

An aerial photograph of a town street at sunset. The street is wide and paved, with a few cars visible. On the left side of the street, there is a prominent orange brick clock tower. The street is lined with various buildings, including residential houses and commercial structures. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue, indicating the time is either sunrise or sunset. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

Territorial Acknowledgement and Connection to Indigenous History

Territorial Land Acknowledgement

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville acknowledges this land is the treaty territory of the Williams Treaty First Nations. It is also the traditional territory of other Anishinaabeg peoples, the Wendat, and the Haudenosaunee. We also recognize the contributions of all Indigenous peoples to this place and commit to a continued dialogue and greater respect for the land we have come to share. This recognition of the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to make the promise and the challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our community.

Connection to Indigenous History

It is believed that people first inhabited a tundra-like Whitchurch-Stouffville about 11,000 years ago, hunting caribou and large animals, such as mastodon, at the end of the last ice age. When the climate warmed 9,000 years ago people began to utilize the rich plant and animal resources native to the Town today. Their camps, hunting and trapping territories, and long portage routes linking the lower and upper Great Lakes provide the beginnings of the Town's rich cultural heritage.

Approximately 2,000 years ago, corn and other crops were introduced from the Mississippi valley to Great Lakes region by Algonquian (Anishnabek)-speaking peoples.

In the Town and York Region, large communities of Iroquoian-speaking ancestors of the Huron-Wendat formed. They were surrounded by hundreds of acres of cornfields. The dispersal of the Huron-Wendat to Wendake (Huron) at the end of the 16th century led to the occupation of the north shore of Lake Ontario by Seneca and Cayuga peoples in the mid-17th century, for approximately 500 years. They were then replaced

by Anishnabek Mississauga people who had migrated southward from northern Ontario.

Today, the presence of this history can be seen through the Wendat (Huron) Ancestral Village in the Community of Stouffville which is the largest and most complex ancestral Wendat-Huron village to be excavated to date in the Lower Great Lakes region. Traditionally, the Huron-Wendat were a great Iroquoian civilization of farmers and fishermen-hunter-gatherers and masters of trade and diplomacy. Thousands of artifacts were recovered from the site, including ceramic cooking pots, flint arrow tips and scraping tools, stone axes, and awls and beads made of animal bone. This diverse cultural heritage enhances quality of life and helps make the Town unique.

Team Acknowledgement

We want to thank the considerable efforts of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville staff, Town partners and stakeholders and members of the consultant team who guided the development of the Complete Streets – Public and Private Standards Manual.

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Disclaimer

The material presented in this manual has been researched and presented, and is based on latest available standards, guidelines and best practices. However, streetscape design is dependent on context. The information provided in this Manual is intended to be flexible and adaptable to local conditions. While flexibility may be considered based on site-specific circumstances, any deviation from this Manual shall be supported by a clear technical rationale and is subject to approval by the Town. Users of this Manual shall confirm that proposed design treatments are appropriate for the specific location, considering relevant site conditions and constraints. Illustrative examples are conceptual only. Streetscape design is also an evolving practice. Users of this manual should confirm that designs are consistent with current legislation, regulations, policies, by-laws, and municipal standards before implementation.

Photo Credits

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
About the Town.....	1
Background	2
Purpose of this Manual	2
Legislative Basis for the Manual	4
What is a Streetscape?	7
What is Important to the Residents and Visitors of Whitchurch-Stouffville?.....	9
1 Public Realm	12
1.1 What is the Public Realm?.....	12
1.2 The Public Realm in Whitchurch-Stouffville	13
1.3 Whitchurch-Stouffville's Transportation Network.....	15
1.3.1 Roadway Classifications	15
1.3.2 Roadway Design Criteria	16
1.3.3 Active Transportation	19
1.3.4 Public Transit	21
1.4 Streetscape Design	23
1.4.1 Streetscape Design Categories.....	23
1.4.2 Roundabouts	36
1.4.3 Implementation Considerations	37
1.5 Public Realm Streetscape Elements	38
1.5.1 Accessibility and Road Safety.....	38
1.5.2 Lighting	43
1.5.3 Paving Materials	45
1.5.4 Street Furniture	46
1.5.5 Landscaping	49
1.5.6 Public Art	55
1.5.7 Gateway Features.....	59
1.5.8 Cultural Heritage	63
1.6 Best Practices for Maintenance and Operations	66
1.6.1 Durable and Vandal-Resistant Site Furnishings	66
1.6.2 Public Art Maintenance	67
1.6.3 Winter Maintenance.....	67
1.6.4 Routine Inspections and Record-Keeping.....	67

Table of Contents

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

2 Private Realm	69
2.1 What is the Private Realm?	69
2.2 Private Realm Streetscape Elements.....	70
2.2.1 Mid-block Pedestrian Connections	71
2.2.2 Private Businesses / Patios	71
2.2.3 Green Infrastructure for Stormwater Management.....	72
2.2.4 Private Parking Lots	72
2.2.5 Signage.....	73
2.2.6 Conclusion	73
3 Public and Private Realm Integration	75
3.1 Streetscape Design Integration between the Public and Private Realms.....	76
3.2 Design Principles (Whole Town Approach)	76
3.3 Typical Elements & the Ideal Public/Private Interface	77
3.3.1 Public Sidewalk and Furniture Zone (Public)	77
3.3.2 Private Patios / Terraces.....	78
3.3.3 Signage and Lighting.....	79
3.3.4 Stormwater Management.....	79
3.3.5 Parking Lot Design Standards	81
3.3.6 Utilities	91
3.4 Governance: Rules, Approvals and Maintenance	93
4 Conclusion	95
5 List of Schedules	96

List of Tables

Table 1: Overview of Manual Content & Application.....	4
Table 2: Provincial Plans, Policies, Guidelines and Standards.....	5
Table 3: Regional Plans, Policies, Guidelines and Standards.....	6
Table 4: Municipal Plans, Policies, Guidelines and Standards.....	6
Table 5: Town's Roadway Classifications and Design Criteria	18
Table 6: Roadway Classifications and Streetscape Design Requirements.....	25

Table of Contents

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

List of Amendments

Amendment/Revision	Date of Update	Section of Manual	Description

Table of Contents

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual



Introduction

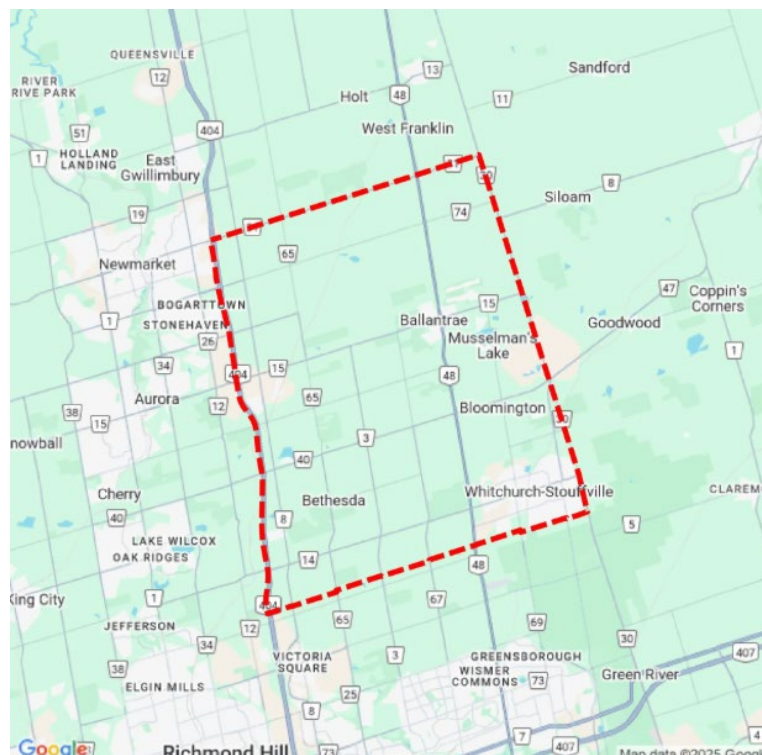
Introduction

About the Town

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (Town) is a geographically diverse municipality covering over approximately 200 square kilometers (km²). The Town is one of the nine (9) local municipalities that comprise York Region. It is bordered by Markham to the south, Aurora and Newmarket to the west, East Gwillimbury to the north and Uxbridge and Pickering to the East (see **Figure 1**).

Over the past two decades, the Town has experienced significant population growth, growing at a rate of 8.8% from 2016 to a 2024 population of over 57,000. It is one of the most rapidly growing communities in Canada, and the Town's 2025 Official Plan forecasts that growth and development will continue over the next decade.

Figure 1: Map of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville¹



¹ Source: Google Maps

Background

The Community of Stouffville's Main Street Built Form and Urban Design Guidelines were produced in 2020 (**Figure 2**). They outline a cohesive vision for the Town's Main Street corridor, encouraging complete and healthy communities, protecting the Town's agricultural, environmental, cultural heritage resources, and demonstrating current best practices for urban design. However, these guidelines do not provide direction for streetscape design outside of the Main Street corridor.

Figure 2: Community of Stouffville's Main Street Built Form and Urban Design Guidelines, 2020



Purpose of this Manual

As the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville continues to grow, it is important that direction is provided for the planning and design of the public and private areas adjacent to roads, across the entire Town. The standards and guidelines presented in this Manual shall be used to guide all planning, design and development applications within the Town, as well as guide the Town's Engineering & Public Works Departments, which support the Town's vision for building complete communities and can create a consistent identity for the municipality for attracting tourism, wayfinding and investment in the community. Where conflict exists, the Town reserves the rights to require compliance with the more stringent

standards. All design plans must be submitted to the Town for review and approval.

This Manual serves as a resource for the planning, design and maintenance of the Town's streetscapes which includes roadways and adjacent publicly owned areas such as boulevards, wayfinding points such as signs and gateways, as well as stormwater management infrastructure, utilities and vegetation including trees.

It is intended to provide guidelines to achieve the priorities of the Town and its residents, and to be inclusive of the goals of other stakeholders such as business owners and developers.

The manual is divided into three (3) sections; the public realm (publicly owned), the private realm (privately-owned) and the interaction between the two ownerships, where guidelines can assist to create a seamless transition between the two realms. For the purposes of this Manual, a **realm** is defined as an area or piece of land in relation to its legal ownership.

This Manual is intended to assist the Town with the implementation of its Official Plan by translating policies into actionable design guidelines and recommendations.

The guidelines are intended to provide general recommendations. The Town should be consulted for specific detailed design considerations, standards, and palettes, which can vary per location and purpose. The Manual should be used in conjunction with Provincial, Regional and Municipal design guidelines and standards. An overview of the content and application for sections in this Manual is provided on the next page in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Overview of Manual Content & Application

Section	Content	Application
Section 1: Public Realm	Section 1 describes the public realm – what is it, streetscape typologies, design standards, etc.	Information found within this section guides the development within the public realm of the Town.
Section 2: Private Realm	Section 2 describes the private realm – what is it, design standards, etc.	Information found within this section guides the development within the private realm of the Town.
Section 3: Public & Private Realm Integration	Section 3 outlines the integration of public and private realms.	Information found within this section can be used to ensure a seamless transition between the public and private realms.
Section 4: Conclusion and List of Schedules	Section 4 provides a conclusion to summarize the manual and lists the schedules that accompany the Manual.	Information found in this section will guide submissions to the Town (checklists, plant lists, etc.).

Legislative Basis for the Manual

Other policies, standards and acts from different levels of government, regulating bodies and organizations with legislative authority will impact and have oversight determination of the streetscape design. The municipality has additional manuals and policies to review for adherence in conjunction with the streetscape context.

Tables 2 to 4 on the next pages provide information on associated documents and legislation.

Table 2: Provincial Plans, Policies, Guidelines and Standards

Policy	Purpose / Description
<i>Planning Act</i>	The <i>Planning Act</i> sets out rules for land use planning in Ontario.
Provincial Planning Statement (PPS)	The PPS is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the <i>Planning Act</i> and provides policy direction on matters of Provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The PPS sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land while protecting resources of Provincial interest, public health and safety and the quality of the natural environment.
Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan	The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP) is an ecologically based plan that provides land use and resource management direction for approximately 80% of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.
Greenbelt Plan	The Greenbelt Plan identifies where urbanization should not occur in order to provide permanent protection to the agricultural land base and the ecological features and functions occurring on this landscape.
<i>Highway Traffic Act (HTA)</i>	The HTA serves as a regulatory framework that dictates how transportation infrastructure is used, designed and managed. It works in tandem with the <i>Planning Act</i> to ensure that roadways are safe, efficient, and capable of handling traffic volumes.
<i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)</i>	AODA is not just for physical access to businesses, but it ensures that accessibility is integrated into all aspects of daily life including service, information, employment and public space design.

Table 3: Regional Plans, Policies, Guidelines and Standards

Policy	Purpose / Description
Transportation Master Plan (2022)	The Region's Transportation Master Plan outlines how the region will manage, invest and develop region-owned transportation infrastructure. This Plan guides the development of multi-modal networks (roads, walking, cycling and transit) to support expected growth, enhance safety, reduce congestion and improve connectivity.

Table 4: Municipal Plans, Policies, Guidelines and Standards

Policy	Purpose / Description
Official Plan (2025)	The Town's Official Plan outlines a land use policy framework to guide growth and development within the Town to the year 2051, including policies that establish growth management; establish protected major transit station areas; provide for a wide range of housing options and transportation options; plans for infrastructure and servicing; protect the natural heritage system and water resources; protect the agricultural system, and other matters.
Transportation Master Plan (2024)	The Town's Transportation Master Plan outlines how the Town will manage, invest and develop town-owned transportation infrastructure. This Plan guides the development of multi-modal networks (roads, walking, cycling and transit) to support expected growth, enhance safety, reduce congestion and improve connectivity.
Active Transportation Servicing Plan (2018)	This Plan identifies infrastructure requirements for the development of an integrated pedestrian and cycling network in the Communities of Stouffville, Ballantrae and Musselman's Lake. The objective of this plan is to address these issues and create a connected active transportation network.

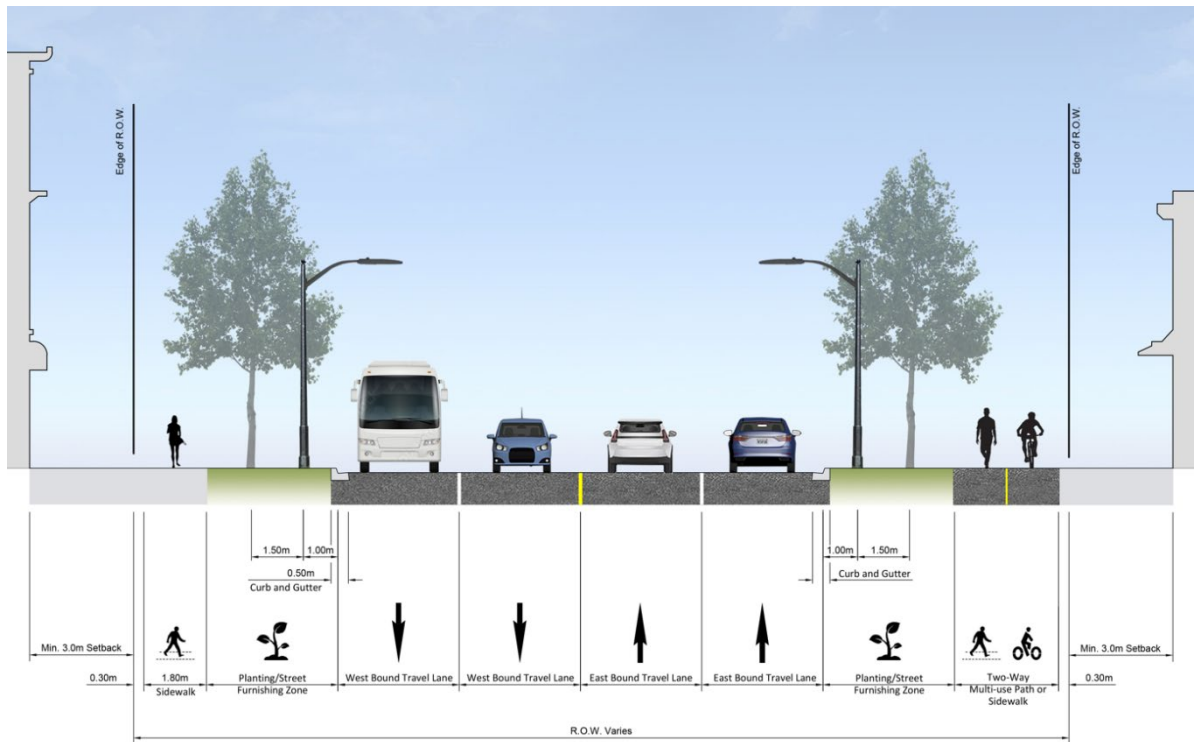
Policy	Purpose / Description
Zoning By-law	Enforceable municipal regulations that dictate how land can be used, what types of buildings are permitted and where structures can be located on a property.
Community of Stouffville Main Street Built Form and Urban Design Guidelines (2020)	The guidelines are intended to ensure that new development is consistent with the Town's overall goals for the Main Street Corridor.
Engineering Design Standards	These standards developed by the Town ensure safety, reliability and uniformity in products and processes across the Town. <i>Changes and revisions will be made from time to time. It is the responsibility of the Developer, Development Engineer and/or Landscape Architect to obtain current versions.</i>
Heritage Conservation Districts	These policy documents provide additional information on landscaping options within the Heritage Conservation Districts of the Town, including some options for native and non-native plantings to reflect historic planting materials.

What is a Streetscape?

The streetscape can be part of the Public or Private Realm. It is the physical environment of a street used for transportation by pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. It includes surfaces for transportation and parking, connections and gateways, boulevards for infrastructure, servicing and offsets, drainage systems, and can have components to enhance its use including trees, seating, shelter, shade and signage. During the design process, cross-sections are developed based on the right-of-way (ROW) width of the road (i.e., what infrastructure can fit into the given width of the road if widening is not an option). The elements of a typical cross-section can include travel lanes, parking lanes, bike lanes, boulevard area (planting or landscaping zones), sidewalks, multi-use

paths and applicable setbacks or offsets from buildings or private property. An example of a typical cross section is shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: Typical Road Cross-Section Elements



Streetscape designs enhance accessibility, functionality and aesthetic character to encourage a safe and sustainable infrastructure for existing and new developments as the Town grows.

Streetscape design relies on a comprehensive decision-making process. It is developed based on street typologies and hierarchy of streetscape types with associated considerations:

- Streetscape **Types** - the hierarchy of streetscape types.
- Streetscape **Zones** - the functional zones that organize the public right-of-way (boulevard) between the building face and the roadway.
- Streetscape **Elements** - elements that make up a Streetscape (e.g. paving, street trees, medians, lighting, street furniture).
- Public and Private Areas **Interface** - mixed-use areas and gateways.

- Public **Utilities** - how utilities are facilitated.
- **Implementation** and **Maintenance** Strategy.

In all streetscape design decisions, the following priority hierarchy shall apply:

- Public safety and accessibility (AODA Compliance)
- Infrastructure and utility requirements
- Pedestrian movement and clear zone
- Cycling and transit infrastructure
- Landscape and urban design elements

What is Important to the Residents and Visitors of Whitchurch-Stouffville?

In support of this Manual, the Town conducted an online survey in January 2026 through the Town's Come Together website. A total of 101 respondents participated, with more than 90% identifying as Town residents and 12.5% indicating that they work in or own a business within the Town (refer to **Figure 4** on the next page). Survey results indicated that most travel within the Town is vehicle-based (90.5%), followed by walking (53%) (refer to **Figure 5** on the next page).

Key themes identified through the survey included requests for additional street furniture, such as benches and waste receptacles, concerns regarding limited pedestrian connectivity throughout the Town, and a strong desire to preserve and reinforce the Town's heritage character. Respondents also emphasized the importance of enhancing public safety through improved lighting, accessibility and shaded tree canopies.

The highest priorities identified by respondents were user safety, community character and local identity. Overall, participants expressed a desire for streets that are welcoming, pedestrian-friendly, green and nature-oriented, and reflective of the Town's history and heritage.

Figure 4: Public Engagement Feedback – Location of Respondents

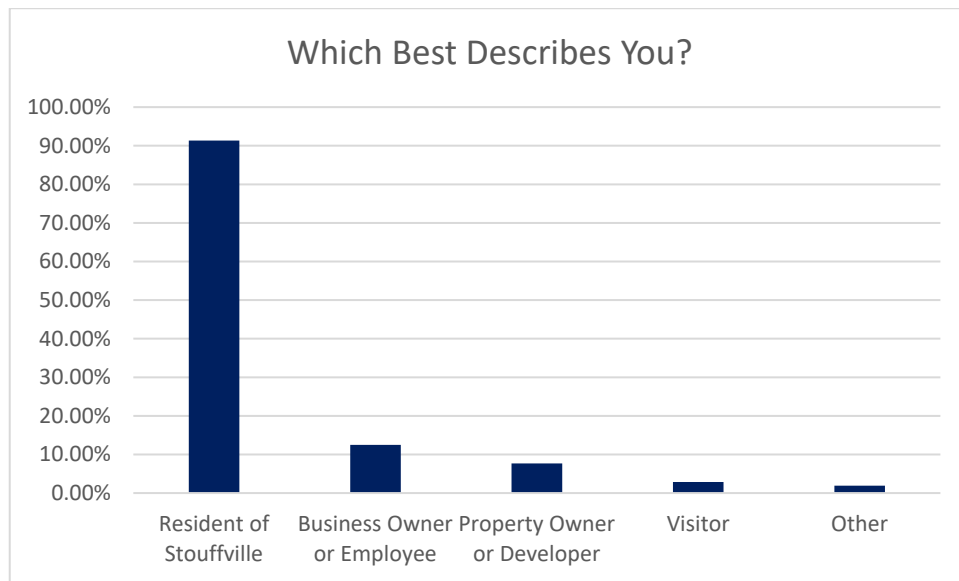
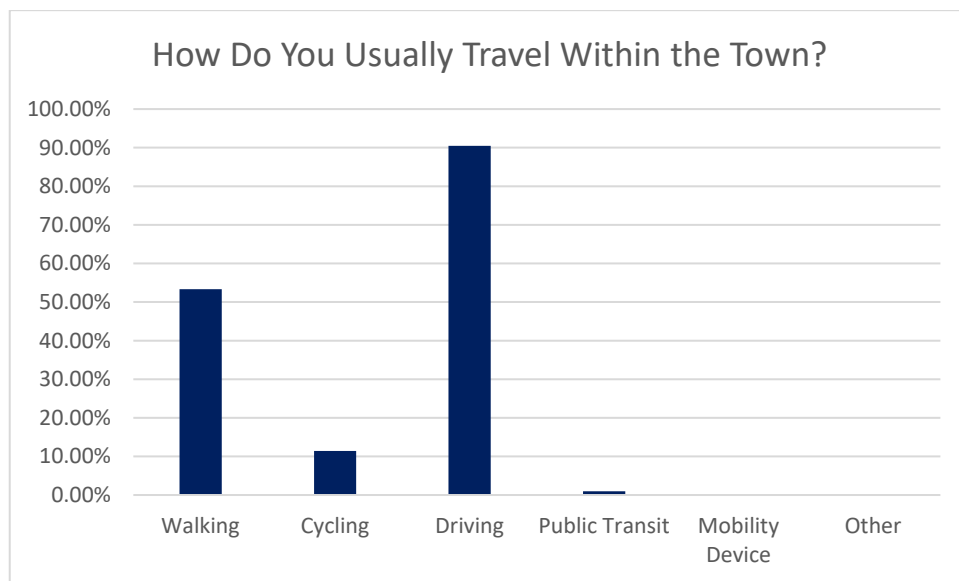


Figure 5: Public Engagement Feedback – Method of Travel





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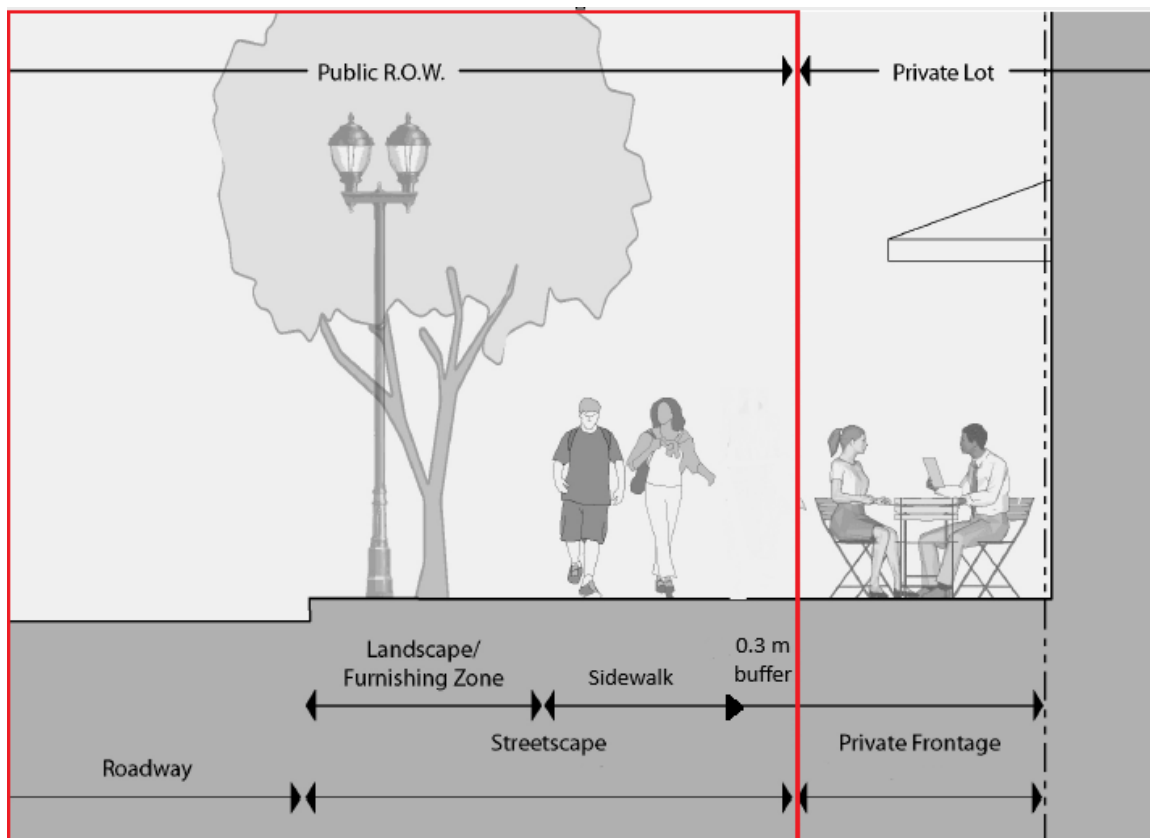
Public Realm

1 Public Realm

1.1 What is the Public Realm?

The public realm is a publicly accessible and visible space that is not privately-owned and can include streets, boulevards, sidewalks, parking lots, walkway connection blocks, vista blocks, open spaces, pedestrian mews, trails, and parks, etc. **Figure 6** provides a general cross-section of a roadway highlighting the public realm (red border) next to the private frontage of a building.

Figure 6: The Public Realm



1.2 The Public Realm in Whitchurch-Stouffville

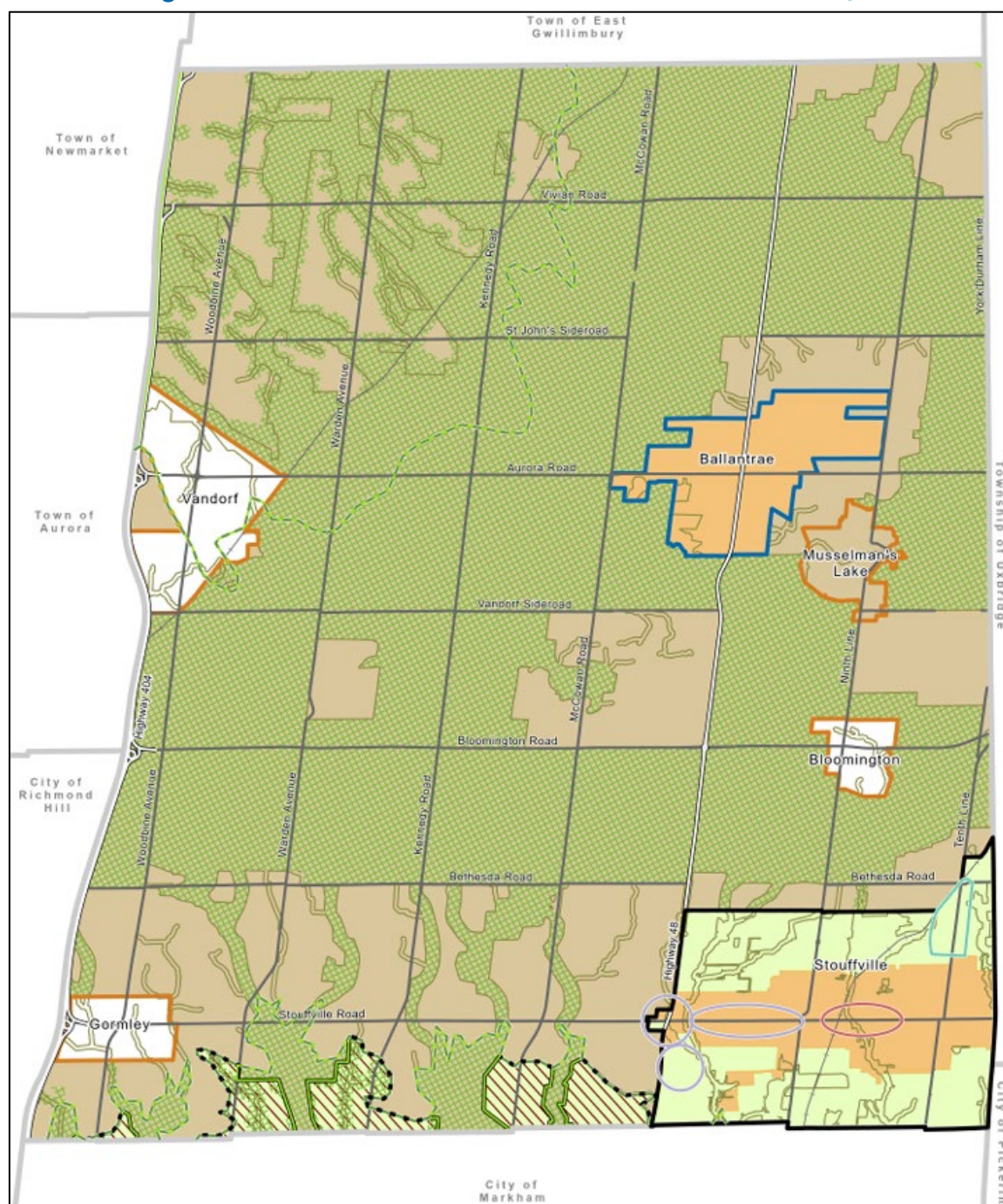
The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is primarily composed of rural, agricultural, and environmental lands. Most of the Town is located within the Greenbelt, which includes the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The Town is known for industry-based activities such as agriculture and aggregate extraction, and is home to many golf courses, equestrian centres and wineries which attract thousands of visitors each year. This rural context is largely balanced by the Community of Stouffville, which is located in the southeast corner of the Town, and is a fully serviced urban community with a diverse range of residential, employment, commercial and institutional uses.

In addition to the Community of Stouffville, there are five (5) smaller settlement areas which are dispersed throughout the Town's rural, agricultural, and environmental lands. These settlement areas are listed below and shown on **Figure 7** (next page):

- Community of Ballantrae
- Hamlet of Musselman's Lake
- Hamlet of Vandorf
- Hamlet of Bloomington
- Hamlet of Gormley

Figure 7: Town Structure (Town's OP Schedule 'A' 2025)²



² Source: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville OP, 2025

1.3 Whitchurch-Stouffville's Transportation Network

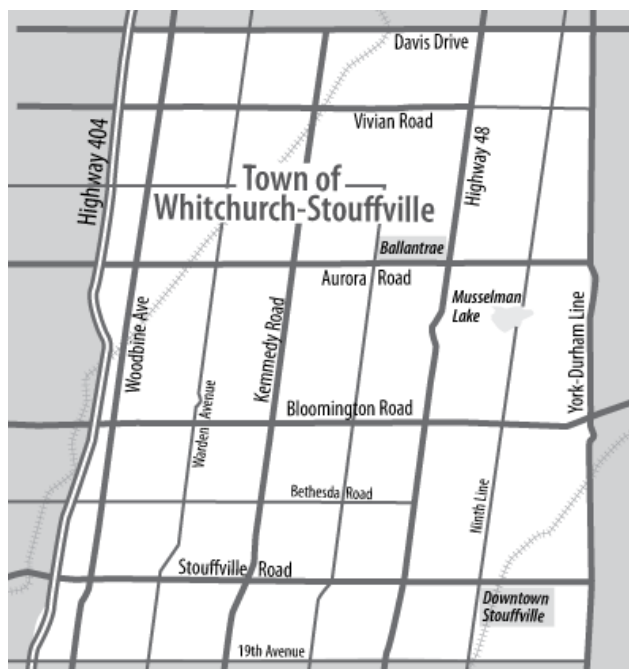
The Town's transportation network includes provincial, regional and local roads, sidewalks and trails, and transit services via York Region Transit (YRT) and GO rail and bus.

Highway 404 forms the Town's western boundary, providing a high-capacity, controlled-access route connecting Toronto to the south and East Gwillimbury to the north. King's Highway 48, under provincial jurisdiction, offers interregional connections between Markham to the south and Beaverton to the north.

1.3.1 Roadway Classifications

York Region owns and maintains the Town's major arterial roads. North-south routes include Woodbine Avenue, Warden Avenue, Kennedy Road, McCowan Road, and Ninth Line, while east-west routes under regional ownership include Davis Drive, Vivian Road, Aurora Road, Bloomington Road, and Stouffville Road (**Figure 8**). York-Durham Line marks the Town's eastern boundary, with jurisdiction shared between York and Durham Regions—York Region south of Bloomington Road and Durham Region to the north.

Figure 8: Major Roadways within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville



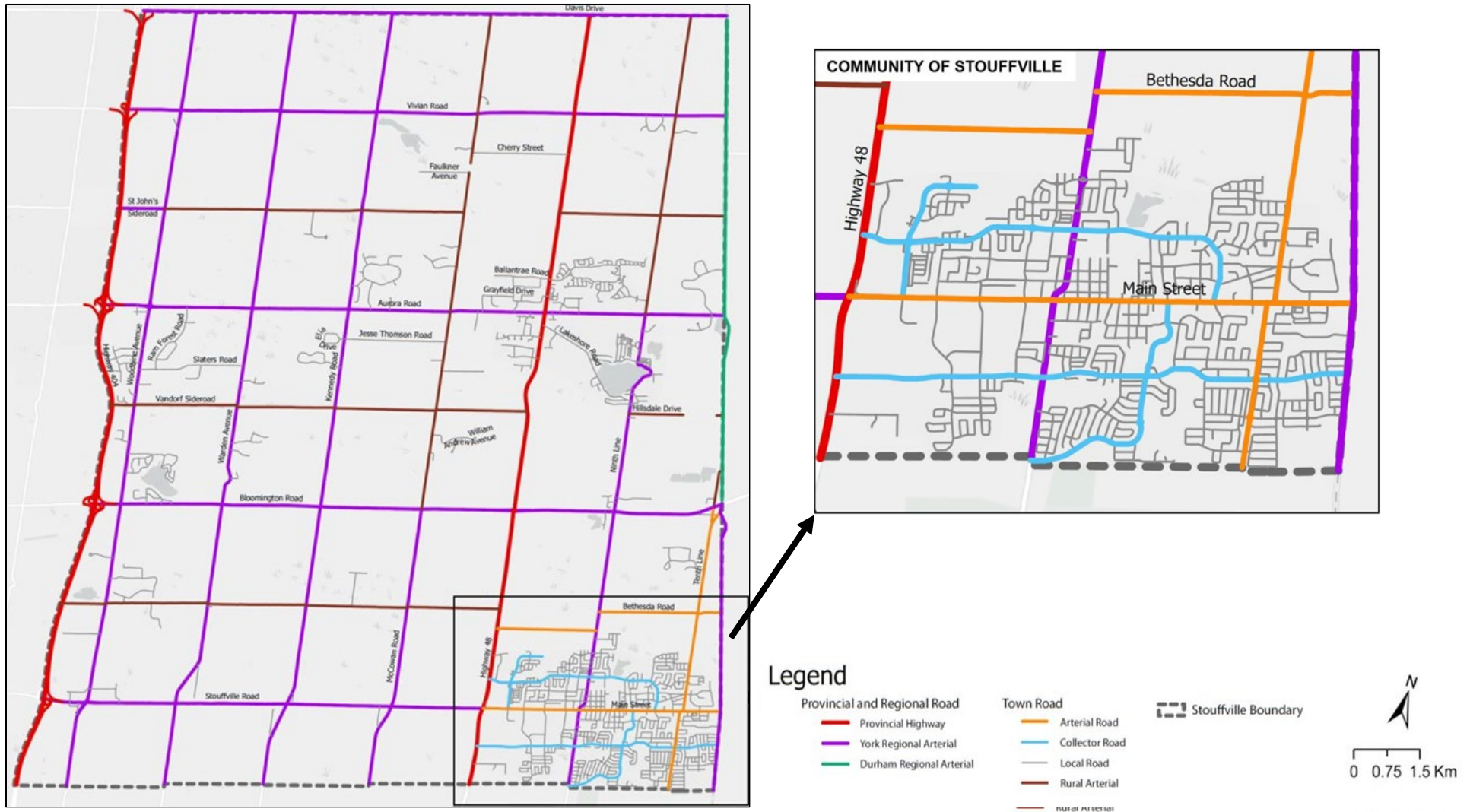
With the mix of the rural and settlement areas, the Town has a varying degree of complexity in roadway classification with four (4) main road categories: Arterial Roads, Collector Roads, Local Roads and Rural Arterial Roads (see **Figure 9** next page).

1.3.2 Roadway Design Criteria

Roadway classifications establish the functional role of each street within the Town's transportation network and provide the basis for determining appropriate streetscape design treatments. The design criteria outlined in **Table 5** (page 18) are intended to guide the planning and design of roadways by identifying the typical right-of-way widths, lane configurations, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, transit considerations, parking provisions, and general roadway characteristics associated with each roadway classification.

These criteria are intended to support a balanced approach to roadway design that considers mobility, safety, accessibility, placemaking, and long-term operational needs. While the table provides a framework for typical conditions within the Town, the application of these standards should remain flexible and responsive to site-specific constraints, adjacent land uses, environmental considerations, and future growth objectives.

Figure 9: Map of Roadway Classifications within the Town³



³ Source: Town's TMP (2024)

Section 1: Public Realm

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

Table 5: Town's Roadway Classifications and Design Criteria

Road Classification	Typical ROW (m)	Typical No. Lanes	Sidewalks	Cycling Facilities	Transit Priority	Parking	Roadways	Notes
Arterial (Major and Minor)	20-45	2-4	Both Sides	Encouraged: bike lanes or multi-use path	Select Routes	Limited	Main Street (urban portion); Tenth Line; Hoover Park Drive; Bethesda Road (east of Hwy 48)	Major mobility within the Town
Collector	20-27	2	Both Sides	Buffered lanes or shared lanes	No	Limited	Park Drive; Baker Hill Blvd.; Millard Street	Neighbourhood-to-neighbourhood connections
Local	17-20	2	Both Sides (preferred)	Optional (sharrows)	No	Yes (context based)	Various subdivision streets; existing neighbourhood collectors	Connects locals to major collectors
Rural	20-26	2	One or Both Sides	None/Shared	No	Yes	All residential streets not designated as collectors	Property access; low volume

1.3.3 Active Transportation

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's mix of rural, semi-rural, and suburban communities result in a diverse range of active transportation facilities, including sidewalks, walkways, trails, bicycle paths, on-road signed routes, and multi-use trails (see **Figure 10**). Most of these facilities are concentrated in the Community of Stouffville, with limited infrastructure in Ballantrae and Musselman's Lake. Sidewalk conditions vary, with some roads featuring sidewalks on both sides, one side, or none. Cycling facilities are primarily off-road multi-use trails located in parks and green spaces, while cyclists in rural areas rely mainly on paved or unpaved shoulders.

Figure 10: Types of Pedestrian and Cyclist Facilities



1.3.3.1 Active Transportation Requirements

Active transportation infrastructure shall be incorporated into all arterial and collector road designs, where feasible and subject to Town approval. This includes but is not limited to:

- Dedicated cycling facilities or multi-use paths
- Clearly marked pedestrian and cycling crossings (see **Figures 11 and 12** next page)
- Accessible pedestrian connections

Figure 11: Example of Pavement Markings for Cycling Crossings



Figure 12: Example of Protected Corners at an Intersection



There are existing trails and walkways located in the Town's in natural/rural areas, including Gormley (Bruce's Mill Conservation Area), Vandorf, Ballantrae–Musselman's Lake, and several York Regional Forest areas (see **Figure 13** on the next page). However, these trails systems are generally disconnected from the Town's active urban transportation network. To address these gaps, the Town completed the Active Transportation Servicing Plan (ATSP) in 2018, which identifies infrastructure needs to create a

connected active transportation network across Stouffville, Ballantrae, and Musselman's Lake.

Many neighbourhoods across the Town were originally developed with rural or semi-rural road cross-sections, leading to a discontinuous sidewalk and cycling network. This manual incorporates recommendations to support the ATSP findings to develop a safer, healthier, and more connected active transportation system throughout the Town.

Figure 13: Trail Link opening at Vanvalley Drive (Vandorf-Preston Lake)



1.3.4 Public Transit

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is served by GO Transit which provides commuter rail connections to Downtown Toronto's Union Station via Markham and Scarborough as well as bus connections to Uxbridge to the north (**Figure 14** next page). The Community of Stouffville is served by both Old Elm and Stouffville GO Stations which provide peak direction rail service to and from Union Station during peak hours.

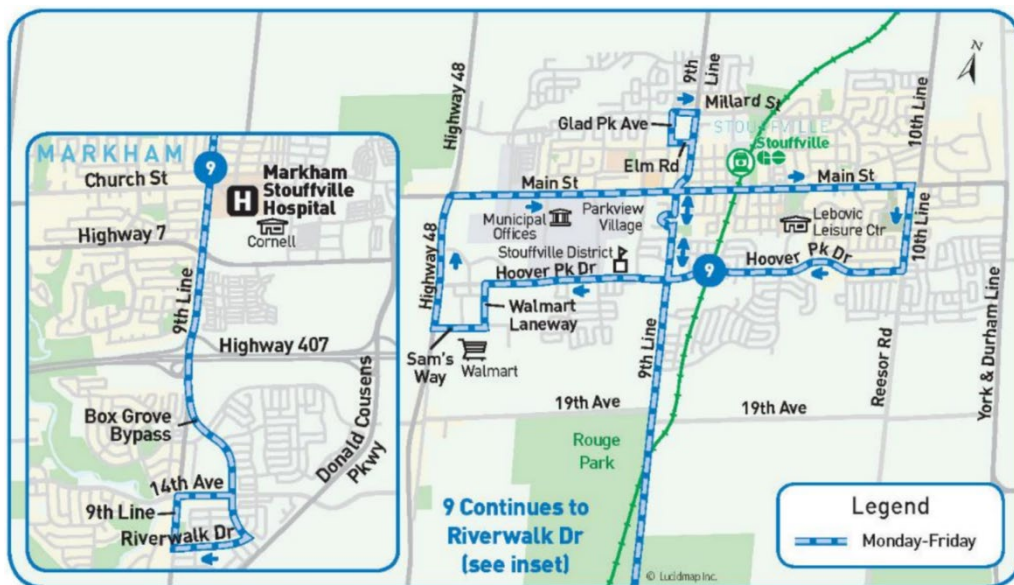
York Region Transit (YRT) provides intra-regional transit within York Region including transit service in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville,

providing transit connections into the City of Toronto and the City of Brampton in Peel Region. Whitchurch-Stouffville is currently served by YRT by one fixed route - Route 9, providing local service within the Community of Stouffville and intraregional connections to Markham via Ninth Line. Route 9 connects to rapid transit route Viva Purple at Cornell Terminal (**Figure 15**).

Figure 14: Stouffville GO Station



Figure 15: Public Transit Routes within the Community of Stouffville⁴

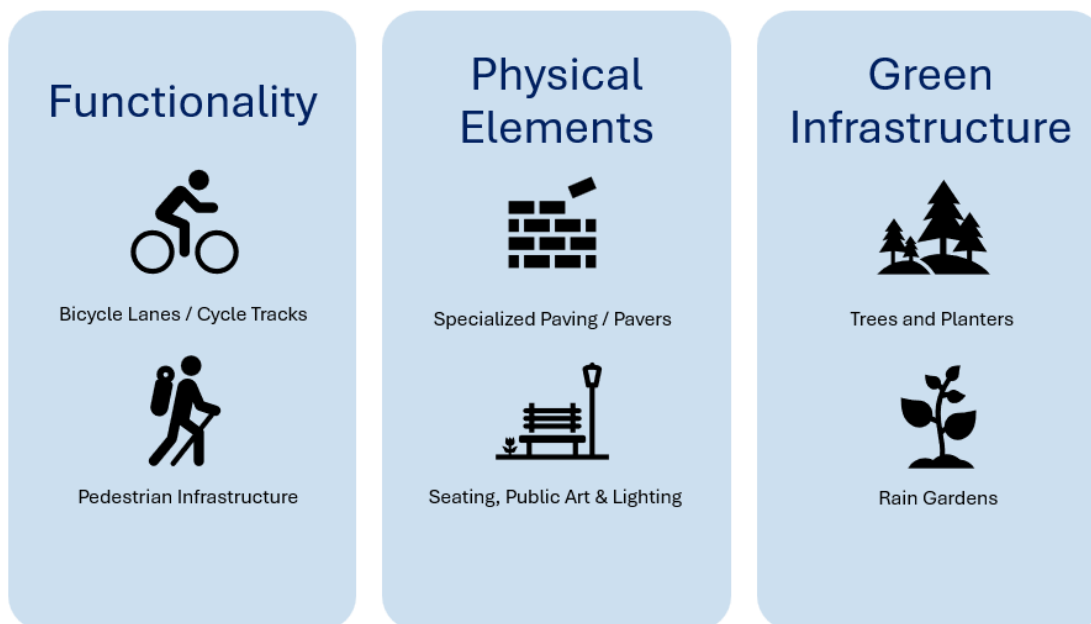


⁴ Source: Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's TMP, 2024

1.4 Streetscape Design

The streetscape in the public realm is typically used by pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Streetscape concept plans illustrate street trees and other landscape materials, special paving, lighting, street furniture, wayfinding, public art, parking, travel and cycling lanes. The three (3) key components of streetscape design are shown in **Figure 16**.

Figure 16: Key Components of Streetscape Design



1.4.1 Streetscape Design Categories

Based on the Town's roadway classifications, a series of streetscape design categories have been established to guide the planning, design, and implementation of public rights-of-way throughout Whitchurch-Stouffville. These categories recognize that streets perform different functions depending on context, adjacent land use, transportation demands, and community character. **Table 6** (page 25) summarizes the primary street categories and identifies typical streetscape features that may be considered during the design process.

The streetscape elements identified for each category are intended to provide direction and establish a framework for future design; however,

not all elements will be appropriate or feasible in every location. Final design solutions shall be subject to detailed review and approval through the Town's planning, engineering, transportation, accessibility, and operations requirements, as well as Regional or other agency approvals where applicable.

Streetscape features should be evaluated based on right-of-way width, traffic operations, buried and above-ground utilities, maintenance considerations, stormwater requirements, surrounding land use, and long-term community objectives.

While LID features may be encouraged where contextually appropriate, proponents should note that the Town does not currently permit LIDs within the municipal right-of-way for the purpose of stormwater management or water balance calculations.

The following categories are intended to support a coordinated streetscape vision while allowing flexibility to respond to site-specific conditions.

Table 6: Roadway Classifications and Streetscape Design Requirements

Street Category	Definition/Functions	Urban Design Principles	Town Road Classification	Examples of Cross Section Features that Could be Considered
Main Streets	Commercial, residential, or mixed-use streets generating grade-level activity	Active frontages, pedestrian-oriented, social interaction, visual interest	Arterial Road	Sidewalks, cycling facility, lay-by and/or on-street parking, medians, turn lanes, street trees, continuous active building frontage
Emerging Main Streets	Streets transitioning toward higher activity and mixed-use	Flexibility, future adaptability/expansion, encourage activation of frontages, connectivity, potential for plazas/public space	Collector Road	Flexible cross section allowing for road widening or transit priority lanes in the future, street trees, cycling facility, outdoor seating, transit, and phased frontage improvements
Green Streets	Street prioritizing pedestrians, cyclists, and ecological performance	Walkability, greenery, stormwater management, comfort, traffic calming	Collector or Local Road	Sidewalks or multi-use paths, cycling facility, lay-by and/or on-street parking, street trees, option for LIDs, stamped concrete or high reflective surfaces, if possible, and minimal vehicular lanes prioritizing active transportation
Local Streets	Primarily residential streets providing local access/neighbourhood movement	Livability, traffic calming, safety, community identity	Local Road	Narrow travel lanes, lay-by and/or on-street parking, sidewalks on both sides, street trees, private landscape, traffic-calming features, and front yard interface
Special Streets / Areas	Heritage districts or streets spanning different urban areas with variable character	Preserve identity, placemaking, identity, adaptability, traffic calming	Varies by context	Variable setbacks, lay-by and/or on street parking, unique design treatment, such as heritage or consistent paving materials, public plazas, widened sidewalks at nodes, street furniture, and transitional buffers between zones, flexible boulevards that respond to adjacent land uses.
Service Streets	Streets primarily serve deliveries, utilities, and back-of-house functions	Functionality, safety, minimal pedestrian conflict	Local Road / Laneway	Efficient vehicle lanes, service access points, minimal landscaping, loading zones, pedestrian safety measures

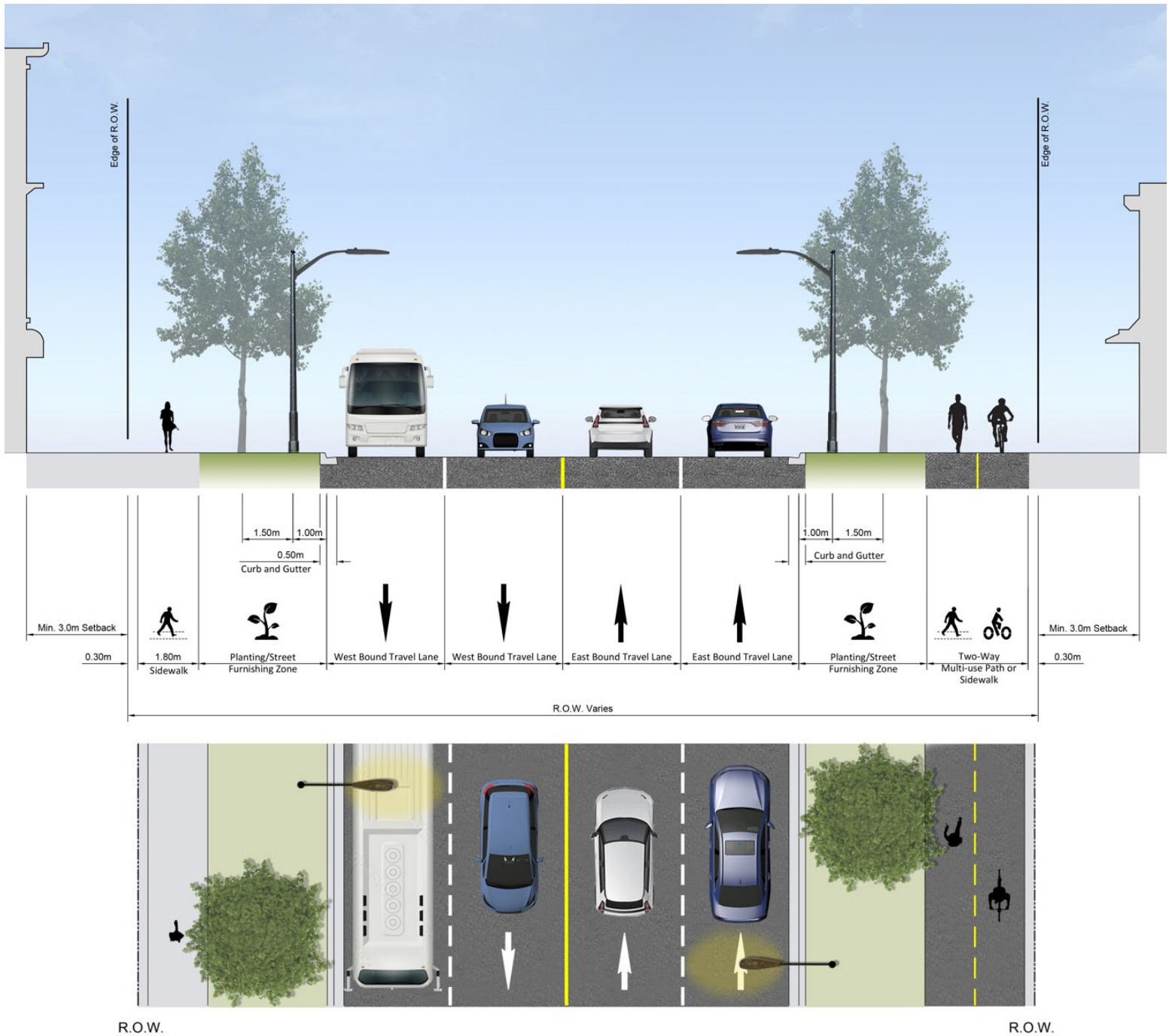
1.4.1.1 Main Streets

Main Streets are well-established commercial, residential, or mixed-use corridors that function as prominent destinations and community gathering spaces. These streets are typically characterized by continuous building frontages, active ground-floor uses such as retail, restaurants, and services, as well as high levels of pedestrian, cyclist, transit, and vehicular activity. Main Streets often serve as important civic and economic corridors and generally correspond to arterial roads.

Design for Main Streets should prioritize pedestrian comfort, safety, and placemaking while balancing mobility and access for all users.

Streetscape elements that may be considered include sidewalks, cycling infrastructure, transit amenities, landscaped boulevards, street trees, coordinated street furniture, decorative lighting, lay-by and/or on-street parking, medians or turning lanes, and opportunities for patios or spill-out spaces where appropriate (see **Figure 17** on the next page). The specific cross-section and streetscape treatments will depend on available right-of-way, transportation function, utility constraints, and adjacent development form. In all cases, Main Street design should support active frontages, visual interest, and a vibrant public realm.

Figure 17: Cross-Section Option for Main Streets



Section 1: Public Realm

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

1.4.1.2 Emerging Main Streets

Emerging Main Streets are streets or corridors that are anticipated to transition over time toward more urban, mixed-use, and higher-intensity development patterns. These streets may currently function as collector or arterial roads but are expected to evolve as redevelopment occurs, densities increase, and community activity expands.

Given their transitional nature, Emerging Main Streets should be designed with flexibility and future adaptability in mind. Streetscape design should consider both immediate needs and long-term opportunities, including phased implementation of active transportation infrastructure, future transit enhancements, wider boulevards, or public gathering spaces. Features may include flexible cross-sections that accommodate future road widening or transit priority, cycling facilities, enhanced pedestrian connections, street trees, interim landscaping, and opportunities for gradual frontage activation through redevelopment (see **Figure 18** next page). Designs should encourage connectivity and placemaking while recognizing that full build-out may occur over time.

Figure 18: Cross-Section Option for Emerging Main Streets



Section 1: Public Realm

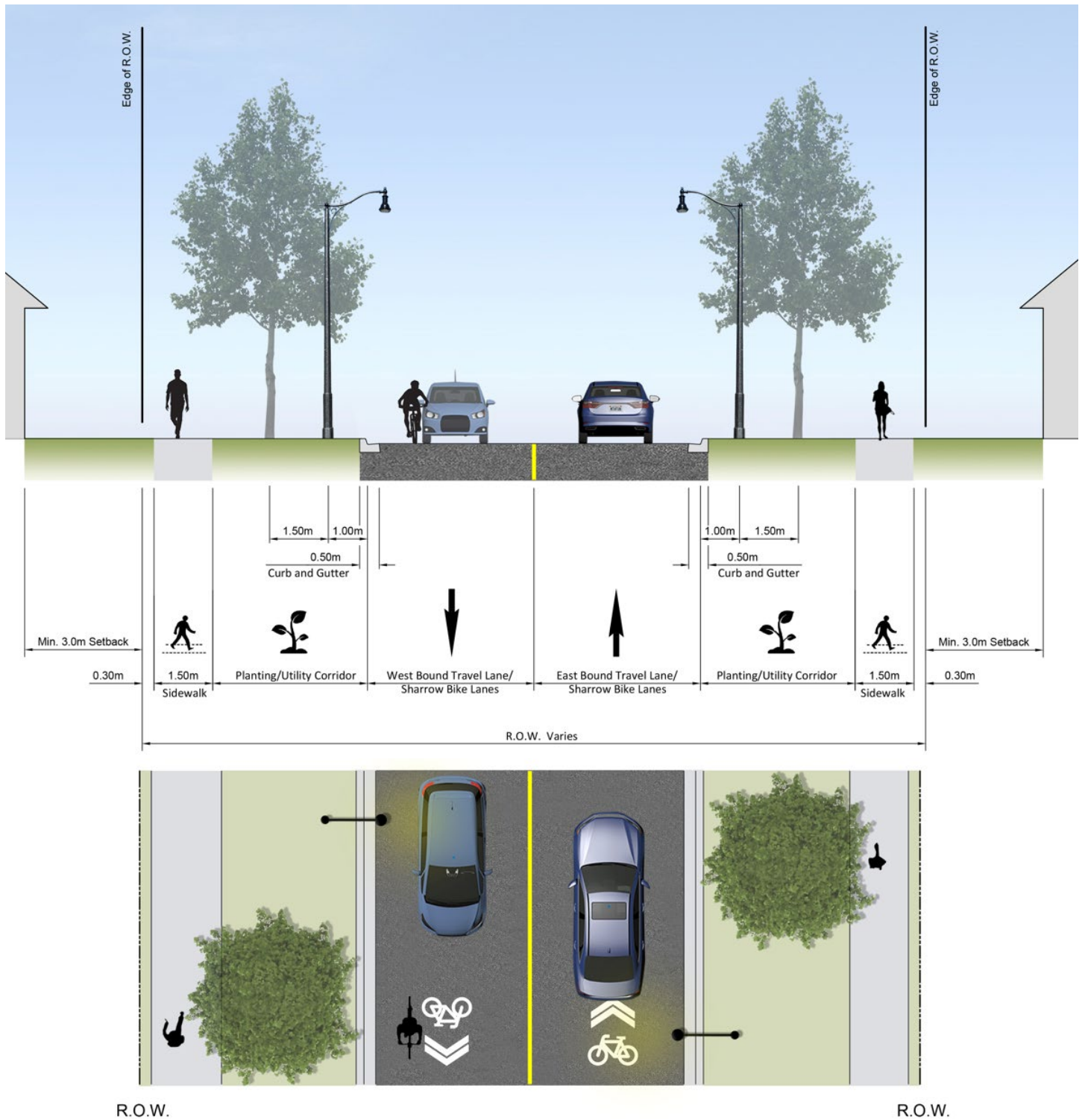
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1.4.1.3 Green Streets

Green Streets prioritize sustainable design, environmental performance, and active transportation while contributing to the Town's broader sustainability and climate resilience objectives. These streets are intended to create safe, attractive, and ecologically responsive corridors that support walking and cycling while incorporating enhanced landscaping and potential green infrastructure opportunities.

Green Streets may be applied to collector or local roads where there is an opportunity to integrate greenery, traffic calming, and sustainable design features. Potential elements include sidewalks, multi-use paths, cycling infrastructure, street trees, enhanced boulevards, bioswales, rain gardens, reflective paving materials, lay-by and/or on-street parking, and site furniture where appropriate, as well as reduced vehicular lane widths where appropriate (**Figure 19** next page). The inclusion of LID measures or boulevard stormwater features is subject to Town Engineering approval and will not be assumed for stormwater management credit unless specifically authorized. Green Street design should focus on comfort, shade, ecological function, and a balanced transportation network.

Figure 19: Cross-Section Option for Green Streets



Section 1: Public Realm

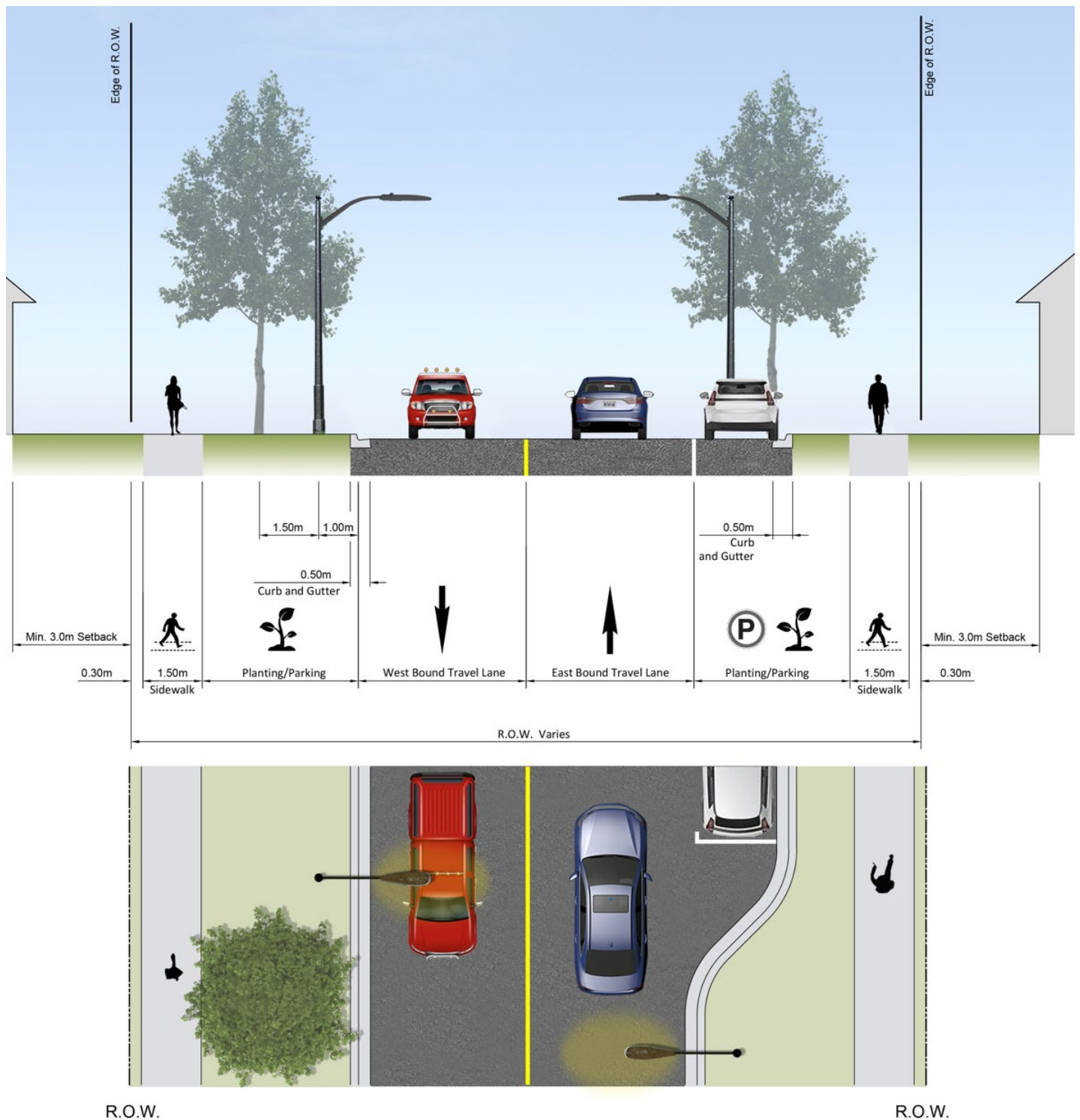
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1.4.1.4 Local Streets

Local Streets primarily consist of residential roadways that connect homes and neighbourhoods to main roads while supporting local circulation and access for residents. These streets are generally lower speed, lower volume roadways that emphasize livability, safety, and community identity. As the most common roadway type within the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Local Streets are found throughout both established and emerging residential communities, including existing and new single-family, semi-detached, and townhouse neighbourhoods. These areas are concentrated around Main Street in the Community of Stouffville, as well as within growing residential developments along the east and west sides of Ninth Line and Tenth Line, and in communities such as Ballantrae and Vandorf.

Design for Local Streets should create comfortable, safe, and attractive neighbourhood environments that support residential quality of life while accommodating practical municipal servicing and maintenance requirements. Streetscape features may include narrower travel lanes, sidewalks, street trees, landscaped boulevards or frontages, lay-by and/or on-street parking where appropriate, and traffic calming measures (see **Figure 20** next page). Streetscape improvements should prioritize pedestrian movement, encourage social interaction, and reinforce neighbourhood character. Local Street design may vary depending on development type, lot configuration, and available right-of-way width, but should consistently focus on creating safe, connected, and complete residential streets.

Figure 20: Cross-Section Option for Local Streets



Section 1: Public Realm

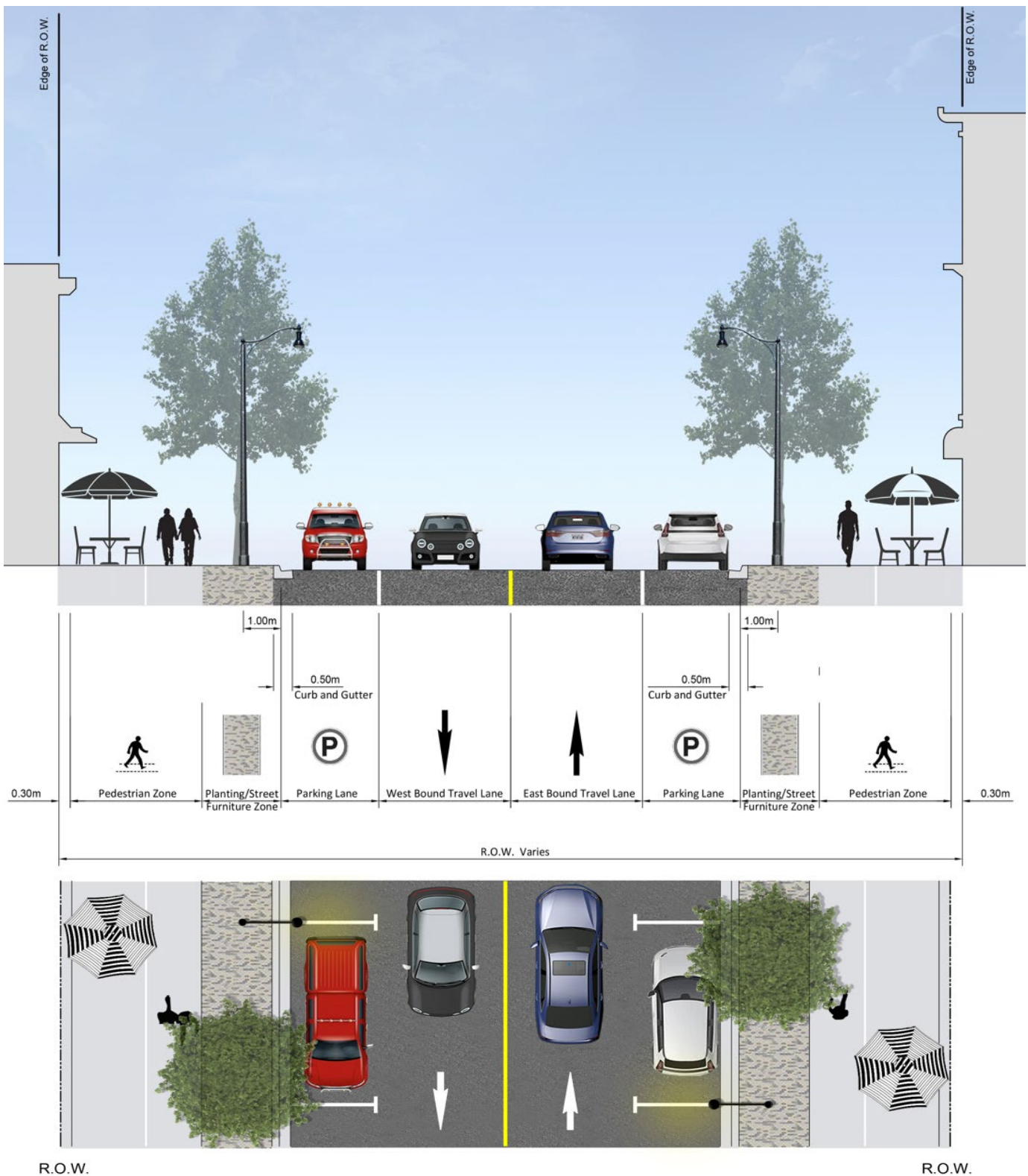
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1.4.1.5 Special Streets / Areas

Special Streets and Areas are located within unique districts, corridors, or neighbourhoods where context-sensitive design responses are necessary to preserve, enhance, and celebrate local identity. These areas may include heritage conservation districts, historic downtown streets, gateway corridors, or streets that transition between different urban contexts. In the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, Special Streets are most found within historical or heritage residential and commercial mixed-use neighbourhoods, particularly in the Community of Stouffville's Core Area along Main Street, where several Heritage Conservation Districts are located. Many homes and buildings in these areas date back to the 1800s, contributing to a distinct cultural and architectural character that should be recognized and reinforced through streetscape design.

Design for Special Streets / Areas should preserve and highlight the unique historical, cultural, or contextual qualities of each location while accommodating contemporary mobility, accessibility, and operational needs. Streetscape treatments may include decorative or coloured paving, heritage-style lighting, coordinated signage, specialty street furniture, public art, pedestrian bump-outs, enhanced landscaping, lay-by and/or on-street parking where appropriate, and context-sensitive materials that reflect the aesthetics and identity of the surrounding neighbourhood (see **Figure 21** next page). Design approaches should support placemaking and strengthen community character while ensuring compliance with applicable heritage guidelines, accessibility standards, and municipal requirements.

Figure 21: Cross-Section Option for Special Streets / Areas



Section 1: Public Realm

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

1.4.1.6 Service Streets

Service Streets primarily support operational functions such as deliveries, rear-lot access, utilities, loading, and maintenance. These streets may include laneways, rear service roads, or lower-profile access routes in both urban and rural contexts.

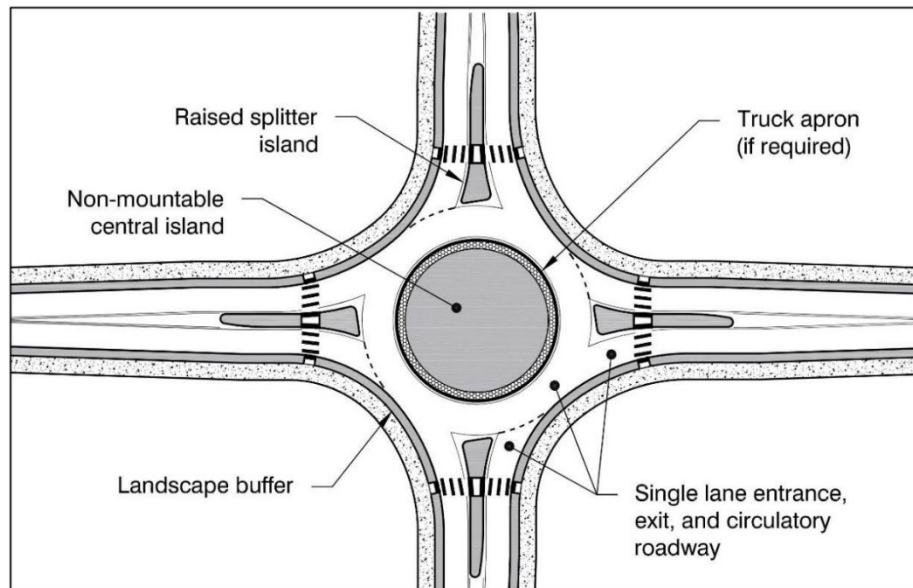
Although Service Streets are generally more utilitarian in nature, their design should still consider safety, functionality, and compatibility with surrounding uses. Streetscape considerations may include efficient lane widths, designated service access points, loading zones, lighting, drainage, clear pedestrian routes, and screening or landscaping where appropriate. In mixed-use or urban contexts, Service Streets should be designed to minimize conflicts between service vehicles, pedestrians, and adjacent residential or commercial uses.

1.4.2 Roundabouts

Roundabouts are a circular type of intersection in which vehicles travel counterclockwise (in Canada) around a centre island. These types of intersections are becoming increasingly popular in municipalities in Ontario. In accordance with the Canadian Roundabout Design Guide (Transportation Association of Canada), general requirements include those shown on **Figure 22** (next page). Signage and artistic features can be added to the centre island if they are offset from potential vehicle intrusion in the low edge areas. The centre island of a roundabout can include plantings and other landscaped items; however, it is important that sightlines be unobstructed and maintained to ensure safety and visibility for both drivers and pedestrians. Design guidelines for roundabouts can be found in the checklist included as **Schedule A5**.

An example of a single-lane roundabout in the Town would be at the intersection of Ninth Line and Bayberry Street / Baker Hill Boulevard.

Figure 22: Basic Features of a Single-lane Roundabout⁵



1.4.3 Implementation Considerations

The application of streetscape categories should be coordinated with land use planning, urban design, transportation studies, servicing strategies, and development review processes. Proposed streetscape elements are illustrative and should be refined through detailed design. All features within the municipal right-of-way remain subject to Town standards, operational requirements, accessibility legislation, and approval by the appropriate municipal departments and external agencies.

By organizing streets according to these categories, the Town can create a cohesive, adaptable, and context-sensitive streetscape framework that supports growth, sustainability, heritage preservation, and community-building across the Town.

⁵ Source: Transportation Association of Canada – Canadian Roundabout Design Guideline (2017)

1.5 Public Realm Streetscape Elements

This chapter outlines the Public Realm Streetscape Elements that contribute to the character, safety, accessibility, and functionality of streets throughout the Town. Elements include accessibility and road safety features, lighting, paving materials, street furniture, landscaping, public art, gateway features and cultural heritage considerations.

The application of these elements will vary based on the streetscape design category, including Main Streets, Emerging Main Streets, Green Streets, Local Streets, Special Streets, Service Streets and Roundabouts. Higher-profile streets may require enhanced streetscape treatments and placemaking features, while local and service streets may utilize more simplified and functional design approaches.

This chapter provides guidance on where these elements should be incorporated and the level of treatment appropriate for each streetscape category to help achieve a consistent, context-sensitive public realm throughout the Town.

Final design solutions of these elements shall be subject to detailed review through the Town's planning, engineering, transportation, accessibility, and operations requirements, as well as Regional or other agency approvals where applicable.

1.5.1 Accessibility and Road Safety

1.5.1.0 Crosswalks

- Crosswalks should be located at regular intervals and should be clearly demarcated (both through signage and line paintings) and designed to meet AODA and transportation engineering standards as is seen in **Figure 23** on the next page.
- Crosswalks should be unobstructed from streetscape elements (benches, planters, lighting, etc.) and should not impede the path of travel or access to the signal button (if applicable).

Figure 23: Pedestrian Crossing on Edward Street in the Town



1.5.1.1 Pedestrian Bump-outs / Curb Extensions

- Pedestrian bump-outs—also known as curb extensions—are a simple yet highly effective design feature that significantly improves accessibility and safety for people walking. By extending the sidewalk into the parking lane at intersections or mid-block crossings, bump-outs shorten the distance pedestrians need to cross, which is especially beneficial for individuals with mobility challenges, seniors, and those using wheelchairs or walkers. This is depicted in **Figure 24** (next page). This reduced crossing distance means less time exposed to traffic and greater confidence navigating streets.
- Bump-outs also enhance visibility between pedestrians and drivers. By positioning pedestrians further into the driver's line of sight, they help ensure that people waiting to cross are more easily seen, even when parked cars are present. This is particularly important for individuals with visual impairments, as clearer sightlines contribute to more predictable and safer interactions.
- They can also calm traffic by narrowing the roadway, encouraging drivers to slow down as they approach crossings.

Figure 24: Example of a Pedestrian Bump-out / Curb Extension⁶



1.5.1.2 Colour Contrast / Texture

- Designs shall consider colour palettes that add contrast to identify sidewalks, boulevards, crosswalks, etc. (**Figure 25**).
- Tactile plates shall be installed at pedestrian crossings as per AODA standards and guidelines along with a dropped curb (**Figure 26** on next page).

Figure 25: Example of Colour Contrasting Using Pavers



⁶ Rendering completed by CIMA+ for a proposed streetscape improvement project in Aurora Ontario

Figure 26: Tactile Plate (with drop curb)

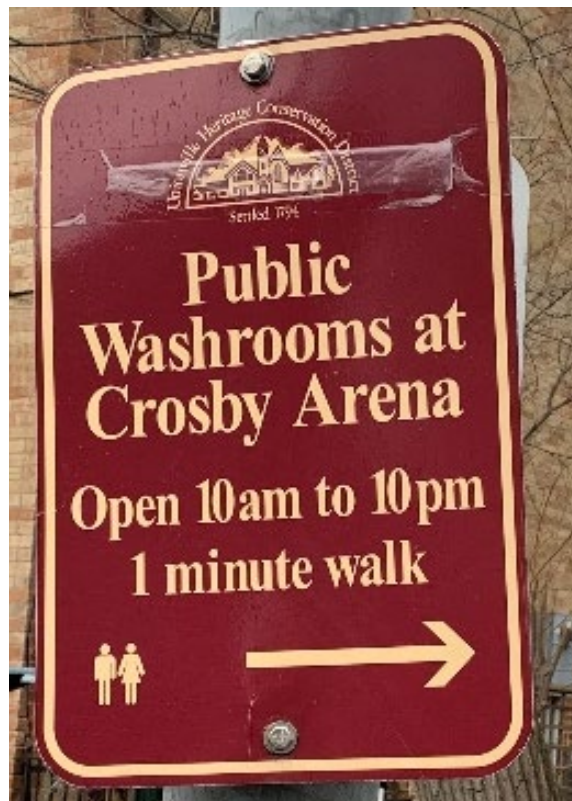


1.5.1.3 Signage

- Includes street signs, directional signs and information signs such as the examples shown in **Figure 27** on the next page.
- Palettes can be developed based on the characteristic of the area (i.e., heritage district).
- Signage should be located at key decision-making points and areas with a high volume of pedestrian traffic (i.e., GO Station, urban plazas and parkettes).
- Where possible, signs should be consolidated to avoid visual clutter.
- The scale and design of signage should reflect the intended user (i.e., signs for drivers should be larger and easy to read from a passing vehicle).
 - Minimum font height based on viewing distance (e.g., ~25–30 mm per metre of viewing distance).
- Signage should use plain language or symbols that are universally understood (i.e., washrooms, arrows, etc.).

- Tactile, braille and audio messages can be added to wayfinding signage, building entrances, washrooms and other key destinations to help those with visual impairments.
 - Contrast ratio of at least 70% between text and background.
 - Mount tactile signage at a consistent height (typically 1200–1500 mm from grade).
 - Use Grade 1 or Grade 2 Braille as per local standards.
 - Ensure tactile characters are:
 - Raised (0.8–1.5 mm)
 - Sans-serif, simple forms

Figure 27: Examples of a Wayfinding Signs



1.5.2 Lighting

Street lighting shall be designed to adequately illuminate roadways, pedestrian walkways, cycling facilities, and public spaces to ensure safety, visibility, accessibility, and user comfort. Streetlight placement, fixture design, and illumination levels must comply with applicable provincial regulations, national standards, and municipal engineering requirements, including the Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC), Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) guidelines, Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) standards, and IES RP-8-22 Standard Practice for Roadway and Street Lighting.

The Town utilizes a variety of lighting fixtures to support different streetscape contexts, including roadways, trails, pathways, and heritage areas such as Main Street. Lighting design should be context-sensitive and contribute to the overall character, function, and identity of each area.

- **Prioritize pole placement** at intersections, pedestrian crossings, high-pedestrian activity areas, and key pedestrian corridors before establishing regular spacing intervals.
- Utilize **energy-efficient**, sustainable lighting fixtures that are downward-directed, minimize light pollution, and comply with dark-sky principles where feasible.
- Select lighting fixtures that reinforce the **character** and design intent of the surrounding area, including heritage, civic, commercial, or residential contexts.
- Proposed lighting fixtures for all developments must **conform** to the Town's Design Guidelines, Standard Drawings, and approved lighting specifications.
- Where appropriate, incorporate **enhanced or decorative lighting** to highlight key public realm features such as public art, gateways, signage, pedestrian connections, parkettes, and civic spaces.

- Pole **height and spacing** should respond to roadway context.
- Final lighting layouts must be validated through **photometric analysis** to ensure adequate illumination uniformity, minimize dark spots, and maintain compliance with all applicable safety and engineering standards.

Figure 28 below shows two (2) examples from within the Town where selected lighting fixtures have been used to reinforce the unique character of an area. The first example is a private development, where a modern LED fixture was chosen to reflect and complement the heritage character of the building. The second example is the revitalization of Edward Street, where upgraded decorative LED fixtures were installed to enhance the pedestrian experience and strengthen the streetscape identity, rather than relying on a standard cobra-head style fixture.

Figure 28: Samples of Existing Lighting Fixtures within the Town



1.5.3 Paving Materials

Surface materials play an important role in streetscape design by contributing to character, guiding circulation, supporting drainage and heat reduction, enhancing wayfinding, and improving overall safety for all users such as the example seen in **Figure 29**. Paving can also support accessibility by assisting pedestrians with visual or mobility impairments through tactile and detectable surface treatments, while helping signal speed reduction zones, crossings, and transitions for drivers. Standard asphalt and poured concrete remain the preferred paving materials within the public right-of-way due to durability, maintenance efficiency, and lifecycle performance; however, decorative or specialty paving materials may be considered in select locations, subject to Town approval. All paving materials and treatments must comply with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, the *Ontario Traffic Act*, and applicable municipal standards and policies. Where appropriate, paving treatments should also be used to clearly define transitions between public and private property, such as through changes in material, texture, colour, sawcut patterns, or banding, to reinforce spatial boundaries, enhance site organization, and support a cohesive public-private interface.

Figure 29: Example of Coloured Impressed Asphalt



1.5.4 Street Furniture

Streetscape furniture includes, but is not limited to, benches, chairs, tables, bollards, planters, bike racks, waste receptacles, flower baskets, banner poles, and other decorative or functional elements that contribute to comfort, safety, placemaking, and an enhanced public realm experience. These elements should be carefully selected and coordinated to support the intended character, function, and identity of each streetscape.

A consistent palette of materials, colours, and design language throughout the Town is strongly encouraged to maintain visual cohesion, simplify maintenance, and reinforce municipal identity. Neutral colours and timeless, simple designs are generally preferred to reduce the risk of dated aesthetics and improve long-term adaptability. Consultation with the Town is recommended to align proposed furnishings with approved standards, preferred models, and maintenance considerations.

In unique or special character areas throughout the Town, such as heritage districts, gateways, civic spaces, main street corridors, neighbourhood service node areas, and prominent public gathering spaces, street furniture should be selected to reinforce the distinct identity and design vision of these locations. In these contexts, enhanced or customized furnishings may be appropriate, including decorative benches, heritage-inspired lighting and bollards, black or historically sensitive colour palettes, specialty waste receptacles, coordinated planters, interpretive signage, decorative banner poles, and other contextual elements that contribute to placemaking and a stronger sense of place (**Figure 30** on the next page).

For example:

- **Heritage Areas:** Traditional or heritage-inspired furnishings, black or muted palettes, decorative metalwork, and coordinated site elements that complement historic architecture.

- **Gateways and Civic Spaces:** Signature furnishings, enhanced seating, decorative planters, public art integration, and coordinated signage to create memorable arrival points.
- **Main Street / Character Areas:** Enhanced pedestrian amenities, decorative banners, flower baskets, coordinated furnishings, and flexible gathering spaces that support commercial vitality and community identity.

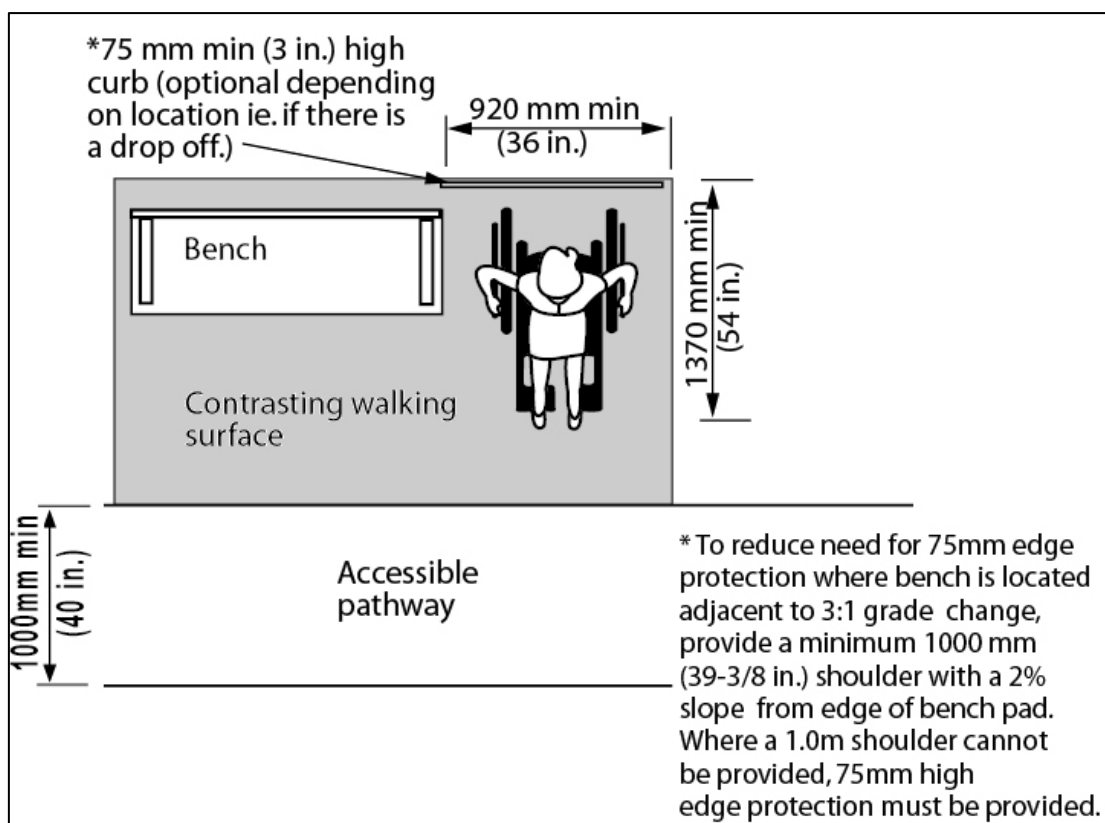
Figure 30: Example of an Existing Trash Receptacle and Seating Area in the Community of Stouffville



1.5.4.1 Anchoring and Sitting Recommendations:

- The anchoring system for permanently mounting benches, cluster seating tables and other site furniture must be vandal / rust resistant with a galvanized coating.
- Site furniture must be mounted on a firm, level surface as per the manufacturer's details to allow for easy replacement, or anchored underground.
- Where benches are installed on a pad, adjacent clear space should be provided to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers, or strollers, and a curb stop should be installed such as the example shown in **Figure 31** (on the next page). Front of bench must have a set back of at least 0.5 metres from the pedestrian clearway.

Figure 31: Rest Area Design Requirements⁷



- Space site furniture in positions which enable access for mobility-impaired users and meet the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* for minimum widths of travel, slope and surface material.
- Benches and other items should be placed at least 1.0 metre away from other furnishings and street trees.
- Adding armrests to benches to assist mobility-impaired users in standing from the seated position.
- Avoid placing waste receptacles beside seating areas, such as benches and tables, to improve user comfort and the overall user experience.

⁷ Source: City of Mississauga Facility Design Standards

- Place benches or cluster seating tables under shade and provide shelter where possible and consider viewpoints for the placement.
- When placing planters, consider the location for ease of maintenance by staff and a watering truck.

1.5.5 Landscaping

This section outlines the Town's requirements and best practices for landscaping within the public realm, including boulevard tree planting, planting plans, plant selection, and design standards. The accompanying figures and schedules provide guidance to ensure that public realm landscaping is functional, resilient, context-sensitive, and consistent with the Town's long-term environmental, aesthetic, and maintenance objectives.

1.5.5.1 Boulevard Tree Planting

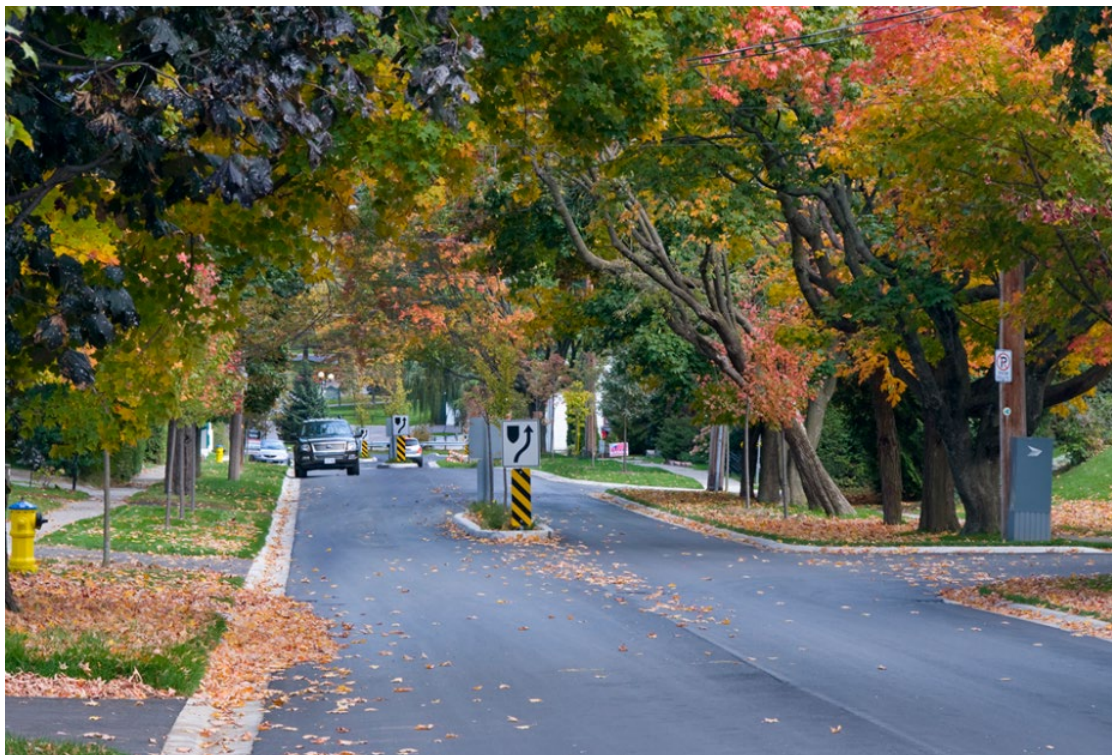
Public realm boulevard tree planting is a key component of the Town's streetscape and urban forest strategy. Section 3.3.6 of the Town's Official Plan (2025) identifies the Town's intent to expand and enhance the urban forest and overall tree canopy. Tree canopy provides significant environmental, economic, social, and public health benefits, particularly in urban environments, by improving air and water quality, storing carbon, reducing stormwater runoff, and supporting biodiversity and habitat.

Boulevard tree planting shall be designed in alignment with the applicable streetscape design categories to reinforce character, establish spatial hierarchy, and strengthen overall streetscape cohesion as seen in **Figure 32** on the next page. Tree species selection, spacing, offsets, and minimum soil volume requirements must comply with Town standards. Refer to **Schedule A3** for additional requirements.

The Town recognizes the urban forest as a defining element of Whitchurch-Stouffville's identity and is committed to its protection and enhancement through the Official Plan. In support of this intent, the Town will:

- Recognize and protect biodiversity through preservation of existing trees, successful establishment of new plantings, and long-term canopy expansion.
- Prioritize retention of existing trees where feasible and select species suited to site conditions to support canopy continuity, seasonal interest, and long-term landscape health.
- Improve knowledge, stewardship, and application of best management practices for the urban forest.
- Emphasize tree preservation and planting requirements across public and private developments, including streets, parks, and built form areas, and
- Consider long-term maintenance requirements in species selection and placement, including location, soil conditions, and species hardiness.

Figure 32: Photo of Mature & Succession Planting on a Residential Road



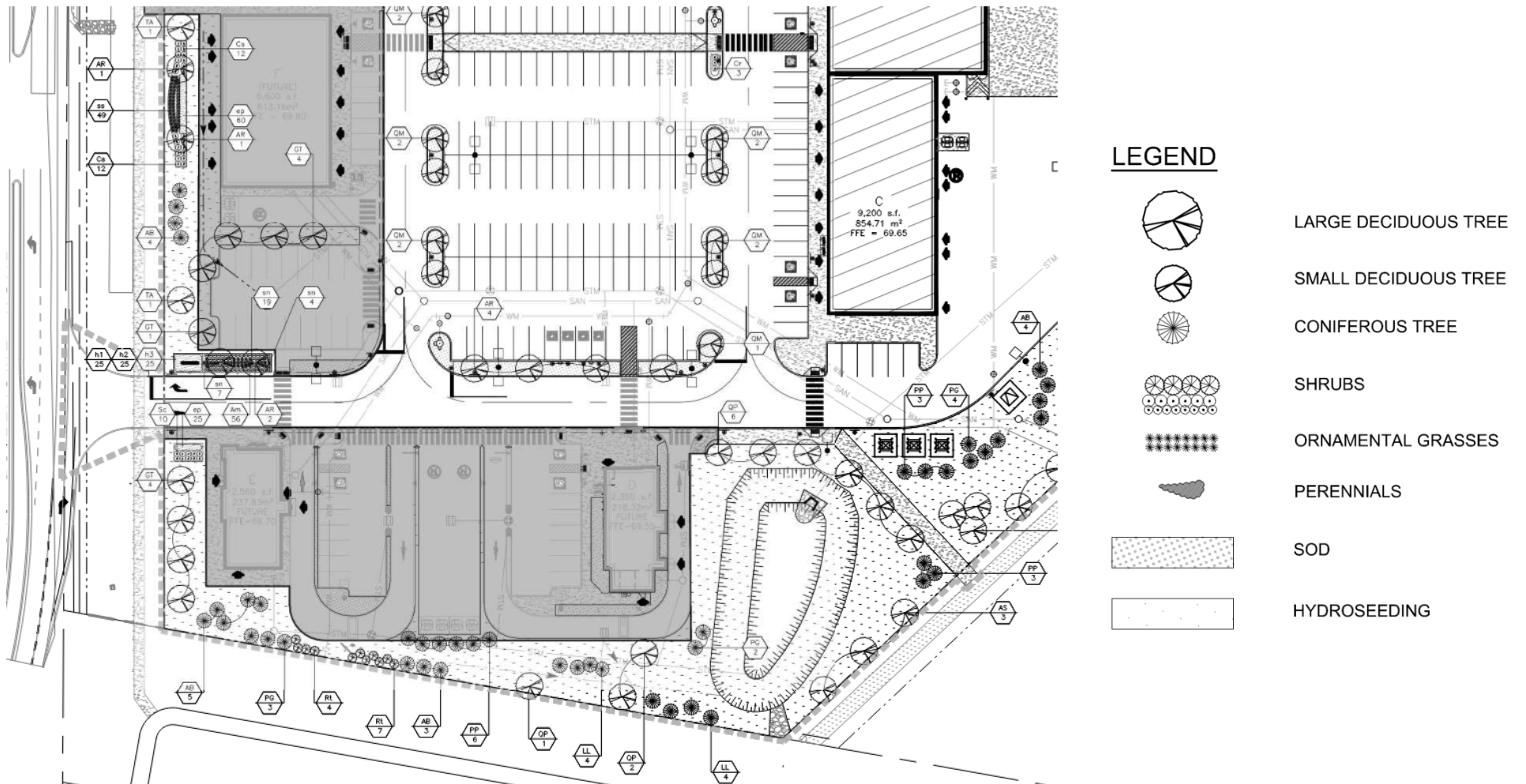
1.5.5.2 Landscape Planting Plan and Planting Details

All street trees such as the example shown in **Figure 33**, and planting designs must be completed by a professional landscape architect. The Landscape Planting Plan will clearly show all existing (preserved) trees and landscaping to remain on the site, as well as illustrate the layout and arrangement of proposed trees, shrubs, perennials, and surface treatment. Planting shall be clearly labelled using plant keys directly linked to a Plant List Table (**Figure 34** on the next page). For additional information please refer to **Schedules A1-A7** and **Schedules B1**.

Figure 33: Example of a Street Tree on Main Street



Figure 34: Example of a Typical Landscape Planting Plan



Section 1: Public Realm

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Complete Streetscape Design: Public & Private Realm Standards Manual

Plant List

Plant lists for Planting Plans that are to be provided in all submissions to the Town and should include detailed and specific information. Please refer to **Schedule A4** for the required information. Suggested plant species can be found in **Schedule B1**.

Planting Design for Streets

Among other things, it is important to understand the site context and physiological growing habits of a tree or other plants when developing planting designs for streetscapes and selecting species. Requirements include consideration of the setback and spacing for street trees, species selection and general layout. Factors to be considered when creating a planting design can be found in the checklist in **Schedule A3**.

Native Species Selection

Native species are encouraged in locations with conditions that support and promote healthy growth. Both native and non-native species can have significant ecological and environmental impacts on the landscapes in which they are planted. Native trees have adapted to their specific local climates and soil conditions, making them crucial for ecological health. They play a critical role in supporting local wildlife by providing habitat and food sources and should be prioritized whenever suitable.

When planting in urban environments, it should be considered that the conditions may not align with the native growing environment, and it may be preferable to choose non-native species that are better suited to the growing conditions. Non-native species that are known to be invasive must not be planted in any situation.

Species Diversity and Landscape Resiliency

Tree species diversity is a common indicator of urban forest health. A broader diversity of tree species guards against the possibility of large-scale devastation by both native and introduced pests and diseases. The diversity of species will depend on the number of trees being planted within a project. Refer to **Schedule A3** for municipal guidelines on diversity.

Landscaped Median Planting Requirements

Landscape medians separate opposing flows of traffic, provide spatial definition, provide pedestrian refuge, encourage slower traffic speed, and provide opportunities to add streetscape planting treatments that protect plant material from salt spray (**Figure 35**). Landscape works provided in raised medians have specific considerations, refer to **Schedule A6** for the Landscape Median Planting Checklist.

Figure 35: Example of a Landscaped Median



Roundabout Planting

Landscape planting is a key feature of roundabouts and can enhance the identity, function and aesthetics of an intersection. **Figure 36** shows an example of a rendering for a roundabout with plantings included in the centre island.

Planting in roundabouts is to be arranged in accordance with the current Canadian Round-about Design Guide (Transportation Association of Canada). Design guidelines for roundabouts can be found in **Schedule A5**.

Figure 36: Rendering of a Roundabout with Plantings in the Centre Island



1.5.6 Public Art

Public art can be a permanent feature or a temporary installation such as the examples shown in **Figure 37** on the next page. Its purpose can be to encourage interaction, tell a story, spark joy, generate reflection, or create a landmark within the public realm. It can serve educational purposes, highlight community features, commemorate events or milestones, and contribute to the overall cultural and aesthetic identity

of the community. Public art should be incorporated wherever possible to:

- Provide education and awareness, helping residents and visitors learn about the community's history, culture, and values
- Add visual interest, activating public spaces and creating engaging experiences
- Enhance the aesthetic quality of streetscapes, parks, plazas, and other public areas

Figure 37: Photos of a Mural and Sculpture Walk in the Community of Stouffville



1.5.6.1 Forms of public art may include:

- Sculptures
- Murals
- Statues
- Digital media or projection art
- Integrated installations within architecture, streetscapes or landscape features
- Screenings / buffers (**Figure 38** next page)
- Benches (**Figure 39** next page)

Figure 38: Example of an Art Installation that Provides Screening from a Parking Lot



Figure 39: Example of Public Art on a Bench in the Community of Stouffville



1.5.6.2 Recommended Locations:

- Public art shall be considered in areas of cultural significance or high-use areas, such as gateway, nodes, public parks, plazas, street intersections, walkways, trails, courtyards, gardens, and institutional or municipal buildings

- Locations that maximize visibility, accessibility, and community engagement

1.5.6.3 Functionality:

- Public art is encouraged to be functional wherever possible, for example integrating into building façade, seating, lighting features, wayfinding, or interactive elements to enhance usability and placemaking.

1.5.6.4 Safety Considerations:

- Avoid placing art near traffic control devices (e.g., stop signs, traffic lights) or other locations where it may distract drivers or impede pedestrian movement.

1.5.6.5 Site Specific

- Public art should be site-specific, reflecting its surroundings, history, or cultural context.
- Review the scale, orientation, and materials of the site to ensure the artwork complements its environment.

1.5.6.6 Community Identity

- Public art should reinforce community identity, strengthen a sense of place, and contribute to the town's visual and cultural profile.

1.5.6.7 Durability and Maintenance

- Public art should be durable, low-maintenance, vandal-resistant, and resilient to environmental exposure (e.g., sun, rain, snow).
- Materials should be selected for longevity while minimizing repair costs and upkeep.

- Public art/media should be securely fastened to prevent theft.
- Additional public art maintenance is described in **Section 1.6.2**.

1.5.6.8 Accessibility

- Public art should be physically and visually accessible, barrier-free, and designed according to universal design principles.
- Encourage Braille on interpretive signage and include touchable or interactive elements wherever feasible to engage all users.

1.5.6.9 Installation Guidelines

- The requirement for structural footings, slabs, or other supports shall be considered in the context of the surrounding site features.
- Buried and overhead utilities must be considered to avoid conflict with public art installation requirements.
- Growth of tree canopies and their potential to obscure public art must be considered when choosing installation locations for public art.
- Avoid placing public art near traffic control devices (e.g., stop signs, traffic signals) or within daylight triangles.
- Maintain clear sightlines and ensure installations do not obstruct pedestrian movement or interfere with accessibility routes or requirements.

1.5.7 Gateway Features

Community signage is currently being updated to reflect the Town's new logo, refined font, and updated colour palette. Each community within the Town has its own identifying signage that marks the area; however, a unified Town-wide gateway feature could be developed to represent the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville as a whole. Such gateway elements

should be strategically located near the Town’s boundaries to clearly signify key entry points.

1.5.7.1 Town-Wide Gateway Features

- Town-wide gateways shall establish a strong and recognizable identity at major entry points into the municipality such the one shown in **Figure 40**.
- Designs shall be bold, landmark-scale, and highly visible from major arterial roads and approaches.
- Gateway elements may include integrated signage, public art, feature lighting, and distinctive landscape treatments.
- Materials and forms shall reflect the overall town branding and design language.
- Consistency in design across all town-wide gateways is required to reinforce a unified identity.
- Lighting shall enhance night-time visibility and create a strong sense of arrival.

Figure 40: Town-Wide Gateway Feature on York/Durham Line⁸



⁸ Source: Google Earth

1.5.7.2 Community Gateway Features

- Community gateways shall define entry points into distinct districts or planned communities within the Town such as the one shown in **Figure 41**.
- Designs shall provide a clear sense of arrival while reflecting the character of the specific community.
- Gateway elements may include scaled signage, landscape features, low to mid-height structures, and feature planting.
- Design shall be coordinated with adjacent streetscape and cross-section conditions.
- Materials, colours, and planting palettes may vary to reflect community identity while remaining consistent with overall town design standards.
- Gateway features shall be legible to both pedestrians and motorists without overwhelming the streetscape.

Figure 41: Gateway Feature for the Community of Bloomington



1.5.7.3 Neighbourhood Gateway Features

- Neighbourhood gateways shall provide subtle identification of entry into residential or local areas such as the one seen in **Figure 42**.
- Designs shall be low-scale and integrated within the surrounding streetscape.
- Elements may include landscape markers, tree groupings, paving treatments, low signage, or lighting accents.
- Gateway features shall prioritize pedestrian-scale experience and residential character.
- Visual clutter shall be minimized to maintain a calm and cohesive neighbourhood environment.
- Materials and planting shall be consistent with adjacent streetscape treatments.

Figure 42: Neighbourhood Gateway Feature⁹



⁹ Source: Google Earth

1.5.7.4 Gateway Principles (All Levels)

- Gateway features shall be located at clearly defined entry points, intersections, or transition zones.
- All gateways shall maintain clear sightlines and shall not interfere with traffic safety, pedestrian movement, or accessibility requirements.
- Design hierarchy shall be maintained: Town-wide (most prominent), Community (moderate), Neighbourhood (subtle).
- Gateway elements shall integrate with surrounding landscape, lighting, and public realm design.
- Durability, ease of maintenance, and long-term legibility shall be key design considerations.

1.5.8 Cultural Heritage

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville has a rich and diverse cultural heritage that reflects both its deep Indigenous roots and the legacy of early European settlement, woven together with its evolving modern identity. The Town's cultural landscape informs its sense of place and should be thoughtfully reflected in streetscape design, materials, and public realm enhancements such as plaques (**Figure 43**) to honour its history while celebrating its contemporary diversity.

Figure 43: Cultural Heritage Plaques in the Community of Stouffville



1.5.8.1 Indigenous Heritage

The Whitchurch-Stouffville area is located within the traditional territories of the Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Anishinaabeg peoples, and lies within the treaty lands of the Williams Treaty First Nations. Long before European settlement, the Huron-Wendat and other Iroquoian peoples established large villages surrounded by cultivated cornfields.

One of the most significant archaeological sites in the region, the Jean-Baptiste Lainé Site, is among the largest and most complex ancestral Huron-Wendat villages in the Lower Great Lakes area. The site provides critical insight into early Indigenous life and remains a cornerstone of the Town's cultural and archaeological heritage.

Streetscape design can acknowledge and respect the Indigenous history through interpretive elements, culturally sensitive design, and educational opportunities, integrated into the public realm.

1.5.8.2 Built and Modern Heritage

Whitchurch-Stouffville contains a remarkable inventory of approximately 650 built heritage resources and a number of designated heritage properties, including the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum & Community Centre and the historic Clock Tower (see **Figure 44**). The area surrounding Main Street conserves the historic commercial core that began to take shape around 1826 and remains a focal point of community life.

Figure 44: Historic Clock Tower building in the Community of Stouffville



Today, Whitchurch-Stouffville is home to a growing and diverse population, with residents representing many cultural backgrounds contributing to a vibrant and inclusive community identity. Streetscape design can reflect cultural richness by incorporating public art, interpretive signage, and design details that celebrate both historic character and contemporary diversity.

1.5.8.3 Design Implications

To respect and celebrate the Town's cultural heritage, streetscape design should incorporate the following principles:

- **Context-Sensitive Design:** Streetscape improvements should complement and enhance the existing heritage character, particularly within or near designated Heritage Conservation Districts and heritage properties.
- **Material Selection:** Use natural and high-quality materials such as stone, brick, and wood where appropriate to reflect the Town's historic architecture and rural heritage.
- **Interpretive Elements:** Include signage, plaques, or installations that educate the public about Indigenous history, early settlement, and local cultural milestones.
- **Public Art Integration:** Commission public art that reflects local stories, Indigenous traditions, and community diversity. Collaborative projects with Indigenous artists and local cultural groups are strongly encouraged.
- **Lighting and Furnishings:** Select lighting and site furnishings that respect the Town's heritage character while meeting modern accessibility and safety standards. Fixtures should be consistent in style, scale, and colour palette to integrated seamlessly with the surrounding built environment.

- **Landscape Design:** Incorporate native and historically significant plant species to reinforce local identity and connect the natural landscape to the Town's heritage.
- **Community Engagement:** Involve local historical societies, Indigenous representatives, and cultural organizations in the planning and implementation of streetscape projects to ensure authenticity and inclusivity.

1.6 Best Practices for Maintenance and Operations

Effective maintenance and operations are essential to ensure that streetscape elements remain functional, attractive, and safe over time. Implementing best practices for the maintenance of materials, furnishings, planting, public art, and seasonal operations such as snow removal helps create streetscapes that are long-lasting, protects municipal investments, and enhances the overall experience for residents and visitors. Routine and proactive maintenance ensures that all streetscape elements continue to function effectively while contributing to the Town's visual identity.

All maintenance requirements within both the private realm (under the responsibility of the property owner) and the public realm (under the jurisdiction of the Town) must adhere to the Town's bylaws and established standards.

1.6.1 Durable and Vandal-Resistant Site Furnishings

- **Selection:** Use site furnishings (such as those described in **Section 1.5.4** benches, waste receptacles, bike racks, bollards, and signage) made of high-quality, durable, and vandal-resistant materials. Powder-coated metals, recycled plastics, and treated hardwoods are recommended for their longevity and resilience.

- **Design Considerations:** Ensure furnishings are anchored securely to reduce theft and damage and select finishes that are resistant to graffiti and corrosion.
- **Inspection:** Conduct routine inspections for wear, vandalism, and damage, addressing repairs promptly to maintain visual quality and public safety.

1.6.2 Public Art Maintenance

- **Inspection:** Schedule regular inspections to assess structural stability, surface condition, and potential damage from environmental exposure or vandalism.
- **Cleaning and Repair:** Follow manufacturer or artist recommendations for cleaning materials and repair procedures to prevent deterioration or loss of artistic integrity.
- *See the Public Art **Section 1.5.6** for specific maintenance requirements and guidelines.*

1.6.3 Winter Maintenance

- **Snow Removal:** Develop a snow removal strategy that prioritizes pedestrian safety and accessibility. Clear sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stops promptly after snow events.
- **Material Protection:** Use de-icing agents carefully to avoid damage to concrete, stone, and plantings.

1.6.4 Routine Inspections and Record-Keeping

- **Maintain logs** for all maintenance activities, inspections, and repairs.
- **Identify recurring issues** to inform future design improvements or material upgrades.
- **Engage municipal staff and contractors** in consistent training on proper maintenance practices to ensure standards are upheld.



2

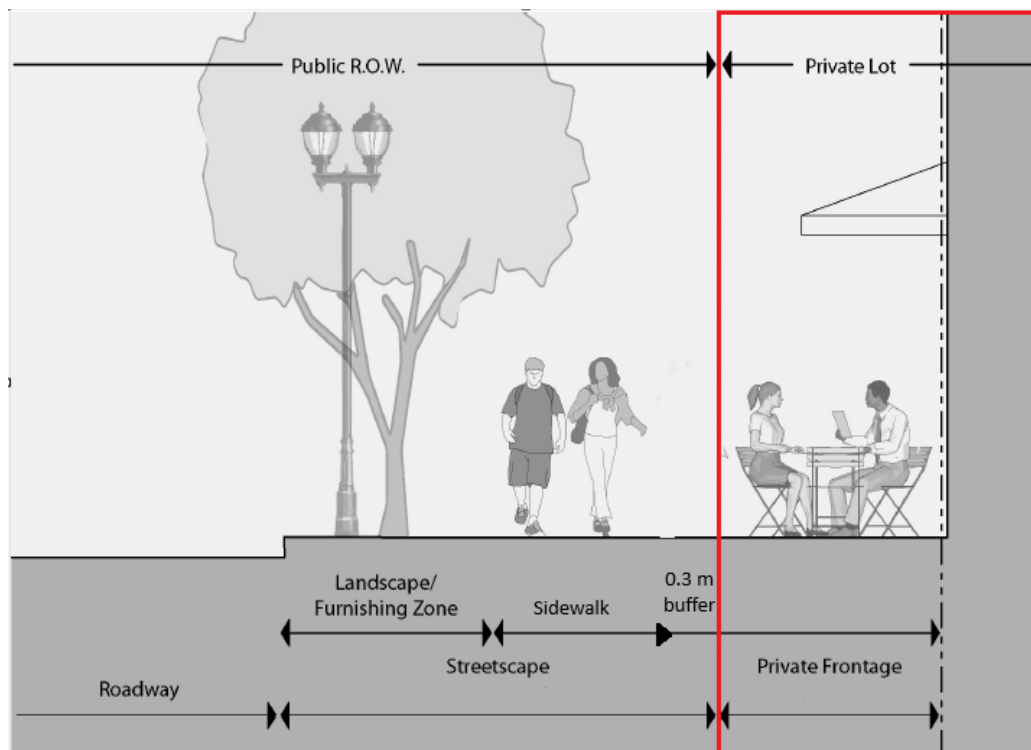
Private Realm

2 Private Realm

2.1 What is the Private Realm?

The private realm is defined as privately owned and controlled space that directly contributes to the character and quality of the public realm. It includes building facades, residential yards, patios, parking lots, canopies, landscaping, gardens, pedestrian mews, mid-block connections, gateways, and other privately owned open spaces. While these areas are under private ownership, they are often highly visible and experienced from the public realm and therefore must be designed to complement and integrate with adjacent public streetscapes. **Figure 45** provides a general cross-section of a roadway highlighting the private realm (red box) next to the private public right-of-way.

Figure 45: The Private Realm Area



Private realm design should go beyond individual site function and consider the broader urban context. Key considerations include building orientation toward the street to support active frontages and natural surveillance, appropriate setbacks to allow for landscape buffering and transitions, and coordinated landscape design to soften edges between public and private spaces. Parking lot design, grading, and servicing areas should be located and screened to minimize visual impact on streetscapes, with landscaping used to provide buffering, shade, and environmental performance benefits.

Setback areas and site edges should incorporate high-quality landscaping to reinforce continuity with the public realm, improve pedestrian comfort, and provide separation between active uses and service or parking functions. Patio areas, where provided, must be appropriately sized and located to ensure they do not impede pedestrian movement or compromise safety, accessibility, or visibility.

2.2 Private Realm Streetscape Elements

The Private Realm Streetscape Elements section of this Manual outlines key design considerations for privately owned lands that directly influence the quality, safety, and character of the public realm. While these areas are privately developed and maintained, their interface with streets, sidewalks, and adjacent public spaces plays a critical role in creating a cohesive and well-functioning urban environment. This section provides guidance to ensure that private development supports accessibility, safety, sustainability, and a high-quality streetscape experience consistent with the Town's overall design objectives.

Private realm elements include building interfaces and patios, green infrastructure and stormwater management, parking lot design, and signage. Together, these components must be carefully coordinated with the public realm to ensure safe, accessible, and visually coherent transitions between private properties and public streetscapes.

2.2.1 Mid-block Pedestrian Connections

Mid-block pedestrian connections between townhouse blocks and larger development sites are strongly encouraged, particularly where block lengths exceed approximately 150–200 metres. These connections should be designed as safe, accessible, and comfortable pedestrian corridors that enhance walkability and permeability. Mid-block connections shall generally provide:

- A minimum overall **corridor width** of 6.0 metres to accommodate both movement and landscape buffering.
- A clear, unobstructed pedestrian **walkway** of 3.0 metres, with a minimum acceptable width of 1.8 metres in constrained conditions, designed in accordance with AODA requirements.
- Soft **landscaped buffers** (trees, shrubs, and planting) on either side of the walkway where feasible, supporting privacy, visual separation, and microclimate benefits.
- Pedestrian-scale **lighting** to ensure safety, visibility, and comfort; and
- **Barrier-free** design with no steps and compliant, gentle-grade ramps where changes in elevation occur.

2.2.2 Private Businesses / Patios

Private businesses and patios must be designed to respect public right-of-way limits and pedestrian clearways. No building elements, including canopies, awnings, doors, or similar projections, shall encroach into the public right-of-way without formal Town approval. A minimum 1.8 metre clear pedestrian zone must always be maintained, free of obstructions in both depth and width, and doors shall not swing into the public sidewalk. Seasonal patios occupying public space may be permitted through an agreement with the Town, subject to requirements for clearway maintenance, operating hours, liability insurance, temporary fencing, furniture standards, and seasonal removal. All building elements should be accommodated within required setbacks and in accordance with municipal encroachment regulations.

2.2.3 Green Infrastructure for Stormwater Management

Private development is encouraged to incorporate green infrastructure to support stormwater management and strengthen connections to public realm systems. This may include bioswales, low impact development (LID) vegetated swales (**Figure 46**), soil cells for street trees, rain gardens, detention areas, permeable paving, and native planting strategies. The inclusion of LID measures or boulevard stormwater features is subject to Town Engineering approval and will not be assumed for stormwater management credit unless specifically authorized.

Additional information on best practice for sustainable design for green infrastructure including recommended plant species lists for bioswales and rain gardens can be found on the following website:

https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/Plant_Lists.

Figure 46: Example of a Vegetated Bioswale



2.2.4 Private Parking Lots

*This section should be read in conjunction with the parking lot design standards in **Section 3.2.5**.*

Parking lots within private developments—including commercial plazas, condominiums, and apartment sites—are key components of the urban

fabric and must be designed to balance functionality, safety, accessibility, aesthetics, and environmental performance. Poorly designed parking areas can negatively impact the streetscape, while well-designed facilities can enhance walkability and overall community character. Parking layouts shall include appropriate pedestrian protection measures such as bollards and curb stops, maintain clear sightlines for safety, and be coordinated with the broader design principles outlined in **Section 3** of this Manual.

2.2.5 Signage

Signage within the private realm should be appropriately scaled to the surrounding context and should not overwhelm or dominate the streetscape. Accessibility considerations, including tactile, braille, and audio components where appropriate, should be incorporated to support inclusive design. Temporary commercial signage, such as promotional or sale signage, must be located within private property boundaries and shall not obstruct pedestrian movement or encroach into the public right-of-way.

2.2.6 Conclusion

Across all private realm areas, design shall ensure that encroachments into public space are not permitted without formal Town approval. All building elements, including canopies, balconies, stairs, and doors, must be contained within required setbacks and shall not obstruct sidewalks or public rights-of-way. Where patios or similar uses are proposed, they must comply with municipal encroachment policies and be designed to maintain clear pedestrian routes, safety sightlines, and accessibility at all times.

Overall, the private realm should be designed as an extension of the public realm, contributing to a continuous, high-quality streetscape that supports safety, accessibility, environmental performance, and a strong sense of place.



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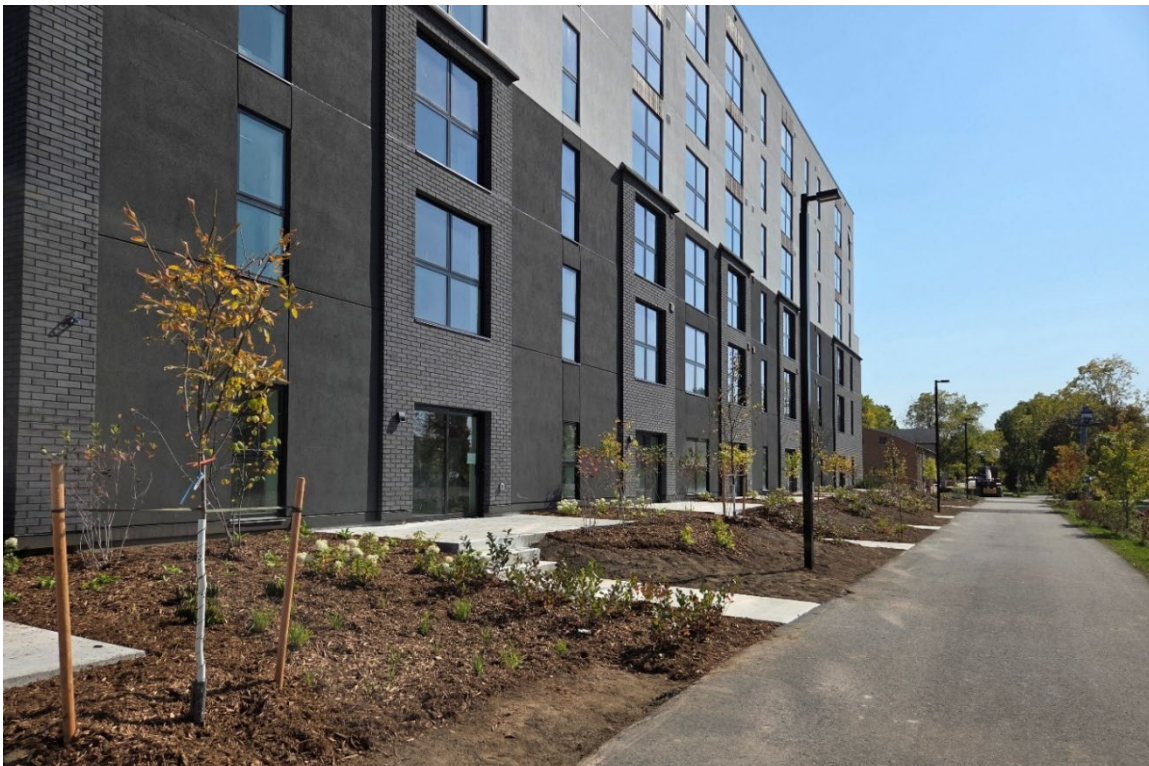
Public & Private Realm Integration

3 Public and Private Realm Integration

A high-quality streetscape in Whitchurch-Stouffville depends on purposeful integration between the public and private realms (**Figure 47**). Coordinated design rules will ensure that sidewalks, trees, lighting, building entrances, signage, and storefront activities form a continuous, accessible, safe and attractive environment. Designs must demonstrate seamless physical and visual integration between public and private realm.

The goal of integration is physical and visual continuity, safety and accessibility, coordinated materials and furnishing palettes, and management/maintenance arrangements so private uses do not conflict with public functions.

Figure 47: Example of Private/Public Realm Integration – Private Residential Entrance Facing a Public Trail



3.1 Streetscape Design Integration between the Public and Private Realms

This section outlines how public realm streetscape design must be carefully integrated with adjacent private properties to ensure a safe, functional, and visually cohesive interface. It provides guidance on key areas of coordination, including privacy, access, servicing, and landscape transitions between public and private spaces.

Streetscape design can impact a private realm where the public and private realm share adjacent spaces. The design of the streetscape components needs to consider the potential effects the design can have on private spaces and their use and enjoyment by the owners.

Typical situations where a design in the public realm needs to consider the private realm are noted below:

1. **Screening** of the public realm to enhance privacy and security with strategic planting, and/or fencing, other landscape buffers such as berms, walls, etc. as applicable as per site context.
2. Tree **planting** offsets to reduce impact of the tree canopy on private gardens, driveways, safety and property maintenance.
3. **Circulation** connections between public and private spaces for vehicles and pedestrians that are safe, meet AODA standards, and provide visual, audio or tactile cues.
4. Ensure servicing and utilities are in well-defined **setbacks**, with safe connections, water movement and grade changes.

3.2 Design Principles (Whole Town Approach)

This section establishes the overarching design principles that guide both public and private realm development to ensure a consistent, cohesive, and high-quality built form across Whitchurch-Stouffville. These principles promote a unified “whole town” approach to streetscape and site design,

reinforcing connectivity, accessibility, sustainability, and character across all development contexts while respecting local variation and heritage identity.

- **Continuity:** Pedestrian surfaces, shade, and wayfinding should feel continuous across public/private edges.
- **Active edges:** Ground floors should animate the street with doors, windows, patios, small-scale retail all to increase passive surveillance and economic activity.
- **Accessibility & universal design:** Clear unobstructed path of travel, accessible loading, grade transitions, tactile warnings at crossings.
- **Heritage sensitivity:** Respect and reinforce Heritage Districts throughout the Town and downtown Main Street's scale, materials and rhythm.
- **Resilience & sustainability:** Incorporate trees, permeable materials, stormwater management in the streetscape.
- **Clear maintenance responsibilities:** Ensure snow removal, seasonal planting, and furniture repair responsibilities are assigned and enforced.

3.3 Typical Elements & the Ideal Public/Private Interface

This section identifies the typical components that define the public/private interface and provides guidance on how these elements should be designed to create a safe, accessible, and well-coordinated streetscape. It establishes expectations for key features such as sidewalks, patios, signage, lighting, and stormwater management.

3.3.1 Public Sidewalk and Furniture Zone (Public)

- **Clearway/unobstructed path:** Minimum 1.8 metre clear pedestrian path on local downtown sidewalks; target wider width where possible

on Stouffville Main Street to allow two people to walk side-by-side, space for patios and curbside amenities.

- **Furniture/planting zone:** Between curb and clearway path add space for benches, bike parking, trash receptacles, trees, planters. Standard tree spacing is 8–12 metres on-centre of trunk (depending on species and soil volume).
- **Canopies & awnings:** Allow fixed and retractable canopies over public sidewalks where they meet municipal approval and clearances. Canopy materials should coordinate with municipal palette.
- **Accessibility – Public Sidewalk to Building Entry:** All commercial and public-facing building entrances must be designed to provide safe, continuous, and accessible barrier-free access from the public sidewalk in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). The transition between the sidewalk and building entry should be fully integrated into the site and grading design to avoid level changes wherever possible.
- **Temporary Accessibility Ramps:** may be permitted on a case-by-case basis where existing conditions prevent immediate compliance; however, these must:
 - Maintain a minimum unobstructed pedestrian clearway at all times;
 - Be fully contained within private property wherever possible;
 - Be stable, slip-resistant, and safely secured; and
 - Not obstruct winter maintenance operations, including snow clearing, storage, or sidewalk plowing.

3.3.2 Private Patios / Terraces

- Seasonal private patios occupying public sidewalk space require an encroachment agreement and insurance.

- The private patios may require screening for the public view.
- See additional details in **Section 2.2.2**

3.3.3 Signage and Lighting

- **Signage:** Limit projection into pedestrian zone; signage design guidelines that respect heritage character.
- **Lighting:** Provide pedestrian-scale lighting for sidewalks. Coordinate fixture design (style, mounting height) across public and private edges.

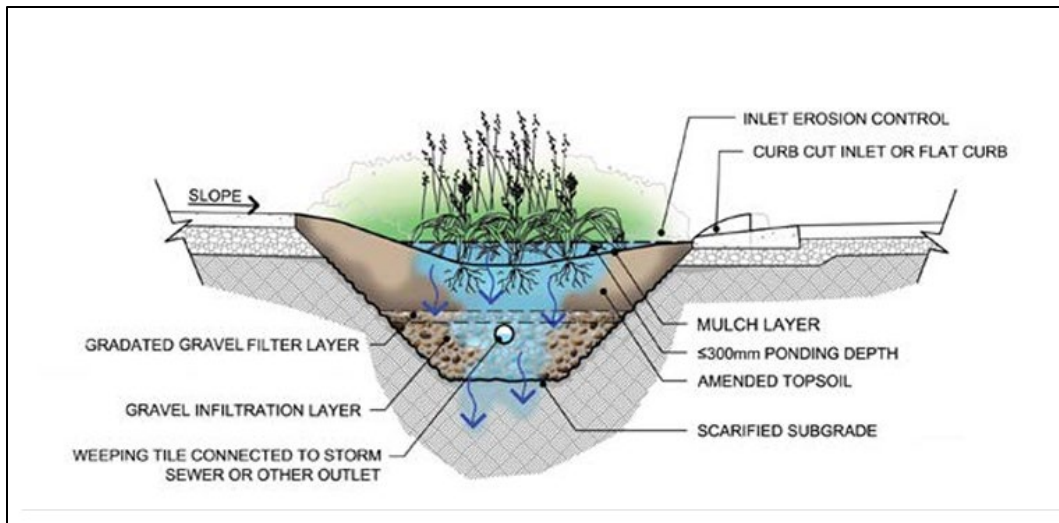
3.3.4 Stormwater Management

This section provides examples and guidance on where Low Impact Development (LID) features, such as bioswales, may be designed and incorporated; however, the inclusion of LID measures or boulevard stormwater features is subject to Town Engineering approval and will not be assumed for stormwater management credit unless specifically authorized with the Town's planning, engineering, transportation, accessibility, and operational requirements, as well as Regional or other agency approvals where applicable.

- **Bioswales:** A Bioswale is a type of green infrastructure that captures and filters stormwater. It is used as an alternative to traditional underground drainpipes, as an ecological and cost-effective approach to manage rainfall. It reduces the amount of water entering the municipal sewer system and improves the water quality of runoff before the water goes into local streams and lakes. Bioswales can be located at the interface of the private and public realms, but typically is in the public realm, connecting stormwater management between both.

Figure 48 (next page) provides a cross-section of a bioswale. Design and plant list recommendations for bioswales can be found at the website https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/Plant_Lists

Figure 48: Bioswale Cross-Section



- The Bioswale is typically a gently sloped, linear vegetated channel, similar to a ditch but designed to temporarily store stormwater and filter it. Soil, filtering porous drainage layers, gravel and native plants are usually incorporated into the design. These components slow down the water velocity, and filter pollutants.
- Another advantage is that they can create habitat for pollinators and improve ecological biodiversity.
- A limitation of the Bioswale is that it is less feasible along roadsides where there are many driveway crossings. Slopes and vegetation density are also important to ensure the water moves through the system and optimal filtration is achieved.
- Use tree pits with soil cells as a last resource where space is limited, bioswale medians where space allows, permeable paving in parking lots, and rain gardens within the public realm to reduce runoff and support healthier trees.

3.3.5 Parking Lot Design Standards

3.3.5.1 Purpose and Intent

These standards establish consistent design expectations for:

- Public Realm / Municipal Parking Lots
- Private Realm / Commercial Parking Lots
- Integrated Public–Private Parking Environments
- Regulatory Compliance

All parking facilities must comply with applicable municipal zoning by-laws, site plan control requirements, and provincial regulations. Requirements vary by jurisdiction and must be confirmed during detailed design.

Key legislation includes:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*
- Local municipal zoning by-laws and engineering standards

3.3.5.2 General Design Principles

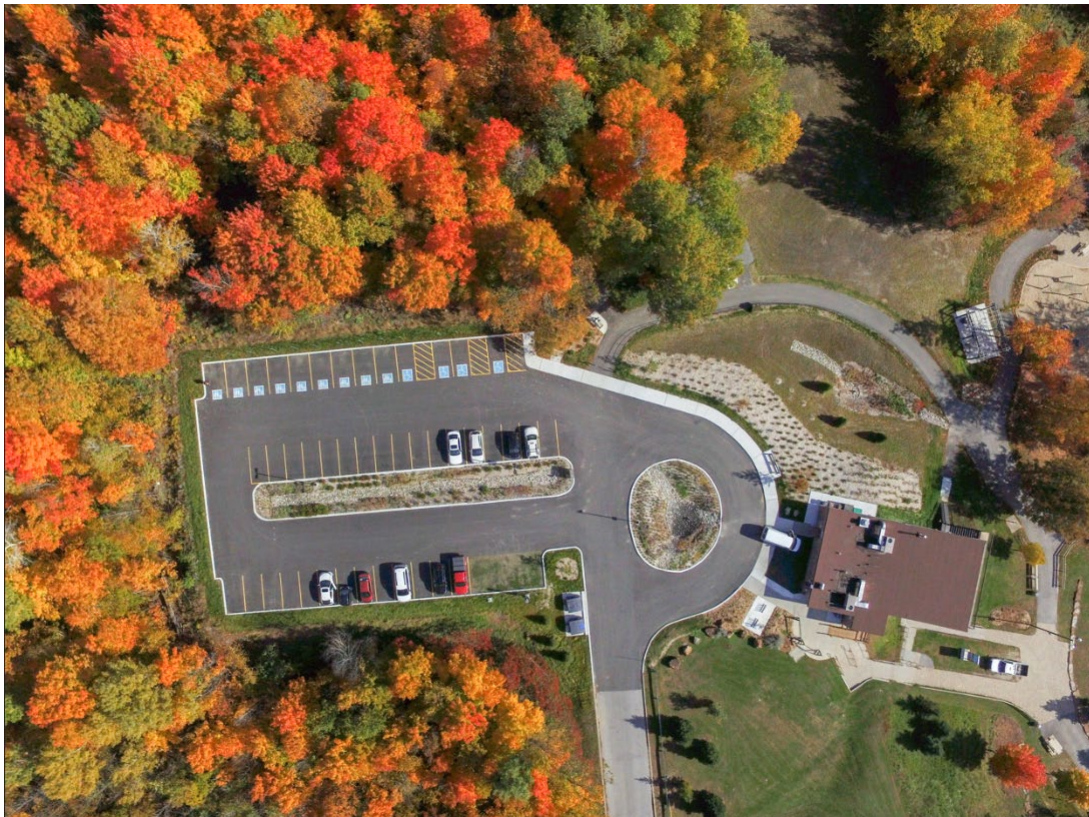
Parking lots are often the first impression visitors experience before entering a site or building. Thoughtful, attractive, and user-friendly design, from pavement markings and layout to signage and landscaping, should foster a welcoming atmosphere while reflecting and reinforcing the unique character of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

All public and private parking lots shall:

- Prioritize pedestrian safety and accessibility.
- Integrate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to enhance visibility and user comfort.
- Support safe vehicular circulation.

- Address winter operations, including snow storage and salt management.
- Contribute positively to adjacent streetscapes through landscaping and buffering.
- The inclusion of LID measures or boulevard stormwater features is subject to Town Engineering approval and will not be assumed for stormwater management credit unless specifically approved by the Town such as the example seen in **Figure 49**.

Figure 49: Municipal Parking Lot with LID Features



3.3.5.3 Layout and Circulation

Vehicular Circulation

- Provide clearly defined entry and exit points.
- Ensure drive aisles meet minimum municipal width requirements.
- Minimize conflict points between vehicles and pedestrians.

Parking Space Dimensions and Accessible Parking

All parking space dimensions shall comply with applicable municipal zoning by-laws and accessibility legislation. This applies to both public and private parking lots.

General Parking Space Requirements:

- Standard parking space length and width shall conform to local standards and may vary depending on parking angle (e.g., 90°, 60°, etc.).
- Minimum vertical clearance must be maintained, particularly in structured, underground, or covered parking areas.

Other Parking Lot Considerations

- Ensure areas for waste collection are screened, and collection access does not conflict with vehicle or pedestrian circulation in the site.
- Include vehicle charging stations.
- Include areas for bicycle parking.
- Provide amenity and/or shaded sitting areas.
- Screen adjacent property with fencing and/or landscaping per direction from the Town.
- Plant trees where the location, maintenance practices, and soil volume space allows them to grow and stay healthy. Provide a protective mulch surface at a minimum of 1 metre offset radius to avoid trunks getting clipped by an adjacent lawn equipment. Space trees to ensure

there is shade provided for vehicles and pedestrians in the parking lot at every median.

- Must consider maintenance practices, wayfinding and safety for surface material design.
- Parking lot designs shall include bollards and curb stops to protect pedestrian and cycling areas.
- Sightlines must not be obstructed to ensure safety for all users.

3.3.5.4 Accessible Parking Requirements

Accessible parking spaces are mandatory and shall be provided in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, as applicable.

- The required number of accessible spaces shall be based on the total parking supply; however, the number of accessible parking spaces may be increased depending on the type of building (i.e., senior centre or recreation centre)
- Accessible spaces shall be located closest to accessible building entrances.
- Space dimensions, access aisles, signage, and pavement markings must meet current regulatory standards.
- Clearly marked access aisles and barrier-free routes must be provided from accessible spaces to building entrances.
- Accessible routes shall connect seamlessly to sidewalks and transit stops and, wherever possible, minimize or eliminate the need to cross vehicular aisles.

3.3.5.5 Pedestrian Safety and Connectivity

Parking lot design must support safe and intuitive pedestrian movement.

- Provide designated pedestrian walkways separated from vehicular aisles where feasible.
- Use high-visibility crosswalk markings.
- Minimize pedestrian travel distances across drive aisles.
- Ensure barrier-free connections to public sidewalks and adjacent properties.
- Provide pedestrian refuge areas in large parking lots.

Public-private integration shall ensure that pedestrian routes align across property lines to create continuous networks.

3.3.5.6 Surface Materials

- Use durable, climate-appropriate paving materials suitable for freeze-thaw cycles.
- Pavement must support anticipated traffic loads.
- Where feasible, incorporate permeable paving to reduce runoff.
- Pavement markings must be permanent, reflective, and highly visible.
- All materials shall support ease of maintenance and long-term durability.

3.3.5.7 Landscaping and Buffers

Landscaping improves aesthetics, reduces heat buildup, and supports stormwater management.

Perimeter Buffers

- Where adjacent to residential and commercial or mixed-use developments, a minimum of 3 to 4.5 metre landscape buffers are required at the perimeter consisting of coniferous and deciduous

planting to provide year-round buffer and interest. Buffers adjacent to sidewalks are critical to prevent vehicle overhang into pedestrian zones.

- Screen parking from public streets using planting, berms, or low walls where appropriate.

Interior Landscaping

- Provide landscaped islands at regular intervals.
- Incorporate shade trees to reduce urban heat island effects.
- Use hardy, low-maintenance, salt-tolerant species.
- Curbed islands should allow controlled runoff entry for stormwater treatment.
- Refer to the plant list for species selection in **Schedule B1**.

3.3.5.8 Low Impact Development (LID) Integration

The inclusion of LID measures or boulevard stormwater features is subject to Town Engineering approval and will not be assumed for stormwater management credit unless specifically authorized.

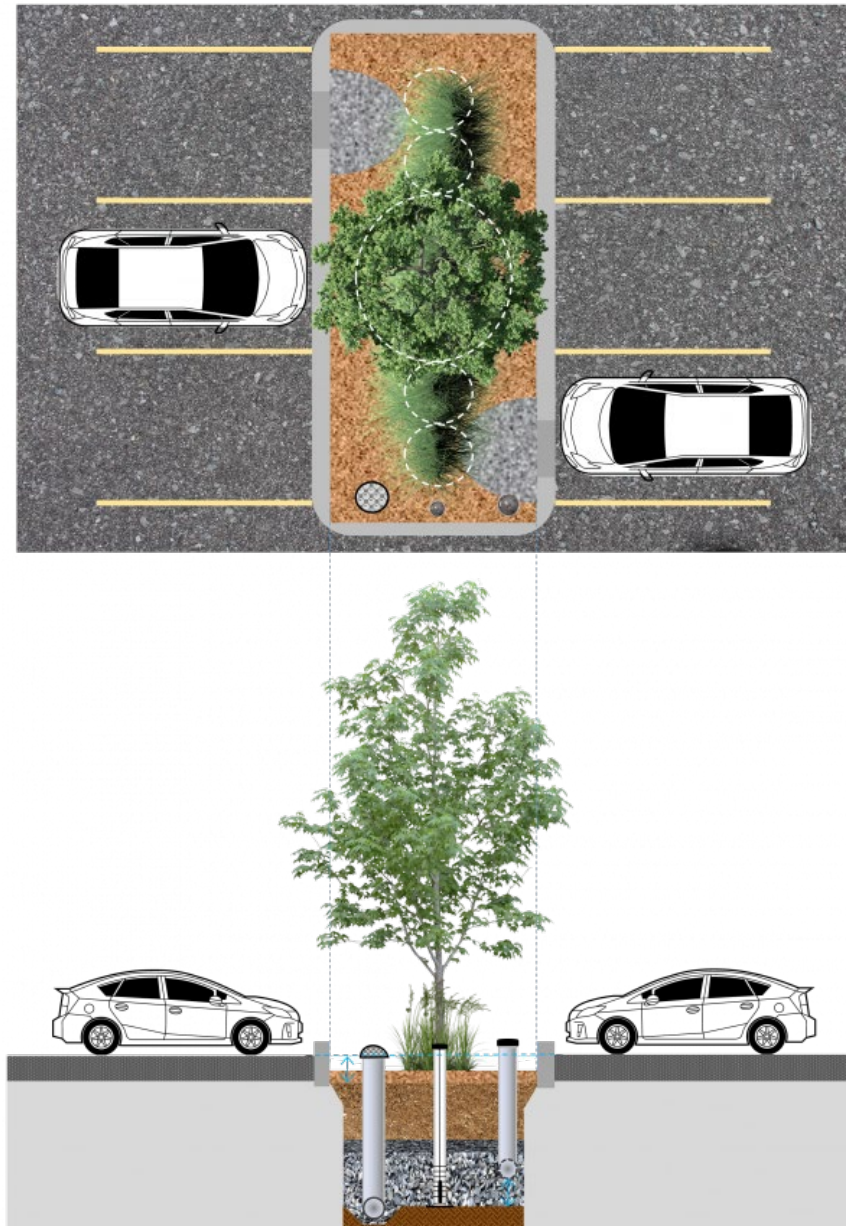
Parking lots present significant opportunities for on-site stormwater management.

Design Strategies

- Integrate bioswales, enhanced grass swales, and rain gardens within islands or along perimeters.
- Refer to https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/Plant_Lists for planting recommendations.
- Direct runoff into landscaped areas prior to entering storm systems.
- Incorporate native or adaptive vegetation.
- Provide underdrains in bioretention areas adjacent to salted parking surfaces (**Figure 50** next page).

Figure 50: Partial infiltration bioretention cell serving a parking lot¹⁰

Bioretention – Partial infiltration



¹⁰ Source: Sustainable Technologies

3.3.5.9 Winter Considerations

- Designate snow storage areas that do not obstruct sightlines or pedestrian routes.
- Avoid piling snow in LID facilities unless designed for it.
- Reduce salt use through thoughtful grading and drainage design.
- Recognize that road salt can damage plantings; specify salt-tolerant species.

3.3.5.10 Lighting Standards

Lighting must balance safety, visibility, and environmental responsibility.

- Provide uniform lighting coverage across parking and pedestrian areas.
- Use energy-efficient LED fixtures.
- Install full cut-off luminaires to minimize glare and light trespass.
- Ensure lighting supports CPTED principles and visibility of entrances and walkways.
- Lighting design shall comply with applicable municipal and industry standards.
- Plans must be prepared and certified by a qualified professional and approved by the municipality.
- Fixtures should be consistent with streetscape standards to ensure visual cohesion and maintenance efficiency.

3.3.5.11 Maintenance & Operations

Parking lots must be designed for long-term functionality and ease of maintenance, and snow and ice management should be considered in the early design of all parking lots to ensure safe, efficient winter maintenance of the site.

Pavement Maintenance

- Maintain clear and visible pavement markings.
- Repair potholes and surface failures promptly.

Snow and Ice Control

- Designate snow storage areas at site plan approval and must be shown on grading plans.
- Locate snow storage to avoid conflicts with parking, drive aisles, pedestrian routes, accessible spaces, fire routes, and sightlines.
- Prioritize perimeter edges, reinforced landscape islands, or surplus paved areas that do not affect operations or drainage.
- Size snow storage proportionally to parking supply and expected snow removal needs, ensuring no loss of required parking.
- Consider long-term impacts of de-icing materials on pavement durability and landscape health.

Landscape Maintenance

- Provide irrigation or drought-tolerant planting strategies.
- Ensure LID features are inspected and maintained to preserve function.

3.3.5.12 Public and Private Realm Integration

Where private commercial parking lots abut municipal sidewalks or public spaces, integration is required to maintain streetscape continuity.

Integration Strategies

- Align pedestrian walkways with public sidewalks.
- Continue streetscape materials (e.g., tree species, lighting style) where appropriate.
- Screen large parking areas from primary street frontages.
- Encourage shared parking strategies between adjacent properties.
- Support future redevelopment and intensification by locating parking to the rear or side of buildings where feasible.

Parking lots should not dominate primary street frontages. Buildings should frame the street edge, with parking positioned to support, not define, the public realm.

3.3.5.13 Sustainability and Urban Design Objectives

All parking facilities should aim to:

- Reduce impervious surface impacts.
- Improve microclimate conditions through tree canopy coverage.
- Support transit, cycling, and pedestrian connectivity.
- Incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure where appropriate.

3.3.5.14 Conclusion

Parking lot design must extend beyond minimum zoning compliance. Whether municipal or private, parking facilities are visible, functional parts of the streetscape. Through careful attention to accessibility, circulation, landscaping, stormwater management, lighting, and pedestrian connectivity, parking lots can become safe, sustainable, and integrated components of complete communities rather than isolated expanses of pavement.

3.3.6 Utilities

Utilities in both the private and public realms include utility cabinets, transformers and hydro and gas metres. These items can be effectively integrated into new developments, and/or screened from view to minimize their impact on the public/private realm.

- Utilities should be located within the public boulevard and buried underground where possible.
- The use of a join utility trench is recommended to minimize the impacts of routine maintenance and repairs on the roadway, street trees and other streetscape elements.
- Choice of plant material, trees species and location is to be meet standards of the utility providers. Refer to **Schedule A3** for further information.
- The following planting diagrams should be considered when planting boulevard trees under overhead powerlines (**Figure 51** next page).

Figure 51: Planting Under or Around Powerlines and Electrical Equipment¹¹



¹¹ Source: Electrical Safety Authority – Planting Under or Around Powerlines & Electrical Equipment

3.4 Governance: Rules, Approvals and Maintenance

This section outlines the governance framework required to implement, review, and maintain high-quality streetscape design across the Town. It provides guidance on approvals, regulatory tools, funding mechanisms, and clearly defined public and private responsibilities to support consistent long-term management of the public and private realms.

- **Design review:** to be integrated into site plan / heritage permit reviews. The checklist should include materials, clear zones, furniture, lighting and tree planting.
- **Encroachment / patio licenses:** Standard municipal license with insurance, seasonal removal, and maintenance clauses.
- **Developer contribution & cost-sharing:** Use site plan agreements, community benefit charges or local improvement charges to fund public realm upgrades and long-term maintenance.
- **Maintenance matrix:** Prepare a public / private responsibilities table for snow removal, planting replacement, street furniture upkeep, and lighting repairs, recommendation to make this part of every encroachment agreement and site plan.
- **By-law adjustments:** Ensure zoning and sign by-law updates explicitly permit desired private activities (e.g., sidewalk patios, operable awnings) subject to standards.



4

Conclusion

4 Conclusion

As the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville continues to grow, this Public and Private Realm Standards Manual provides consistent direction for the planning, design, and development of streetscapes and adjacent areas throughout the municipality. It applies to both publicly owned and privately owned lands adjacent to roads.

The Manual translates the Town's Official Plan and related urban design objectives into practical, actionable guidelines that support the creation of complete communities, strengthen local identity, and enhance tourism, and investment. It also expands upon the Community of Stouffville's Main Street Built Form and Urban Design Guidelines (2020) by extending streetscape direction beyond the Main Street corridor to the broader Town context.

Organized into the public realm, private realm, and their interface, the Manual promotes a coordinated approach that ensures seamless transitions between public and private spaces. It is intended for use by Town staff, Council, developers, and consultants, and should be applied alongside applicable Provincial, Regional, and Municipal standards.

Overall, this Manual serves as a key implementation tool to ensure high-quality, context-sensitive, and cohesive streetscapes that reflect the Town's long-term vision.

5 List of Schedules

Schedule A – Checklists

Schedule A1 – Landscape Drawings Submission Checklist

Schedule A2 – Development Submission Checklist

Schedule A3 - Planting Design Checklist

Schedule A4 – Planting Plan Checklist

Schedule A5 – Roundabout Centre Island Checklist

Schedule A6 - Landscape Median Planting Checklist

Schedule A7 – Streetscape Design Checklist

Schedule B – Plant List

Schedule B1 – Plant List