



Urban Design Direction for

# Kerr Village Growth Area

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# 1 Introduction

**KERR VILLAGE** is a unique traditional commercial area in Oakville that offers a variety of retail, eateries and services to local residents living within the district and in surrounding neighbourhoods. The district is well positioned as a vibrant commercial and cultural destination – a place to live, work, shop and play.

Kerr Village is a designated mixed-use Growth Area ([Livable Oakville Plan](#)) and an active business improvement area (BIA).

A key defining and unifying element of this district is the traditional commercial corridor along Kerr Street – a functional and attractive ‘main street’.

‘Main Street’ typically means a primary retail street or ‘high street’ of a village or town. It is usually a focal point for shops, eateries and services, and is most often used in reference to a place for retailing, socializing and hosting events. In many communities, the main street is utilized and celebrated as the ‘living room of the community’.

This urban design document sets the expectations for preferred design outcomes in Kerr Village by providing design direction for finding compatible design solutions that are firmly based on our policy direction, by continually scanning best practices, and by achieving an appropriate fit with the context and character of the district.



Kerr Village and surroundings

# 1 Introduction

## A. the policy context

The design direction contained in this document implements the policy goals, objectives and urban design policies as set out in the Kerr Village (S. 23) and Urban Design (S.6) sections of the [Livable Oakville Plan](#), as amended and updated.

## B. the urban design context

This design document builds upon the broad urban design direction contained within the [Livable by Design Manual \(Part A\) – Urban Design Direction for Oakville](#). This document provides clear design direction that is specific to the Kerr Village context.

### Official Plan Schedule O2 Kerr Village Urban Design



# 1 Introduction

## C. the guiding design principles

New and infill development, along with public realm improvements, are expected to be designed and executed in accordance with these six guiding design principles:

<b>sense of identity</b>	creating distinct and vibrant communities
<b>compatibility</b>	fostering compatibility and context-specific design
<b>connectivity</b>	enhancing connectivity and accessibility
<b>sustainability</b>	integrating sustainability and resiliency
<b>legacy</b>	preserving built heritage and cultural and natural resources
<b>creativity</b>	inspiring creativity and innovation

[Refer to the [Livable by Design Manual](#) for detailed descriptions]

## D. the urban design focus

The urban design direction contained within this document focuses on public realm enhancements and property redevelopment activities that reinforce the context and character of this traditional commercial area and illustrates how revitalization efforts can achieve the expectations of a vibrant economic and cultural district.

This urban design direction expands upon the broad-based and fundamental design direction and guiding design principles contained in the endorsed Part A document.

While this design direction is specifically tailored to reinforcing and enhancing the Kerr Village context and character, it is not intended to limit design options. Rather, this document should foster creativity in design through clear directives that outline expectations while providing design flexibility that will allow for creative and innovative public realm and site/building design that ultimately contributes to the character of the whole district.

## E. key reference materials

[Livable Oakville Plan \(Official Plan\)](#) (2009 to present)

[Livable by Design – Urban Design Manual](#) (2013 to present)

[Town of Oakville Streetscape Strategy](#) (2014)

## 2 Kerr Village Context

**Kerr Village** is centrally located in south Oakville. The district is situated south of the CN/GO railway tracks, west of the Oakville GO Station in Midtown, northwest of downtown Oakville, and just west of the main branch of Sixteen Mile Creek.

The limits of Kerr Village extend along the length of Kerr Street, from the railway tracks in the north to just south of Lakeshore Road West in the south. The southern portion of the village extends along Lakeshore Road West, from Maurice Drive in the west to Sixteen Mile Creek in the east.

Kerr Village has a unique main street character in Oakville, that is reflected in the many shops, eateries and services that operate along Kerr Street and Lakeshore Road West. The commercial area, as well as the stable neighbourhoods which surround it, create an established district that draws in patrons and residents from across the town.

While the Kerr Street corridor provides a unifying element, the existing and planned mixed-use village is comprised of three distinct districts:

- Upper Kerr Village District
- Kerr Village Main Street District
- Lower Kerr Village District



## 2 Kerr Village Context

The **Upper Kerr Village District** is envisioned as a higher density, transit-supportive, mixed use area. This district will include gateway features, urban park with pedestrian mid-block connections and establish a mix of commercial and residential uses. The adjacent employment uses that remain should be buffered to foster co-existence. The district extends south from the railway tracks to Speers Road.

The **Kerr Village Main Street District** is envisioned to remain a predominantly mixed use area along the Kerr Street corridor, lined with residential buildings that incorporate commercial uses at-grade. Re-development must enhance pedestrian activity through human-scaled buildings and streetscape improvements, as well as transitions to the surrounding neighbourhoods. Heritage Square serves as a gathering point for the community, with Westwood Park, Normandy Park, and Trafalgar Park providing additional open space amenities. The district extends south from Speers Road to Rebecca Street.

The **Lower Kerr Village District** is envisioned to remain a mixed use area, with a blend of commercial, office, and residential uses. Since this portion of Kerr Village may be perceived as an extension of Downtown Oakville, a balance between compatibility and differentiation of the two districts is essential. The district extends south from Rebecca Street to just south of Lakeshore Road.



# 3 Urban Design Direction for Kerr Village

**Design** is a key component of the continuing revitalization of Kerr Village as a vibrant business district and a recreational and cultural destination.

Business and culture thrive with people. Accessible, interesting and comfortable public areas encourage people to return. To maintain the vibrancy of the district, the design of the built environment must support people as they make their way to and throughout the village.

This design document addresses these important considerations under the following themes:

- A. distinguish the district**
  - create a sense of arrival
  - incorporate unifying elements
  - incorporate expressive elements
- B. foster activity at street level**
  - create active spaces on the boulevard
  - incorporate active uses on the ground floor
- C. frame the street**
  - define the corridor through built form
- D. be compatible with surroundings**
  - incorporate transitions to surroundings
- E. create links to and throughout the district**
  - prioritize pedestrian access and movement



Each theme contains design direction and precedent images identifying how these essential components can be realized.

The design direction is intended to highlight the broader design intent and it should not be construed as a set of prescriptive standards.

If deviating from this direction, the alternative design approach must meet or exceed the intent of the stated direction and complement the context and character of the Kerr Village district.



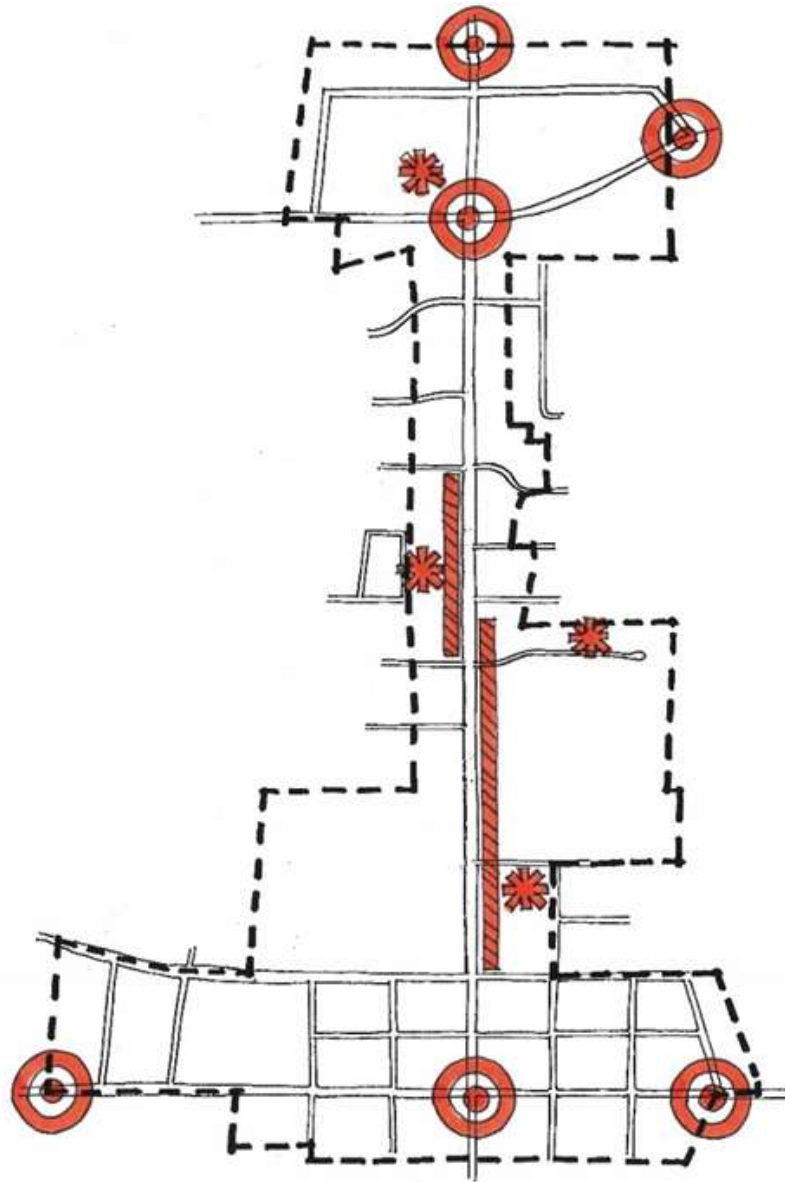
### 3A distinguish the district






Accentuating Kerr Village from its surroundings will require improvements to the public realm; including gateway elements that signify arrival to the district, streetscapes and public places with unifying elements, and contextual public art. These improvements can strengthen the district's identity and further enhance its cultural vibrancy.

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### 3A distinguish the district



***'distinguishing the district'*** design direction is primarily focused on:

-  urban squares
-  gateways
-  enhanced streetscape setbacks

# 3A distinguish the district

## create a sense of arrival

### 1. incorporating gateway elements

Gateways are located at key entry points to the district and at prominent intersections. These gateway locations can be effectively expressed through the combination of high quality built form, distinctive landscaping and open space treatments, and place-making elements, such as public art and streetscape features.

Kerr Village gateway locations, as identified on schedule O2 of *Livable Oakville*, include:

- Speers Road and Kerr Street
- Speers Road at the Queen Mary Drive bridge
- future Kerr Street underpass and railway crossing
- Lakeshore Road West and Dorval Drive
- Lakeshore Road West and Forsythe Street
- Lakeshore Road West and Kerr Street

#### design direction

*In gateway locations, design buildings and install public realm enhancements that create a distinct sense of arrival and incorporate significant identifying features that reflect the district character.*



## 3A distinguish the district

This design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. orienting the building massing and main entrances directly towards the street and, where applicable, towards the intersection,
- b. incorporating buildings and structures that express a high standard of architectural quality and reinforce the local context and character
- c. incorporating distinctive streetscape surface treatments and furnishings, plantings and landscape designs and public art installations at entry points and throughout to unify the district



# 3A distinguish the district

## incorporate unifying elements

### 2. coordinating the 'look and feel' of public spaces

Kerr Village has a variety of park spaces and urban squares that create places for people to gather and enjoy their leisure time. These open spaces can be publically-owned or publically-accessible privately-owned spaces.

#### design direction

*Design and enhance public open spaces with specific recurring elements that will establish visual cues and connections for place-recognition and create a greater sense of cohesiveness that reinforces district unity.*

This design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. using Westwood Park as a source of inspiration in the selection of hard and soft landscape materials and furnishings in future enhancements of Normandy Park, Heritage Square, and the development of future public open spaces within the district including the north gateway square.
- b. incorporating streetscape elements from the adjacent boulevard to create seamless transitions and a compatible interface between the public and private realms



# 3A distinguish the district

## 3. coordinating the streetscape elements

Establishing a consistent and recognizable streetscape design within the municipal right of way will greatly assist in unifying the district, create places for social interactions, and frame local community life, all which strengthen Kerr’s identity.

### design direction

*Enhance the streetscape and visually distinguish the district by selecting and installing consistent and repetitive paving treatments, lighting fixtures, furnishings, trees and plantings, banners and other elements.*

This design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. developing a streetscape concept plan demonstrating the streetscape treatment that will be installed on the primary, secondary and local streets within the Kerr Village district
- b. where appropriate, extending the streetscape treatment into abutting public open spaces and publicly-accessible privately-owned open space
- c. increasing the number and quality of plantings within the identified enhanced streetscape areas and into other softscape areas located adjacent to the streetscape



# 3A distinguish the district

## incorporate expressive elements

### 4. installing public art

Public art expresses local identity and character, fosters creativity, and instills a sense of civic pride. It should be thoughtfully incorporated throughout the district.

#### design direction

*Incorporate public art installations into the streetscape, public open spaces, and publically-accessible portions of private development.*

This design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. sourcing, designing, and installing sculptures, friezes, murals, luminal installations, metal works, fountains, customized furnishings, etc.



## 3B foster activity at the street level

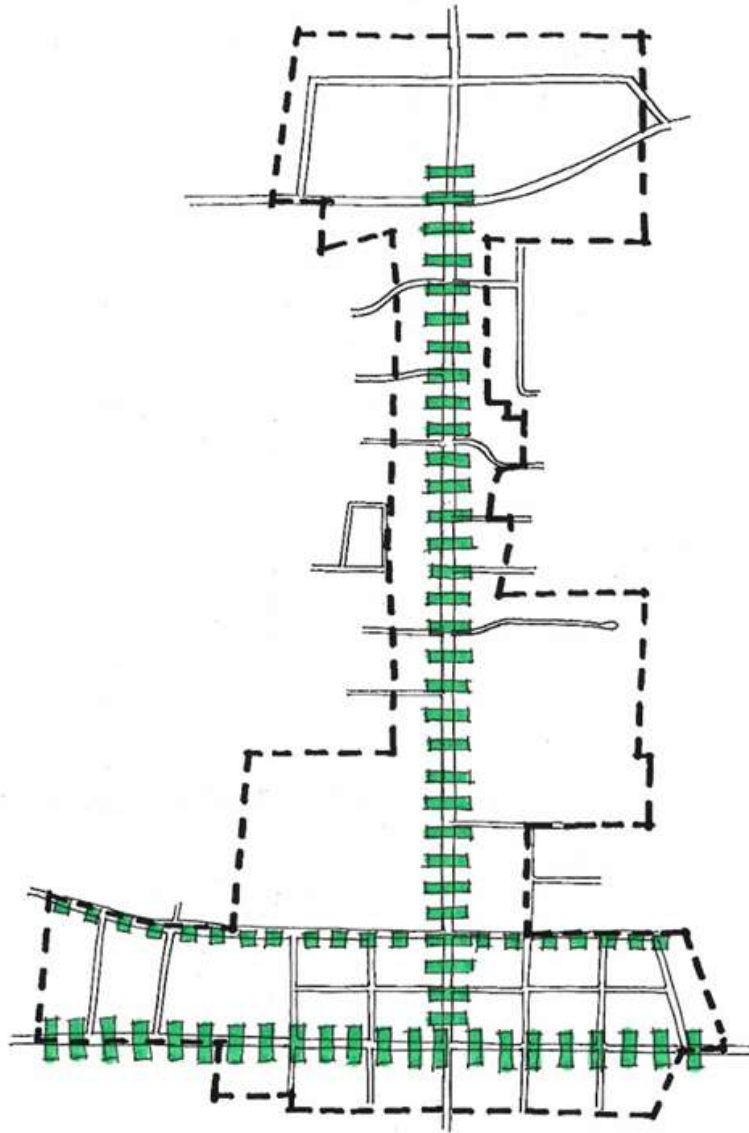


A vibrant main street is created through accessible and comfortable pedestrian and cycling amenities, well-designed gathering and sitting areas, tree plantings and furnishings, and human-scaled built form lining the street. These bustling commercial districts can provide a street-life that draws patrons from near and far.

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## 3B foster activity at the street level



***‘fostering activity at the street level’***

design direction is primarily focused on:



primary streets



secondary streets

# 3B foster activity at the street level

## create active spaces on the boulevard

### 1. establish activity zones along the pedestrian routes of travel

Inviting and comfortable spaces for pedestrians within the boulevard is a key ingredient of a successful main street.

To foster activity at street level, the pedestrian realm along primary and secondary streets should consist of a building interface zone; pedestrian path zone; planting and furnishing zone; and curb zone.

#### design direction

*Foster activity at street level by creating high quality pedestrian environments within the boulevard along primary and secondary streets.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

#### *... within the building interface zone ...*

- where space permits, providing space for retail displays, entrance features and patio seating
- ensuring building entrances and display windows are oriented towards and open onto the street
- incorporating weather protection elements, such as awnings and canopies



## 3B foster activity at the street level

### *... within the pedestrian path zone ...*

- d. maintaining an unobstructed, barrier-free and predictable pedestrian path of travel
- e. incorporating surface treatments that differentiate between path of travel (ie. concrete) and other activities (ie. unit paving and patterns)

### *... within the planting and furnishing zone ...*

- f. incorporating new street trees with adequate spacing and soil volume, through the use of soil cell systems
- g. installing coordinated street furnishings and surface treatments; such as benches, light poles, waste receptacles, bike racks, transit stops/shelters, etc.
- h. along primary and secondary streets, incorporating a hardscape surface treatment to expand activities
- i. where space permits, incorporating additional places for seating and gathering
- j. incorporating wayfinding elements and public art

### *... within the curb zone ...*

- k. locating infrastructure and utilities within this zone
- l. creatively integrating above-ground utility features within the streetscape design



# 3B foster activity at the street level

## 2. create places for gathering and pausing

Kerr Village has generous landscape setbacks and enhanced streetscape areas (as per Schedule O2, *Livable Oakville*). The transformation of these areas should strike a balance between multi-purpose hard paved surfaces and soft landscape planting spaces. Together, these hard and soft elements support and enhance active street uses, user comfort, streetscape vibrancy and district identity.

### design direction

*Create well-connected and inviting gathering places and sitting areas in strategic locations along the primary streets with a balance of multi-purpose paved and soft planting areas.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. creating innovative and multi-purpose spaces that can accommodate a variety of activities, provide user comfort, and reinforces the district identity
- b. providing a mix of hard and soft surfaces, which is compatible with the immediate surroundings
- c. incorporating fixed and moveable seating
- d. maintaining healthy existing trees, where feasible, and incorporating new plantings for shade and buffering
- e. incorporating building setbacks to expand gathering spaces if there is insufficient room in the right-of-way



# 3B foster activity at the street level

## 3. create a comfortable pedestrian environment

Kerr Street is oriented in a northwest direction perpendicular to Lake Ontario, making it susceptible to late fall to early spring cold winds and off shore breezes.

To mitigate potential negative effects of the elements, the overall building design, positioning and massing should result in creating comfortable walking and sitting spaces at ground level that have good sun exposure and provide protection from the elements.

**design direction**  
*Design a comfortable pedestrian environment that maximizes positive micro-climate conditions and mitigates potential impacts on the use and enjoyment of the boulevard.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. ensuring building height, massing, setbacks and setbacks will maximize sun exposure and minimize a wind tunnel effect on the boulevard
- b. incorporating building setbacks and recesses at main entrances and gathering spaces that will provide shelter from winds
- c. incorporating canopies and/or awnings at building entrances and gathering spaces to provide protection from the elements



## 3B foster activity at the street level

### 4. minimize the impacts of vehicle access points

Pedestrian-oriented circulation and activities along primary street boulevards can be significantly enhanced through minimizing pedestrian/vehicle conflicts by directing access to a side street/rear lane and/or encouraging shared access driveways.

#### design direction

*Along primary streets, create a safe and comfortable environment that encourages pedestrian circulation by minimizing potential conflicts with vehicles entering and exiting sites.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- locating vehicular access points to side streets wherever possible and/or to rear lanes, where provided
- where side street or rear lane vehicle access is not possible, incorporating mid-block driveways that can provide vehicular shared access to abutting properties
- limiting the width of driveway access points
- extending the upper floors of the building over the driveway access to maintain the consistent streetwall and maximize the usability of the site



## 3B foster activity at the street level

### 5. provide ample bicycle parking

To encourage more cyclists to visit, eat and shop in Kerr Village, ample bicycle parking should be provided within the public realm and private developments.

#### design direction

*Incorporate bicycle parking facilities throughout the entire district.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. locating bicycle racks and storage:
  - i. within the boulevard spaced at regular intervals
  - ii. within vehicle parking areas, including surface and underground parking lots
  - iii. at major activity centers, such as Westwood Park, Trafalgar Park, Heritage Square, and future north open space
  - iv. near building entrances of larger developments, that are clustered and provide protection from the elements



## 3B foster activity at the street level

### incorporate active uses at the ground floor

#### 6. maintain a fine-grain pattern

Traditional main streets are lined with narrow buildings that are positioned towards the front property line, with ground-floor entrances and large windows oriented to the pedestrian realm.

#### design direction

*Design buildings along Kerr Street, Speers Road, Rebecca Street and Lakeshore Road that will reinforce and enhance the local commercial main street character.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. creating a continuous streetwall with architecturally detailed facades that provide visual interest and a backdrop for on-street activities
- b. articulating facades into narrower segments, through projections and/or recesses, that reflect the rhythm and scale of the surrounding built form
- c. wrapping the façade rhythm of openings around corners to draw pedestrians and maintain a backdrop
- d. incorporating human-scaled buildings and features
- e. providing weather protection elements that provide coverage at entrances and over outdoor displays





## 3C frame the street



The traditional commercial main street corridor defines Kerr Village. To frame this corridor, new development should reflect the existing context and patterns by incorporating minor variations in setbacks, variation in building heights and step-backs, projections and recesses of the façade, large window openings, defined building entrances and high quality architectural design.

# 3C frame the street

## define the corridor through built form

### 1. creating a dynamic street wall

The street walls in Kerr Village are fragmented, interrupted by significant building setbacks, varying building heights, surface parking lots and driveways. The consolidation of properties may be required to achieve sizable and functional blocks for redevelopment.

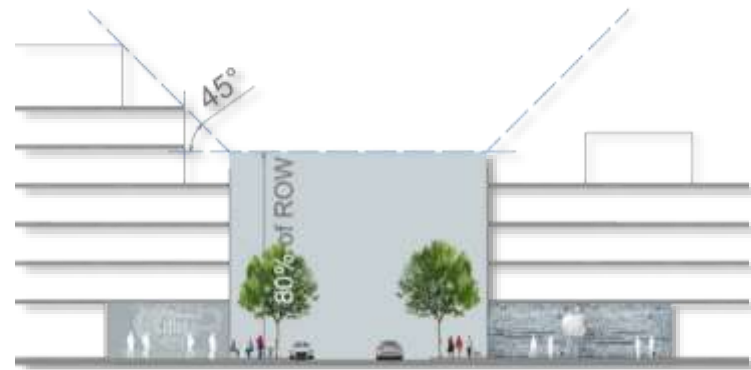
Framing these streets with appropriate building heights and setbacks will greatly improve pedestrian comfort and support retail along the street.

#### design direction

*Design and position buildings and structures that establish a continuous street wall with a strong and active interface with the pedestrian realm.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. positioning buildings along all primary streets within the required front and flankage yards
- b. establishing the building base height to be no greater than 80% of the street width. Above this height, step back the remaining building at a 45-degree angle from the main wall, in order to provide access to sky views and sunlight
- c. spanning building floors above access driveways on primary streets for continuity of the street wall



# 3C frame the street

## 2. creating strategic breaks in the street wall

Breaks or setbacks should be incorporated into the street wall to create places for gathering, create visual cues for navigation within the streetscape, provide access to internal courtyards and pedestrian connections, and mitigate monotony.

### design direction

*At mid-block and other strategic locations, incorporate building setbacks to create forecourt and amenity spaces that will enhance the building design, continuous street wall, and the public realm.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. creating more visually interesting street walls through projections and recesses of building facades, which can result in desirable outdoor amenity spaces, especially where the boulevard may be narrow or constrained
- b. incorporating significant breaks in building facades longer than 55.0 m
- c. where new development is proposed, dividing the facades into smaller segments to reflect the rhythm and scale of a traditional, main street and village built form



# 3C frame the street

## Redevelopment Concept

This conceptual illustration depicts desirable built form and pedestrian realm components that reinforce traditional main street development by addressing the street and transitioning to the surroundings.

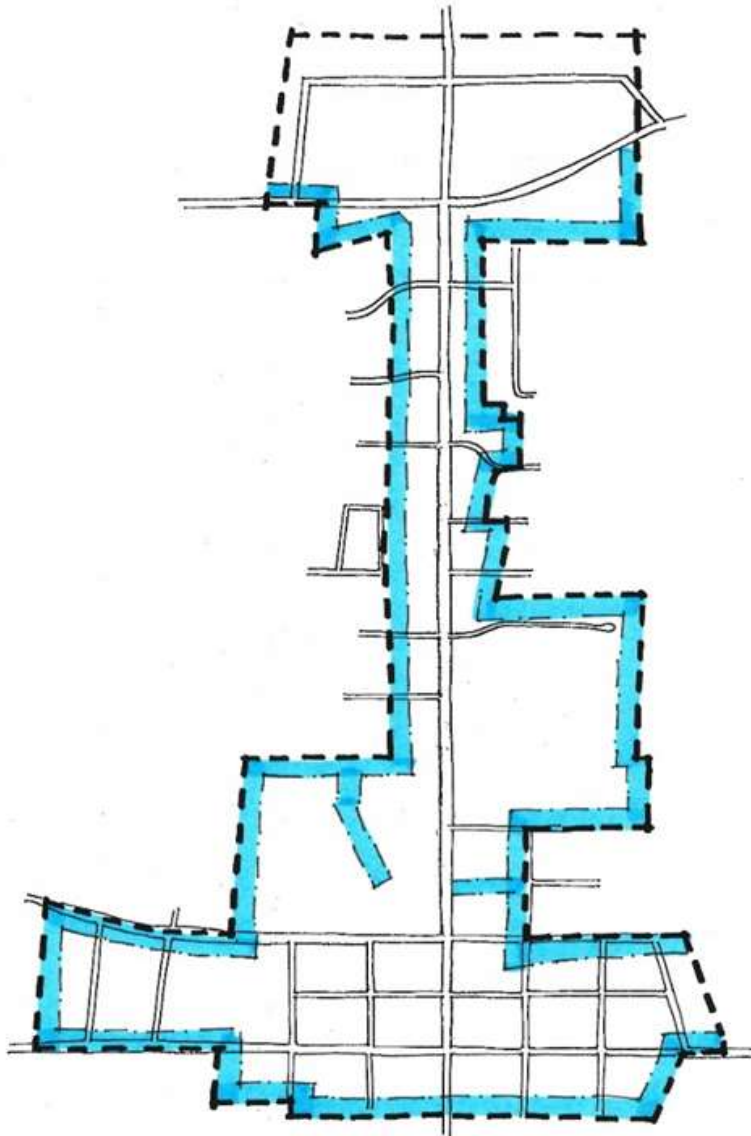


## 3D be compatible with surroundings



Kerr Village has a mix of low- to mid- to high-rise buildings. To maintain compatibility and respond to the character within Kerr Village, transitions from buildings greater than three storeys in height must be made with buildings along the shared streetscape, with adjacent low-rise residential areas, and with open spaces and urban squares.

## 3D be compatible with surroundings



***'be compatible with surroundings'***  
design direction is primarily focused on:  
■ the interface of tall and mid-rise buildings abutting low-rise dwellings and open spaces

# 3D be compatible with surroundings

## incorporate transitions to surroundings

### 1. transitioning to buildings along the streetwall

With each new development, it is crucial that appropriate transitioning to adjacent buildings is achieved along the shared streetwall.

#### design direction

*Design and position buildings to create appropriate transitions along the adjacent streetwall that will reinforce the overall main street and district character.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. positioning buildings along the front lot line and incorporating streetwall setbacks that transition to adjacent buildings with greater setbacks
- b. positioning mid-and high-rise buildings to the minimum side lot line and incorporating façade stepback(s) starting at 10.5 m above grade
- c. between residential buildings, incorporating a 15.0 m minimum separation between primary windows and a 7.5 m minimum separation between all other windows
- d. incorporating visually interesting end wall treatments on the exposed portions of facades, including a combination of window openings and architectural treatments



# 3D be compatible with surroundings

## 2. transitioning to abutting public spaces

With each new development, incorporating appropriate transitioning to abutting public squares, parks and open spaces, such as Heritage Square, can effectively frame these spaces and increase their usability both at grade and from above.

### design direction

*Design and position buildings to create appropriate transitions towards abutting public open places that can support and benefit from these amenity spaces.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. setting the building back a minimum of 3.0 m from a public open space so that commercial activities, such as patios and sales areas, extend into the open space
- b. incorporating hardscaping, plantings and furnishings that reflect the streetscape and architectural features that can provide weather protection
- c. for residential uses at grade, elevating individual residential unit entrances to 0.6 m to 0.9 m above grade for greater privacy
- d. ensuring abutting buildings incorporate ample window openings and private amenity areas overlooking the open space to provide “eyes on street” for monitoring and animating the abutting open space





# 3D be compatible with surroundings

## 3. transitioning buildings to low-rise residential areas

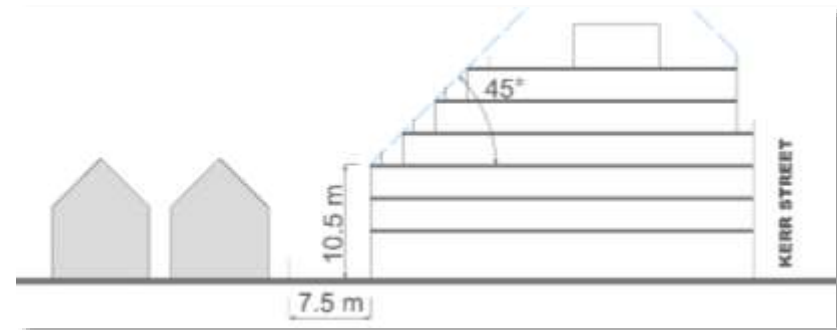
Kerr Village consists of a mix of low and high-rise buildings. With each new development incorporating increased building heights and massing, providing appropriate transitioning to and buffering between adjacent low-rise residential areas can assist in mitigating potential impacts.

### design direction

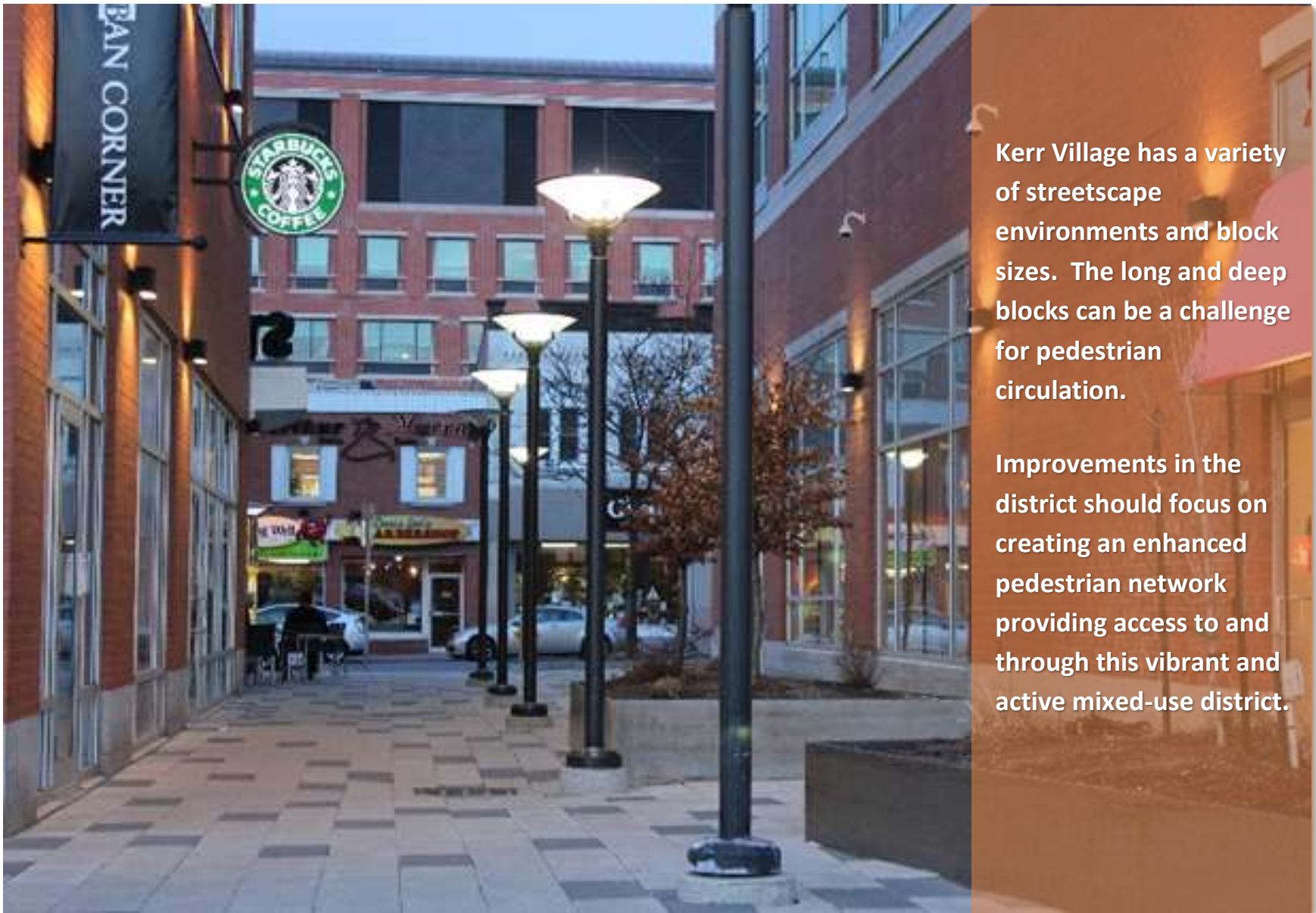
*Design and position buildings to create appropriate transitions towards abutting residential neighbourhoods to minimize the potential impact of overlook and shadowing.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- positioning buildings at a minimum setback of 7.5 m from a shared property line abutting low-rise residential properties
- incorporating setbacks on the rear and/or side façades at a 45-degree angular plane starting from a height of 10.5 m above grade
- positioning principal windows at a minimum of 10m back from shared property lines
- locating rooftop terraces and balconies at a minimum of 10.5 m above grade



### 3E create links to and throughout the district



Kerr Village has a variety of streetscape environments and block sizes. The long and deep blocks can be a challenge for pedestrian circulation.

Improvements in the district should focus on creating an enhanced pedestrian network providing access to and through this vibrant and active mixed-use district.

# 3E create links to and throughout the district

## prioritize pedestrian access and movement

### 1. creating connections throughout the district

Kerr Village is comprised of three different areas that are connected via the Kerr Street corridor and two are surrounded by low-rise residential neighbourhoods. There are significant opportunities to improve upon the existing pedestrian network, as well as, to create new linkages to/from nearby amenities and surroundings.



#### design direction

*Enhance the existing pedestrian realm and, where possible, create new linkages to the district that improve access and connectivity.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. designing development along primary and secondary streets with a strong focus on enhancing the pedestrian realm, with built form framing the street and ample entrances along the ground level facades
- b. incorporating visual cues along the streets and public realm, such as new streetscape and wayfinding elements, that create interest and navigation tools for visitors and residents to explore the village and its surroundings



# 3E create links to and throughout the district

## 2. establishing mid-block connections

An interconnected pedestrian network is a key component of a well-functioning district and surrounding community. While a typical 'main street block' length is 100.0 m, within the Kerr district, block length varies from below 100.0 m to over 200.0 m. Where new development occurs in the middle of longer blocks, new pedestrian connections must be incorporated to improve upon the pedestrian network.

### design direction

*Within blocks longer than 100m in length, create mid-block pedestrian connections between the village district and nearby neighbourhoods and amenities.*

The design direction can be accomplished by:

- a. incorporating well-defined pedestrian connections to and throughout the site for new development
- b. creating connections that are predictable, comfortable and barrier-free
- c. incorporating ample space between the building faces and incorporating pedestrian-oriented uses and openings along these connections
- d. incorporating a variety of elements that can animate the space; such as lighting, landscaping, furnishings, public art and weather protection features

