

Type 3 - Larger Front & Back Sites

Type 3 sites represent larger, narrow blocks of land adjacent to the Avenue. These may be individual blocks or several blocks side-by-side. There are several large front and back sites west of Fairview. They provide an opportunity to reclaim large strips of land and fill in the gaps with new double-sided development that faces both onto University Avenue and adjacent streets, such as Charles. Their larger size presents an opportunity to create a substantial scale of development capable of supporting a range of uses with underground parking and new open spaces.



Key Characteristics

- Larger narrow sites composed of one or more blocks
- May contain existing buildings
- Typically 300 feet deep facing onto two or more public streets



Emerald Gardens, Saint Paul



Denver, Colorado



Lake Street, Minneapolis

The examples above demonstrate some key characteristics of redeveloped large front and back sites: (clockwise from the top) the larger block size of this development allowed for the creation of a small internal street and landscaped open space; a mixed-use development containing both apartments and townhouses frames a new public open space; a higher-density, mixed-use development with frontage on several sides.

Key Principles of Type 3 Development:

Making Development "Fit"

- Provide a range of building heights from 4-6 stories.
- Allow for building up to 15 stories in height, where appropriate, adjacent to public open spaces, at key intersections and along Charles Street.
- Develop blocks with building addresses fronting onto all surrounding public streets.

Transit-Supportive Land Uses & Densities

- Provide live/work opportunities adjacent to employment areas, such as along Charles Street.

Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

- Locate parking inside buildings, below ground or in shared structured parking.

- Accommodate access and servicing from the side of University Avenue or north of the lot off Charles Street.
- Introduce an alley to provide access to parking and servicing.
- Provide interim surface level parking adjacent to Charles Street as part of a phased parking strategy.

A Green, Attractive & Connected Pedestrian Environment

- Provide mid-block north/south connections to improve access between areas to the north of Charles.
- Create inter-block connections with thoughtful streetscape treatments and lighting.



A rendering of the Carleton Lofts project demonstrating the potential to address the rear of the site with new townhomes.

Demonstration of Two Large Front & Back Sites at Carleton and Fairview

The existing Carleton Place Lofts project represents an excellent model for the development of larger blocks along the Avenue. The form is determined by the reuse of the historic buildings, with the net effect a series of pavilion-like buildings interspersed with open spaces. Additional buildings with underground parking will be added over time to increase density on the site. The scheme shown above places townhouses along the rear property to finish the street to the north. These units would require additional underground parking.

A little further to the east of Carleton Lofts is a similar-sized block without heritage buildings to regenerate (top right). The depth of this block allows for a full frontage to be developed on both sides. The built form is similar to the Emerald Gardens project south of the Avenue; however, in some locations, increased building height in the 12 - 15 story range have been provided.

Retail could be placed at-grade but a residential frontage with additional streetscaping would also contribute to street vitality. The scheme shows a mid-rise office building on the eastern end of the block to provide employment population. This block could provide 600 - 800 residential units plus commercial space.

A new park around the heritage building links the open spaces of the district. An additional open space is shown on the triangular western end of the site. This southwestern exposure would be an excellent location for outdoor cafes next to the park.



A rendering of a redeveloped large front and back site along the Corridor. An existing heritage building has been preserved and incorporated into a new public open space. While most of the buildings are mid-rise in scale, taller 12-15 story towers have been located at key intersections and next to important features and open spaces.

Design Directions

1. Establish a face for new development.

- Encourage infill to create a continuous street wall.
- Establish minimum frontages and setbacks along University.
- Front University with medium-density development of 4 - 6 stories with step backs above the 4th floor up to a height of 15 stories.
- Provide active frontages at-grade along University and live/work opportunities adjacent to employment uses along Charles Street.
- Establish minimum ground floor heights of 13 ft. to allow for changes in use over time.

2. Limit access and servicing from University Avenue.

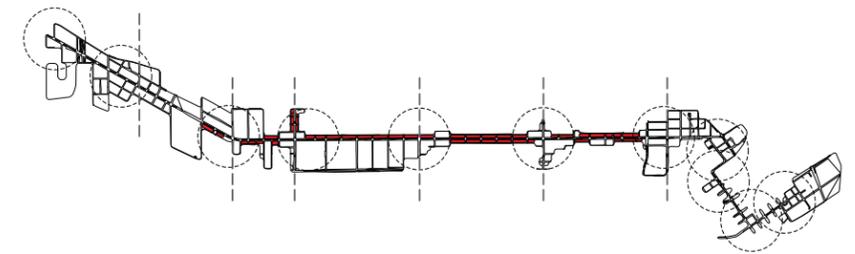
- Provide access to parking and servicing from the side of the lot or streets to the north and south of University Avenue.
- Introduce alleyways where appropriate to provide access to parking and servicing.
- Consolidate access, servicing and parking between properties.

3. Establish an open space framework.

- Use open spaces to strengthen pedestrian connections with the Avenue and LRT.
- Connect to and extend existing open space connections north and south of the Avenue.



An aerial rendering of the redeveloped large front and back site close to Fairview. The size of the block is large enough that development could address both the front and rear of the block.



Type 4 - Half-Depth Infill Sites

Type 4 sites represent smaller parcels of vacant or underutilized land scattered along the Corridor. There are over 40 blocks containing these sites, providing an opportunity to replace the gaps along the Avenue with infill development that is of a complementary scale to existing buildings. New development on these sites presents an opportunity to intensify retail activity along the Avenue, and provide additional residential or commercial uses on the upper levels. An important consideration for new development on such sites will be how to ensure new buildings are of a scale that is compatible with existing neighborhoods to the rear.



Key Characteristics

- Smaller parcels of land located along University Avenue
- Lots typically no greater than 125 feet deep stretching from University Avenue to the middle of the block or edge of the alleyway
- Currently underutilized or vacant



Mississauga, Ontario



University Avenue, St. Paul



Toronto, Ontario



Toronto, Ontario



Toronto, Ontario

The examples above demonstrate some key characteristics of redeveloped half-depth infill sites: (clockwise from top left) a new Main Street mixed-use residential development with retail at-grade; the patio of a restaurant along University helps to increase pedestrian activity and put “eyes on the street;” two new infill developments maintain the existing scale and rhythm of the street; a new two-story development has organized itself around an open public court yard to create a focus and provide relief from a busy street; a half-depth development contains a mix of residential and retail, and fills in a gap in the street face.

Key Principles of Type 4 Development:

Making Development “Fit”

- Provide a range of building heights from 2-3 stories.
- Carefully fit new developments into their surroundings so that they can improve existing street conditions and integrate well with existing neighborhoods to the rear.
- Construct houses, townhomes, duplex or small-scale walk-up apartments on sites that face the neighborhood to reinforce the lower-density residential character of the neighborhood.

Transit-Supportive Land Uses & Densities

- Increase opportunities for people to live along the Corridor by encouraging multi-unit, mixed-use development.

Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

- Preserve and extend existing alleys to the rear of the block as important access routes for parking and servicing.
- Where alleys are shared by residential uses, minimize disruption for those uses.

Creating a Green Attractive & Connected Pedestrian Environment

- Provide for setbacks from the property line to increase boulevard width and provide greater pedestrian amenity along the Avenue.



A rendered aerial illustrating how half-block developments (in orange) could gradually fill a block over time. The alley through the center of the block plays an important role in the development of half-depth sites by providing access and parking for businesses along the Corridor as well as new residential housing north of the Avenue along Sherburne.



The rendering above illustrates the smaller, more incremental scale of half-block developments along the Corridor. Along University, new 1 - 3 story buildings (in orange) repair the holes along the street frontage, while, in the rear of the block, new townhouses to reinforce the residential nature of the street.

Demonstration of Half-Depth infill along the Corridor

There are a significant number of blocks along the Avenue that exhibit this “half block” character. The term applies to the frontage along University where a lane bisects the block, allowing for an Avenue front and a neighborhood back. Here the alley plays an important role and should not be removed or closed.

Infill along the street allows for businesses to fill in the frontage while continuing to rely on parking in the rear off the alley. Buildings are built to the street and generally 2 - 4 stories in height. Mixed-use is acceptable, including retail, office, live-work and residential. Small-footprint buildings several stories tall built on the majority of the lot can easily achieve transit-supportive density. Larger developments can utilize underground parking with access from the alley.

Development that faces the neighborhood should reinforce a lower-density, residential character of houses, townhomes, duplexes or apartments.

Design Directions

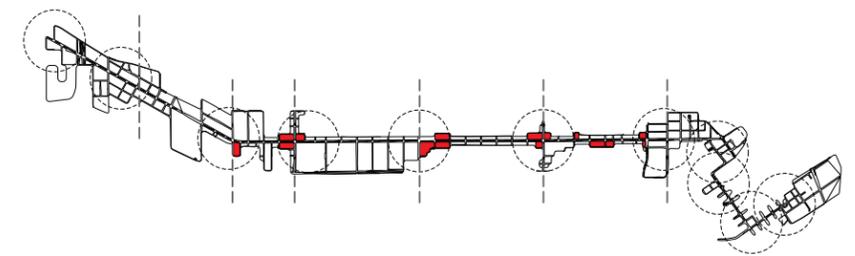
Half Block (Front)

- 1. Establish a face along University.**
 - Create a continuous animated street face along University.
 - Front University with new development of between 2 and 3 stories.
 - Provide active frontages at-grade.
- 2. Limit access and servicing from University.**
 - Introduce, preserve for and/or extend the alley where possible, to provide access to parking and servicing.
 - Consolidate access, servicing and parking between properties.
 - Provide all servicing and parking to the rear of new development.

Half Block (Back)

- 1. Repair residential streets to the north and south of University.**
 - Reintroduce smaller-scale, 2-3 story housing to fill in gaps along streets to the north and south of University.
 - Provide street access to residential units that front onto Sherburne and Aurora.
- 2. Limit access and servicing from Sherburne and Aurora.**
 - Introduce and/or extend the alley where possible, to provide access to parking and servicing.
 - Consolidate access, servicing and parking between properties.
 - Conceal parking behind new development.

Towards a Transit-Supportive Corridor



Type 5 - Full-Depth Infill Sites

Type 5 sites represent small parcels of vacant or underutilized land that extend from the Avenue through to the neighborhoods in the rear. There are a number of these sites along the Corridor that provide an opportunity to both fill in the gaps with new development of a complementary scale to the Avenue and complete the residential streetscape to the rear. New development on these sites offers a chance to intensify retail activity along the Avenue and provide additional residential or commercial uses on the upper levels. To the rear of the property, new residential infill development will help increase densities along the Corridor, and repair the residential character of streets that have been eroded by insensitive developments and surface parking.



Key Characteristics

- Smaller parcels of land located along University Avenue
- Sites extend from University Avenue (north or south) to the next adjacent street so that there is the potential for new buildings facing in either direction
- Currently underutilized or vacant



The examples above demonstrate some key characteristics of redeveloped full-depth infill sites: (clockwise from top left) a five-story building integrates into the scale of the main street by stepping back above the third-story; a “walk-up” apartment helps to increase density while maintaining the scale of the neighborhood; a corner building with three floors of residential and retail at grade; the Rondo Library has a four-story building fronting University and integrates with smaller-scaled residential to the rear with townhouses directly accessed from the street; townhouses will help to reinforce the scale and character of residential streets to the rear.

Key Principles of Type 5 Development Include:

Making Development “Fit”

- Provide a mix of building types from 2-4 stories.
- Allow for building up to 15 stories in height where appropriate adjacent to public open spaces and at key intersections.
- Provide single-family houses, townhomes, duplexes or small-scale walk-up apartments facing the neighborhood to reinforce the lower-density residential character of the neighborhood.
- Step parking decks back from the street edge, and either line them with residential units of a similar height or provide a landscaped buffer.

Transit-Supportive Land Uses & Densities

- Increase opportunities for people to live along the Corridor by encouraging multi-unit, mixed-use development.

Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

- Preserve and extend existing alleys to the rear of the block as important access routes for parking and servicing.
- Allow cultural or institutional uses to run through the block, where appropriate.
- Locate parking inside buildings, below ground or in shared parking decks along Sherburne or Aurora.

A Green Attractive & Connected Pedestrian Environment

- Provide setbacks from the property line to increase boulevard width or provide front courts for institutional or cultural uses.
- Locate open spaces adjacent to the Avenue and front them with new development.
- Orient primary institutional or cultural uses towards University Avenue.



A rendered aerial illustrating how full-depth infill development might exist along the Corridor. As with the half-depth sites, the alley has been maintained to provide access and some convenience parking for both the businesses along the Corridor and new infill residential housing north of the Avenue.



The rendering above illustrates a full-depth development north of University. In this scenario, the Corridor has been lined with mixed-use medium density development. The development has taken advantage of its proximity to a station and location on a corner block to “turn the corner” and continue north up the street away from University, while, to the rear, new infill townhouse development helps repair the gaps along Sherburne.

Demonstration of Full-Depth Infill Site along the Corridor

Along the Avenue, especially on corner sites, opportunities exist where the lot reads from both the Avenue and the rear residential street. Corner locations, because of their dual street frontage, have a unique ability to create landmark buildings with greater heights than are appropriate at mid-block locations. This site shows the inclusion of an Avenue-related residential building with retail-at-grade serviced by underground parking. The alley is maintained and a smaller residential apartment building, possibly without ground floor retail, is placed on the cross street. In this case, the building could be configured to allow for street-accessible residential units or live-work space. The residential street is then filled in with townhouses to complete the block in response to the neighborhood pattern.

The corner location has been tested with a variety of building heights from 6 to 10 to 15 stories (see following page). All of these scenarios achieve a transit-supportive density with a range of 70 - 160 residential units per acre plus commercial, retail or service space.

Some convenience parking could be placed at the rear of the Avenue buildings and underground. Townhouses would supply their own parking off the alley.

Design Directions

1. Establish a face along University.

- Create a continuous animated street edge.
- Front University with medium-density development of 4 – 6 stories with step backs above the fourth story up to a height of 15 stories.
- Provide active frontages at-grade.
- Establish minimum ground floor heights of 13' to allow for changes in use over time.

2. Repair residential streets to the north and south of University.

- Reintroduce smaller-scale 2-3 story housing to fill in gaps along the streets to the north and south of University.
- Provide direct ground-level access to new residential units.
- Provide an angular plane to ensure that buildings step down towards Sherburne and Aurora.
- Step parking decks back from the street edge, and either buffer them with landscaping or line them with residential units of a similar scale to the neighborhood.

3. Increase density where appropriate.

- Increase densities, where appropriate, through the use of taller structures up to 15 stories next to open spaces and at major intersections.
- Encourage buildings to “turn the corners.”

4. Limit access and servicing from University.

- Reintroduce the alley to provide access to parking and servicing.
- Use “doglegs” to prevent dead ending where extending the alley from end-to-end is not feasible.
- Consolidate access, servicing and parking between properties.