The Essential Factors Governing the Compatibility Between
Developing Projects and the
existing Urban Fabric: The Case
of the St. Lawrence �N�e�i�g�h�b�o�u�r�h�o�o�~�
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY in Toronto

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The purpose of this report was to examine the essential factors that govern the compatibility

between development projects and their existing urban fabric. To achit1v007 Tc 2n 0.127c0 Td (o71f68.e)Tj 0 achm 3.653 0 T507co7cg Td ilieraturhe rviewv007 Tc 2529 Tc 3.653 0 Td helpedn to dfmine the ach2ion -0.0e2-Tc 3.52

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neighbourhood's surrounding context that included the area known as the Old Town of York. Next, similar information was collected for the St. Lawrence project. Categories ofdata collected include: architectural character, massing, site organization, linkage systems and urban spaces. Common qualitative measurement techniques such as recording on-site observations, taking photographs and archival review of maps and documents were used during the data collection. Finally, comparison was made between the two sets of data using the design guidelines as the framework for the evaluation. It was found that despite all the attempts made to integrate this development into the old fabric of the city, the project is only successful in achieving a coherent relationship of site organization, linkage systems and urban spaces. However, attributes such as architectural character and massing did not fully correspond to those ofthe buildings around the site. It was argued that for the Housing Department the issue of design quality was a low priority compared to the desire for providing a large number of assisted housing. Similarly, the problems with the massing were related to the Housing Department's conflict ofobjectives. In particular, the decisions to maintain a low-rise form and the use of high densities to achieve social housing targets were mentioned as the main causes of these shortcomings. Two additional factors that played a crucial role in the way this neighbourhood was designed were identified as environmental constraints such as the noise coming from the south and the lack of ingenuity on the part of some of the architects.
Several conclusions were made that can be employed in future developments. First, clear
goals for design compatibility should be set at the initial stages of the project. Next, to avoid the conflict of interests, objectives of the project should not be contradictory in nature. Finally, politicians and planners should take a stronger position with respect to the aesthetic qualities of the built form and open spaces.

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