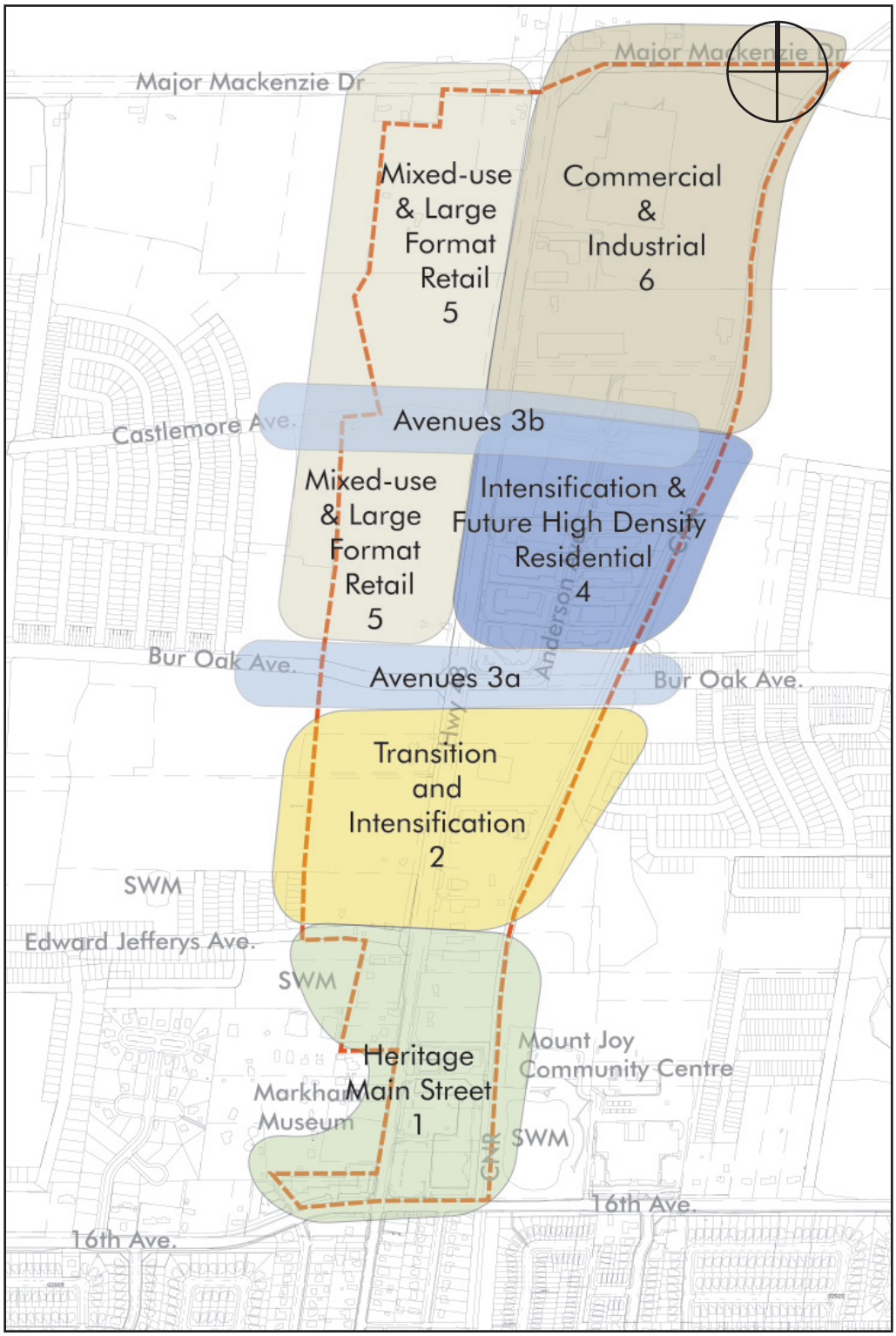
2.4 Urban Design Districts

The Study Area has been organized into six zones, for which a distinct urban design framework has been developed.



Urban Design Districts

1 - Heritage Main Street

The Museum is an important landmark in the Town of Markham and should be emphasized as a marquee cultural attraction for eastern Markham through improved access and edge landscaping and streetscaping, reflecting the principles and guidelines outlined in the Main Street Markham Streetscape Guidelines study.

Key design principles for this area include:

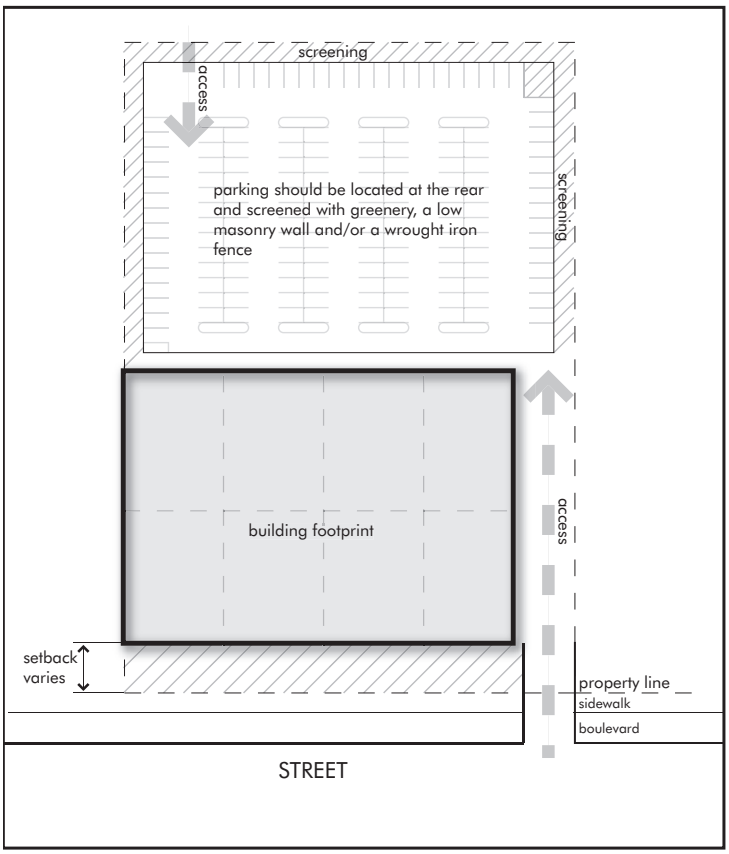
- Buildings in this district should be treated as an extension of Main Street Markham and receive the same treatment as the area located south of 16th Avenue.
- The Garden Basket property should be encouraged to incorporate street-related uses in order to achieve revitalization and intensification to animate the Highway 48 frontage.
- A stark visual transition between old and new should be avoided. Instead, a gradual transition should occur north of Edward Jeffreys Avenue.

Infill development on the Garden Basket site will contribute to a more animated frontage along Highway 48.

Area-specific guidelines

Follow the guidelines listed under Section 3.2 - Mixed Use Areas and Buildings except when supplemented or superseded by the specifications below:

- **Uses** - The range of uses should be flexible and include residential, office and commercial uses except automotive service related and drive-through facilities.
- **Retail Character** - Single retail units should be limited to a maximum 500 square metres.
- **Height** - Buildings should have a minimum of 2 storeys and a maximum of 4 storeys.
- **Setbacks** - A variety of setbacks integrating landscape and tree plantings can be provided. New development should front onto Highway 48, though smaller setbacks are less critical here as in other districts closer to Bur Oak Avenue.
- **Vegetation** – Existing trees should be preserved as per Markham's existing and proposed legislation.
- **Parking** - Parking should be located at the rear of buildings. Surface parking should be screened with greenery, a low masonry wall and/or a wrought iron fence.
- **Streetscape Design** - Streetscape Treatment A is proposed for this area.

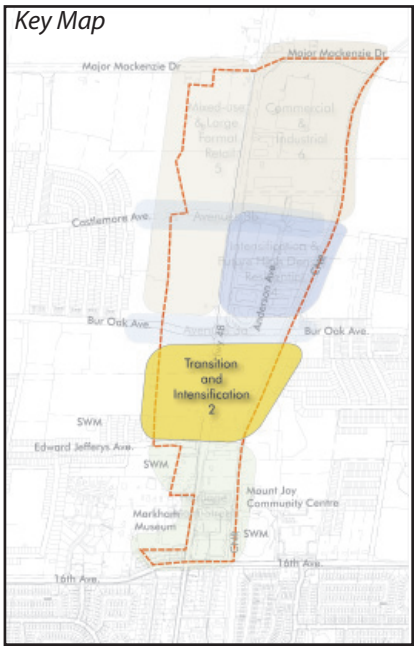


Parking should be located at the rear of buildings.

Surface parking should be screened with greenery, a low masonry wall and/or wrought iron fencing.

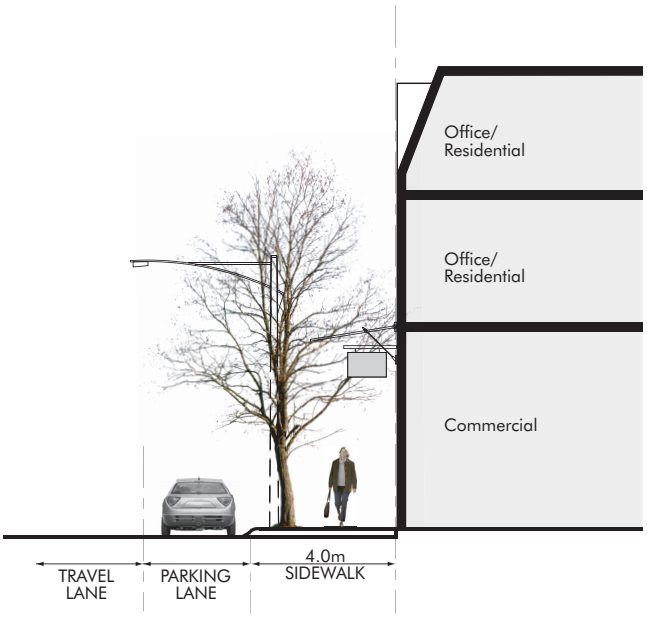
2 - Transition and Intensification

The lands to the north of Edward Jeffreys Avenue should perform a transitional function between south and north, and support the uses and built form in the Heritage Main Street District visually and functionally. This area should support medium-density in a built form ranging from 2 to 8 storeys in height. This area is not intended as a commercial node though a mix of residential and grade-related commercial uses are appropriate.



Key design principles for this area include:

- An active well-defined street-wall incorporating a high proportion of glazing and primary building entrances should front onto Highway 48 and should take advantage of the 10 metre sewer easement as an area for landscaping, terraces and patios.
- A vertical mix of uses (i.e. within the same building) and horizontal mix of uses (i.e. on adjacent sites).



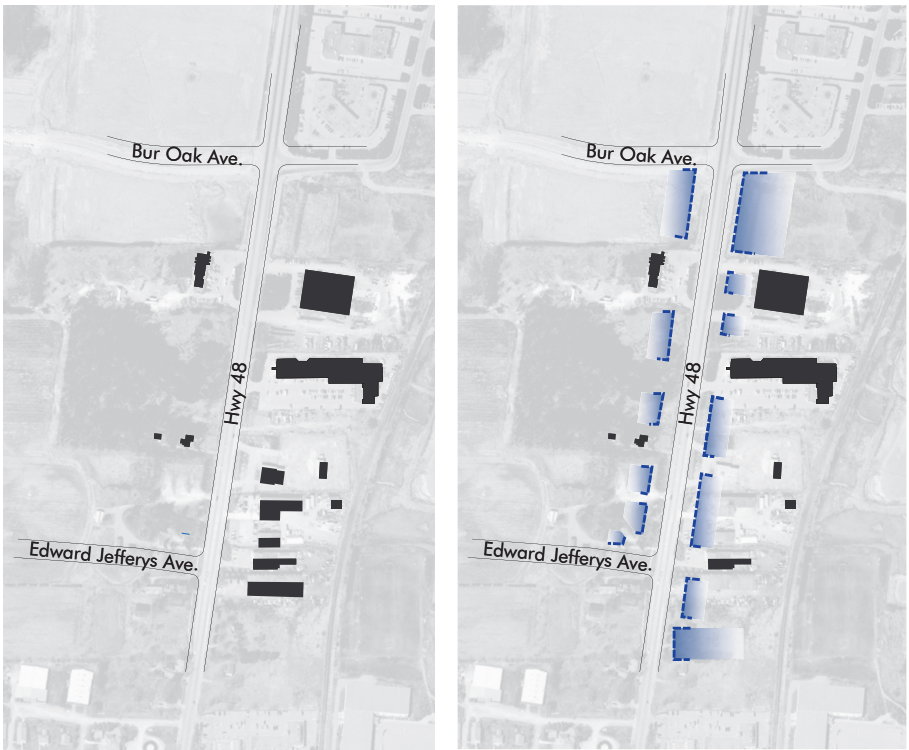
Buildings should incorporate a vertical mix of uses.

Area-specific guidelines

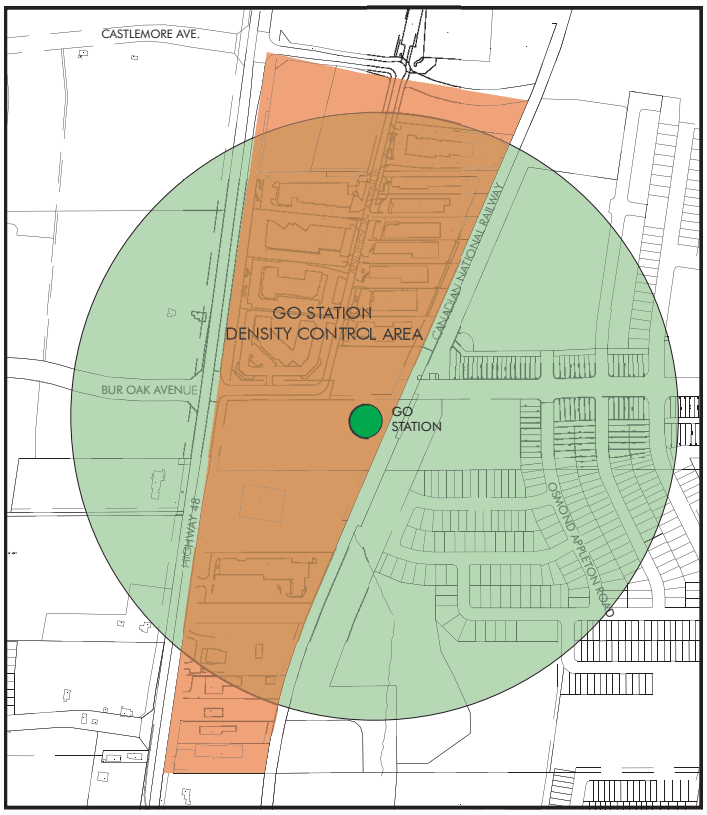
For applications in which commercial is not the dominant use (i.e. Less than 50% of GFA), follow the guidelines listed under Section 3.2 - Mixed Use Areas and Buildings. Otherwise, follow the guidelines listed under Section 3.1 - Commercial Areas, except when supplemented or superseded by the specifications below:

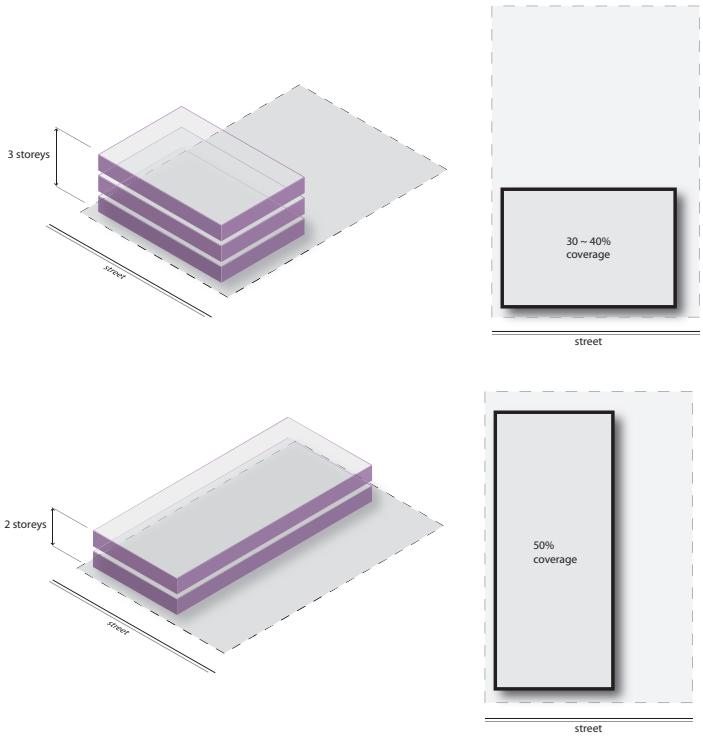
Uses and heights - A variety of uses should be encouraged including:

- Residential and live-work townhouses;
- Apartment and condominium buildings (up to 8 storeys)
- Buildings should be a minimum of 2 storeys and a maximum of 6 storeys for the first 10 metres from Highway 48. Building heights up to 8 storeys can be accommodated at the mid-section of the property. Where the property abuts adjacent single family residential areas a minimum 7.5 metre setback and a height limit of 3 storeys (or 11.5 metres) for the first 10 metres is required.
- Commercial uses with a maximum unit size of 2,000 square metres.



The building frontage along Highway 48 should be increased to 70% through infill development.





Within 400 metres of the GO Station GFA = 2 x floorplate & Floor Space Index Ratio of at least 1.0

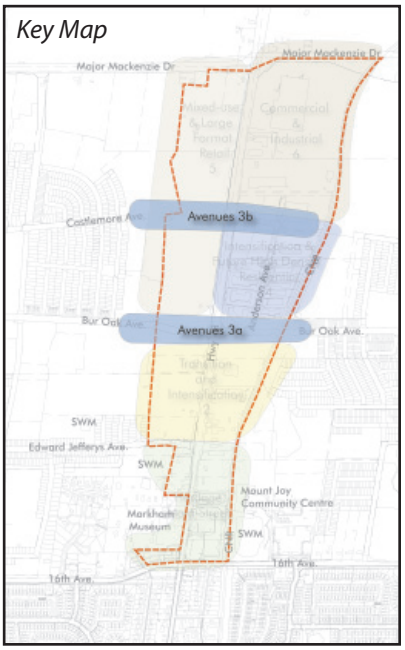
- **Minimum Density** - For sites in proximity of the GO Station building as indicated below, all structures are to be built with at least two usable floors (i.e. GFA = 2 x floorplate). In addition, a Floor Space Index of at least 1.0 should be achieved.
- **Frontage** - Buildings should be sited to provide a consistent and animated street wall (including primary entrances and a high proportion of glazing) along Highway 48, with buildings representing at least 70% of the street frontage, building line to building line.
- **Setbacks** - A setback of between 1 and 3 metres from the property line should be provided.
- **Parking** - Parking should be located at the rear of buildings. Where visible from the adjacent public streets they should be screened with greenery, a low masonry wall and/or a wrought iron fence. Front yard parking is prohibited.
- **Streetscape Design** - Streetscape Treatment A is proposed for this area. Alternatively a boulevard lane can be accommodated on the west side of Highway 48 in the 10 metre easement area.

3 - Avenues

A significant opportunity exists to create a strong commercial, residential and civic focal point centred on the Mount Joy GO Station at the intersection of Bur Oak Avenue and Highway 48. Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue are envisioned as key east-west spines joining the residential communities to the east and west of the Highway 48 corridor.

Key design principles for this area include:

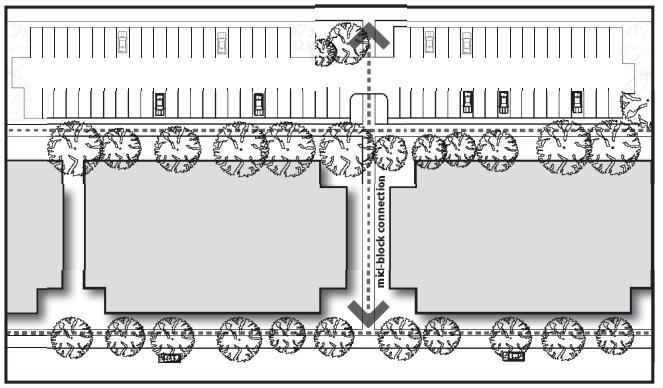
- Creation and encouragement of a cyclist and pedestrian-friendly, urban mixed-use street, connecting the residential community of Wismer Commons to Highway 48, the GO Station and the Greensborough Community.
- Encouragement of pedestrian movement and the control of vehicular speeds along Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue are key priorities.
- A vertical and horizontal mix of uses.
- A fine grain of buildings and façades strongly related to the street with a minimum of 2 to 4 stories defining the street wall, up to a maximum of 8 in proximity to the GO station.

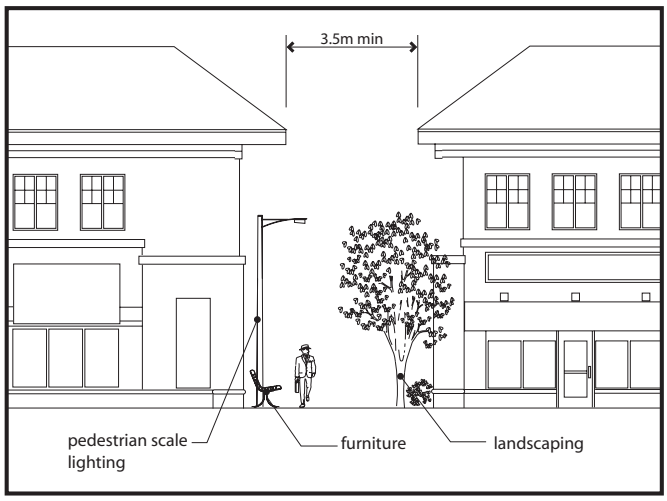


Mixed-use buildings should define the street edge along Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue.

Area-specific guidelines

Follow the guidelines listed under Section 3.2: Mixed Use Areas and Buildings except when supplemented or superseded by the specifications below:

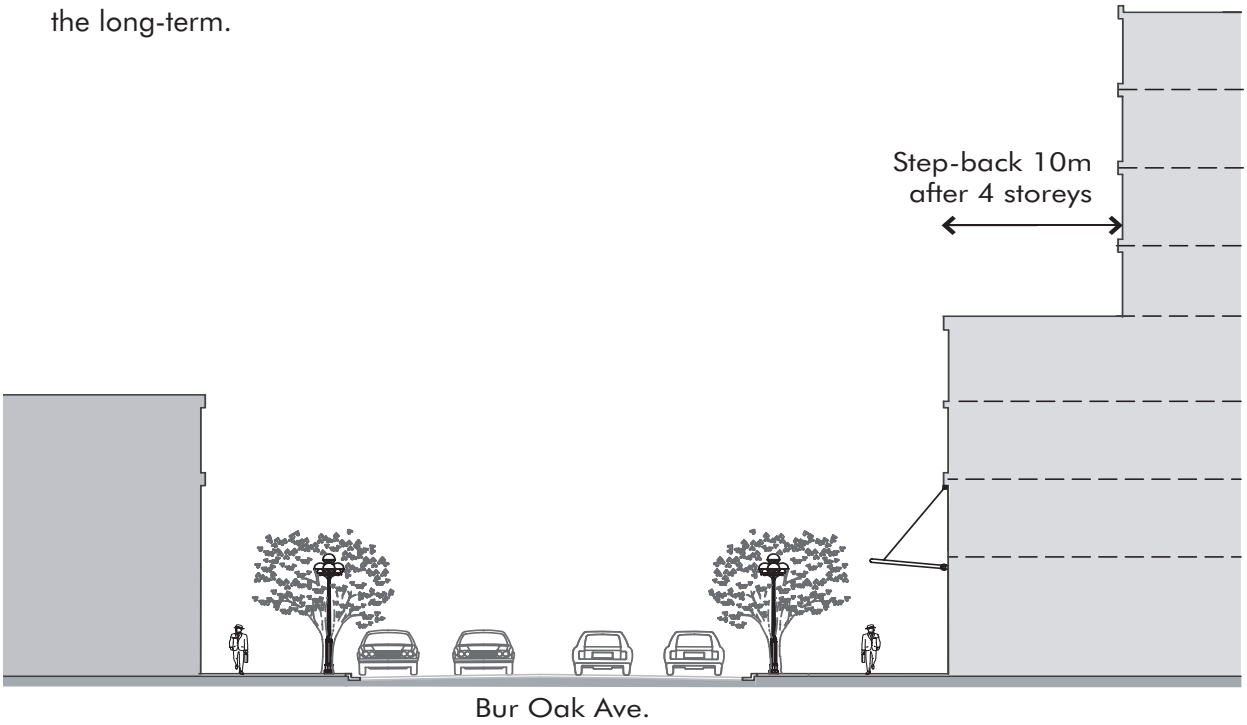




Example of pedestrian mid block connections.

- **Height at Street Wall** - within 10 metres of the front property line along Bur Oak and Castlemore Avenues, buildings should be comprised between 2 and 4 storeys in height. Beyond the first 10 metres, upper floors should be stepped to a maximum height of 8 storeys to ensure sensitive transition to street-related built form.
- **Frontage** - A consistent, animated street edge should be provided along Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue with primary access to commercial and residential uses from these avenues. Buildings should occupy a minimum of 80% frontage along the Avenues.
- **Pedestrian Mid-block Connections** – the street wall should be broken up in the middle of long blocks (exceeding 100 metres) for a north-south pedestrian or road connection.
- **Retail Character** - Retail at grade and a consistent rhythm of entrances should be provided. One entrance should be provided at least every 10.0 metres of frontage with an average not exceeding 10.0 metres.
- **Setbacks** - A narrow setback not exceeding 1.5 metres is preferred on Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue unless a civic space including a parkette, seating area, playground or public art installation, or a patio or outdoor dining area is provided.
- **Landscaping** - On Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue, a tree (minimum calliper 7.5 cm at 30 cm in height) is to be planted at a minimum interval of one every 7.5 metres in a continuous tree trench of at least 1.6 metres in width and 1.0 metre in depth and protected by a tree grate.
- **Lighting** - Pedestrian-scaled downcast lighting integrated with street lighting is to be provided on the length of the entire street.

- **Off-street Parking** - Additional parking may be provided at the rear of buildings or underground, but never between the primary building façade and the street.
- **On-street Parking** - To foster the vitality of the street's businesses and reduce traffic speed, on-street parking is to be provided on Bur Oak Avenue and Castlemore Avenue. Curb extensions at intersections or mid-block pedestrian crossings should be provided.
- **GO Parking** - Structured parking should be provided to accommodate GO Transit users and unlock development opportunities on current surface parking lots.
- **Bicycle Infrastructure** - A bicycle lane of at least 1.5 metres in width should be integrated on both sides of Castlemore Avenue. Bicycle lanes on Bur Oak Avenue are considered a desirable feature in the long-term.



Upper floors should be stepped back from a podium to ensure sensitive transition to lower built form.

4 - Intensification and Future High Density Residential

Unlike the west side of Highway 48 north of Bur Oak Avenue, this district already contains existing built form which is largely industrial in character. Therefore, it is proposed that the transformation of this area in the short term be primarily conveyed through the treatment of the roadway and streetscape treatment with high-density residential uses encouraged in the vicinity of the GO Station. Long-term Redevelopment and intensification should be encouraged for this area as a high density residential node in proximity to the GO Station:

Key design principles for this area include:

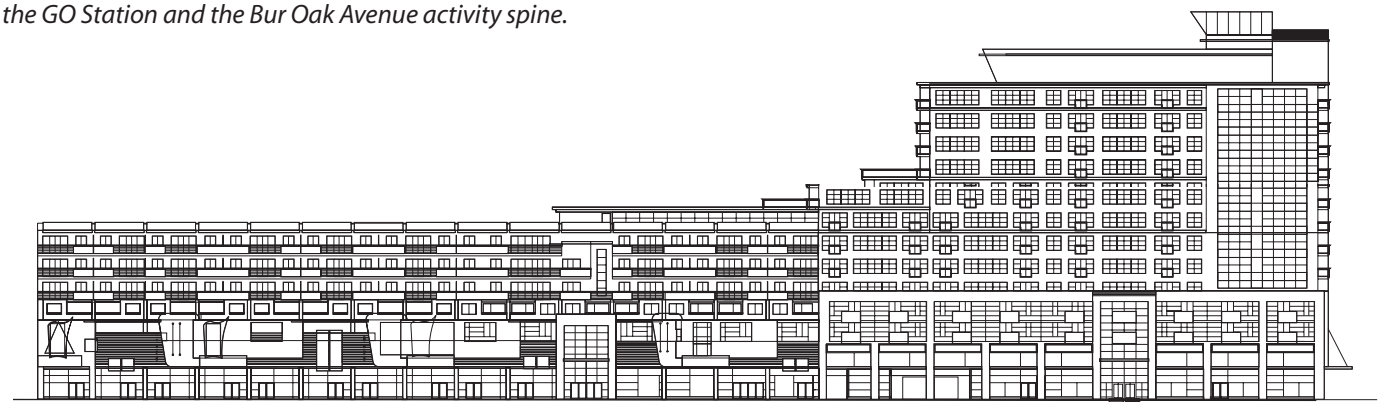
- A variety of commercial and residential uses should be allowed in this area.
- Whenever an application is made for a new building or addition, the opportunity to infill the front setback should be seized with active street-oriented uses.
- As part of development and redevelopment, streetscaping treatments should be introduced and enhanced.
- High-rise buildings should be introduced to take advantage of the Mount Joy GO Station.
- New buildings should be oriented towards Castlemore Avenue.
- Driveways should be consolidated.

Area-specific guidelines

For applications in which commercial is not the dominant use (i.e. Less than 50% of GFA), refer to the guidelines listed under Section 3.2 - Mixed Use Areas and Buildings. Otherwise, follow the guidelines listed under Section 3.1 - Commercial Areas, except when supplemented or superseded by the specifications below:

- **Density Requirement** - Within the GO Station proximity area, all structures are to be built with at least two usable floors (i.e. GFA = floorplate x 2). Mixed-use buildings are strongly encouraged up to 8 storeys in height, or 12 storeys at and at key locations or gateways. Stepbacks of upper floors above the fourth storey should be introduced to create adequate transition to street edge. In addition, a Floor Space Index of at least 1.0 should be achieved.
- **Setback** - When a new building or major addition is proposed, the front setback from the property line should be reduced to 3-5 metres;
- **Off-street Parking** - Parking should be located at the rear of buildings. Surface parking visible form adjacent public streets should be screened with greenery, a low masonry wall and/or a wrought iron fence.

Mixed-use high-rise buildings are strongly encouraged generally up to 8 storeys, and where warranted up to 12 storeys in height in close proximity to the GO Station and the Bur Oak Avenue activity spine.



Stepbacks of upper floors above the fourth storey should be introduced to create adequate transition to street edge.