the needs of people of all ages, abilities and incomes
- Balance functional design and aesthetics with long-term sustainability
- Protect and enhance natural features
- Connect streets and provide pedestrian linkages
- Provide high quality private and common amenity areas

1.3 Building Types

BBTs and STs are typically

- 3 to 4 storeys tall
- Comprised of units that are stacked vertically and/or horizontally with access from grade
- Front onto a public street, condominium road, pedestrian mews or open space
- Include surface and/or underground parking

These are illustrated in Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2

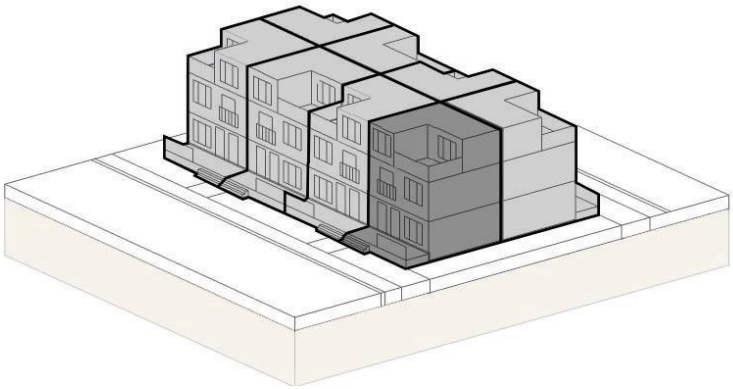

Figure 1.1: Example of Back to Back Townhouse

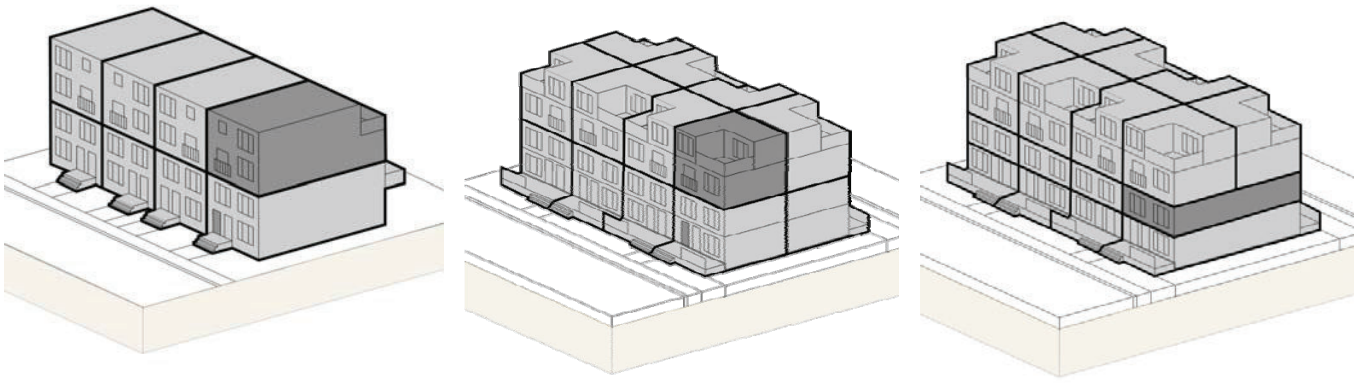

Figure 1.2: Examples of Stacked Townhouse

Checklist of Principles

The following principles are to be considered when designing a development that includes BBTs and/or STs. These principles are intended to ensure that new developments are compatible with and respect the existing and/or planned context through appropriate setbacks, tree preservation and landscape buffers. Consideration shall be given to site design, building massing, orientation, height and grading relative to the street to ensure new developments are compatible with and sensitive to the surrounding context.

This checklist is to be used as a guide for developers, design professionals, property owners and the public to ensure they have considered key issues associated with this residential built form.

Review and check each principle when complete ☑

2.1 Zoning By-law ☐

- Refer to the Zoning By-law regulations that apply to the proposed built form. Generally BBT's and ST's are zoned RM9, RM10, RM11 and RM12 or in combination with other zones

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2.2 Building Height

- New developments will be required to demonstrate an appropriate transition in building heights
- Buildings heights shall be contained within a 45° angular plane, measured from the property line (See Figure 2.1)
- Maximum building heights of 3 storeys for BBTs and 4 storeys for STs

2.3 Building Setbacks ☐

- When existing adjacent front yard setbacks vary, new buildings should align with the average setback between the two adjacent properties or the minimum zoning requirement, whichever is greater

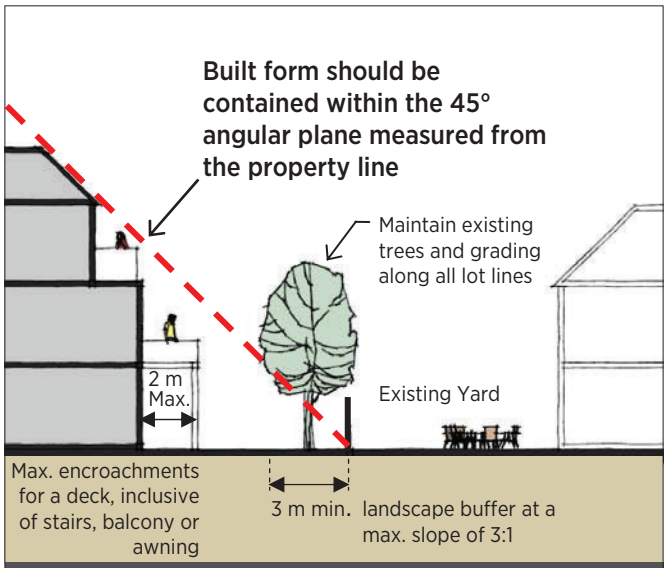

Figure 2.1: BBT and ST should transition and mitigate impacts onto existing neighbours.

2.4 Separation between Buildings

- Separation distance between buildings should be the minimum setbacks as outlined in the Zoning By-law
- In the case of a front wall to front wall condition, the separation distance should be the greater of the 45° angular plane or the minimum setbacks as outlined in the Zoning By-law (See Figure 2.2)
- Where a basement unit forms part of a 3 storey development the minimum separation distance will be 15 m

2.5 Block Length

- Excessively long blocks should be avoided
- The maximum length of a block should generally not exceed the greater of 41 m or 8 linear modules to promote pedestrian connections, allow for landscaping and provide a break in the massing (See Figure 2.3)

2.6 Natural Features

- New developments should preserve and enhance natural heritage features; including, trees, woodlands, valleys and wetlands
- Appropriate setbacks and buffers should be provided to existing and proposed natural features to ensure their health and continued growth

2.7 Grading and Retaining Walls

- Manipulation of site grades should be avoided
- Match existing grades and provide a minimum 3 m wide landscape buffer around the property
- The landscape buffer should be unencumbered by below grade parking structures, easements, retaining walls, utilities, severe grade changes and hard surface areas

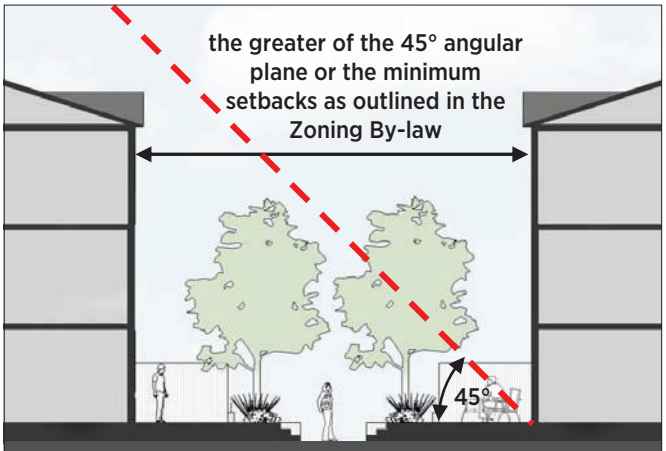

Figure 2.2: Separation between Buildings

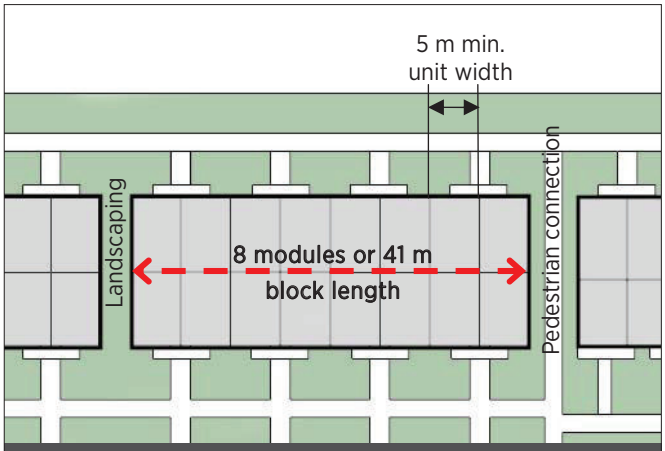

Figure 2.3: Blocks should be broken-up to allow green space and pedestrian connections

Checklist of Principles

- Each individual building will establish a grade elevation based on 'Context Grade'. Context Grade means the average of 12 points, 8 of which are taken around the perimeter of the site and 4 of which are taken around each individual building (See Figure 2.4)

- The first storey means a storey of a building that has its floor closest to the context grade and its ceiling more than 1.8 m above the context grade (See Figure 2.5)

- The use of retaining walls should be avoided. Where retaining walls are required, their height should be limited to a maximum of 0.6 m to eliminate the need for railings and to reduce long-term maintenance costs (See Figure 2.6)

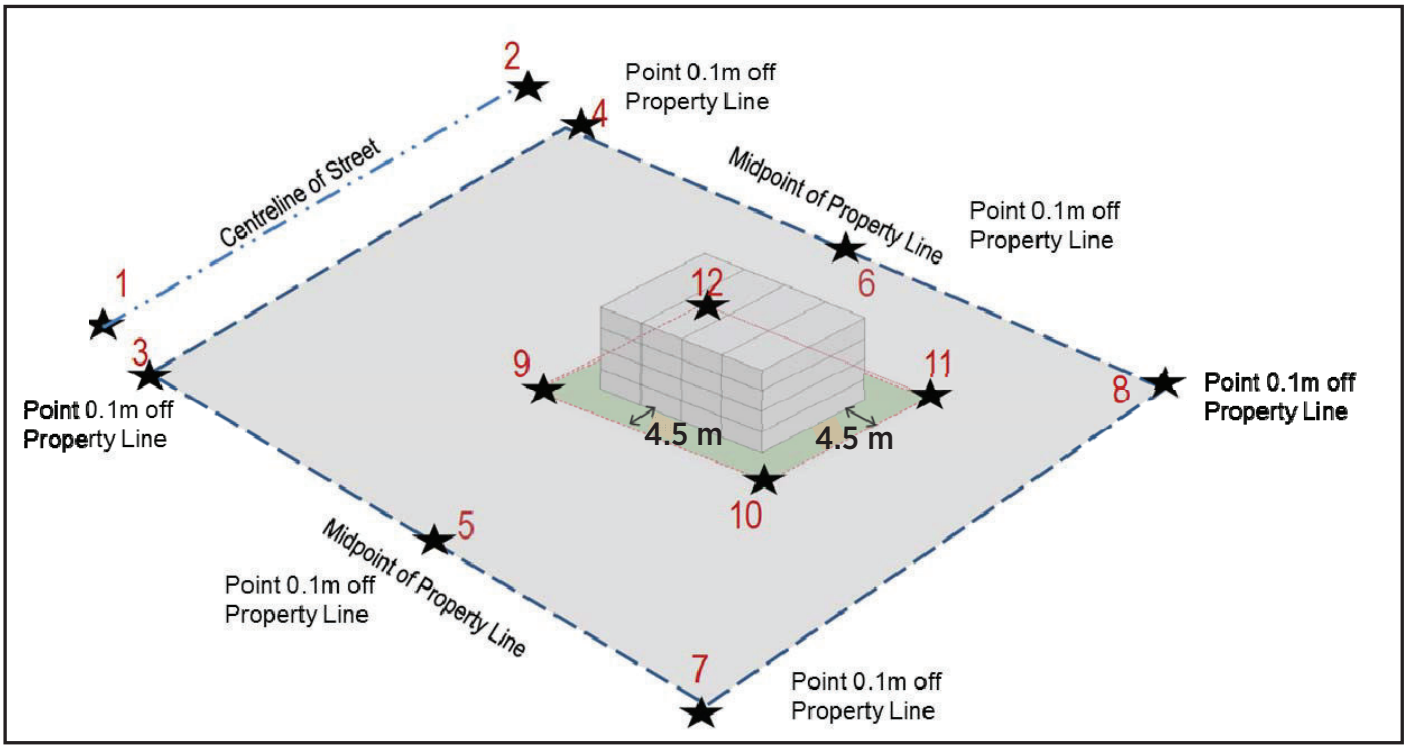

Figure 2.4: Context Grade: The average of 12 Points. 8 of which are around the perimeter of the site and 4 points located 4.5 m around each building

2.8 Below Grade Units

- Below grade units should be avoided
- Manipulation of site grades requiring retaining walls to accommodate below grade units is discouraged
- If a below grade unit is proposed, it must be a through-unit that has windows on both the front and rear of the building (See Figure 2.7) or a double wide (i.e. 10 m wide) back to back unit
- Below grade units require a minimum of 6 m^2 of private outdoor space located at the unit's floor level with unobstructed views and access to daylight (See Figure 2.7)
- All building projections, including balconies and porches located over private outdoor spaces or windows of below grade units should not obstruct access to daylight. See the Zoning By-law for the overhang regulations (See Figure 2.7)

2.9 Building Elevations

- New development should be compatible with the existing context in terms of height, scale, massing and materials
- Where appropriate, incorporate sloped roofs and half-storeys with dormer windows on upper levels to reduce perceived heights, scale and massing
- Ensure new developments have a variety of facade articulation, building materials and colours for visual interest

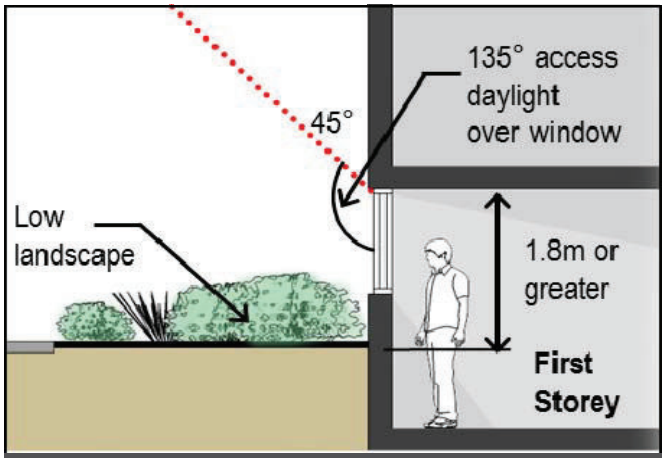

Figure 2.5: Definition of First Storey

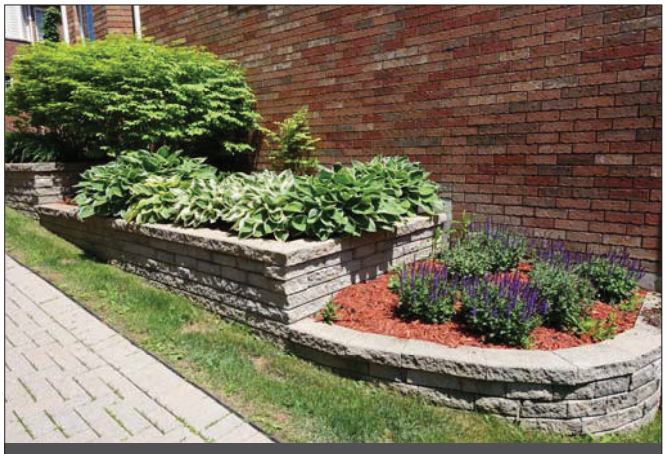

Figure 2.6: Landscape retaining walls should not be higher than 0.6 m

- Blank facades on the visible end unit elevation are unacceptable. End units that are visible should have entrances, windows and architectural interest to animate the elevation

- Buildings should be designed with high quality and durable materials to avoid long term maintenance costs. Stone and brick is preferred. Stucco and wood are discouraged

- Stepback roof top mechanical rooms 3 m from the exterior edges of the building to reduce their visual impact

- The mechanical floor area located on a unit roof top should not be greater than 20 m^2 , inclusive of stair

2.10 Exposed Parking Structures

- Exposed parking structures should be avoided. Where portions of the underground parking structure are exposed, they should match the building materials

- Consolidate the entrances to underground parking structures within the same development to minimize the number of overhead doors

- Maintain the minimum soil volume over the parking structure to support the growth of the vegetation. Minimum soil volume varies based on the type of vegetation

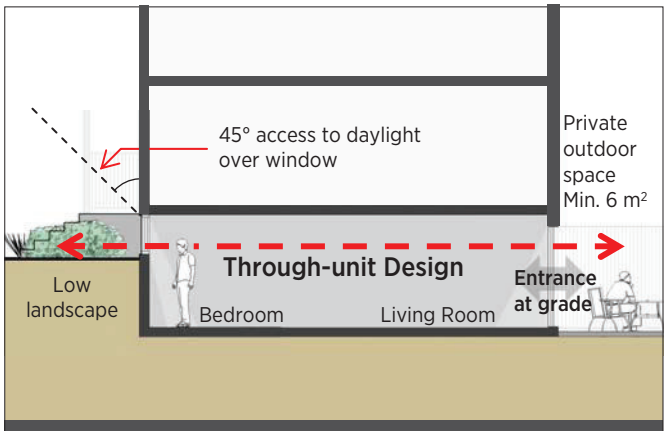

Figure 2.7: Below Grade Units

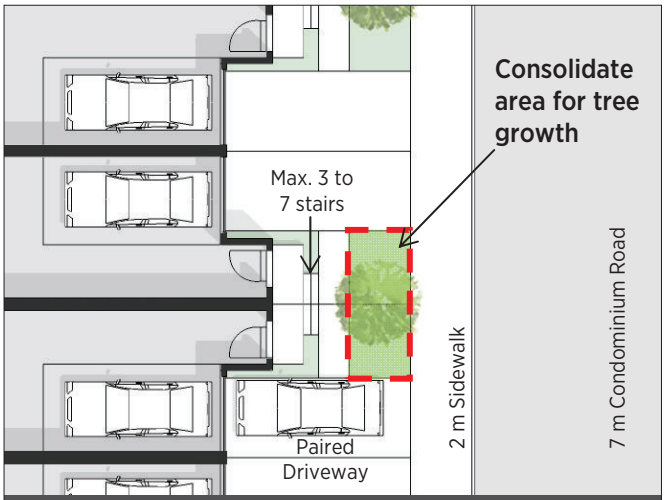

Figure 2.8: Combine landscaped soft areas for tree growth

2.11 Landscaped Soft Areas

- Landscaped soft areas are required adjacent to paved areas and around the perimeter of the site. To provide relief between buildings landscaped soft areas should be distributed throughout the development
- Landscaped soft areas should be provided between entrances to individual units and sidewalks, walkways, public streets and condominium roads
- Pair individual landscaped soft areas to increase soil volume for tree growth particularly where there is a driveway (See Figure 2.8)
- Limit the number of stairs to a unit entrance to 3 to 7 risers to maximize landscaped soft area, mitigate safety issues in the winter and reduce maintenance costs
- All stairs should be poured-in-place concrete. Precast stairs are not permitted

2.12 Common Outdoor Amenity Area

- A common outdoor amenity area is required for all new multi-unit residential developments
- The total space required is the greater of 5.6 m^2 per dwelling unit or 10% of the site area
- Common outdoor amenity areas should be centrally located, highly visible and accessible by all residents (See Figure 2.9)
- A minimum of 50% of the required common outdoor amenity area shall be provided in one contiguous area
- A mews will not be considered a common outdoor amenity area

Figure 2.9: Common Outdoor Amenity Areas should be centrally located, accessible and highly visible.

Figure 2.10: Balconies as Private Outdoor Space

- Refer to the Outdoor Amenity Area Design Reference Note for additional detail

  http://www7.mississauga.ca/documents/pb/main/2015/Amenity_Space_Reference.pdf

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2.13 Private Outdoor Space

- Each unit requires a private outdoor space with a minimum contiguous area of 6 m^2
- The private outdoor space may be located at grade, on a balcony, deck, porch or on a roof top
- Recessed or partially recessed balconies are preferred. Projecting balcony shall be avoided (See Figure 2.10). If a projecting balcony is proposed, it may project a maximum of 2 m beyond any building façade and should be designed with solid or opaque materials or tinted glass

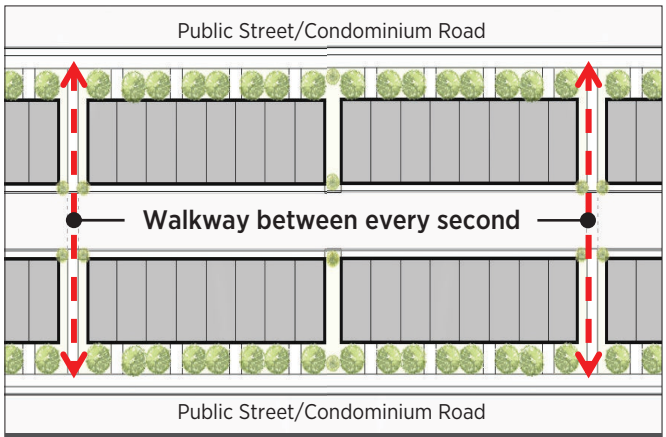

Figure 2.11: Pedestrian connections should be located after every second block

- Mechanical equipment, including air conditioning units and the storage of personal items are discouraged in private outdoor spaces

2.14 Pedestrian Connectivity ☐

- Provide a walkway between every second block to allow connectivity (See Figure 2.11)
- Sidewalks will be located on one side of a road. Sidewalks on both sides of the street maybe required for large developments
- The following sidewalk widths will be required:
  - Sidewalks abutting a road minimum 1.8 m
  - Sidewalks abutting a road, where traversed by a driveway minimum 2 m
  - Walkways in all other areas minimum 1.5 m
- There should be at least one barrier-free path of travel that meets AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act) standards throughout the site

2.15 Waste Collection and Storage ☐

- Waste storage rooms, drop-off locations (i.e. garbage chutes) and waste collection points (temporary pick-up) should be considered early in the site design stage to ensure appropriate placement and functionality

- The waste storage rooms and the waste collection point should be located internal to the site and should not be visible from a public street or impact residential units or adjacent properties (See Figure 2.12)
- Above grade waste storage rooms/enclosures should be well screened and appropriately setback from existing uses and proposed dwelling units to minimize undesirable noise, odour and visual impacts
- The waste collection facility should consider the space requirements for the waste, recycling and green bins, along with bulky items
- Waste drop-off areas should be easily accessible by the residents via a sidewalk or walkway and distributed throughout the site
- Waste collection points (pick-up areas) should not encumber parking stalls or access to other elements of the development (e.g. fire route, entry to the underground parking garage, mailboxes, etc.)
- Waste collection points should made of durable concrete and be at the same level as the road
- Refer to the Region of Peel's Waste Collection Design Standards Manual for more information

  https://www.peelregion.ca/pw/standards/design/waste-collection-design-manual-2016.pdf

2.16 Surface Parking

- Surface parking should be centrally located within the site and accessed by a sidewalk or walkway

Figure 2.12: Waste storage room and waste collection areas areas should be constructed of durable materials.

Figure 2.13: Community mailboxes covered and in a central location

- Parking lots should be setback a minimum of 3 m from a lot line and not located between the front face of a building and the street

- A minimum 3 m setback should be provided between the side wall of a building and a surface parking space

2.17 Utilities and Services ☐

- The location of above and below grade utilities and services should be considered early in the site design stage to ensure they meet utility requirements and that any visual impacts from the public street are mitigated

- Through the development process provide the locations of above and below grade utilities, easements, etc. to ensure sufficient unencumbered space is provided for public and private trees, and landscaped soft areas

- Transformer vaults are typically located on a streetline and generally on a serviceable pad (i.e. minimum 3 m x 3 m pad for smaller developments). Contact Alectra Utilities for further requirements

- Community mailboxes should be centrally located and accessed by a sidewalk or walkway (See Figure 2.13)

- Conceal or recess hydro and gas meters into the building's exterior walls (See Figure 2.14)

2.18 Property Management and Maintenance ☐

- Long term maintenance and property management should be considered early in the development process to avoid costly maintenance issues

- Use durable and high quality building and site materials. Stucco is discouraged on the first 2 storeys of a building

2.19 Other Considerations ☐

- Review Mississauga's Fire Route By-law 1036-81 early in the site design stage for the fire route design, building access requirements, etc.

- Review the Ontario Building Code to ensure that site and building designs comply with the relevant requirements

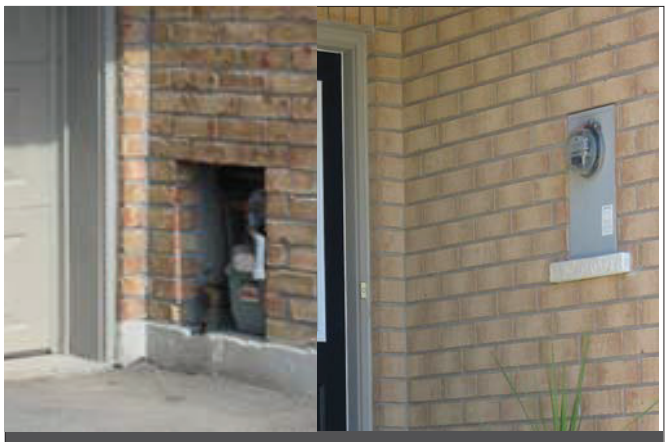

Figure 2.14: Place Hydro and Gas Meters and other utilities in concealed or recessed locations.

3.1 RM9 Stacked Townhouses Design Standards

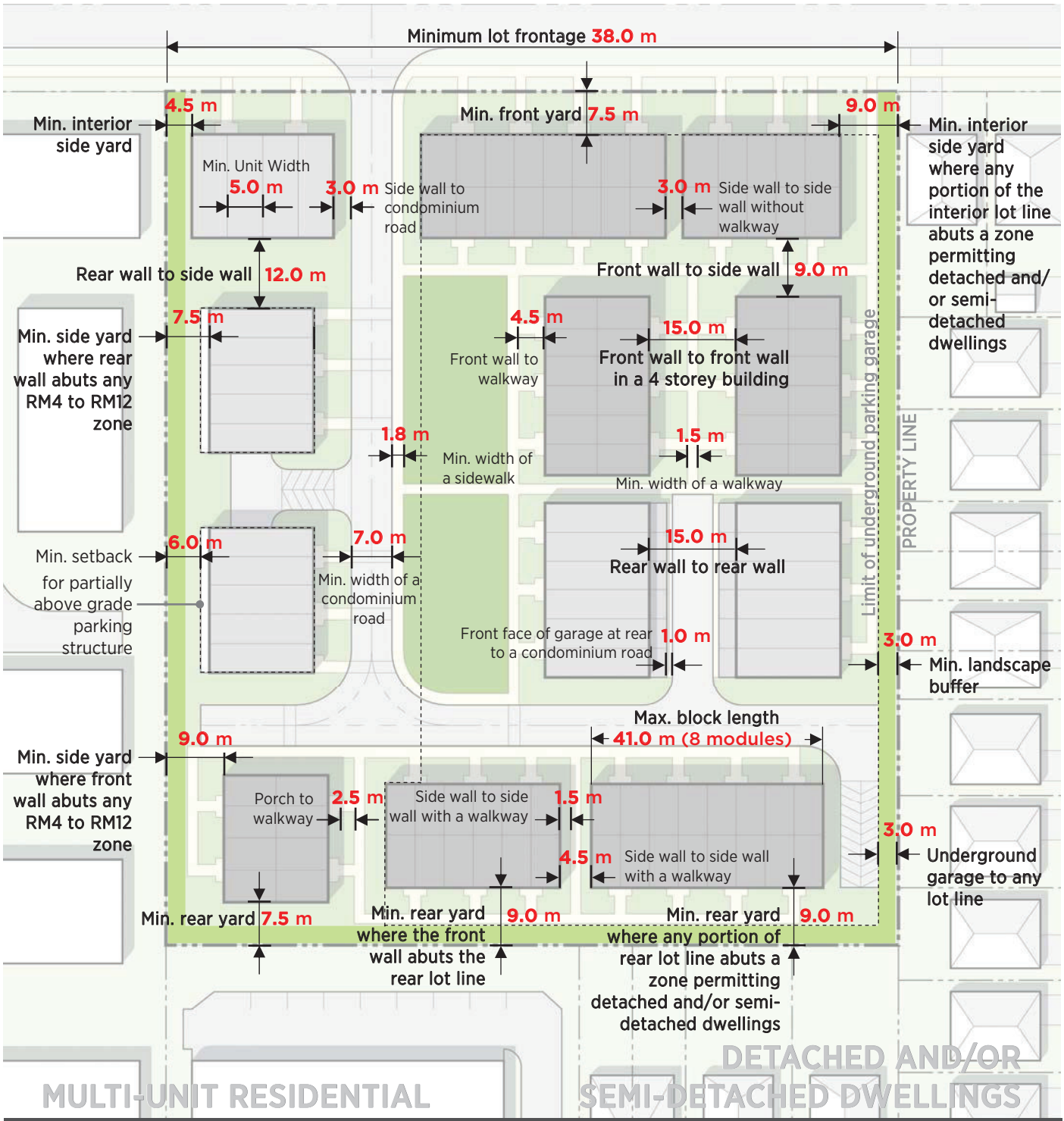

Figure 2.13: Standard Dimensions for Stacked Townhouses (RM9). For Additional Standards refer to the Zoning By-Law. The above drawing is for illustration purpose only and not to scale.

3.2 RM10 Back to Back Townhouses on Condominium Road Design Standards

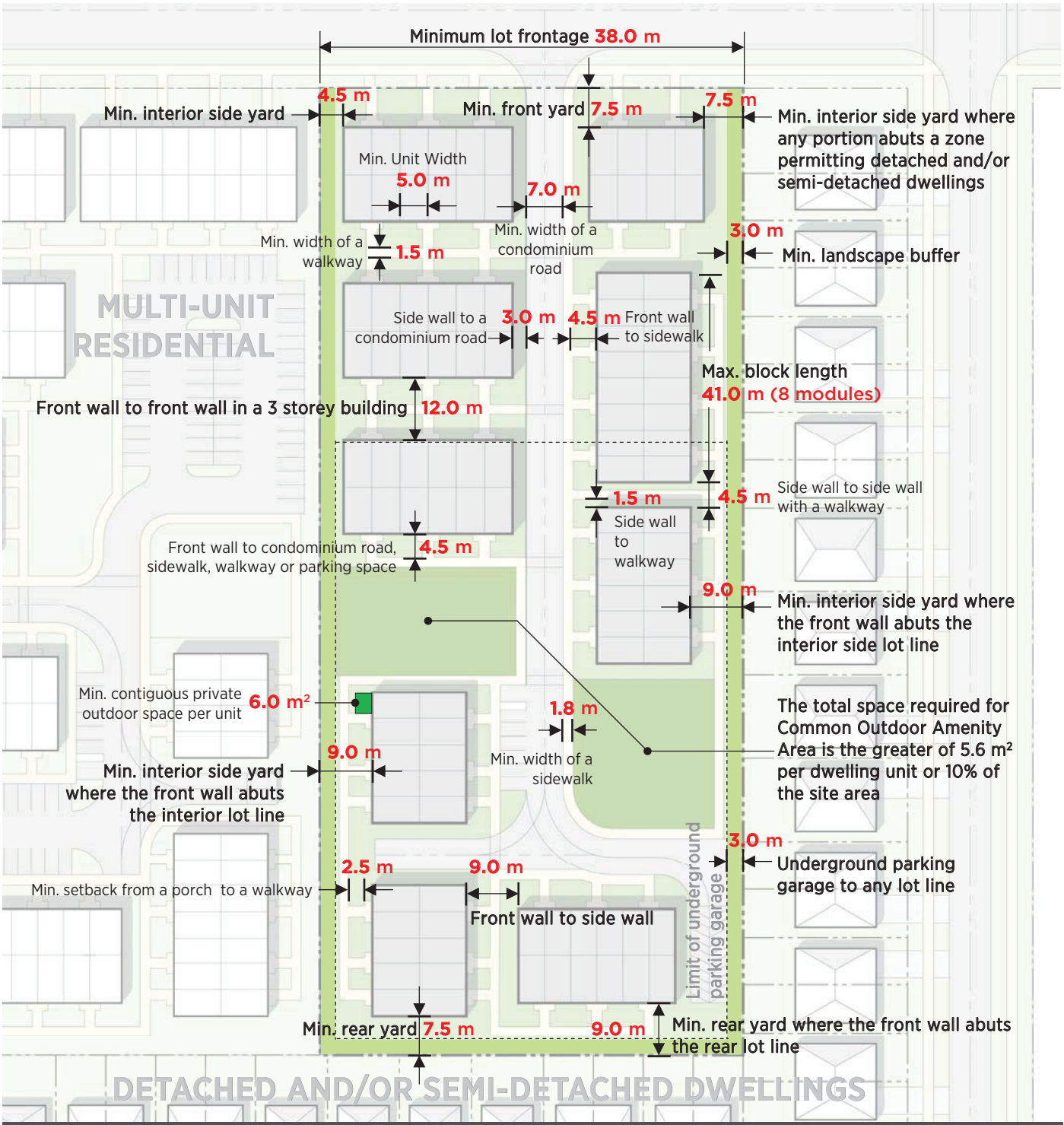

Figure 2.14: Standard Dimensions for Back to Back Townhouses (RM10). For Additional Standards refer to the Zoning By-Law. The above drawing is for illustration purpose only and not to scale.

3.3 RM11 Back to Back Townhouses on a CEC-Road Design Standards

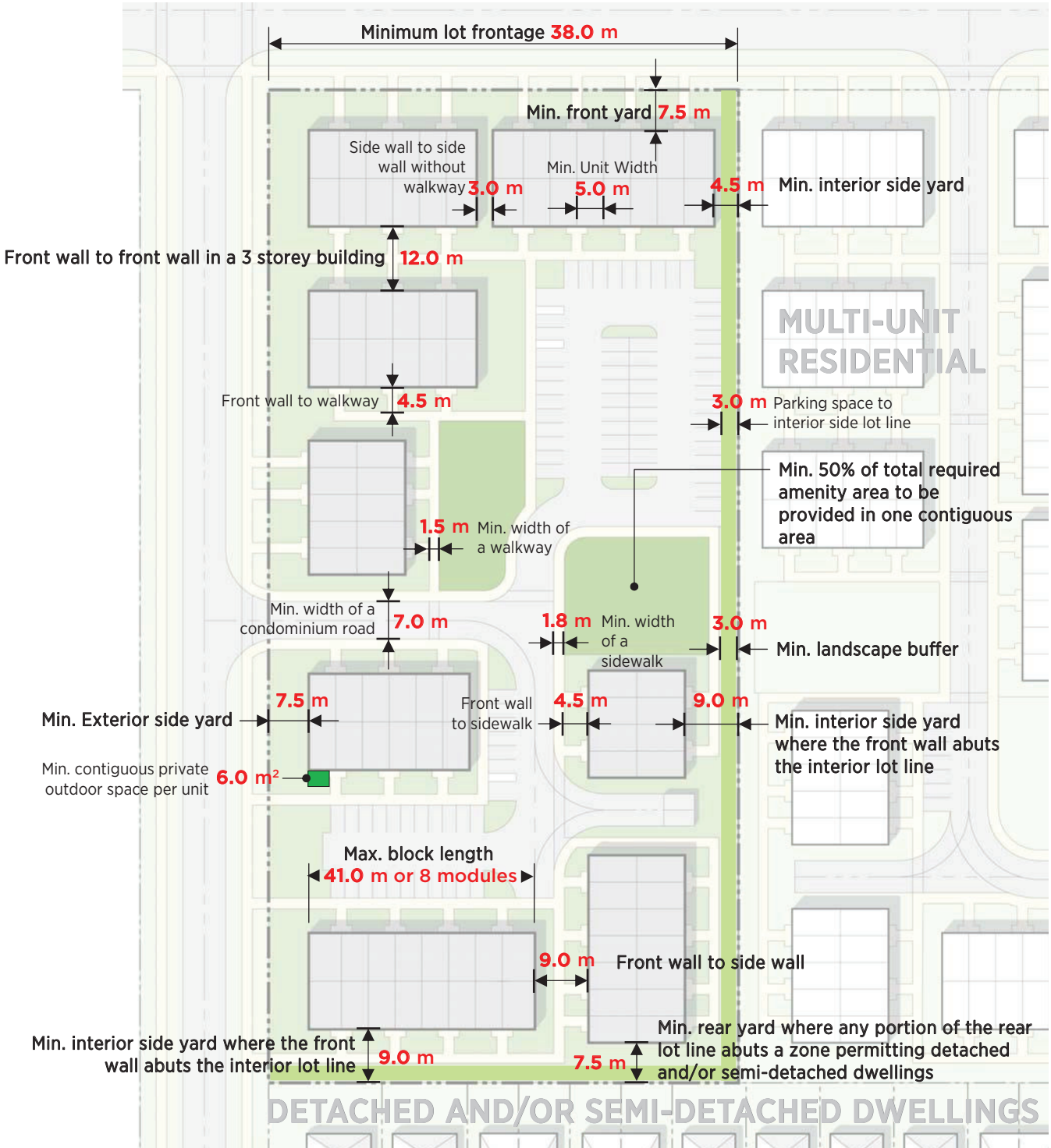

Figure 2.14: Standard Dimensions for Back to Back Townhouses (RM11). For Additional Standards refer to the Zoning By-Law. The above drawing is for illustration purpose only and not to scale.

5 Design Standard Diagrams

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