



EMPLOYMENT AREAS URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

JULY 2006



Design Guidelines Community and Resort Planning
Architectural Design · Control Urban Design
Architecture Landscape Architecture

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Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide applicants with a clear understanding of the urban design criteria to be incorporated within proposals for development in the Town's employment areas. Implementation of these design criteria will ensure that developments in employment areas achieve the desired built form vision for these areas. In making these criteria available as a design reference, several benefits are derived:

1. applicants can develop suitable designs/lay-outs prior to the submission of formal development applications;
2. town staff can review new development applications in a consistent manner, using a standard set of design references; and,
3. landowners and residents have the assurance that the appearance, layout and design of these types of uses will appropriately address the surrounding land use context.

These urban design guidelines are a tool for the Town of Ajax to guide the development of employment lands. Urban design refers to the location, configuration and relationship of the component parts of employment areas, including roads, open spaces, development sites, buildings, parking, servicing, and landscaping, among others. The guidelines apply to the development of greenfield sites, infill within established areas, and redevelopment of existing sites.

The guidelines are intended to be used by a variety of stakeholders, including:

- the Town of Ajax in establishing and communicating a vision for employment lands, and reviewing development applications (particularly applications for site plan approval);
- private landowners and developers, to understand the expectations for a high quality built environment; and,
- the general public, to understand the image for employment areas within the Town.

These guidelines have been prepared to coincide with the completion of Salem Road and its new interchange at Highway 401. The Salem Road

interchange will make a large area of employment lands both north and south of Highway 401 easily accessible. These guidelines will ensure that a high standard of urban design is established for these areas as well as other employment sites in the town, contributing to health and vitality of the Town of Ajax.

1.2 Organization of the Guidelines

These guidelines include both general, guiding principles for achieving the vision for employment lands, as well as detailed, specific requirements to guide all aspects of the employment area environment. They are organized under six sections:

1. Introduction

- description of the purpose, organization and creative process of the guidelines

2. Guiding Principles

- identification of general goals for employment areas, as taken from policies of the Official Plan
- an examination of each of the employment areas in Ajax (see map entitled “Employment Areas”, Figure 2, page 10) with respect to locational attributes that make them unique, and how the general goals can be applied to them
- a description of the vision for employment areas established by stakeholders

3. The Public Realm

- an outline of the broad principles for establishing quality employment environments through the creation of streetscapes that are interesting and cohesive
- an examination of how the hierarchy of streets in Ajax is both informed by, and supports the overall vision
- a description of how public land uses and features establish a positive framework for employment areas

4. The Private Realm

- an analysis of how the “appearance” of individual development sites – the type of built environment they create – supports the vision and reinforces the public realm
- a presentation of specific guidelines for the location, configuration, and relationship of all

elements on private property, including massing, the placement and orientation of buildings, landscaping, circulation, signage and site furnishings, etc.

5. Areas of Special Treatment

- a look at special features in both the public and private realms, that are memorable and vibrantly express the unique vision of the Town of Ajax and its employment areas.

6. Implementation

- a reference on how to interpret the guidelines
- an explanation the process by which the Town of Ajax will apply the guidelines

1.3 Process

These urban design guidelines were developed through a comprehensive participation process involving all stakeholders. The involvement of stakeholders, including Town staff, landowners, Councillors, and the public, has resulted in a guideline framework that expresses the unique cultural, social, built, biophysical, economic and political characteristics of Ajax, promotes civic pride, has the commitment of the community, and is implementable.

The guidelines were developed during three key working sessions with stakeholders. At the first workshop, the opportunities and constraints associated with the employment areas were identified and discussed, and design principles were articulated. At the second workshop, a preliminary urban design framework, responding to the established principles, was reviewed and discussed, in order to establish clear direction for the guidelines. The third working session involved an open house held to permit stakeholders to respond to and refine the guidelines.

2.0 Guiding Principles

2.1 Official Plan

The Town of Ajax Official Plan provides the broad policy context for land use change. The Town is expecting to accommodate 120,000 residents by the year 2021. It is recognized that employment areas are important to the economic health and quality of life of Ajax, and sufficient employment land has been set aside to ensure an appropriate balance between employment and housing.

Policies of the Official Plan that are relevant to employment areas include the following objectives:

- Establish comprehensive urban design guidelines that will ensure and provide for a range of safe, functional and attractive employment areas.
- Strengthen the economic base by increasing job opportunities and expanding the assessment base.
- Ensure the development of a variety of employment areas that provide a range of employment opportunities.
- Ensure that sufficient employment opportunities exist to accommodate future growth at a Town-wide activity rate of at least 1 job for every 2 residents.
- Ensure that a sufficient supply of employment generating lands is designated and that these lands can be appropriately serviced.
- Provide locations in employment areas for community facilities that are visible and accessible to residents
- Promote the establishment of business parks.
- Protect and enhance the natural heritage system.
- Enhance the Downtown Central Area as a unique area within the Town.
- Establish an interpretive trail system comprising linked and interconnected environmental and recreational features.

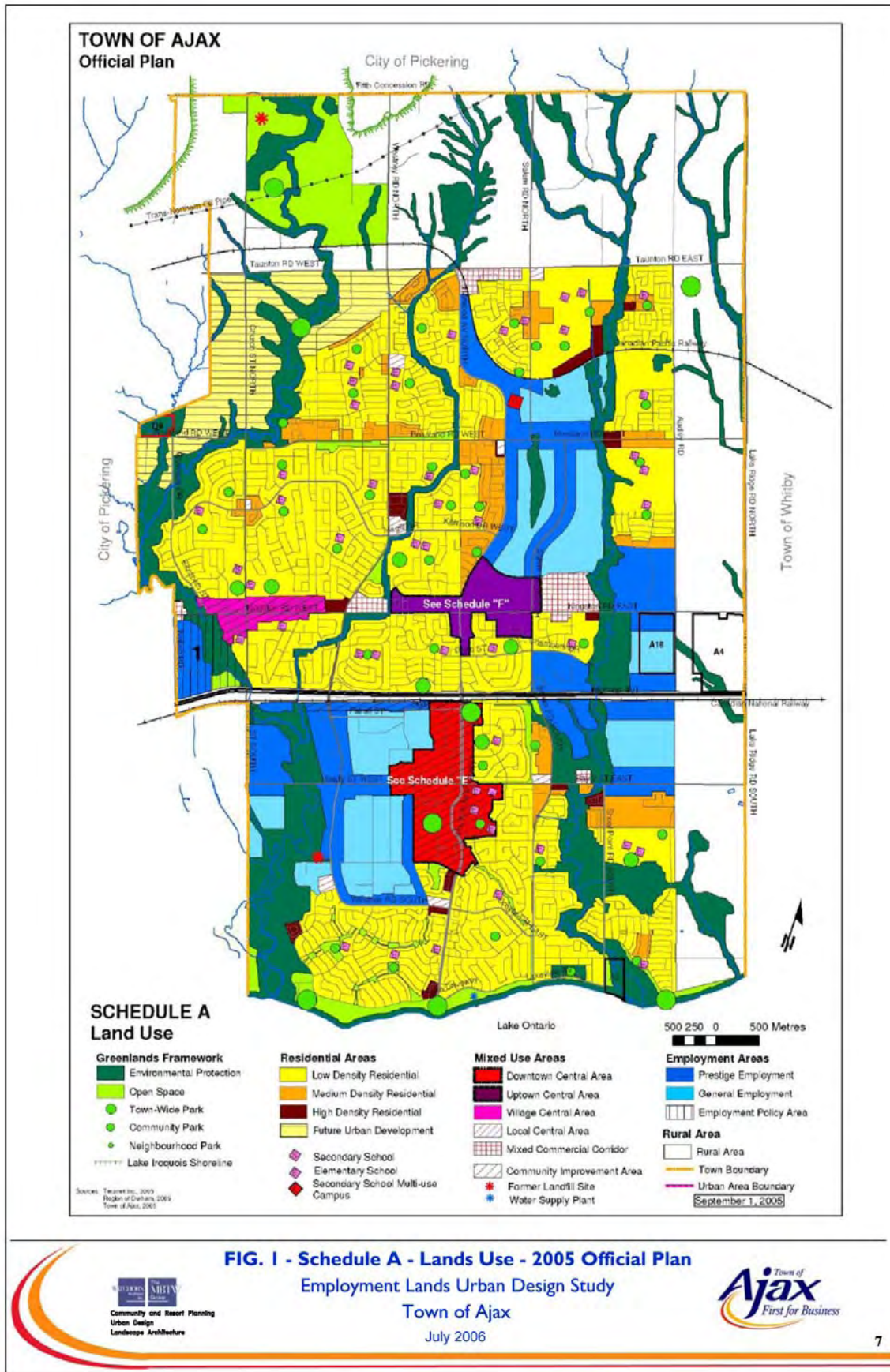


FIG. I - Schedule A - Lands Use - 2005 Official Plan

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The Official Plan differentiates between two categories of employment lands: Prestige Employment and General Employment. General Employment areas shall be developed to a high standard of urban design, but because they are generally located away from major transportation routes, outdoor storage is permitted if screened from public view. Prestige Employment, because it is located along major transportation corridors, does not permit outside storage and has an even greater emphasis on a high standard of building design and landscaping.

Excerpts from the Official Plan include:

- All employment areas shall ensure adequate screening, landscaping, berming, or a combination. Shared access and parking among various properties is encouraged.
- Adjacent to Highway 401, buildings shall front onto the highway and exemplify high quality design features including built form, landscaping and signage. No outdoor display of items such as vehicles, watercraft, or equipment shall be visible from the highway. Parking shall generally not be located between the building and highway.

2.2 Ajax History

Policies in the Official Plan seek to preserve and celebrate Ajax's valued rich history. The prologue to the Official Plan outlines Ajax's history:

The Town of Ajax is named after a war ship, the "H.M.S. Ajax". During the early days of the Second World War, in December of 1939, the H.M.S. Ajax, together with the H.M.S. Achilles and the H.M.S. Exeter won an important naval victory in the famous Battle of the River Plate.

Ajax grew into a community during the Second World War as a result of the war-related munitions plant, Defence Industries Limited, that was built in the area, south of what is now Highway 401. The plant and its associated facilities were significant in size and the rapid influx of plant employees quickly led to the establishment of a community. By the time the War ended, a settlement had emerged and the residents of this new community needed a name for their new town, and a contest was held for



H.M.S. Ajax



Ajax, the early years (1945)

that purpose. The name “Ajax” was chosen in recognition of the heroic actions of the H.M.S. Ajax at the Battle of the River Plate. Today, most of the Town’s streets have been named after the ship’s veterans.

The Town experienced rapid expansion in the 1980’s and again in the late 1990’s. Today, “Ajax by the Lake” is a diverse, vibrant, growing community within the Greater Toronto Area. The Town respects and values human diversity and acknowledges the social, cultural and economic contributions of all groups.

These guidelines explore ways of understanding and celebrating this history through the development of the Town’s employment areas.

2.3 Context

There are three major/primary areas of employment lands within the Town of Ajax. They include: the Established Core Area south of Highway 401, accessed by the Westney Road interchange; the Carruthers Creek Employment properties north and south of Highway 401; and the Audley Road area located east of Carruthers Creek and bisected by Salem Road. It should also be noted that the Notion Road Area constitutes a fourth, smaller employment area.

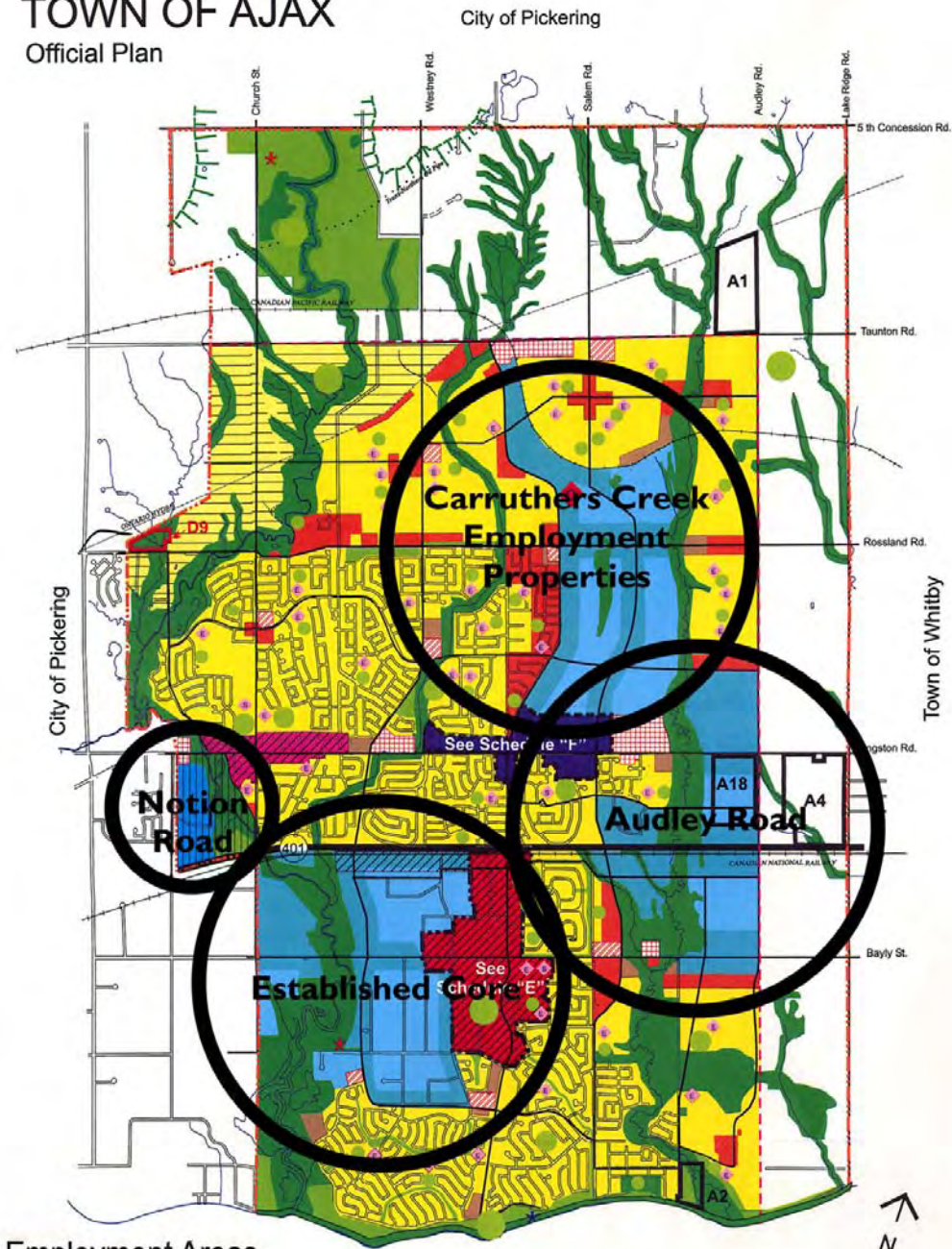
1. Carruthers Creek Employment Properties

The Carruthers Creek Employment Area has the following attributes:

- consists largely of greenfield sites;
- is aligned along Salem Road, which functions as the major transportation route and forms the ‘spine’ of this area;
- abuts Harwood Avenue along the western perimeter (Harwood Avenue is envisioned to become a boulevard street, with a multi-use trail accommodating pedestrians and cyclists, leading directly to a downtown that is urban, intensive, and pedestrian-oriented);
- is separated from adjacent residential lands by Harwood Avenue, which demarcates the top of a natural ridge separating the two areas;
- contains a planned pedestrian trail system in the Carruthers Creek corridor, which will link to the waterfront trail; and,
- contains a variety of natural features.

TOWN OF AJAX

Official Plan



Employment Areas

- Prestige Employment
- General Employment
- Employment Policy Area

Lake Ontario

0 250 500 1000 2000 m

FIG. 2 - Ajax Employment Areas
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2. Established Core Area

The Established Core Area has the following attributes:

- has extensive Hwy. 401 frontage;
- includes a variety of older wartime and post-war buildings, including Messier-Dowty Inc., Volkswagen, and Slough Estates (a British company that valued the land, resulting in compact form and intimate streets);
- contains a variety of more recent development, including automotive sales and the Nokia headquarters building;
- includes several undeveloped sites, creating infill opportunities;
- incorporates a planned pedestrian trail system in the Duffins Creek corridor, to link with the existing trail along the waterfront;
- contains several sites in transition, as old facilities are replaced by new ones that meet current demands for ceiling heights or trucking access;
- is subject to a strong downtown influence;
- serves as a gateway to Ajax from the west, along highway 401 and Bayly Street;
- has access to CN Rail; and
- enjoys proximity to community facilities, the downtown, and the Rouge Valley Health Centre.

3. Audley Road Area

The Audley Road Area has the following attributes:

- has extensive Hwy. 401 frontage;
- consists largely of greenfield sites;
- is directly accessible via the Salem Road/Highway 401 interchange, and is further accessible from east-west streets such as Bayly Street and Kingston Road East, which cross Carruthers Creek;
- incorporates a planned pedestrian trail system in the Carruthers Creek corridor, to link to the waterfront trail; and,
- serves as a gateway to Ajax from the east, along Highway 401, Bayly Street and Kingston Road.



Greenfield employment lands adjacent to natural features

4. Notion Road Area

The Notion Road area is the subject of a land use and urban design study jointly prepared by the Town of Ajax and the City of Pickering (June 2001). This document contains guidelines specific to this area.

Synopsis

The subject guidelines set out site planning principles that are applicable to each of the employment areas.

The Audley Road area abuts both sides of Highway 401, along which elements of civic and corporate prestige and identity are paramount. Sites next to Highway 401 should be designed to present their best architecture, landscape, signage and public identity to the corridor.

In many respects the Audley Road and Carruthers Creek areas are similar. However, one characteristic unique to the Carruthers Creek employment properties is Harwood Avenue. This high-quality street is the Town's main ceremonial route, and since it separates residential and employment lands, sites adjacent to it are subject to a greater emphasis on integrating and respecting the established residential character.

2.4 Common Vision

The vision for employment areas in Ajax builds on existing locational, amenity, and lifestyle attributes of the Town. This refers to the rich choice of cultural amenities and services, natural features, and good transportation access to the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), available in the Town.

Ajax has changed from a military-oriented, single function centre to a diverse community providing for multiple services and facilities and a range of housing. The historic components of Ajax are in the south, whereas the newer, greenfield components are predominantly in the north. Existing natural features link the north and south areas, and play a key role in attracting people (both employers and skilled employees) to Ajax. Lake Ontario is an obvious asset, as open spaces and residential neighbourhoods are located along its edge. The employment areas have the benefit of major valley systems that link to Lake Ontario, and which are significant open space-natural systems. Celebrating natural features by making them visible and



Ajax in relation to the G.T.A.

accessible is an important part of the vision for the entire community as well as employment lands.

This diversity of amenities offers a balance and choice between a very urban lifestyle and a relaxed lifestyle. The employment area vision builds on these elements of Ajax's *identity*.

Identity

The most important aspect of the vision is to establish a high-quality built environment. This includes buildings, landscapes, and streetscapes – all of the elements that come together to create unified communities within the Town. Ajax's employment environments will:

- establish a unique identity for the Town along Highway 401, as well as in the employment areas, that sets Ajax apart from other municipalities along Highway 401 and in the GTA;
- establish a common element that unites the four employment areas. The Town of Ajax is working towards establishing elements of built form, street furniture and/or landscaping that will establish a unique identity for Ajax;
- have buildings which address public streets and spaces with articulated built form with a clear "frontal" expression;
- have landscaping that is attractive and reinforces the streetscape and natural features;
- be clear and navigable, where people understand where they are, and can easily find their destinations;
- offer a choice of routes and modes of travel for all users;
- integrate natural features into the structure of the community by ensuring they are visible and accessible; and,
- ensure that parking and servicing, while essential to the functioning of employment areas, are downplayed and are not part of the primary image.

The following design principles were established through the workshop process to define the vision:

Image

- All employment areas should share a common element that will identify them as being in Ajax, to create a sense of place. (Employees and visitors will know that they are in Ajax.) The Town of Ajax is working towards establishing elements of built form, street furniture and/or



landscaping that will establish a unique identity for Ajax;

- Focus on creating a high quality public realm that creates a unique identity and attracts employers and employees.
- Integrate public and private realms.
- Enhance the unique characteristics of Ajax, including good transportation access, unique history and natural environment, and skilled labour force, through design that introduces, supports or expands these characteristics in the built environment. For instance, a trail marker may interpret some aspect of Ajax's history while providing visibility and access to a natural feature.
- Create landscapes that have references to historic, artistic, cultural or natural elements or features, to avoid the "typical" business park that appears like it could be anywhere.
- Ensure that more important streets in Ajax have an enhanced image.
- Provide flexibility in the guidelines to ensure that sites of different or unique functional or aesthetic requirements can be accommodated and result in high quality environments.
- Provide an appropriate land use interface between employment areas and non-employment uses.
- Create aesthetic employment areas with amenities to create a competitive advantage for businesses in Ajax. For example, employment areas that are well-connected to natural features allow employees to experience them during their short breaks and lunch periods, and become part of their rationale for living and working in Ajax.
- Utilize the unique presence and location of the railway and GO Transit services to enhance the identity, and character of Ajax.

Heritage

- Enhance and celebrate Ajax's unique history of employment areas as an original settlement, military and wartime development, and settlement patterns through design features.

Primary Identity

- Create a unique experience along Highway 401 in Ajax.
- Create gateways to Ajax on Highway 401 at each end of the Town.

Linkages

- Implement the recommendations of the Vision 2020: A Bicycle and Leisure Trail System Plan where possible.

- Consider individual courtyards and/ or open spaces as part of a larger network of open space.
- Encourage multiple uses to cluster “people places” (such as courtyards, patios, cafeterias) to create nodes that are vibrant and active, linking both to each other and to the surrounding setting.
- Consider possibilities for linking North and South Ajax.

Natural Features

- Utilize natural features to maximum advantage by celebrating them in the landscape, ensuring they have high public profile as amenities for employees.
- Provide visual and physical access to natural features.

Topography

- Celebrate opportunities provided by change in topography (for overlook, for dramatic urban design).
- Ensure access and servicing that is functional (in areas of different topography).
- Consider positive and negative sight lines created by topographic difference.



The trail in this natural system invites public use through its visibility

3.0 The Public Realm

3.1 Image



Fairall Street exhibits many of the characteristics of these guidelines, including buildings set close to the street with main front entrances connected to the sidewalk.

The image of Ajax's employment areas will follow the pattern typically established in older urban areas (such as Ajax's original employment and residential areas) where:

- the public realm is the focus of design;
- buildings are located close to and address the street;
- a significant portion of the street frontage is defined by buildings;
- adjacent buildings and uses are located close together and create a sense of neighbourliness; and,
- pedestrian movements are direct and well-connected.

These principles of organization and design avoid patterns more typically considered 'suburban', with their large building separations, landscaped buffers, and parking areas in front of buildings. These principles will result in a built environment within Ajax's employment areas that is pedestrian friendly, transit-supportive, and visually attractive.

3.2 Unity and Variety

Ajax's employment areas seek to achieve a balance of unity and variety in their urban design. For example, buildings can have consistent setbacks, massing, rooflines, use of materials, or colours, that help to create a unified appearance in the streetscape. This contributes to a sense of wholeness, where component parts relate to each other to help define a sense of place. However, it is appropriate that buildings also vary these same elements, to create interest and variety in the streetscape. This balance of unity and variety applies to streets, spaces, the landscape, and the relationships among them.

3.3 Streetscapes

Streets are one of the most important components of public space. They link all land uses in the community, providing access for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. Attention to the streetscape appearance of Ajax's employment lands provides an opportunity to convey a unique, high-quality image that not only unifies the different employment areas,

but also integrates them positively into the community. While this section is primarily concerned with the linear street corridor, attractive streetscapes are the result of the interplay and relationship between roads, sidewalks, utilities, furniture, planting, buildings, access and parking.

3.3.1 Streetscape Hierarchy

Certain streets in Ajax, because of their high visibility and use, will be important in defining the image of the employment areas, and therefore require a higher standard of quality and design. As noted above, this includes not only the treatment and maintenance of the public realm, but also buildings and private landscaping.

The street hierarchy is as follows:

Corridor	Level of Treatment
Highway 401 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> includes all sites with a significant frontage visible from Highway 401, including those on the south side of the CNR corridor 	special
Harwood Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where the Carruthers Creek employment areas interface with adjacent residential a special street in the Town 	
Salem Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accesses the new employment areas 	enhanced
Westney Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accesses the established core 	
Other arterial roads	high
Collector roads	
Local roads	

Highway 401 is unique because of its high speed, limited access, and gateway role (see Section 5, Areas of Special Treatment). All of the others are true streets and will have elements in common.

3.3.2 Landscape Buffers

The Town’s comprehensive zoning by-law requires landscape buffers adjacent to roads in employment areas. The intent of these landscape buffers is not to screen employment areas from streets; rather, it is to reinforce the street edge, the pedestrian realm, and good built form. The width of the landscape buffer is dependent on the road designation in the

official plan and/or the designation of adjacent uses as follows:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Landscape Requirements</u>
Highway 401	15m
Harwood Avenue	9m
Type A and B Arterials	9m
Type C Arterials	6m
Collectors adjacent to Prestige Employment	6m
Locals adjacent to Prestige Employment	3m
(Refer to 'Schedule C - Transportation' for the location of these roads)	

The treatment of the landscape buffer shall support the overall streetscape goals. In this regard, where portions of a site's frontage contain built form, the adjacent landscape buffer shall reinforce the building's contribution to the streetscape (for example, the buffer may be located immediately adjacent to the base of the building and be comprised of foundation planting; or, it may be located at the edge of the right of way to define a pedestrian walkway entrance). Where part of a site's frontage contains parking, or allows views to service, storage, or loading areas, the landscape buffer shall be appropriately landscaped to define the street edge and adjacent building walls as well as provide a screening or buffering role (for example, the buffer may be located adjacent to the right of way and take the form of a low hedge. In other words, the landscape buffer may vary in its location between the building face and the edge of the right-of-way to where it is most appropriate and effective. The treatment of landscape buffers shall be consistent with the following parameters:

- Reinforce the linear wayfinding cues by demarcating pedestrian or vehicular entrances.
- Incorporate landform and planting consistent with public identity elements (see below). A public identity element can be located in the landscape buffer.
- The treatment within the landscape buffer can be the public identity element itself.
- Materials within the landscaping buffer may include hard elements such as columns, low walls and decorative fencing, and soft elements such as trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcover and sod. The buffer may not be wholly sod.

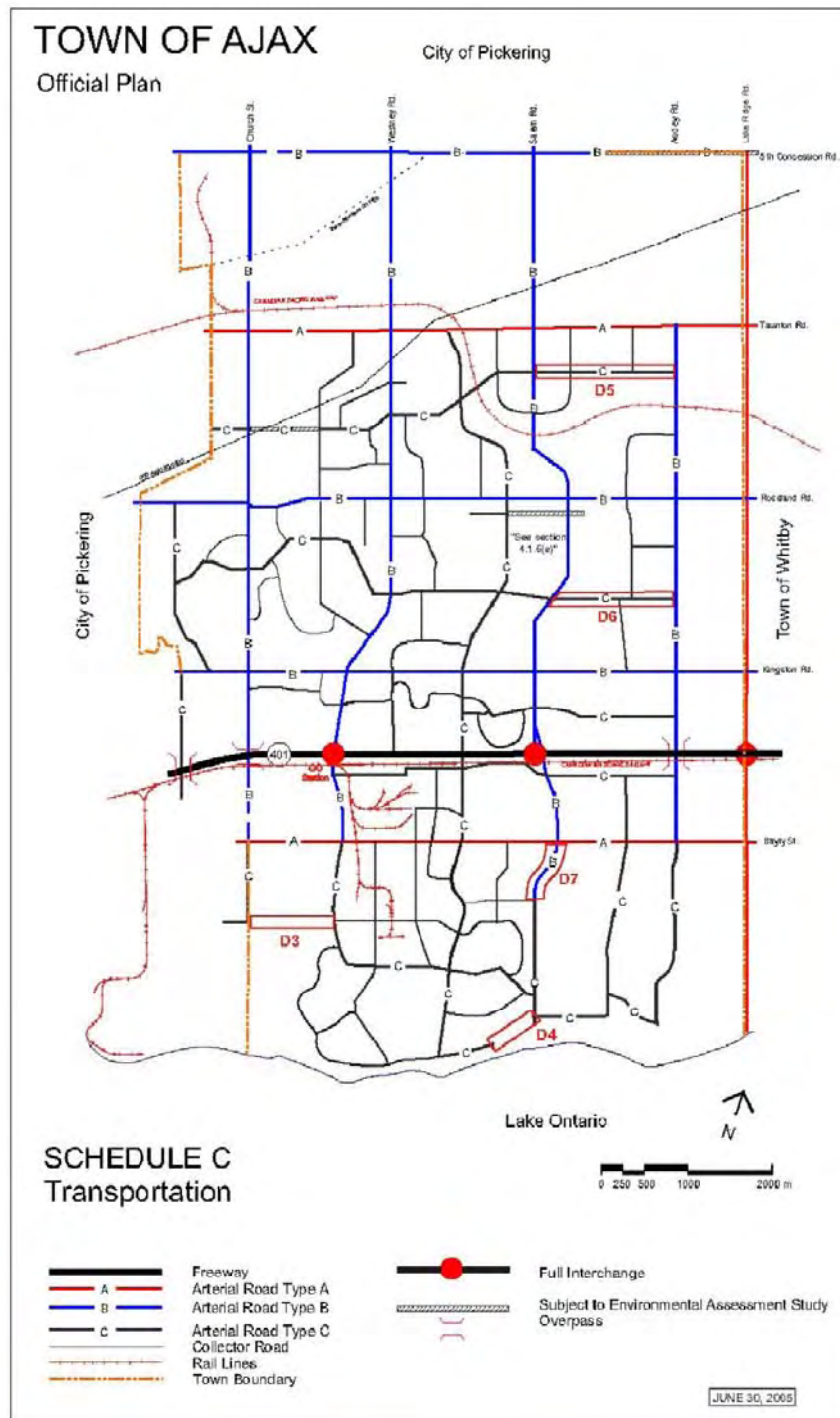


FIG. 4 - Schedule C - Transportation - 2005 Official Plan

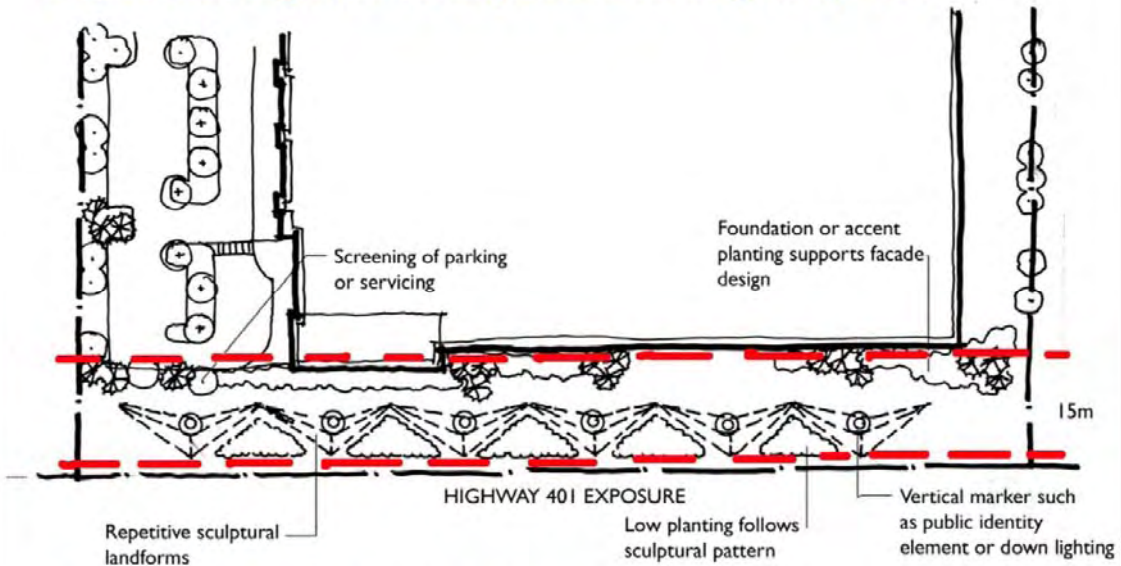
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15m LANDSCAPE BUFFER Adjacent / significant exposure to Highway 401



9m LANDSCAPE BUFFER Adjacent to Harwood Avenue and Type A and B Arterials

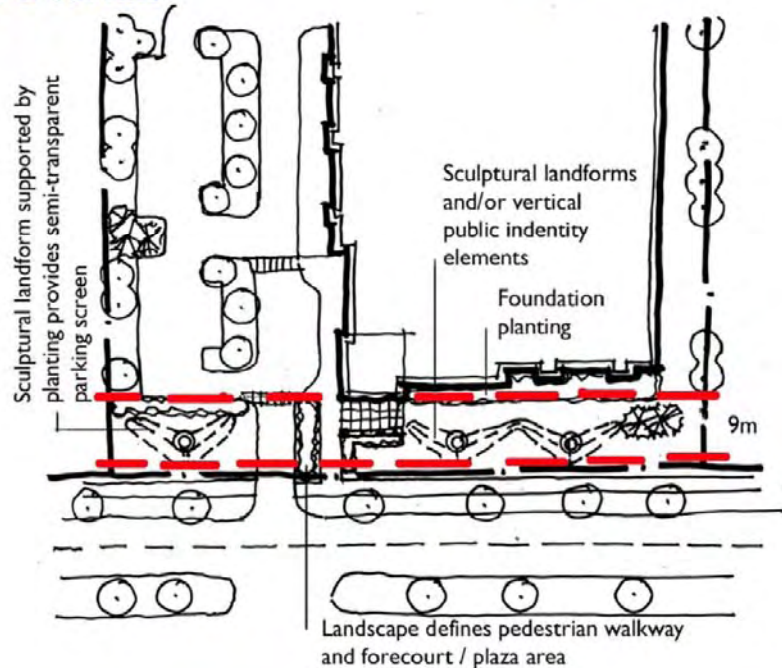


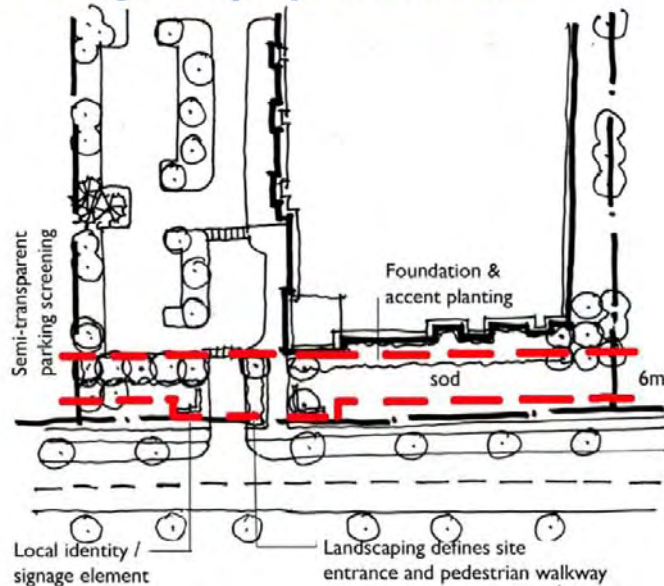
FIG. 5A - Demonstration Landscape Buffers

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6m LANDSCAPE BUFFER
Adjacent to type C arterials, and Collector
Roads in Prestige Employment Areas



3m LANDSCAPE BUFFER
Adjacent to Local Roads in Prestige
Employment Areas

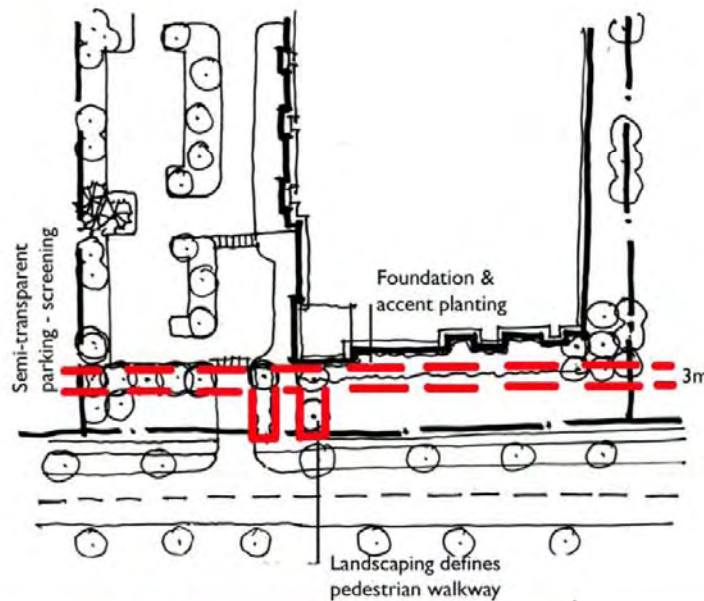


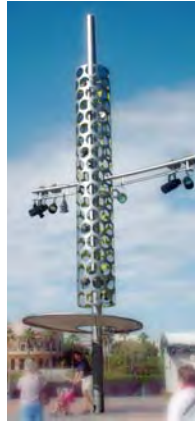
FIG. 5B - Demonstration Landscape Buffer

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3.3.3 Public Identity Elements

A significant component of achieving a unique and identifiable image of employment areas in the Town of Ajax and the GTA is through the establishment of public identity elements. These are built or landscape elements that are highly visible, bold and artistic, and create landmarks in the community. Their purpose is to express civic pride or history, or corporate identity, or both.

Public identity elements may include publicly commissioned art, or they may be composed of building, streetscape, or landscaping items that are located and designed to be memorable, such as, landform, colour, lighting, signage, plant material, walls, or building components, among others. The intent is to create simple, low-maintenance and inexpensive gestures that are recognizable and unique. It is intended that their character and detailing reinforce the built form image, using a simple, complementary design. The Town of Ajax is working towards establishing elements of built form, street furniture and/or landscaping that will establish a unique identity for Ajax.

These elements shall be located consistently with the street hierarchy, where they will have the greatest impact by defining important corridors or places. There are three types of elements:

- town-scale elements, that include an expression of civic identity celebrating Ajax within the GTA and have the highest-impact;
- employment-area-scale elements, that celebrate the employment areas within the Town, act as local landmarks, have a moderate-impact, and are consistent with, but do not necessarily celebrate, Ajax's identity; and,
- local-scale elements, that are modest landmarks that may include only corporate identity.

Refer to the map "Street Hierarchy and Public Identity Features" (Figure 6, Page 25) for locations of these elements. Local-scale elements are shown for demonstration – they occur in a variety of locations that are along major travel routes, are publicly visible, or are locations of important features such as open spaces or amenity areas.

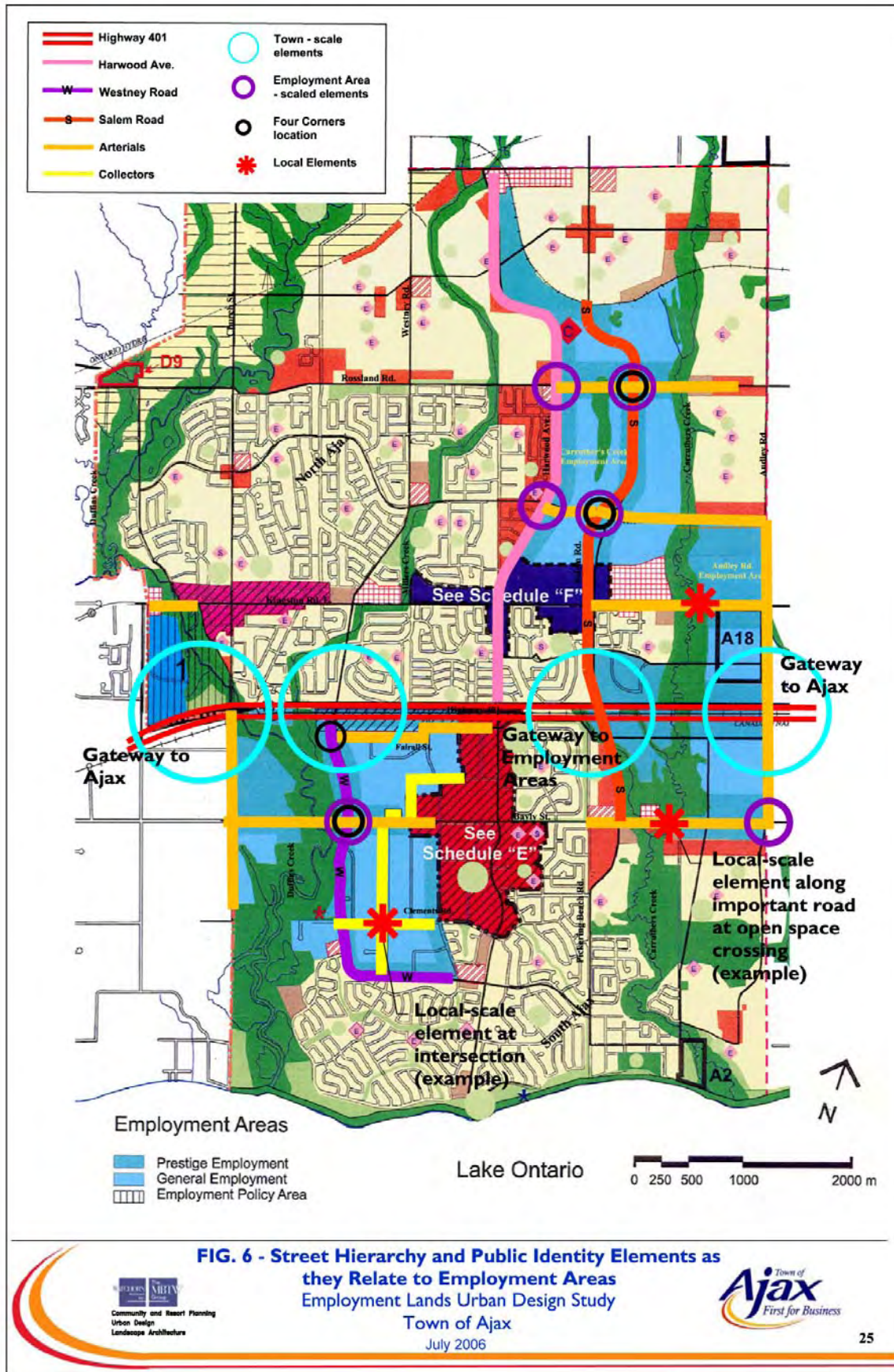


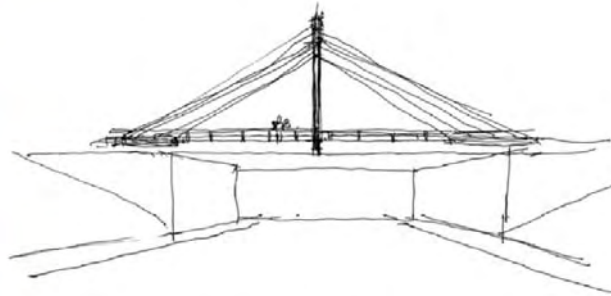
FIG. 6 - Street Hierarchy and Public Identity Elements as they Relate to Employment Areas
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The vertical element and triangular shape is reflective of the communication tower of the H.M.S. Ajax, and can inspire the design of public identity elements.

This element can be used at bridge overpasses along Highway 401, to create a strong landmark, to identify Ajax. The same visual accent could be used on pedestrian bridges in Carruther's Creek, and elsewhere.



These elements may be developed in partnership with corporate sponsors, for example, as signage. By providing a consistent venacular using repeated simple forms, lines & materials, it creates a unique identity for Ajax's employment areas.

Public Identity Elements design principles:

- bold
- simple
- graphic
- large scale at important locations (eg. High ways 401)
- vertical component
- modern
- historical or contextual reference
- incorporate landmark

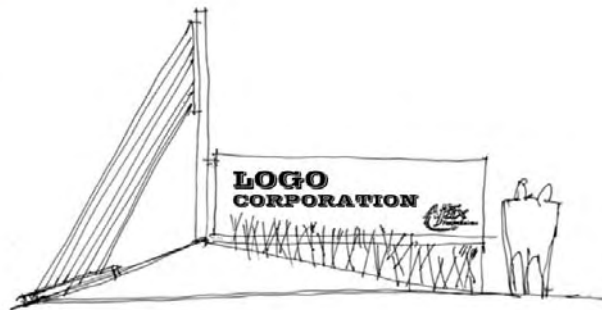


FIG. 7 - PUBLIC IDENTITY ELEMENTS

Employment Lands Urban Design Study

Town of Ajax

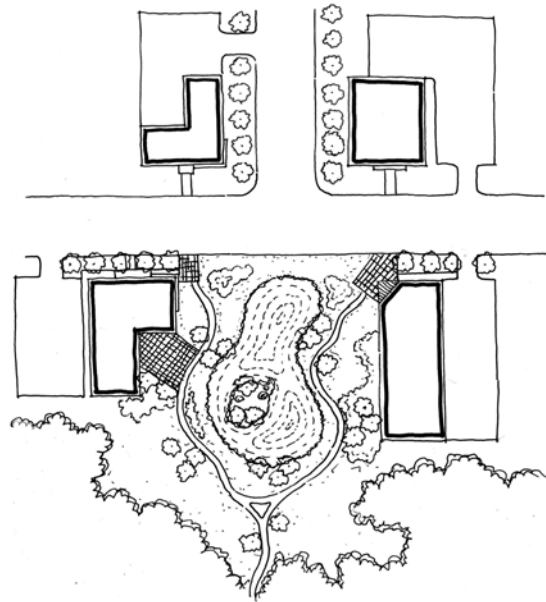
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3.4 Street Network

Through the detailed design of roads identified in Schedule C of the official plan, and through new roads created by plans of subdivision, there is an opportunity to establish a pattern of streets and blocks – a community fabric – that sets the groundwork for employment areas.

- Create a logical, inter-connected and convenient network of streets.
- Provide streets along the edge of significant natural features, in order to give the features “frontage”.
- Orient streets to provide views and access to natural features.
- Locate public land uses and stormwater management ponds along major streets, and at prominent locations such as intersections or at the ends of vistas. Maximize frontage for these uses along major roads.
- Create distinct development pockets or blocks of land through the organization of the street and open space system. These distinct pockets may each have their own sense of place.



Stormwater management pond located along an important street, at the end of a view corridor

TO BE AVOIDED

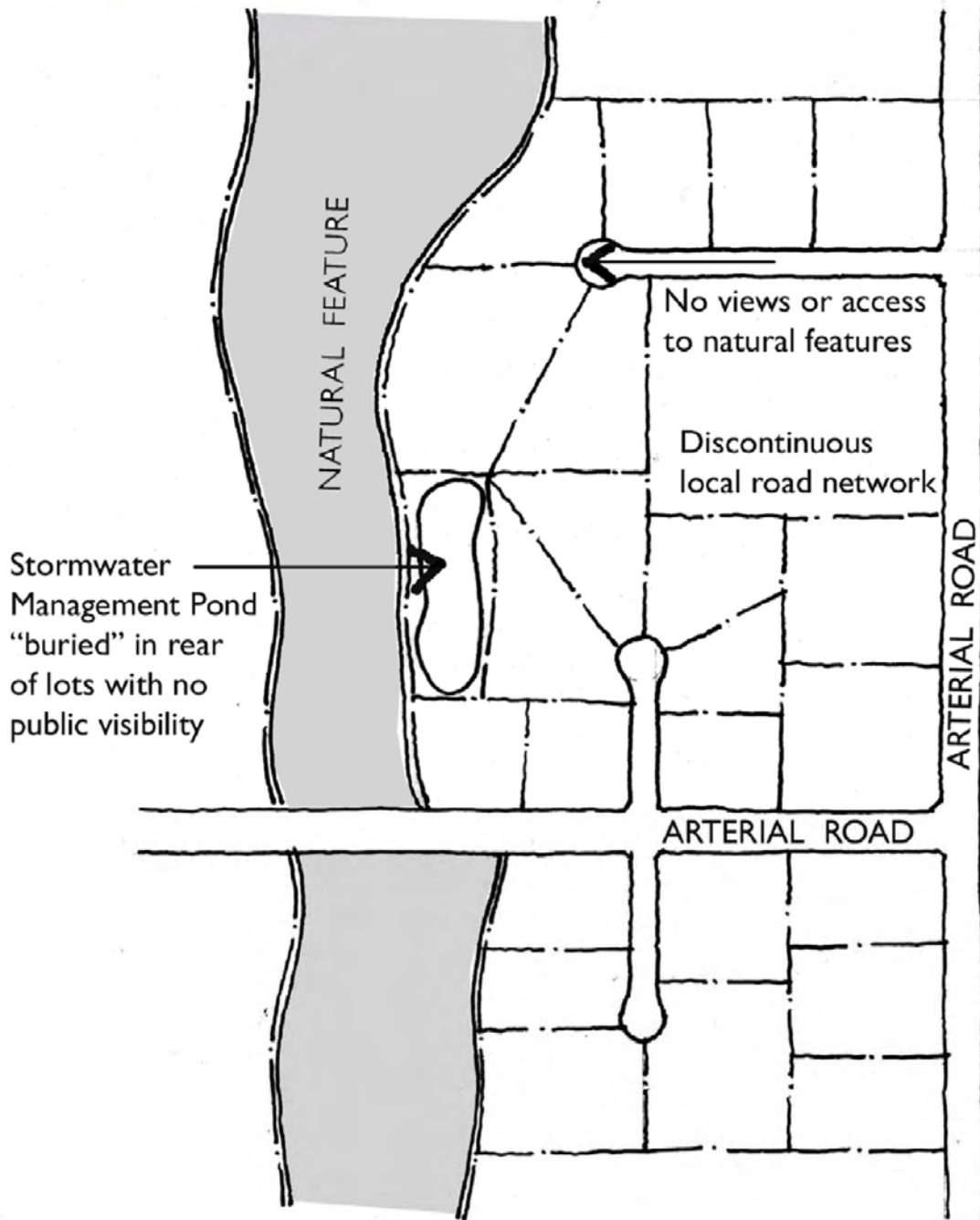


FIG. 8A - STREET AND BLOCK PATTERN

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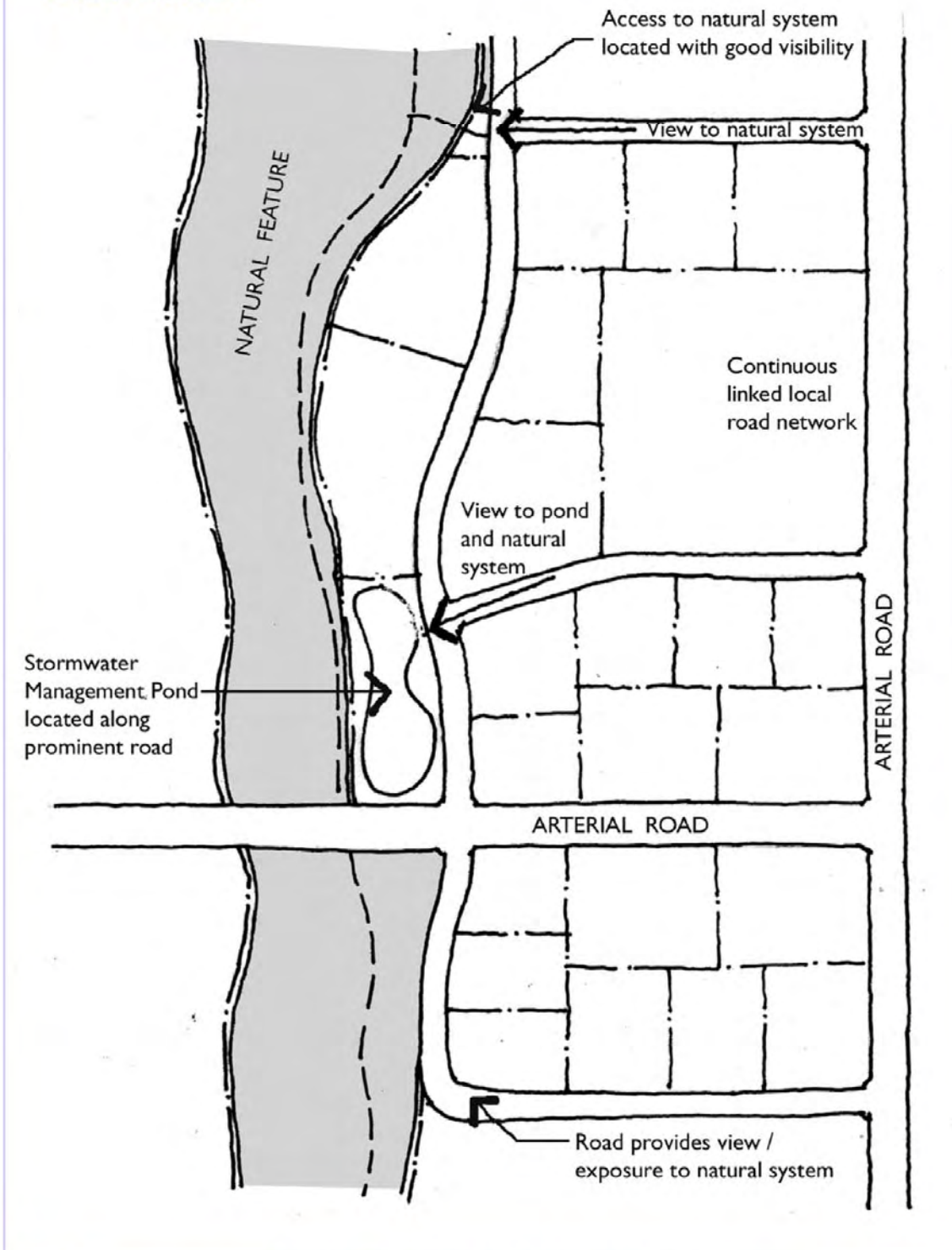


FIG. 8B - STREET AND BLOCK PATTERN

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3.4.1 General Streetscape

- Provide a sidewalk on both sides of the street.
- Provide splash strips at major intersections.
- Locate transit stops to maximize rider safety and convenience.
- Provide concrete pads at all transit stops.

3.4.2 Street Trees

- Provide tree planting on each side of the street as per Town standards.
- Select street trees from a diversity of high crowned deciduous species, with selection of variety based on hardiness, seasonal colour and salt tolerance. Where streets abut natural areas select native deciduous species.

3.4.3 Street Furniture

- Consider modern rather than necessarily 'victorian' in character heritage-inspired elements that bring a common language to unify the employment areas in the Town. The Town of Ajax is working towards establishing elements of built form, street furniture and/or landscaping that will establish a unique identity for Ajax.
- Tree grates, guards, bollards, benches, bus shelters, waste receptacles, lighting, street signage posts, newspaper boxes and other permanent site furnishings are encouraged to complement and harmonize in finish, colour and materials throughout the employment areas.
- Provide street furniture in appropriate locations along street frontages (e.g., in the vicinity of transit stops, at intersections of arterial and collector roads, and along pedestrian routes shown in the town's "Vision 2020 – Bicycle and Leisure Trail System Plan" or similar trail plan).



FIG. 9 - STREET FURNITURE
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4.0 The Private Realm

4.1 Site Planning

The configuration of individual development sites shall be driven by two urban design goals: firstly, to reinforce a positive streetscape image by appropriately addressing the public realm with buildings and landscaping; and, secondly, to create an environment that provides comfort and amenity, is navigable, and is efficient for building and transportation functions. A variety of site configurations may be possible to accomplish these goals, and the following guidelines are meant to be flexibly interpreted for each specific situation. For example, function, topography, corporate image, aesthetics, road hierarchy and access may all affect the layout of a site – whether a building is close to the street, or set back; where parking and servicing areas are located; and how it is landscaped.

The variety of contexts in which site planning occurs, imply that not all guidelines can be interpreted in the same way for each situation. In general, buildings are to be located close to the street, address the street with doors and windows, provide direct pedestrian connections, and locate parking and servicing functions to the side or rear of the building. Where the streetscape is not supported in this way by buildings and the visual absence of parking and servicing, then landscaping and the provision of additional amenity treatments must be utilized.

4.1.1 General

- Establish well-defined, visually appealing streetscapes. Buildings and landscaping should contribute to the larger streetscape image.
- Buildings shall be sited, designed and organized in such a manner that over a discrete area, all new development appears and functions as an integrated extension of all other adjacent employment development. This may occur over time, as later development follows the cues established by earlier development. Examples of discrete areas include:
 - street corridors, particularly arterials and other through streets;
 - a cluster of buildings at the end of a cul-de-sac;
 - a crescent streetscape;
 - sites relating to natural features; and,



Building groupings with a similar family of design details

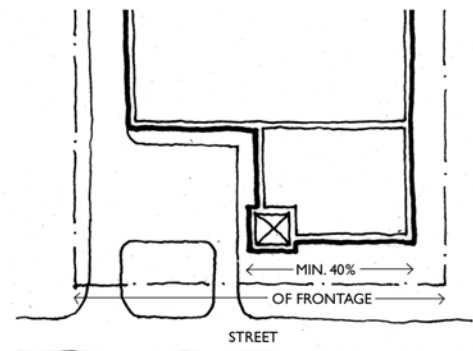
- areas defined by clear edges, such as major roads and open spaces, or that may be within one visual corridor.
- Avoid homogeneity of building appearance in discrete areas.
- Concentrate amenities and activities at prominent locations wherever possible. For instance, locating the main front entrance at a corner, close to the sidewalk, adjacent to an employee amenity space such as a patio, allows for multiple opportunities for casual encounter and interaction and will enrich the streetscape.

To support well-defined streetscapes where buildings have a direct, intimate relationship with the street, a “street-oriented” type of site plan functions as an appropriate general approach to most new development, and is particularly appropriate to infill or redevelopment of older employment sites. The following bullet points define a street-oriented site plan:

- Site buildings generally parallel to adjacent roads. The public faces of buildings shall align with neighbouring buildings so as to present a consistent street edge defined by the building faces lining the street.
- Site buildings with a substantial portion of their front and exterior side facades between 3.0 and 12.0 metres of the front and exterior lot lines (as the Zoning By-law permits), called the **Build Within Zone**. It is intended that highly articulated building facades be located within the Build Within Zone.
- Provide a minimum amount of building wall located within the build within zone as follows:
 - on all lands adjacent to arterial and collector roads, the minimum built frontage shall be 50% of the frontage of the property;
 - on all lands adjacent to local roads, the minimum built frontage shall be 40% of the frontage of the property; and,
 - if the size of the building relative to the size of the property is such that the building is not large enough to achieve the applicable minimum built frontage standard, then the building shall be designed to be oriented such that the longest building face is presented to the street within the build within zone, with the exception that the building face facing the street shall be



Building set close to the street with significant built frontage and articulated facade



Demonstration plan achieving minimum 40% built frontage



Direct pedestrian connections from parking areas to main entrance

designed to present a frontal-quality façade with detailing in terms of entrances, windows and architectural elements.

- Locate the main entrance to face or address the street.
- Locate parking and servicing to the side or rear of buildings, where the building itself screens them from view. No parking areas or driveway aisles are permitted between an adjacent street and any part of the building façade within the build within zone.
- Encourage visitor parking that is easily accessible to the main entrance.
- Provide shared vehicular access between sites where physically possible.
- Locate service functions such as loading bays, garbage and recycling disposal away from public view, using the building, including wing wall extensions, as the primary screen.
- Outdoor storage, where permitted, shall be located away from public view using the building as a primary screen.
- Views of outdoor storage that are not screened by buildings shall be screened with a barrier, which may be some combination of a berm, wall and/or a solid decorative fence, or other appropriate landscaping.
- A limited amount of outdoor display will be permitted where it helps to animate the street edge and promotes a clean, active business image for Ajax.
- Locate office uses to face the most important streets.
- Locate show rooms, presentation and sales pavilions, and retail components to face streets, to add interest and vitality to the streetscape.
- Locate amenity or commercial uses, such as kitchens, cafeterias, or sandwich shops, at grade, facing public space, preferably public streets or natural features.
- Provide periodic unimpeded views to natural features from streets through building placement and landscape design.
- Provide direct visual contact with natural features from interior spaces wherever possible.
- Divide large parking areas that are adjacent to or highly visible at the street edge through the use of landscaping, pathway systems, and building placement to create smaller “outdoor rooms”.
- Ensure that service areas have adequate space for maneuvering and allow for efficient operation. Vehicle movements in and around

service areas should not conflict with adjacent parking areas.

- Locate service areas, truck maneuvering areas, and outdoor storage areas away from adjacent residential properties, using the building as a primary buffer or screen.
- Pave all service areas.
- Use a concrete apron around waste/recycling areas to minimize damage to hard surfaces.
- Setbacks of employment buildings and uses from residential uses shall comply with applicable regulatory controls, including the Town of Ajax Official Plan and Zoning By-law.

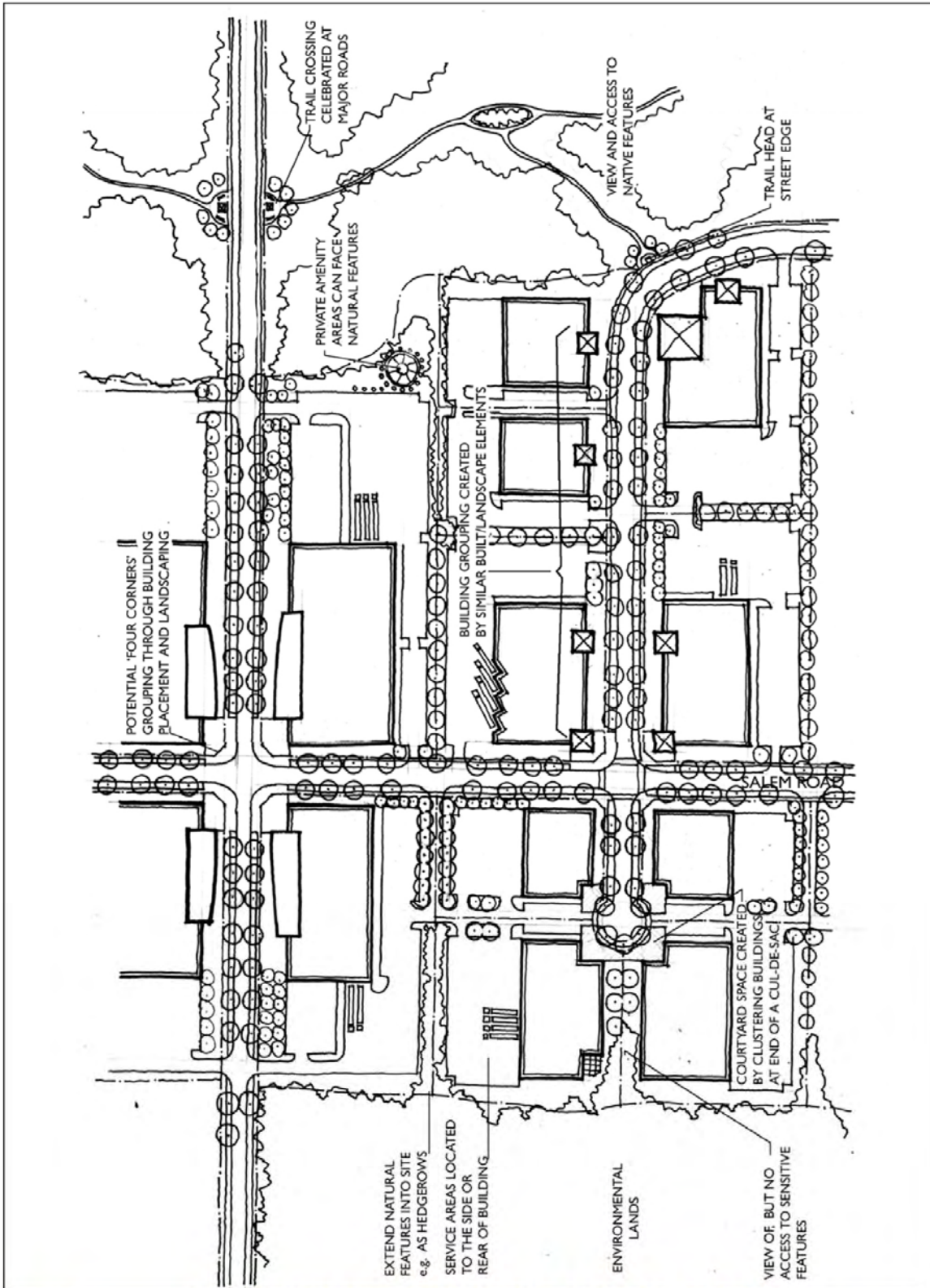


FIG. 10 - DEMONSTRATION PLAN OF URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND BUILDING GROUPING

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4.1.2 Pedestrian Amenity

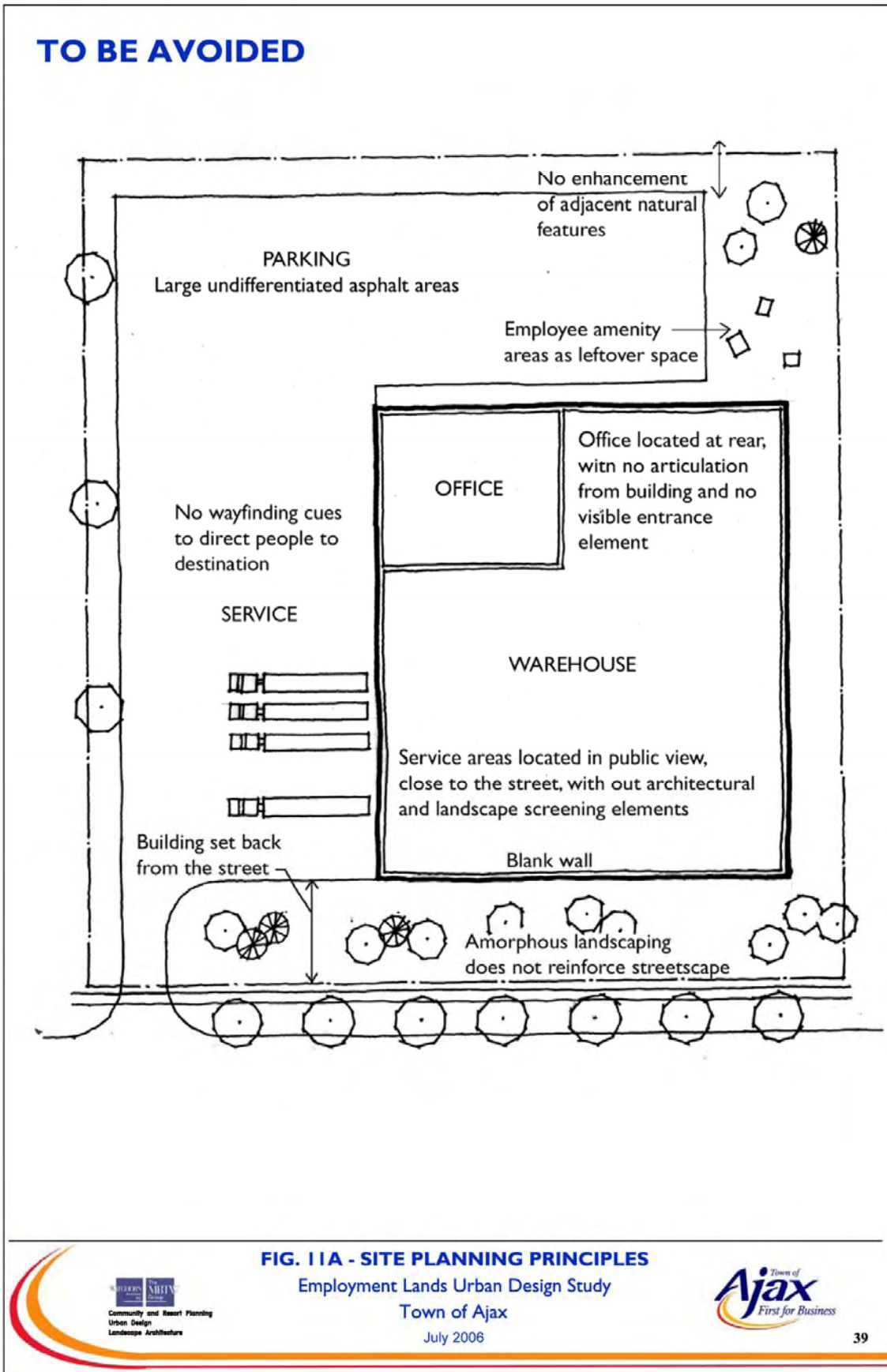
The pedestrian circulation system can be an organizing feature of sites. The pedestrian realm can create amenity for employees by providing comfortable places to walk or sit. It can also be configured to promote a more active street life by providing opportunities for interaction.

- Provide well-defined, clearly identifiable and safe pedestrian movements. This shall be achieved through different paving materials, colours, special landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting (e.g., lighted bollards), and alignment with desire lines.
- Provide direct pedestrian linkages from the sidewalk to main entrances visible from the street.
- Provide direct pedestrian linkages from parking areas to building entrances.
- Provide raised walkways (minimum 1.5 metres wide) around the perimeter of all buildings where they abut driveway aisles, parking and service areas, except at overhead or loading doors. Ramps and curb depressions shall be provided in appropriate locations to allow for barrier-free access to buildings.
- Link pedestrian systems in a continuous network internal to the site, to public sidewalks, and to adjacent sites with convenient destinations such as large offices or ancillary retail (ie. restaurants or convenience stores).
- Provide barrier free access and circulation with special attention to the design of curb cuts and pedestrian crossings.
- Incorporate traffic calming features or designs in areas of congestion or conflict with vehicular traffic.
- Provide direct pedestrian linkages to existing or future transit stops from main entrances visible from the street.
- Provide outdoor pedestrian spaces and amenities in desirable areas, for example:
 - courtyards or squares for gathering, eating, and relaxing;
 - outdoor patios adjacent to cafeterias/food service;
 - picnic tables next to natural features, or adjacent to food service; and,
 - seating areas where they have a comfortable micro-climate.
- Locate outdoor pedestrian spaces to face public streets, or natural features, wherever possible.



Well defined pedestrian links

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- Encourage common or shared pedestrian spaces between buildings and sites.
 - Provide for safe pedestrian movements across driveways, parking areas, and vehicle routes through the site.



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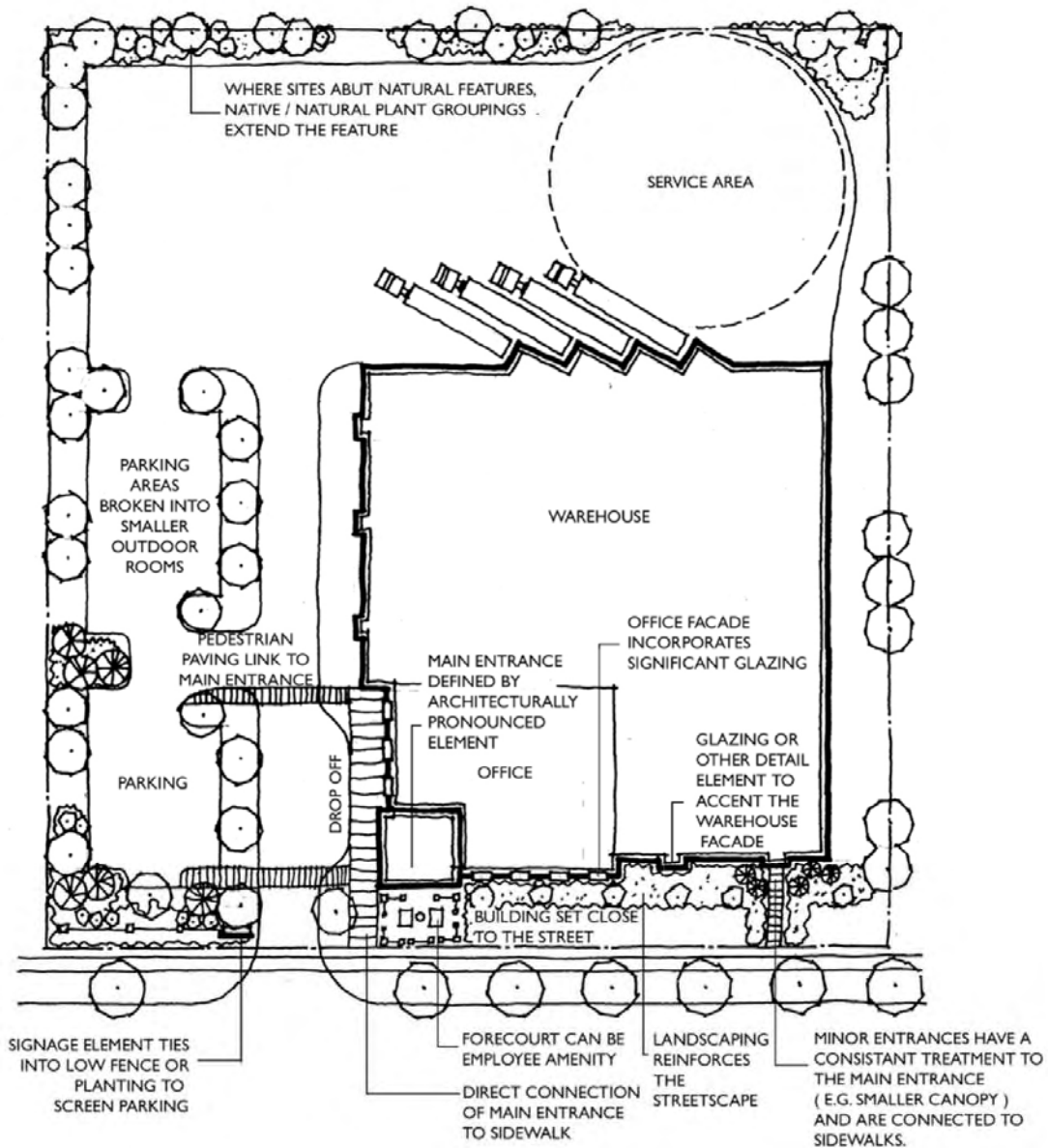


FIG. 11B - SITE PLANNING PRINCIPLES

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4.2 Built Form

The location, orientation and massing of buildings shall allow the “best” form and articulation of the buildings to be visible from a number of locations and situations, with an emphasis on the public realm. The best form is intended to respond to the streetscape hierarchy, that is, it should be visible from and orient to, the most important streets. The best form shall respond to the principles set out in the vision.

The best form of buildings could be simple built form shapes. Best form is the most attractive or articulated form that any individual building has to offer, such as the office component, or the elevation without the loading bays. Simple shapes may be preferred to complicated forms that may be less easily recognized when viewed from vehicles.

- Orient buildings to address the street. Building elevations facing adjacent roads shall have a clear “frontal” expression in the detailing of entrances, windows and architectural elements. Buildings shall promote a vibrant and pedestrian friendly streetscape through pedestrian scale, the provision of windows at grade level, prominent and sheltered entrances, and the use of materials.
- Articulate all publicly visible wall surfaces through projections, depressions, columns, texture, vertical or horizontal plane changes, or changes to roof line, in combination with colour and material changes. Avoid long stretches of monotonous building facades or “blank” walls.



Preferred: articulated wall surface



To be avoided: monotonous walls



This building provides a purposeful change in material between the office and warehouse components

- Provide purposeful termination of building façade materials, through plan changes (jogs in the building), projections, or other elements. Changes of façade materials within the same plane on any elevation are not acceptable.
- Avoid continuous roof lines through the use of projections, changes in vertical plane, and prominent building elements, particularly at entries, on street axes, at pedestrian walkways and at site entrances.



Preferred: dynamic roofline through changes in vertical plane, building element, colour and material



To be avoided: monotonous roof line

- Anchor key streets and prominent corners by providing noticeable architectural forms. In this regard, buildings will “turn” the corner, i.e., have articulated facades facing both streets.
- Provide built elements that acknowledge view termination axes of streets, or vehicular or pedestrian circulation routes, for example, through a change in shape or material.
- Ensure that portions of buildings abutting street corners are a minimum of 6 metres in height.
- Incorporate a high proportion of windows in the elevations of office components to afford clear, unobstructed sight lines from the office area to adjacent roads, outdoor pedestrian amenity areas and parking areas.

- If there are multiple buildings on one site, they shall have a coordinated architectural treatment to develop overall site harmony. Provide differentiating characteristics, particularly at entrances and in the landscaping. Note that addressing can be part of this differentiation.



Preferred: building grouping with similar vocabulary but distinctive elements



To be avoided: monotonous treatment of multiple building site

- Provide materials and finishes of high quality. Metal cladding is discouraged, and its use will be reviewed on design merit.
- Treat side and rear elevations exposed to public view with an appropriate level of architectural detail consistent in vocabulary with the front elevation.
- Integrate the screening of rooftop mechanical equipment through the design of facades, rooflines and parapet conditions to completely screen them from public view. Pipe stacks or other vertical elements shall be positioned to coordinate with the building design from all visible public elevations. Screening should be compatible with other materials and colours used on the building. Where buildings are adjacent to existing or planned high density residential uses or existing/proposed hotel/motel sites, or other tall buildings, all rooftop mechanical units shall be wholly enclosed, with louvers or other appropriate means of ventilation employed as required.
- Incorporate hydro transformers and utility vaults as part of the building, unless the utility provider requires otherwise.
- Locate areas for waste storage and recycling within buildings wherever possible. Where it is not possible, waste and recyclable shall be contained within an enclosure of solid masonry,

using materials and of a design complimentary to that of the main building. Concrete bollards shall be installed flanking access doors, where appropriate.

- No overhead doors for loading or waste disposal shall be located on a building wall facing an adjacent street, unless screened by another building (e.g., an interior service court).
- Encourage enhanced landscaping and architecture along all publicly accessible natural features.
- For accessory buildings, provide compatible and complimentary design, colour and materials to the main building.

Building entrances can play a significant role in establishing positive streetscapes and identity, connecting the building with the street and larger community, and providing orientation for the user. They provide an opportunity to create an architectural statement.

- Emphasize the main entry using form, colour, and shape coordinated with the building, landscape and signage.
- Provide clearly visible, articulated building entrances.



A clearly articulated building entrance coordinated with landscaping



This building has a well defined entrance articulated by changes in plane, material and colour

- Establish a wayfinding identity for building entrances, so that they are visible at first glance from streets or the highway, and lead users to entrances once they have navigated through drop-off, parking, or servicing areas.
- Provide entrances or entrance elements with an appearance and form that easily leads vehicles and pedestrians to destinations.

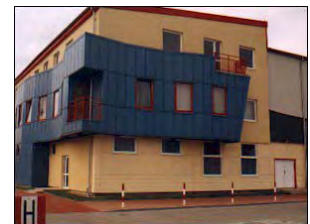
- Encourage principle public entrances to be covered with an entrance canopy or weather protection element.
- Encourage other entrances that are regularly used to have similar architectural vocabulary to the main entrance.
- Provide distinct and identifiable entrances to individual units within multi-unit buildings.

The following guidelines represent further strategies for developing positive streetscapes and identity by creating excitement in building design.

- Create interest using any two or more of the following methods:
 - use colour;
 - incorporate historic references (see Section 5.4);
 - use dramatic lighting;
 - incorporate energy efficient or green architecture design or elements which are visible from public spaces;
 - incorporate artistic elements; and/or,
 - utilize signage as an animating device.



Animated signs create interest



Artistic elements create interest

- Mass or sculpt the building using any one or more of the following methods:
 - break the plane of the building;
 - create layers in the façade; and/or,
 - incorporate changes to the rectangular box.



Break the plane of the building

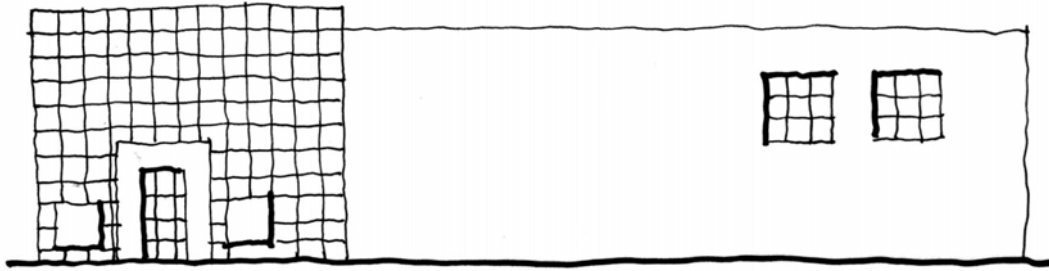


Changes to the rectangular box



Layers in the facade

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- Create a cohesive image using one or more of the following methods:
 - balance the elements and colours of the building. This does not impose symmetry, but a balance between dominant and subordinate elements.
 - bring some of the distinctive elements of one part of the building into other parts, and vice versa.



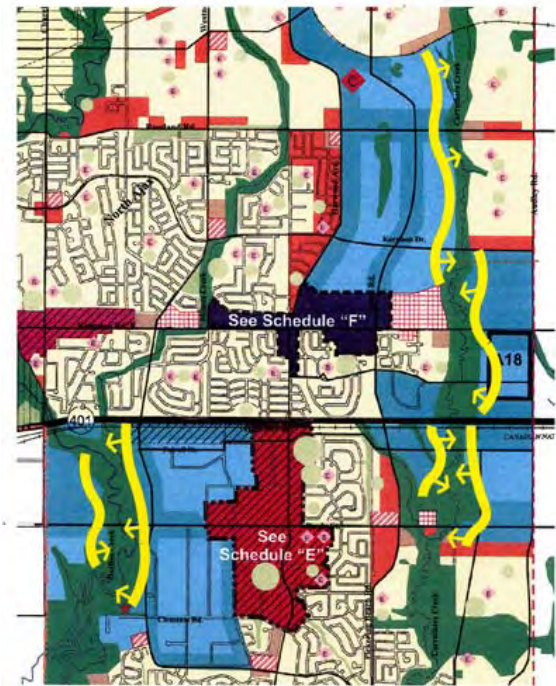
Distinctive elements from one part of the building are brought to the other

4.3 Landscaping

Expression of the Town’s pride and appreciation of its natural and recreational features is a key principle for employment lands. Sites adjacent to major features should address the feature with a treatment appropriate to an important street within the Prestige Employment designation. That is, the natural or recreational feature is treated as importantly as any street or use in the Town.

Open spaces, valley edges, parks, pedestrian walkways, woodlots, and natural features share many of the same visual opportunities as streets and corner sites. Full use is to be made of the opportunities presented by these special conditions and their significance reinforced.

- Use landscaping to compliment and reinforce positive elements of buildings, and to support the sense of a continuous urban form; avoid the impression that buildings are isolated from each other on their own sites.
- Integrate landscaping with the design of the building, including using materials, shapes or elements of the building in the landscape. Ensure placement and spacing of landscaping is consistent with the rhythm or configuration of the building.
- Articulate pedestrian entrances facing adjacent streets and define edges of walkways linking public sidewalks to building entrances.
- Plant trees in all landscaped areas in a manner that is harmonious and consistent with the surrounding tree pattern. Planting in landscape strips abutting roads should compliment the existing character of the streetscape in terms of placement and species.
- Select plant materials to suit growing conditions at the planting location and match anticipated maintenance levels. Where side or rear yards between sites are adjacent to natural features, provide naturalistic or hedgerow planting on both sites that becomes continuous with the natural feature.
- Organize landscaping such that it does not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular sightlines required for safety, either at the time of development or when planted material reaches a mature state.
- Ensure that parking visible from streets is screened with semi-transparent techniques (hard and/or soft landscape elements) to allow casual observation for safety. Further lessen the impact of parking by using walkway islands,



Natural features orientation diagram



Semi-transparent screening of parking



Examples of service areas screened by hard & soft landscape elements

raised landscaping and low walls to break up the area into small zones. Provide a view corridor from buildings, circulation areas, gathering spaces or sidewalks to parking areas.

- Locate functions such as loading docks, garbage disposal/recycling, and/or outdoor storage (where permitted) away from public view and from residential areas. Locating them behind buildings allows the building to screen them. Where buildings and wing walls do not screen the whole of service or outdoor storage areas, screen them with hard or soft landscape elements including walls, fencing, berming, and/or planting that is consistent in materials and details with the character of the site as a whole.
- Encourage enhanced landscaping and architecture along all publicly accessible natural features.
- Berms used as landscaping elements shall be created at a maximum 3:1 slope.
- Encourage landscaping that protects, supports, enhances or extends natural features into sites.
- Provide non-intrusive fencing (for example, black vinyl chain link fence) in flankages or rear yards where required.



This landscaping reinforces the streetscape, helps define the main front entrance and links it to the street, provides a pedestrian connection to parking, and provides semi-transparent screening of parking

- Preserve all existing perimeter trees with minimal changes to the area beneath the drip line. Locate underground services and utilities so as not to encroach within the drip line of trees to be preserved, to minimize disruption to the root system.
- Preserve existing trees near or along residential property lines wherever possible to act both as a buffer as well as to prevent planting on residential properties to become suddenly exposed to edge conditions.
- In instances where a utility provider requires that a hydro transformer or utility vault be located outside of a building, such elements shall be screened by hard and/or soft landscaping.

4.4 Lighting and Furnishing

- Arrange lighting to mitigate spillover effects on adjacent natural features, so as not to disrupt the natural functions of these sensitive areas. Similar treatment shall be undertaken to mitigate potential spillover effects on adjacent residential development.
- Locate lighting to enable users to easily identify routes through a site.
- Ensure a safe pedestrian environment by providing appropriate lighting in all pedestrian areas including building entrances, walkways, and parking areas.
- Enhance the night image by highlighting prominent architectural and/or landscape qualities, and corporate identity features.
- Encourage lighting and furnishing to be compatible with the characteristics of the furniture, signage and lighting within the employment areas.

4.5 Signage



This building has signage with individual letters and clearly visible street addressing



These signs are well integrated with the building

The design of signage in employment areas is encouraged to promote an attractive visual environment and an active business image for Ajax. Given the importance of signage and corporate identity, clear and unobstructed views are essential.

- Integrate signage with the design of the building or site. Encourage signs that are compatible in size, style, colour, shape, materials, location and mounting with the built form.
- Signage comprised of individual letters, front lit or back lit, or halo effect neon is preferred. Cut out letters with cold cathode back light and other innovative signage will be considered.
- Signage in high exposure areas such as gateways or intersections shall enhance the special identity and character of these areas, as well as the image of Ajax.
- Provide wayfinding identification that directs trucking, employees, visitors, cyclists, and pedestrians, as appropriate, to their destinations.
- Provide large-scale street addressing easily visible to traffic. All addressing shall have alphabetic or numeric characters that are a minimum of 20cm (8") tall. For every 15m of distance above 30m between the curb of the road and the address location, characters shall be an additional 10cm (4") tall. Street names are encouraged in the addressing.
- All signage will be reviewed and regulated in accordance with the Town's sign by-law.

5.0 Areas of Special Treatment

Areas such as gateways, landmark locations, Highway 401, cross roads, and nodes of land use intensity, are opportunities for special treatments including enhanced and contextually unique urban design, architecture and landscape. Ajax's unique heritage provides an opportunity for interpretation and expression not only in areas of special treatment, but throughout employment areas.

5.1 Gateways and Landmarks

Special opportunities exist at gateways to create a sense of arrival or entry and reinforce the image of the employment lands. Because of their prominent locations, these sites are recognizable landmarks and community-orienting focal points.

Landmark locations are highly visible sites within employment lands. They are created when one or more of the following factors come together:

- they are located along important street corridors;
- they are at a crossroads or gateway;
- they are located at the end view of a street, for instance at a T-intersection, or a bend in the street; and/or,
- they are adjacent to an important open space.

The approach to landmark locations follows the public identity elements identified in section 3.3 Streetscapes. Landmark locations become community-orienting focal points that benefit from the application of special design.

- Locate special buildings or places at the end of view corridors. Encourage pedestrian squares or courtyards which can be used for public purposes at these locations.
- Locate buildings close to the street at the gateway or landmark.
- Provide identifiable architectural features for buildings at gateways or landmarks, such as towers, enhanced elevation treatment, unique massing of roof lines, a multi-storey presence, or other prominent architectural forms.
- Design buildings to support the overall image of the employment areas.
- Locate main building entrances at the gateway or landmark.



Landmark architecture and landscaping at the corner of important streets

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- Locate parking and service areas away from the primary gateway or landmark location.
 - Design sites to create year-round interest and an attractive night time appearance.
 - Relate development on all adjacent corners or sites, as appropriate, through coordinating setbacks, massing, heights and landscaping. Encourage buildings with compatible architectural styles, elements and details.
 - Provide public identity elements at key locations appropriate to the hierarchy of streets.

5.1.1 Highway 401/Salem Road Interchange Gateway

As identified on the map entitled “Street Hierarchy and Public Identity Elements as they Relate to Employment Areas” (Figure, 6 p. 25), the lands in the vicinity of the Highway 401/Salem Road interchange constitute the town’s eastern employment area gateway from Highway 401. This eastern gateway is intended to provide the principal highway egress location into the abutting prestige employment area from highway 401 and from areas north and south along Salem Road. Development in this location will convey an upscale employment business image of the highest quality and reinforce the vision of this gateway as a corporate address and destination. The development of landmark buildings shall be undertaken in order to highlight the entry point and provide orientation elements. Given that this area is intended to be developed for employment intensive uses, buildings shall be multi-storey and of commensurate size and massing. Built form is required to provide for a transition in scale from the broad expanses of Highway 401 to the more contained urban corridor appropriate to Salem Road, and achieve the intent of the guidelines for gateway areas as outlined in section 5.1. Special attention shall also be given to the design, layout and siting of buildings in order to provide direct views and pedestrian access to adjacent natural features and stormwater management ponds, allowing employees and visitors to take full advantage of these features.

TO BE AVOIDED

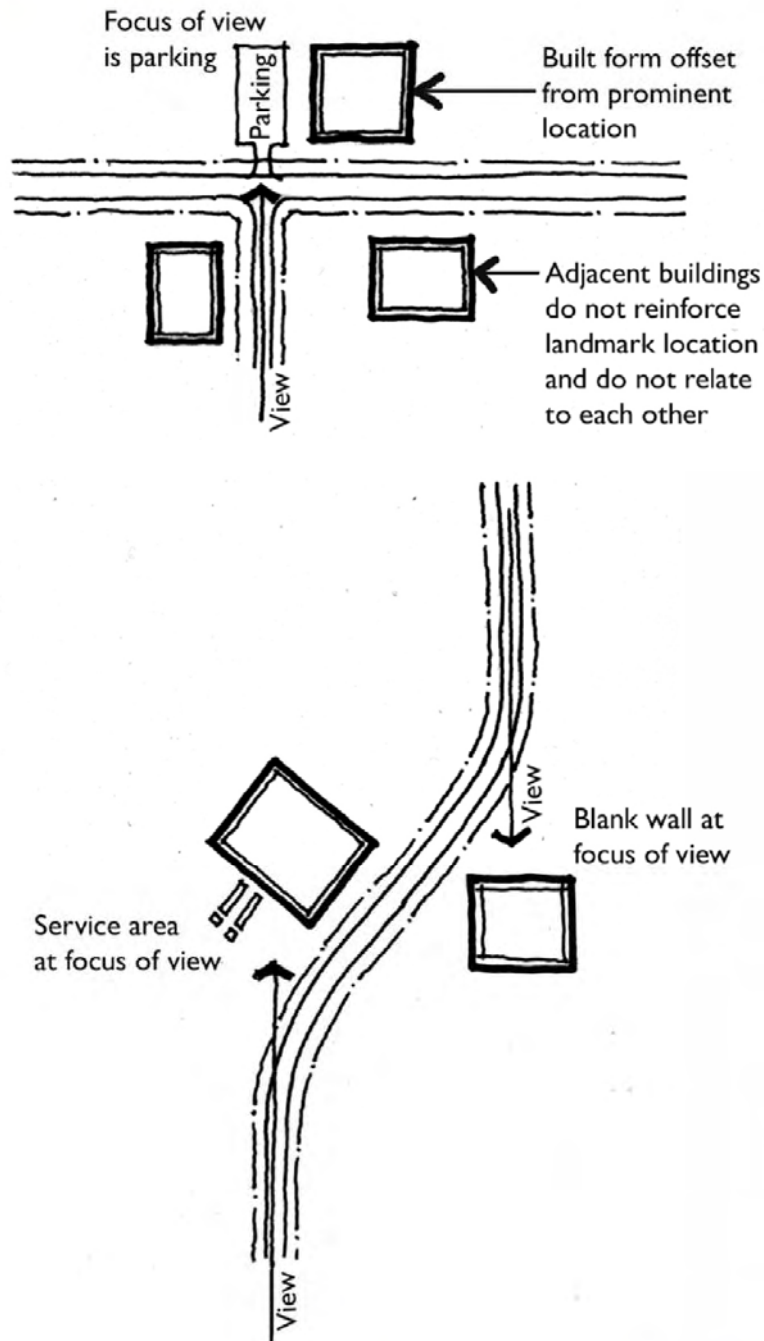


FIG. 12A - GATEWAYS & LANDMARKS

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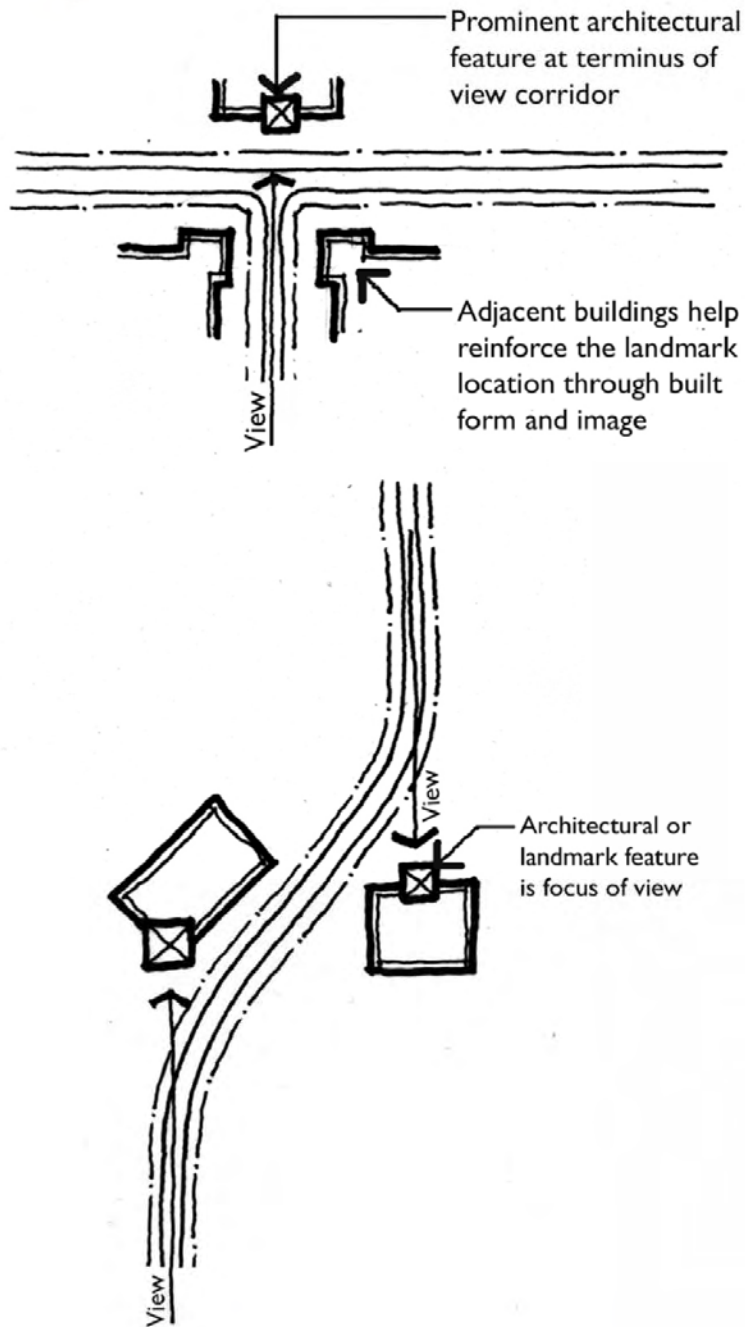


FIG. 12B - GATEWAYS & LANDMARKS

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FIG. 12C - TO BE AVOIDED

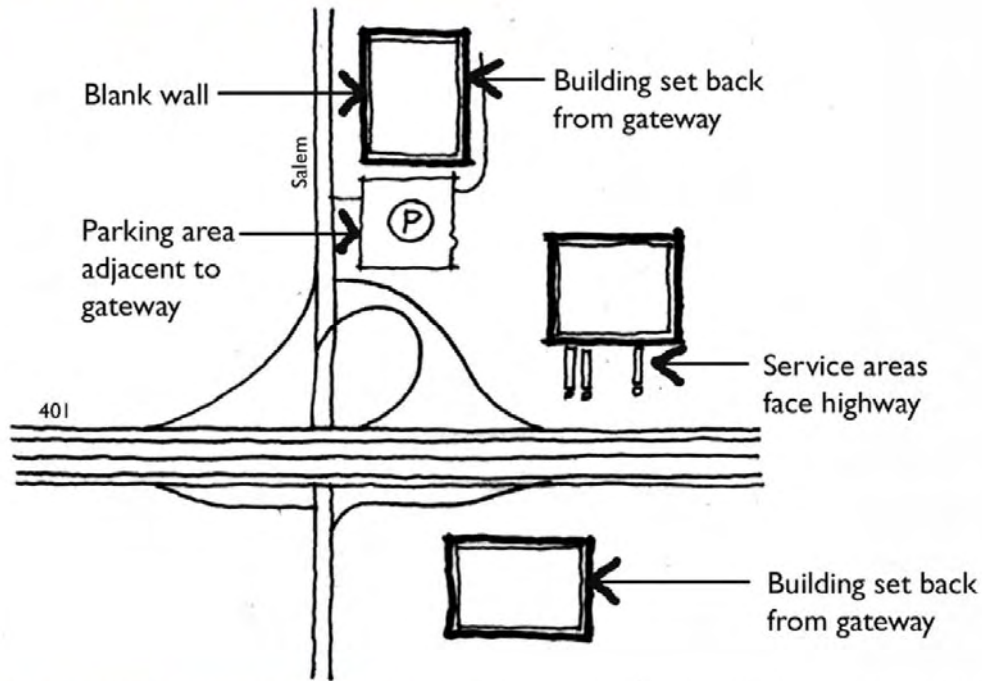


FIG. D - PREFERRED

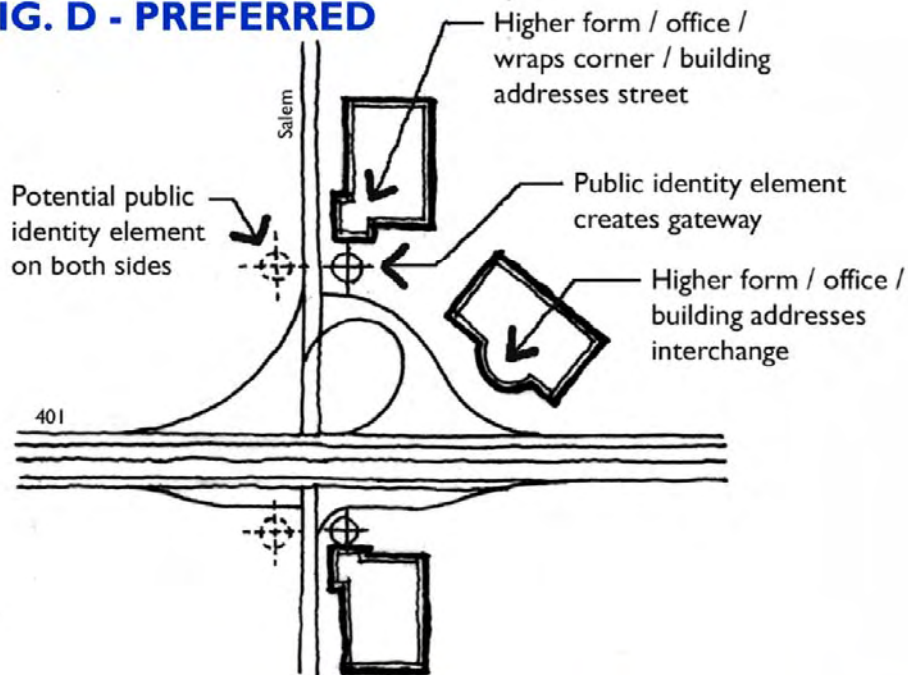


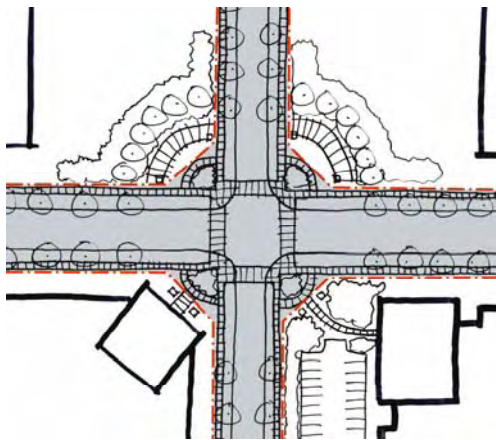
FIG. 12C & FIG. 12D - GATEWAYS & LANDMARKS

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A four corners can be created by built form and/or landscaping.

5.2 Four Corners

Sites at the crossroads of important streets can take on characteristics similar to landmark or gateway locations. These 'four corner' locations provide the opportunity to create an active, community-orienting focal point, where they can take advantage of the activity at the corner. Four corners locations represent ideal opportunities to locate public identity elements; however, such elements can occur throughout employment areas, including at T-intersections.

- Address all four corners of the intersection with either built form or enhanced landscaping. Built form is preferred. Locate buildings close to the corner at the minimum setback and provide main building entrances addressing the intersection.
- Provide a pedestrian amenity space at the intersection such as a plaza or seating area.
- Relate built form on all corners, through coordinating setbacks, massing, heights and compatible architectural styles, elements and details.
- Relate landscaping on all corners, through symmetrically compatible spaces & arrangements of elements.

Refer to the map "Street Hierarchy and Public Identity Features" (Figure 6, p 25) for potential four corners locations.

5.3 Highway 401

As briefly highlighted in Section 2.1 of this document, the Ajax Official Plan contains a number of design-related policies for employment areas, including policies for the development of prestige employment sites adjacent to Highway 401. Given the role and function of Highway 401 as the Town's primary transportation corridor, and the special image for Ajax, the Official Plan singles out development of adjacent employment sites for special treatment.

In terms of urban design, the prime exposure of these lands to Highway 401 means that no outdoor display of items such as motor vehicles, watercraft, snowmobiles, cranes or other equipment is permitted on lands visible from the Highway. Similarly, except for limited amount of visitor parking, parking and loading facilities generally shall not be located between the building(s) and Highway 401, in order to promote a prestige appearance. In the

same vein, buildings proposed on sites adjacent to Highway 401 shall be designed so that they front on the Highway and exemplify high quality design features including built form, landscaping, and signage – in other words, treatment that is equal, if not superior, to that intended for prestige development where building façade(s) and landscaping has frontal exposure to an arterial road.”

Buildings with exposure to streets on two or three sides will consider the priority of street frontages in the quality of their appearance. Highway 401 will have first priority followed by arterials, then local roads.

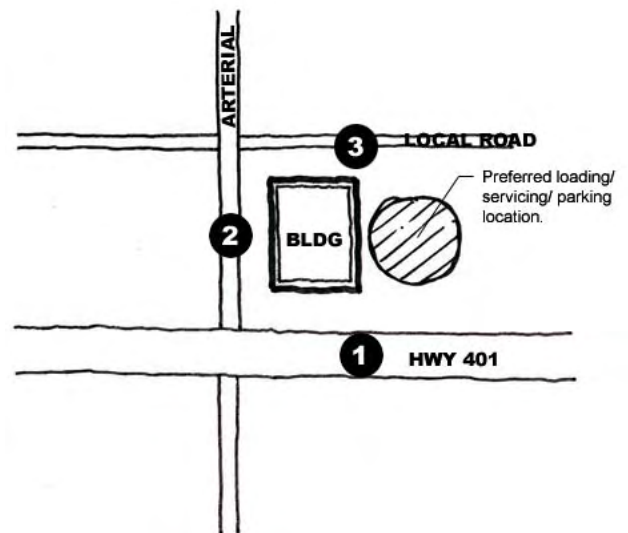
Where natural/ existing grades may effectively screen parking, servicing, or storage areas from view, they may be located flexibly on a site.

The Highway 401 corridor is a special opportunity for several reasons:

- Highway 401 is one of the primary routes linking Ajax to the GTA and points beyond.
- Employment lands flanking Highway 401 can create a positive and unique image for Ajax within the GTA.
- Employment lands exist at the east and west gateways to Ajax along Highway 401.
- The railway is located immediately south of Highway 401, and is actively used both for freight and passenger purposes. The GO Train Station is located along Highway 401.
 - Active freight trains may create an image of ‘Ajax at work’.
 - There is an opportunity to create a positive impression and interesting experience for passengers of GO or VIA.

It is important that the treatment of the Highway 401 corridor positively reinforce its many roles as a gateway or first impression of Ajax. It goes beyond the employment lands themselves. The image established along Highway 401 is a critical town-wide component of defining the Town. That is, the experience of the Highway 401 corridor is key to communicate a clear civic identity, and thus is to be treated with care.

- Provide a landscape treatment that can be perceived while traveling at high speed. This may involve large, simple, repetitive and/or bold forms.



Priority of frontages for locating high quality design features, as well as parking, servicing and storage areas.

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- Consider corporate signage visible to vehicles on Highway 401, in front of the railway, as an alternative to the site or building-mounted signage of adjacent businesses that is blocked while trains are parked on the tracks.
 - Consider a landscape treatment that celebrates the activity of both freight and passenger trains. Parked freight trains mean that a business in Ajax is busy.
 - Consider the motion of trains in the design of the landscape treatment, for instance, their acceleration and deceleration from the station.
 - Consider a gateway sign or element that announces Ajax and its unique civic image.
 - Ensure the treatment of Highway 401 is consistent with the treatment of Ajax as a whole. The establishment of an identity through the new employment lands provides the opportunity to coordinate this treatment as a whole.

Refer to the Highway Beautification Study (2005) prepared by the Town of Ajax Economic Development Office.

5.4 Celebration of History

Ajax's unique history, particularly as it relates to the railway and wartime activities, provides an opportunity to remember and celebrate the past. It is beyond the scope of this document to detail this history; however, a variety of interpretive ideas are set out as precedents. These ideas explore ways that historic details relating to built form and landscape can be incorporated in the contemporary employment area environment.

- Provide an element of historic celebration on sites adjacent to Highway 401 and arterial roads.
- Encourage elements of historic celebration on other sites.

5.5 Large Sites

Users with very large site requirements for building footprint(s), transportation or storage needs, should generally follow the guidelines in this document. The scale of the development, however, may be beyond that envisioned by some of the guidelines. In those cases, the goal is to apply 'normal' scale to key locations within the large sites. Key locations include pedestrian and vehicular access points, passenger drop-offs, office components, and edge conditions at the most important corners or along the most important street(s). At these locations, building

and landscape elements are to follow the relevant guidelines. In between these locations, the site may be dominated by large-scale elements. Large parking and service areas shall still be screened from public view.

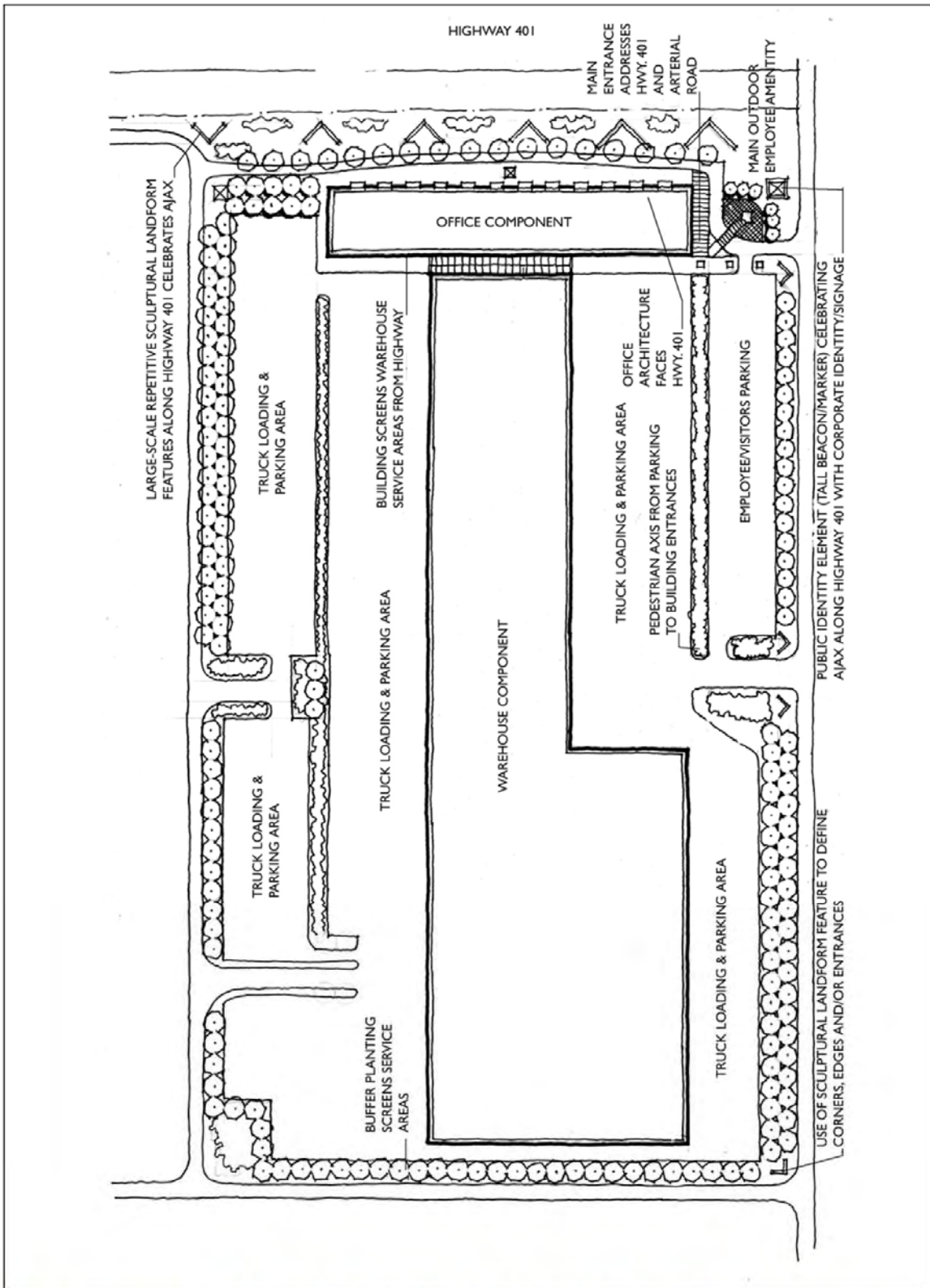


FIG. 13 - DEMONSTRATION PLAN OF LARGE SITE

Employment Lands Urban Design Study

Town of Ajax

July 2006



5.6 Variety of Uses

These guidelines are primarily concerned with more widespread employment uses such as warehousing, manufacturing, and offices; however, a wide variety of employment and ancillary uses are permitted within employment lands, including financial institutions, restaurants, banquet and convention facilities, athletic clubs, and hotels. These types of uses bring variety to the streetscape, provide a pedestrian scale to buildings and the spaces around them, and generate activity. It is appropriate that such developments follow the general guidelines in this document that achieve a high-quality built environment (e.g., locate buildings close to the street with well-defined entrances and strong pedestrian linkages). The following guidelines apply especially to the variety of uses that help achieve variety and animation in the streetscape.

- Locate buildings in prominent locations, at the street edge.
- Encourage the location of uses and the siting of buildings at 'four corners' locations.
- Consider a vehicular drop-off function in association with a main front entrance facing the street, provided it is located and landscaped to support the goals of the broader streetscape.
- Encourage an employment/industrial vernacular for buildings and landscapes, consistent with the employment area as a whole.
- Encourage prominent signage, provided it meets other signage goals of these guidelines.

5.7 Alternative Approaches to Site Planning

The intent of these urban design guidelines is to establish an image for employment areas in Ajax based on high-quality, pedestrian streetscapes defined by articulated built form. This represents the primary approach to site planning.

There may be unique situations, however, that require a different approach to site planning, for instance:

- large, single users where multiple buildings are proposed in a campus setting;
- large corporate headquarters making a dramatic statement with architecture and landscaping;
- areas with significant site constraints such as grading; and,
- special functional needs for access, servicing, and/or operations.

Alternative proposals will be evaluated on a case by case basis, for appropriateness and for design merit. The focus on creating high quality streetscapes and environments is paramount. The following guidelines set out alternative requirements where the general goal of the guidelines cannot be implemented.

- Provide enhanced amenities with a strong visual presence such as historical references in the built form or landscape, well-defined pedestrian gathering spaces, or pronounced public identity elements. The Town of Ajax is working towards establishing elements of built form, street furniture and/or landscaping that will establish a unique identity for Ajax.
- Provide a spacious landscaped setting for the building, parking and other elements of a public nature. Landscaping may incorporate grass areas, landforms, trees, shrub beds and decorative materials.
- Provide a landscaped pedestrian and vehicle route from the street to the main front entrance, with a landscaped drop-off court, and direct access to visitor parking.
- Where the building is set back from the street, provide elements at the street edge that define the street in lieu of the built form, such as low walls, a strong landscaped edge, or public identity elements.
- Provide wayfinding for the site, including corporate signage/identification, directional signage, clear site organization, and building cues such as pronounced entrances.
- If parking is located in front of buildings, an appropriate landscape treatment that diminishes the impact of vehicles is required, such as:
 - parking areas are broken into smaller areas by landscaped islands;
 - hard and/or soft landscape elements act as a screen; and,
 - additional pedestrian amenities or landscaping is provided.
- For sites with multiple buildings, create pedestrian amenity areas such as seating areas, patios, walkways and plazas that link all the buildings and the street. Locate main entrances, staff, entrances, cafeterias, lounges, and other areas of high activity, to have a direct relationship to pedestrian amenity areas and similar functions of other buildings.
- Where appropriate, extend natural features into sites. Provide an adequate size of planting to create the perception of a natural area. Provide

a mix of plant material that is native, diverse, appropriate to the environmental conditions, and has seasonal interest.

6.0 Implementation

6.1 Interpretation

Successful built form environments are the result of the skillful coordination of many complex factors. The built environment includes streets, sidewalks, buildings, landscaping, signs, and parking, among others, on both public and private lands. The configuration of these elements responds to a variety of physical, social and economic dimensions such as climate, employment opportunities, access, transportation modes, and patterns of use or behavior.

These urban design guidelines are meant to guide the consideration and design of these factors. They should be read as a whole, so that the relationship between the guiding vision and specific requirements is understood. Not all of the guidelines are applicable or appropriate to particular situations. The guidelines are meant to be flexible, in order to achieve the intent of the vision, in the many unique and complex situations where they apply.

The guidelines have been written in an action-oriented manner, rather than passive terms such as “may” or “should” consider. As such, they project a strong, affirmative message emphasizing the importance of effective actions for achieving the desired built form for the Town’s employment areas. It is acknowledged that the guidelines are not the only means of achieving the built form vision and applicability will be influenced by local conditions, requirements and constraints. The guidelines can be adapted to such salutations based on professional judgments.

6.2 Process of Implementation

Draft Plan of Subdivision and Subdivision Agreement

The land use design elements are established through the draft plan approval process. This includes the general land use organization, the road layout and the location of stormwater management facilities.

The detailed design requirements of the services within the public rights-of-way are addressed in the subdivision agreement, including the landscape and streetscape design.

In these guidelines, the following sections are particularly relevant to the draft plan stage:

Section 2: Guiding Principles
Section 3.3: Streetscapes
Section 3.4: Street Network
Section 5.0: Areas of Special Treatment

Tertiary Plans

To ensure development occurs in a comprehensive and coordinated fashion, the Town may require the preparation of a Tertiary Plan. The preparation of this plan will draw upon all of the guidelines.

Privately Administered Design Control

These urban design guidelines provide concepts and standards to guide development on public and private lands with regard to issues concerning the vision for employment lands, general goals and objectives, site planning, architecture and landscape design. They establish a set of common base principles.

It is recommended that a privately administered Design Control review process be established, to effectively implement the concepts of this document, as well as more specific and detailed built form solutions, for private development.

The privately administered Design Control review process requires that on a per-application basis within the Town of Ajax's Employment Areas, all site plans, elevations, and materials and colours for all buildings be reviewed and approved by the control architect prior to submission to the Town of Ajax for site plan approval and/or building permit application. This site plan and associated documents (i.e., building elevations, landscape plans and details) are to be submitted as part of the Design Control process, and must be stamped "approved" by the Design Control consultant prior to submission to the Town of Ajax.

In the event that the Director of Planning of the Town of Ajax feels the Design Control consultant is not administering the guidelines in accordance with their intent, the Director may:

1. replace the consultant, or

2. require that a committee comprised of three qualified consultants/architects be established to assess whether the Design Control consultant is administering the guidelines in accordance with their intent. The committee shall be comprised of (i) one member appointed by the Director, (ii) one member appointed by the applicant, and (iii) one member acceptable to the Director to be nominated by the applicant.

In the event that an applicant has a dispute with the administration of the guidelines by the Design Control consultant, the applicant may appeal to the Director, who, at their sole discretion, may choose to appoint a committee as outlined in 2), above.

Site Plan Approval Process

All developments subject to the Site Plan Approval process will be administered by the Town of Ajax. The purpose of this process is to ensure that these development proposals meet all of the requirements of the Town of Ajax as well as those of those of other approval authorities or commenting agencies.

In these guidelines, the following sections are particularly relevant to the site plan approval stage:

- Section 2: Guiding Principles
- Section 4.0: The Private Realm
- Section 5.0 Areas of Special Treatment