

# BURNABY URBAN VILLAGE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following Urban Village Design Guidelines are applicable to future development in all Urban Villages in Burnaby, and are intended to set high-quality expectations for aspects such as urban form, site layout, design and landscaping in these neighbourhoods.

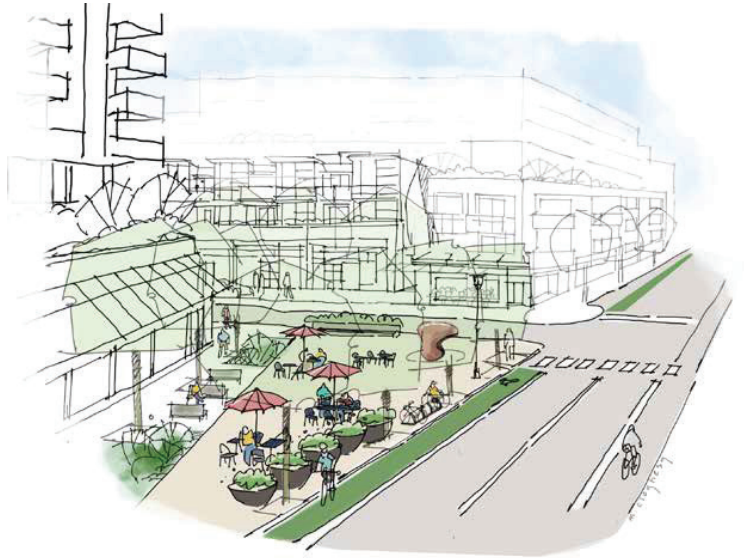
These guidelines are intended to be used alongside the Character Area Descriptions within specific Urban Village Community Plans, to promote unique, innovative and context-appropriate urban design in each Urban Village.

## Relationship to the Street and Public Spaces

The way in which buildings communicate and relate to adjacent streets and public spaces is a crucial urban design aspect that will contribute to creating a comfortable, pedestrian-scaled Urban Village.

### Building Orientation

- » Main building and unit entries for all uses should front the highest-order street(s) wherever possible.
- » Buildings should be oriented to maximize solar exposure to parks, streets, green corridors and other public open spaces within and adjacent to the Urban Village, while minimizing shadowing on these spaces. Access to natural light and ventilation for residential units should also be prioritized.
- » Where appropriate, buildings should be designed, shaped and oriented to visually frame plazas or other urban public spaces and landmarks in a manner that makes these spaces inviting, safe, and pleasant.



*Public plaza space framed by surrounding buildings.*

### Street Enclosure

- » Where applicable, developments should frame adjacent arterial, collector, and busier local streets to create a well-defined continuous street wall or sense of enclosure. Where appropriate, taller building elevations facing these streets should include a low-rise and terraced podium component along the street frontage that is pedestrian-scaled, visually interesting and respectful of the surrounding context.



*Continuous street wall formed by terraced buildings.*

## Pedestrian Interest

- » Development should contribute to making great streets and public spaces that consider the Urban Village Streetscape Principles and Design Actions in contemporary Urban Village Community Plans.
- » Building frontages should be designed to create interest from the street or other public space. This should include building facades with windows that facilitate ‘eyes on the street’, and a variety of detailing and articulation using high-quality exterior materials.
- » For mixed-use development where ground-level commercial, employment or creative economy uses exist:
  - ensure signage is designed at a pedestrian scale and presents as a secondary element to the high-quality materiality and architecture of the building façade.
  - avoid blank walls, and where this cannot be avoided, animate walls through landscaping, architectural articulation or other features such as public art.
  - ground-level building uses are encouraged to “spill” onto the sidewalk to activate and provide interest along the streetscape without obstructing pedestrian access and movement. This could include elements like retail frontage displays, workshop or studio displays, outdoor café or restaurant patio seating, and landscaping and screening elements.
  - Transparent glazing should be used wherever possible to contribute to an interesting and varied pedestrian streetscape (e.g. through interesting display windows).
  - Incorporate functional weather protection elements such as large awnings and covered seating areas.
- » In residential areas, street-fronting ground-oriented units (e.g. townhouses) should have individual front unit entry doors where possible, as well as individual landscaped front porches or patios that clearly distinguish between private and public space. Longer rows of townhouses should be broken up as separate buildings in lower density residential areas to reduce massing and to better fit within the existing neighbourhood character and context.
- » Common entries for larger multi-family residential buildings (e.g. apartments) should be visually prominent, distinctive features along the streetscape, but should be scaled appropriately with the surrounding context.



Ground-level commercial uses “spilling” onto the sidewalk.



Townhouses with individual front unit entry doors and patios.

## Public Art

- » Public art can include both standalone installations, and installations integrated into a project’s architecture and landscaping. Standalone public art should be easily accessible to the public to enable people to interact with it.

## Building Design

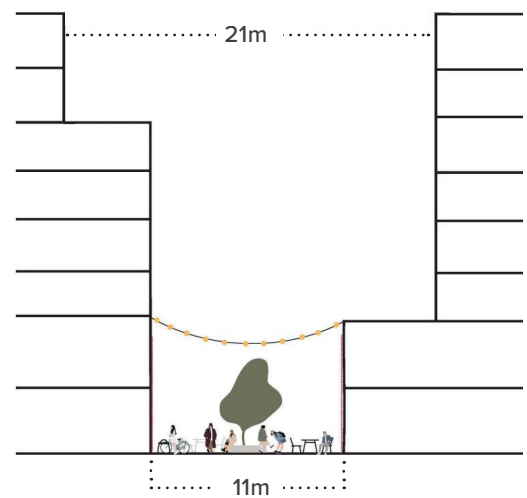
The quality and design of each building in the Urban Village contributes to creating a unique, memorable identity and sense of place in the neighbourhood.

### Unique Urban Village Form

- » Use building terracing and articulation, exterior materials, balcony and deck design, horizontal and vertical façade elements, and other design measures to add interest and variation to mid-rise building forms in the Urban Village, and to facilitate a built form that is distinct from the podium and point tower designs commonly seen in Town Centres.

### Building Separation & Setbacks

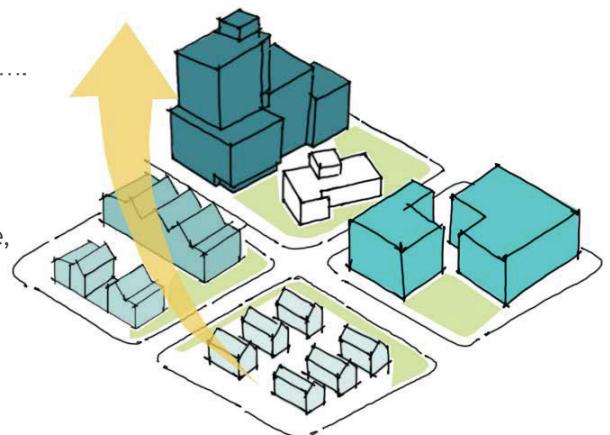
- » Mid-rise buildings on single or separate development sites should be spaced to:
  - provide sufficient privacy, natural light and ventilation, and to avoid shadowing on adjacent buildings and public spaces as much as possible
  - support a close-knit, neighbourhood scale and village-like built form
- » Taller, mid-rise building forms should generally be located a minimum of 21 metres (69 feet) apart, especially where balconies or windows to habitable rooms face each other. Lower-level podiums should be located at least 11 metres (36 feet) apart. Building separations that do not meet these minimum distances may be considered where specific urban design measures, such as unique orientation and location of windows and balconies, are proposed in order to enhance privacy for residents and mitigate overlook.
- » Appropriate building setback distances for specific developments should be further assessed during the development application review process, with consideration to the Character Area descriptions, Streetscape Principles and Design Actions, and the development's integration with the adjacent public realm and block pattern.



*Typical Urban Village building separation minimums.*

### Height & Massing

- » Higher-density development in the Urban Village should contribute to a varied skyline of different heights that are distinctly lower than tower forms in Town Centres. Where feasible, taller building forms should be softened with terraces and green roofs that are heavily landscaped and actively used by residents.
- » Height and massing should focus on gradual transitions between different scales and types of development through height limitations, building step-backs and setbacks, and use of open space.



*Gradual height and massing transitions.*

## Outdoor Access

- » Ensure balconies are well-designed and integrated into building form and massing, in a way that maximizes their usability (e.g. inset balconies that reduce building bulk while also providing weather protection), and contributes to architectural interest.
- » Prioritize access to common outdoor spaces for mixed-use or multiple family developments, including common spaces on rooftops or terraces that are much more functional, social, and expansive than private balconies.

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## Materiality

- » Incorporate durable exterior building materials for new developments that are high quality, provide variety in texture and colour, reinforce massing and building articulation, and relate to the neighbourhood context.

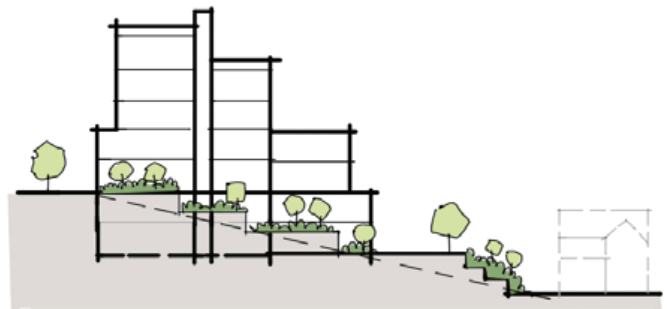
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## Sustainability & Green Design

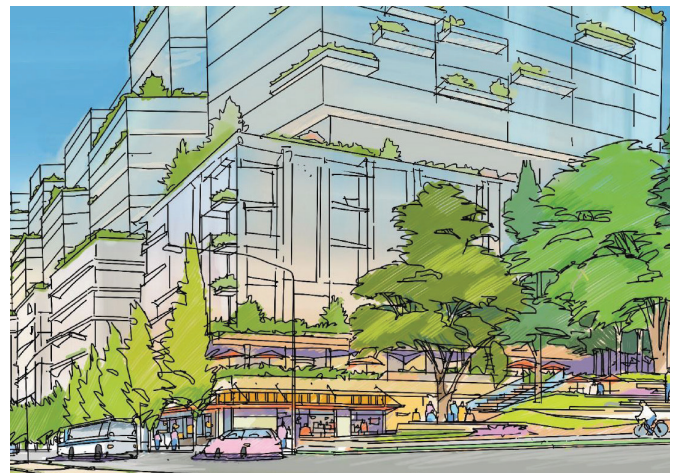
- » New developments should meet or exceed City green building policies, while striving to utilize the greenest and most energy-efficient building and construction technologies available. Opportunities should be considered relating to solar orientation, energy use and reduction, resource use and reduction, waste reduction, water retention and reuse, transportation demand management, interior comfort and landscaping.
- » Mixed-use and multi-family residential developments are encouraged to consider sustainable building technologies, including mid-rise mass timber construction for buildings above six storeys.
- » Green roofs, garden terraces, green walls and other landscaped features are encouraged to be incorporated into the architecture of new developments.

## Landscaping & Topography

- » On-site landscaping should be an integral part of each development and should be designed to create visual interest along the streetscape, with a mix of native and non-native, coniferous and deciduous species.
- » Where topography or slope impacts site and building design, maximize efforts to build according to natural topography, and minimize significant grade manipulation through over-excavation, filling and high retaining walls. Where fill or excavation activities must occur, use landscaping and other public realm enhancement measures to mitigate the visual impact of grade changes.



*Building forms influenced by natural slope and topography.*



*Green terraces and landscaping integrated into building design.*

## Safety, Comfort and Accessibility

The ability for all people to access services and amenities, and feel safe and comfortable moving around the Urban Village is a key indicator of good urban design in the community.

### A Safe & Accessible Urban Village

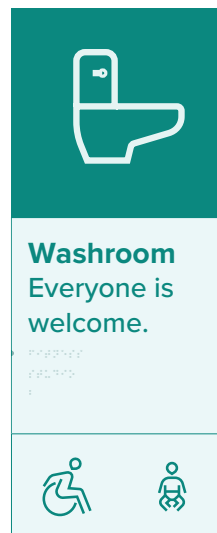
- » Ensure all people are able to access services and amenities throughout the Urban Village through the consideration of universal accessibility principles.
- » Buildings should be designed to allow for ‘eyes on the street’ as well as on adjacent parks, walkways, green corridors and other public open spaces.
- » Buildings and the public realm should be designed with consideration for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) guidelines.
- » Exterior lighting for all developments should be designed and oriented with the following objectives in mind:
  - avoid excessive light-spill onto neighbouring buildings and units
  - consider dark sky lighting and other strategies to reduce night-time light pollution and to mitigate potential impacts on avian and other wildlife species
  - adherence to CPTED standards

### Comfort & Inclusivity

- » Developments near major transit, collector and arterial streets, railway lines, or other sources of noise must consider appropriate noise mitigation measures as part of building and site design, using the City’s acoustic requirements and other applicable policies and best practices.
- » For all developments where public or common amenity bathrooms or change rooms are required, incorporate well-designed universal access facilities to promote safe, convenient and comfortable access for individuals with varying needs, abilities and identities. A consistent set of standards for clear and simple signage should be applied to avoid confusion.
- » All publicly-accessible spaces, whether owned and operated by the City or by a private property owner, should foster diversity and inclusivity, such that people feel safe and comfortable using these spaces regardless of ability, cultural or socio-economic background, or personal identity and expression. In many cases, this will require measures beyond urban design, including effective space programming, as well as various communications and education measures.



Street lighting along Griffiths Drive, Burnaby.



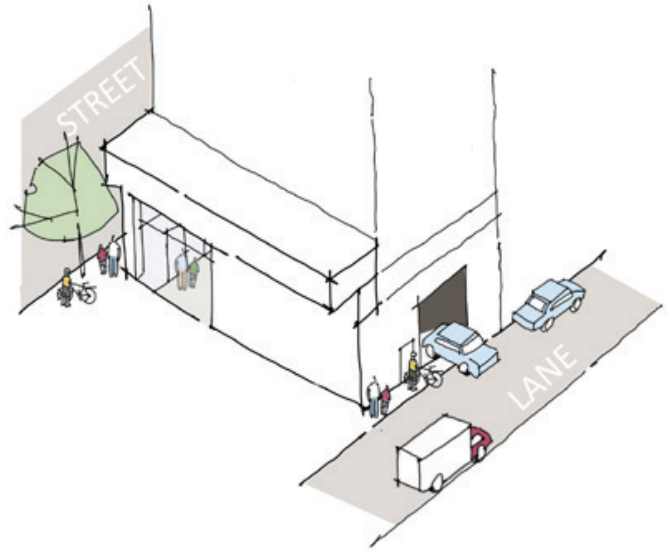
Inclusive public / common amenity washroom signage.

## Efficient Site Access

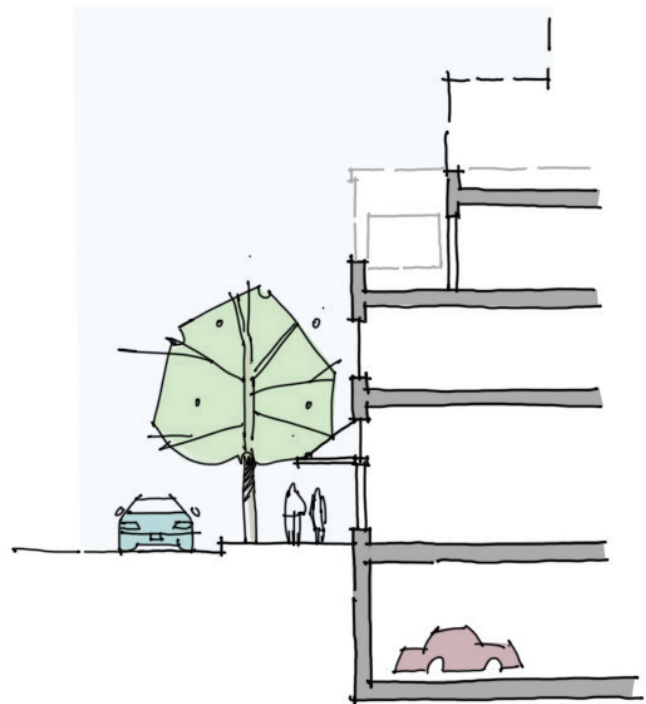
Site access, including parking, service and loading functions, should respect and mitigate negative impacts on the public realm in the Urban Village.

### Site Access, Parking & Loading

- » Site access should prioritize pedestrians and cyclists, while minimizing the impacts of vehicular parking and service access needs on the streetscape. Pedestrian access should be from the highest-order street, with vehicle access provided from a lane or from the lowest-order street where possible.
- » Short-term bicycle parking (e.g. for visitors, customers) should be provided in front of a building, out of the way of pedestrian circulation, in highly visible locations with covered weather protection.
- » Access to long-term bicycle parking (e.g. for residents, employees) may be provided from either the street or the lane. Bicycle elevators should be considered where direct, no-stair access to the street cannot be provided, or where the bicycle parking is provided below the first underground parkade level.
- » Access to garbage and recycling facilities, as well as staging areas, should be from the lane or from private roads where possible.
- » Off-street vehicle parking spaces for new mixed-use and multi-family residential developments should be concealed and/or located underground such that they are not visible from the public realm.
- » Access to concealed or underground parking areas should be designed and oriented such that they are discreet features along a building façade. For example, parkade entry gates should be recessed from and perpendicular to the main building façade where possible, and located at the rear of the building.



*Site access for different travel modes.*



*Concealed / underground parking.*



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**THIS IS**   
**CLIMATE**  
**ACTION**

