



Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework & Implementation Strategy

August 2015

The Planning Partnership
Greenberg Consultants Inc
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This document is the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown PLANNING FRAMEWORK STUDY. It includes two distinct Parts, as follows:

- Part 1 is entitled the **BACKGROUND AND EMERGING DIRECTIONS REPORT**. It is a document that summarizes the history of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, and provides commentary on recent and current planning and development activity, as well as a variety of information regarding the Pedestrian Realm Network. Key to this document is the incorporation of the key issues and opportunities that were discussed and articulated through the stakeholder consultation process. Part 1 provides a basis for Part 2; and,
- Part 2 is entitled **POLICY APPROACH**. It takes the results of Part 1, and establishes a planning and urban design policy framework that is suitable for the basis of a Secondary Plan, that would be implemented as an Amendment to the City of Toronto Official Plan. This document is written in planning policy language, and is intended to provide statutory effect to a number of existing policies and guidelines that apply within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area. It also provides substantial detail identifying where development should, and should not occur, what forms of development in terms of use and built form are appropriate, how future development applications will be analyzed and what future planning approval processes will be required.



Part 1 | Background & Emerging Directions

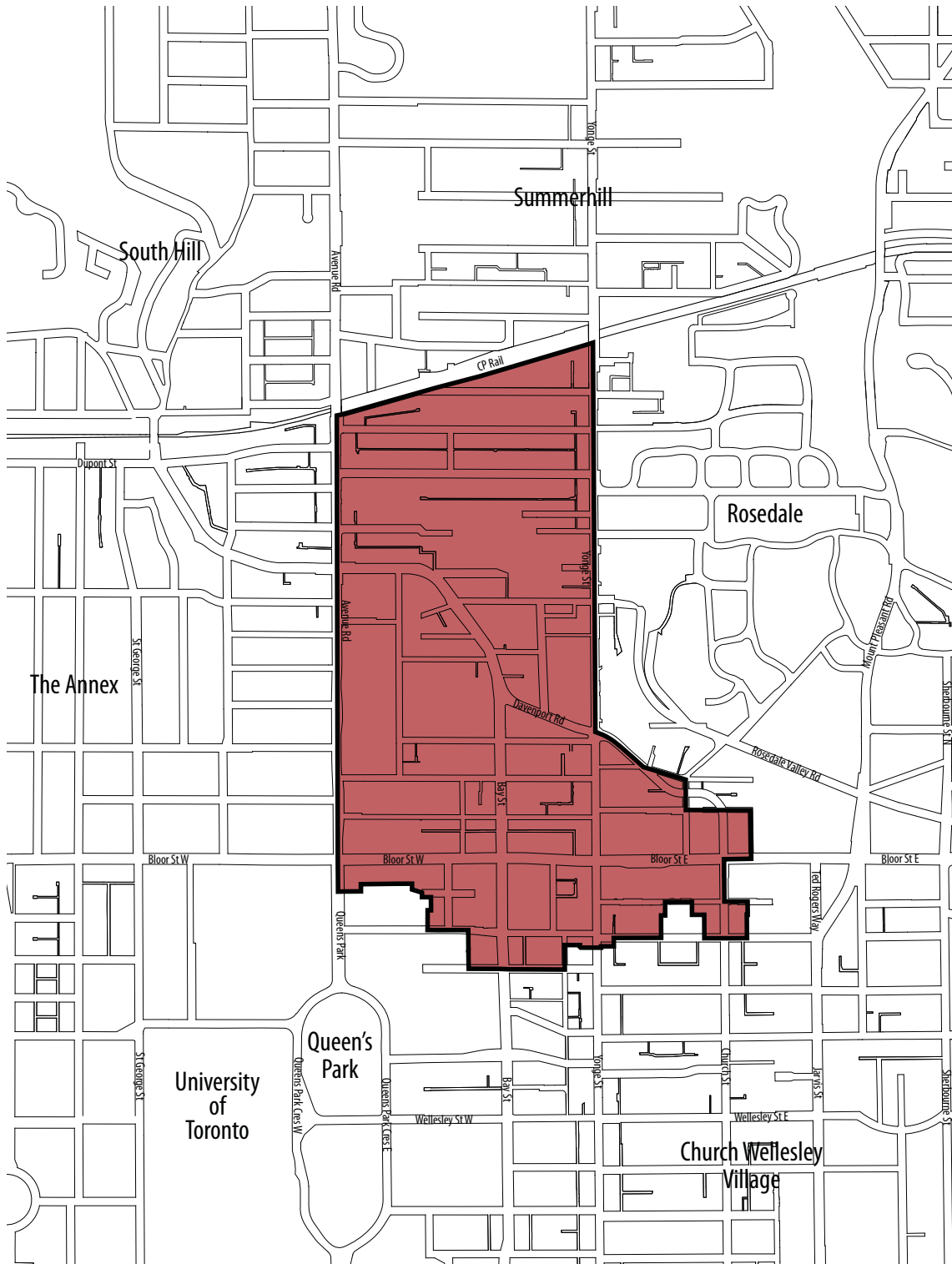
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Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework Study Area



1 Introduction

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area has long been known as a transformative neighbourhood. Its colourful and storied history - from a small village unto itself, to a residential annex of the City, to the heart of Toronto's counterculture, and finally into one of the most exclusive shopping, dining, and residential districts in Canada – has bestowed it with a renowned character that is sought after by businesses, tourists, residents and developers alike. This remarkable history is detailed in this report.

Changing Context

In the last decade, the accelerated pace of development in the area has been disconcerting to the Bloor-Yorkville BIA, local residents and business owners. In the midst of another era of drastic change – one that is bringing taller and taller buildings, and more high-rise residential developments than ever before – the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Association (BIA), ABC Residents Association, Greater Yorkville Residents Association (GYRA) and the Yonge Bay Bloor Business Association (YBB) have expressed their concerns over a lack of comprehensive planning. New towers, and often skyscrapers, have numerous and significant impacts on the area. These developments have drastically increased the residential population of Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown, which has both increased the number of people visiting the area and accessing restaurants, shops and other services, adds pressure to local public parks and open spaces, and has limited the capacity for office space and professional services. Furthermore, these tall buildings have largely changed the 'look and feel' of the area by overwhelming existing smaller buildings and blocking sunlight from many of the prime shopping and dining areas, and parks and open spaces. By approving these new developments in isolation from one another, and without due regard for the existing character of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, the City of Toronto runs the risk of impairing the economic and cultural success of the area. Residents and business owners alike are quick to recognize the threat that these new projects pose to the area.



It is clear that the development demands on the Bloor-Yorkville/North-Midtown area are not slowing down, so it is imperative that the BIA, ABC Residents Association, GYRA and the YBB develop a plan that illustrates a feasible long-term vision for the future of the entire neighbourhood. The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy aims to address these concerns by considering the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area as a connected, complete entity and establishing a long-term vision for future compatible development to enhance existing character. This study seeks to preserve the exceptional reputation and distinctive character of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, while capitalizing on opportunities for investment and enhancement.

Engaging Stakeholders

In order to create a successful Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy, the BIA, ABC Residents Association, GYRA and the YBB have engaged those who are most familiar with the area, and most affected by development. An iterative process was undertaken to engage stakeholders in conceptualizing and refining the vision for the area, which included a two-day Public Workshop held at the Toronto Reference Library on April 22 and 23, 2013. The team's open and accessible approach invited stakeholders – including City staff and Council, residents, business owners and representatives of the development industry – to help create a vision that addresses their needs and desires, and is effective in establishing a clear vision for the future of the Area. The meetings, group exercises and team working sessions resulted in the formation of key directions.

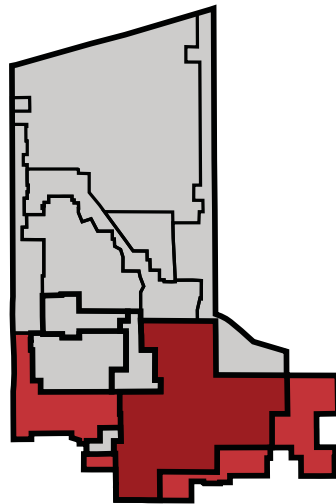
A Unique Neighbourhood

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area includes beautiful residential neighbourhoods, as well as an eclectic mix of buildings – different styles, different scales and from different eras – and a diversity of retail and service commercial uses, restaurants, hotels, offices, housing types and cultural amenities, which make the area an active, animated and enjoyable place. In addition to the retail commercial functions, the mix of land uses also varies from single-detached homes to apartments, major and small scale office uses, and an array of cultural and community uses including schools, libraries, art galleries and a fire station. The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area also includes Bloor Street, Canada's preeminent retail destination street, which supports an existing and growing inventory of large scale, tall buildings with a mix of office, retail and service commercial uses, restaurants and hotels, as well as a growing residential population. The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is also one of the most accessible neighbourhoods in Toronto – by road, transit, bicycle and for pedestrians. Together, these unique characteristics make Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown a very desirable place to live work and socialize.



A Community of Distinct Character Areas

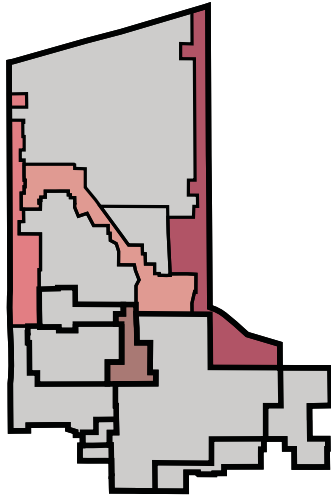
During the workshop held in 2013, the character areas of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area were mapped and shared with workshop participants. Since the workshop, mapping of the character areas has been slightly modified to align with the current Official Plan designations with respect to the areas surrounding the Study Area. These represent proposed character areas that will be confirmed in Part 2 - The Policy Approach.



Urban Core + Urban Ridge

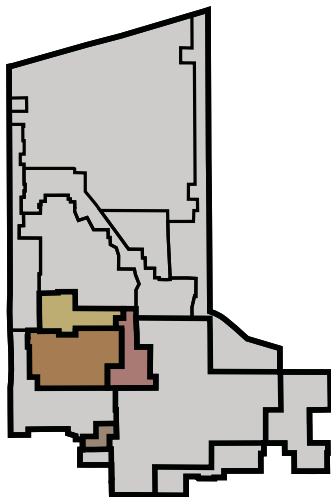
The Urban Core is intended to have the greatest intensity of uses and scale in the Study Area. It has the tallest buildings and therefore the greatest responsibility to contribute to the Pedestrian Realm Network. In particular, it is expected that each development will contribute to enhancing and strengthening the visual and physical pedestrian connectivity through the Area.

The Urban Ridge provides a transition in scale and intensity from the Urban Core to the Villages and adjacent residential neighbourhoods. As in all of the character areas, high activity uses that create a vibrant street life are required on all key streets - Yonge, Bloor, Bay, Cumberland and Yorkville Streets and Avenue Road.



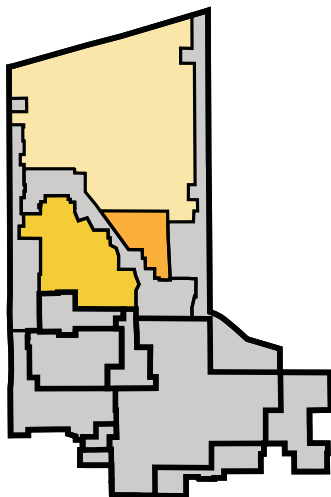
Corridors

The Corridors will provide a transition in scale and intensity from the Urban Ridge. Development will ensure a sensitive transition to adjacent low rise neighbourhoods. It will be important to maintain the traditional “main street” character of Yonge Street, north of Bloor Street.



Villages

The intent of the Villages is to preserve the existing and historic character of the area with new compatible development to promote economic revitalization. Of primary concern is to maintain a fine grain texture of retail uses, and to ensure appropriate height and massing relationships.



Neighbourhoods

The intent of the Neighbourhoods is to preserve the existing historic and residential character of the areas. New development will be limited, compatible and context appropriate.



| 2 Cultural Heritage

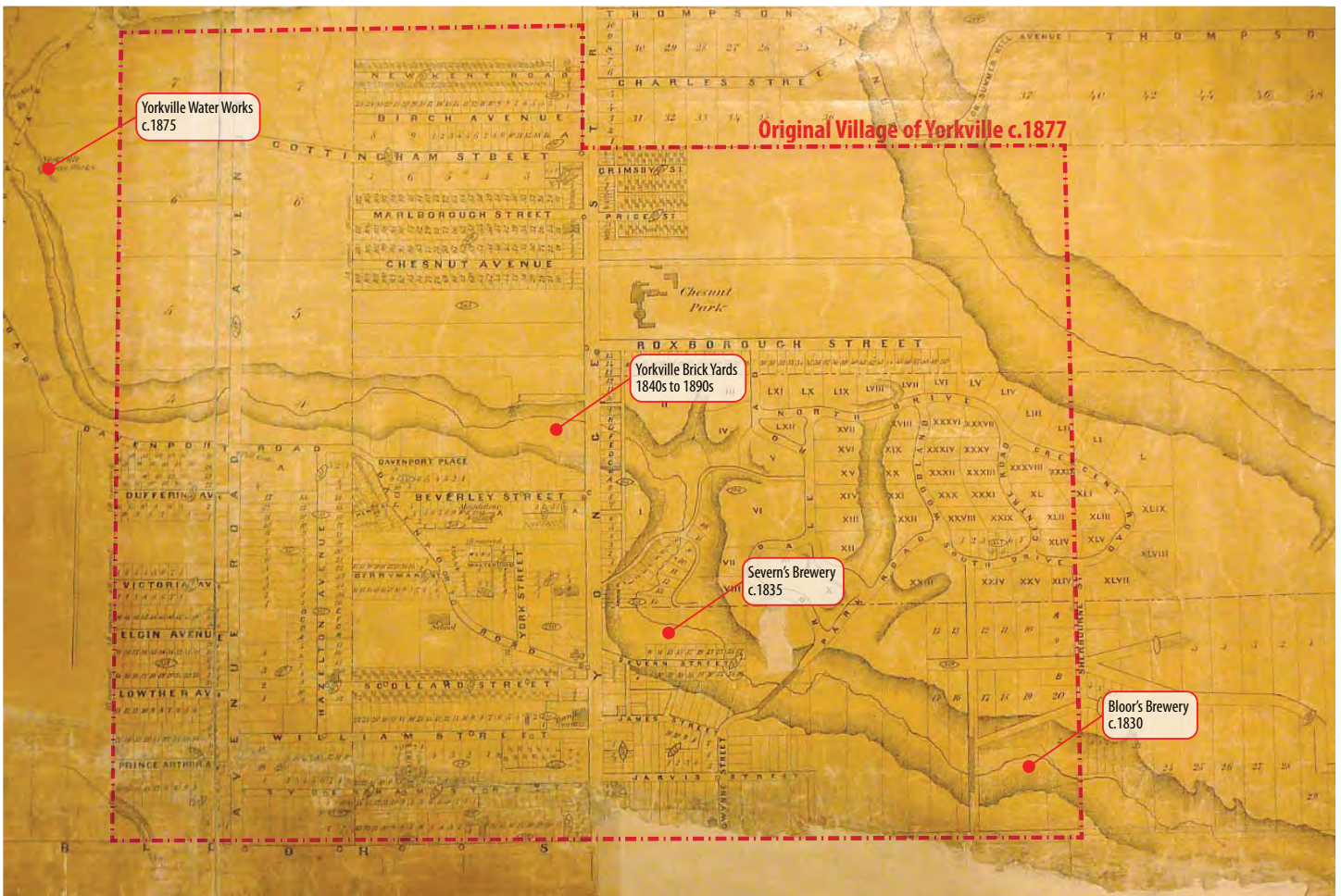
Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown is an area rich in culture and history, both tangible and intangible. From a middle and working class suburban village, to becoming a part of the City of Toronto in the late 19th century, to the bohemian cultural centre of the 1950s and 60s, to its role as one of the most exclusive residential addresses and shopping districts in Canada, the neighbourhood has undergone great change since its incorporation as a village in 1853. Today the Area is defined by a village character with pockets of 19th century built form, juxtaposed with high-density development and a unique Pedestrian Realm Network composed of parks and a series of pedestrian focused urban squares, courtyards and mid-block connections.

Despite recent development pressures, the Area continues to embody a distinctive character and remains an important cultural hub and tourist destination in Toronto. There are a significant number of Designated and Listed Heritage Buildings, as well as one Heritage Conservation District (Yorkville-Hazelton Area HCD) within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area. The following description of the Area's historical evolution and explanation of the cultural heritage maps provides a basis for understanding, inspiring and informing the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy in such a way that builds on, and adds to its unique history and culture.

Period of Stability: 1853-1950s

Original Village of Yorkville (1877)

The period from 1853, when the original Village of Yorkville was incorporated, through to the 1950s was a relatively stable period for the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area. In 1853, Bloor Street was the northern boundary of the City of Toronto, and the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area was a middle and working class suburban village. In the later half of the 19th century, significant industries included brick making and brewing, which established a significant employment base in the community.

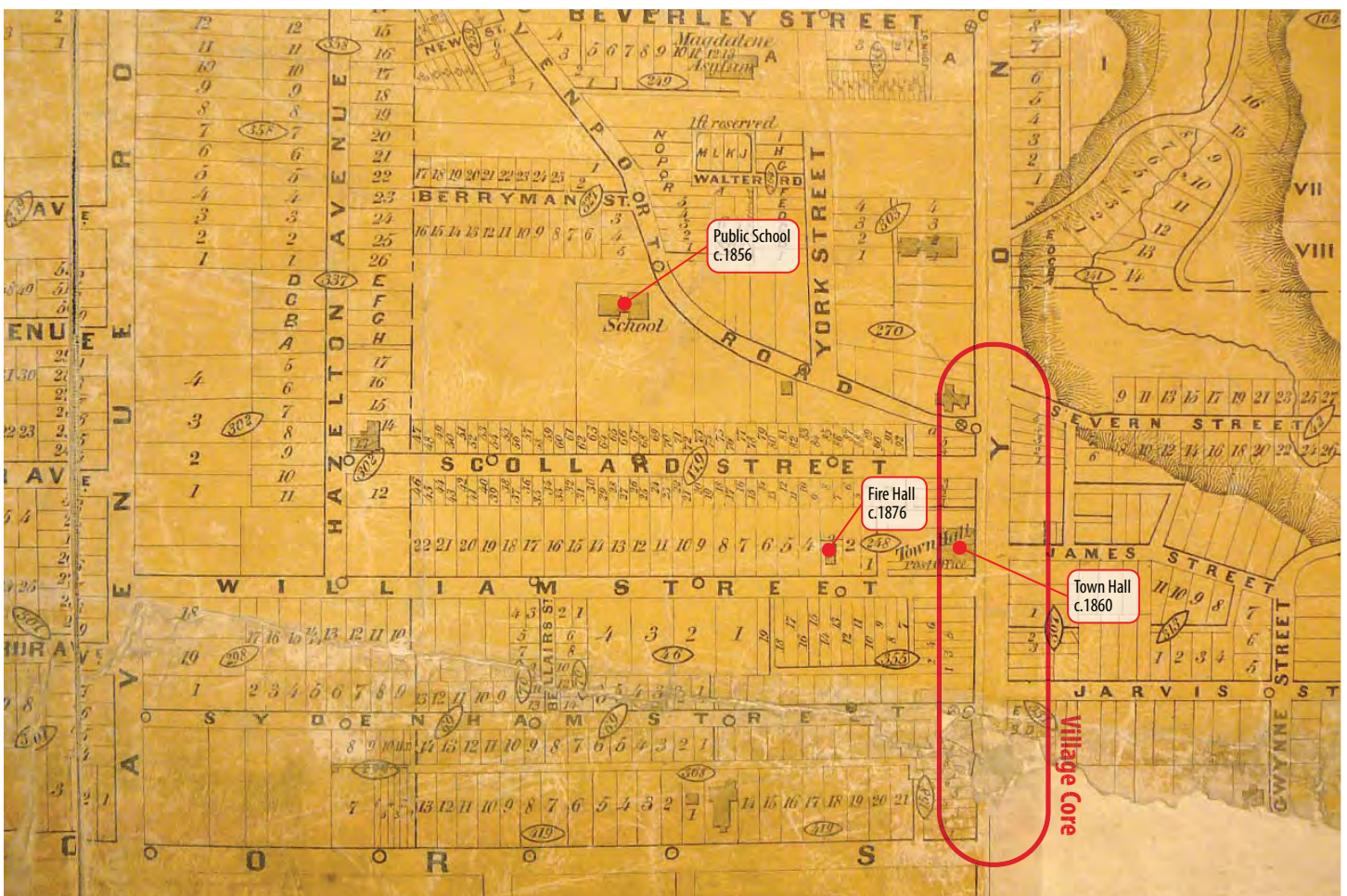


Village of Yorkville, c. 1877



Village Core (1877)

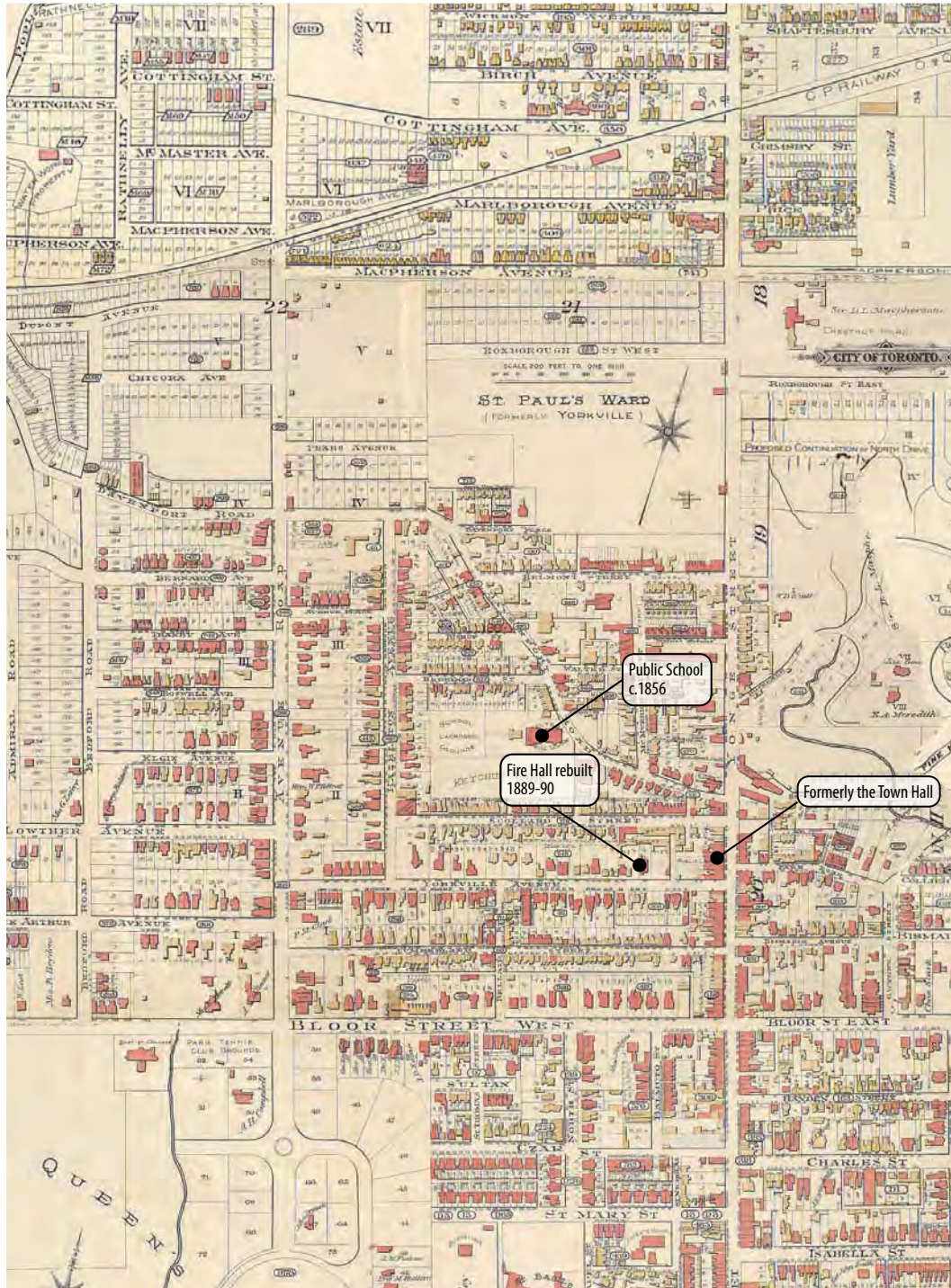
Prior to annexation, the Village Core was tightly defined around Yonge Street, just north of Bloor Street. The commercial hub centred on Yonge Street, while Bloor Street and surrounding side streets were residential. A public school was built on land donated by Jesse Ketchum, tanner and philanthropist, c. 1856. The Town Hall stood at the corner of Yonge Street and Yorkville Avenue, built c. 1860 by William Hay, one of Toronto's most famous early architects, and by 1876 the first fire hall was built, Yorkville resembled and functioned as a complete community, nestled at the northern edge of the City of Toronto.



Detail of Village of Yorkville Core, c. 1877

Post-Annexation by City of Toronto (1890)

In 1883, the Village of Yorkville was annexed to the City of Toronto. The annexation does not appear to have profoundly changed the character of Yorkville; however, post annexation, the Fire Hall was rebuilt on Yorkville Avenue in 1889-90 and a public library was built adjacent to the Fire Hall in 1907.

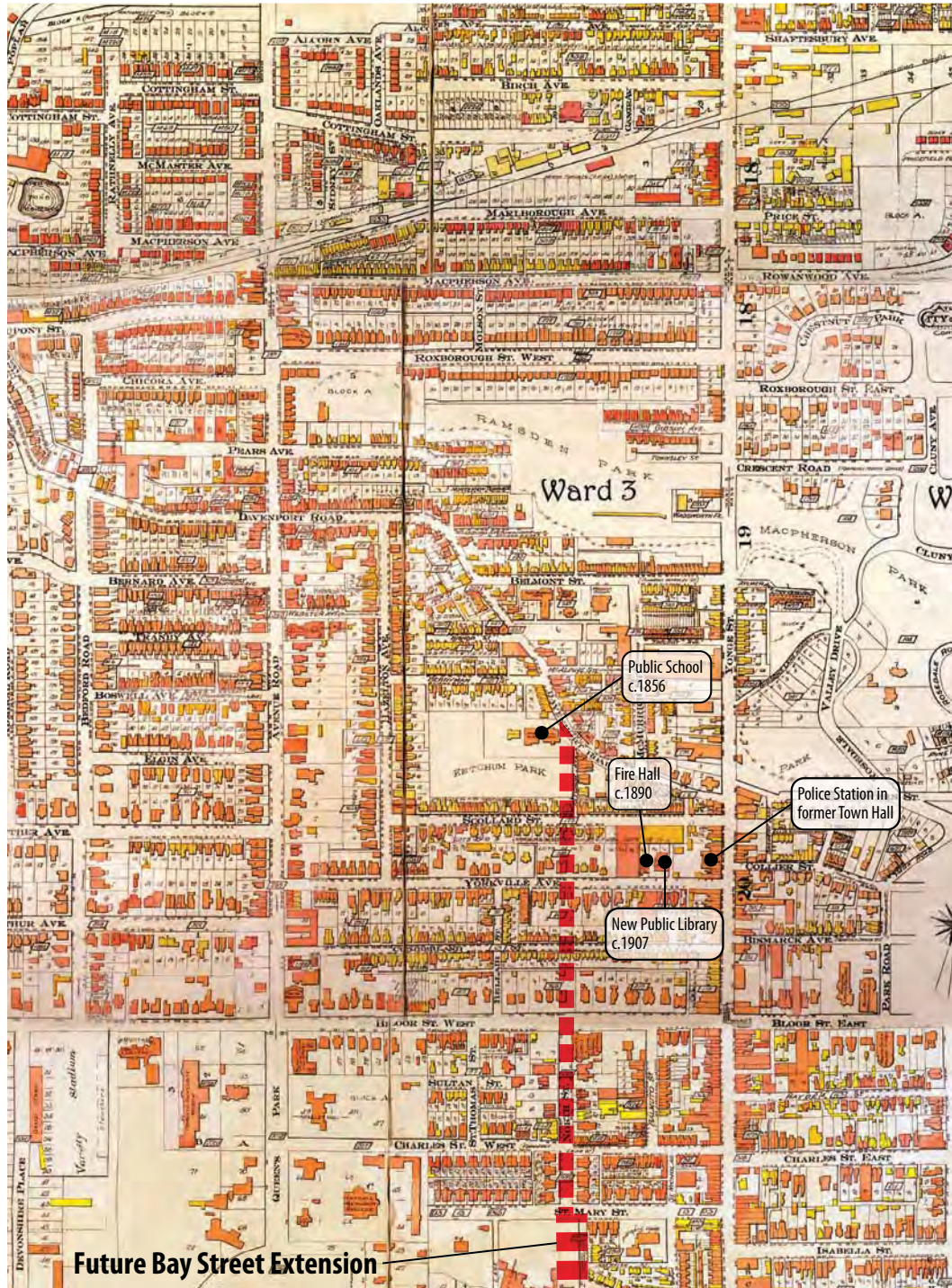


Post-Annexation, 1890



Early 20th Century (1913)

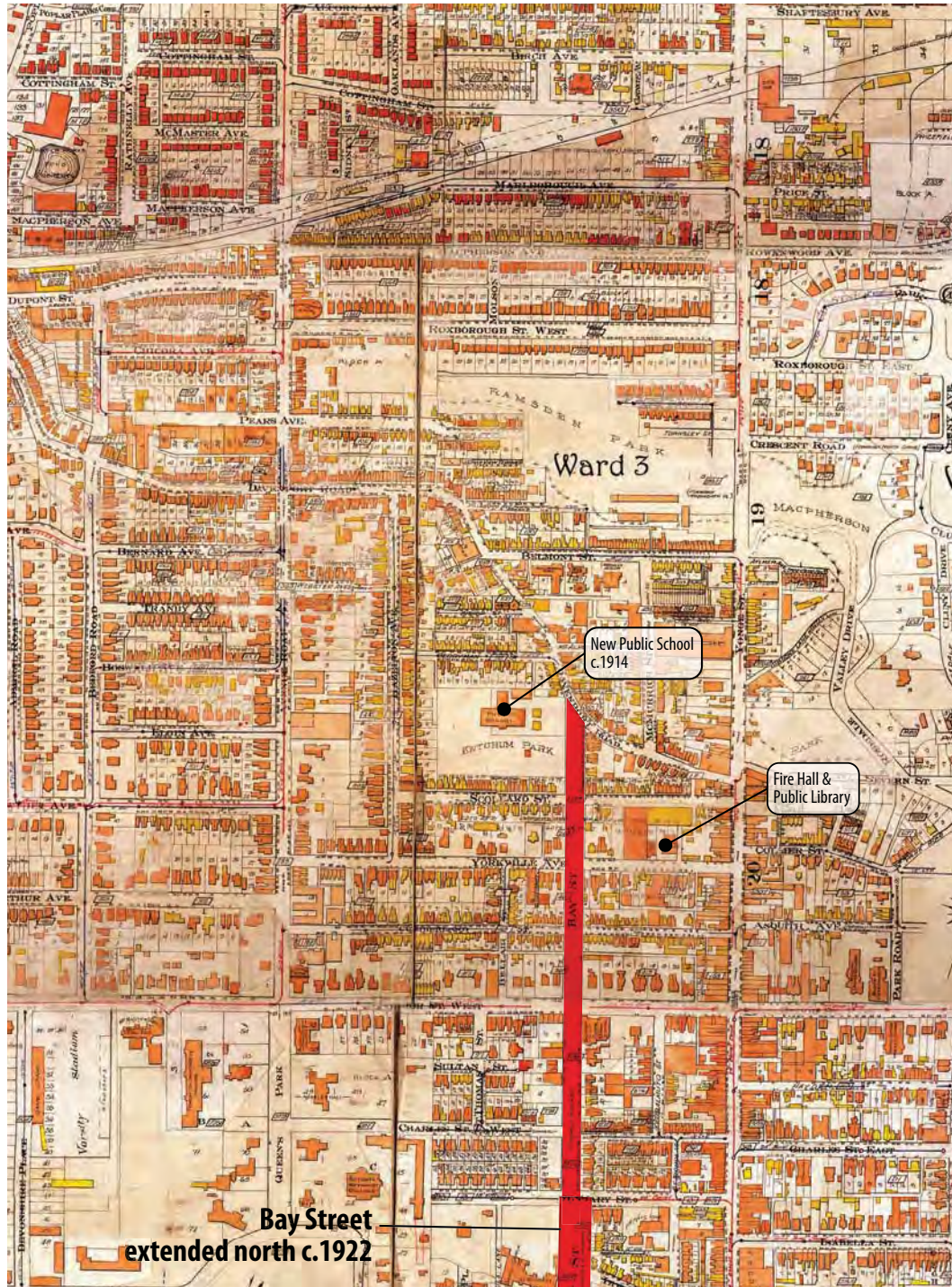
The first wave of major change to sweep through the Village came with the extension of Bay Street in the early 1920s. This extension divided the old Village in half, forcing the public school to rebuild west of Bay Street and shifting the focus of the village. The residential neighbourhoods, however, remained relatively intact.



Post-Annexation, 1913

Bay Street Extended (1924)

Over time, Yonge Street lost its connection to the Village and to the west of Bay Street a new village centre emerged. However, beyond the Bay Street extension, the historic and established land use pattern and built form was maintained with very little change until the 1950s.



Post-Annexation, 1924

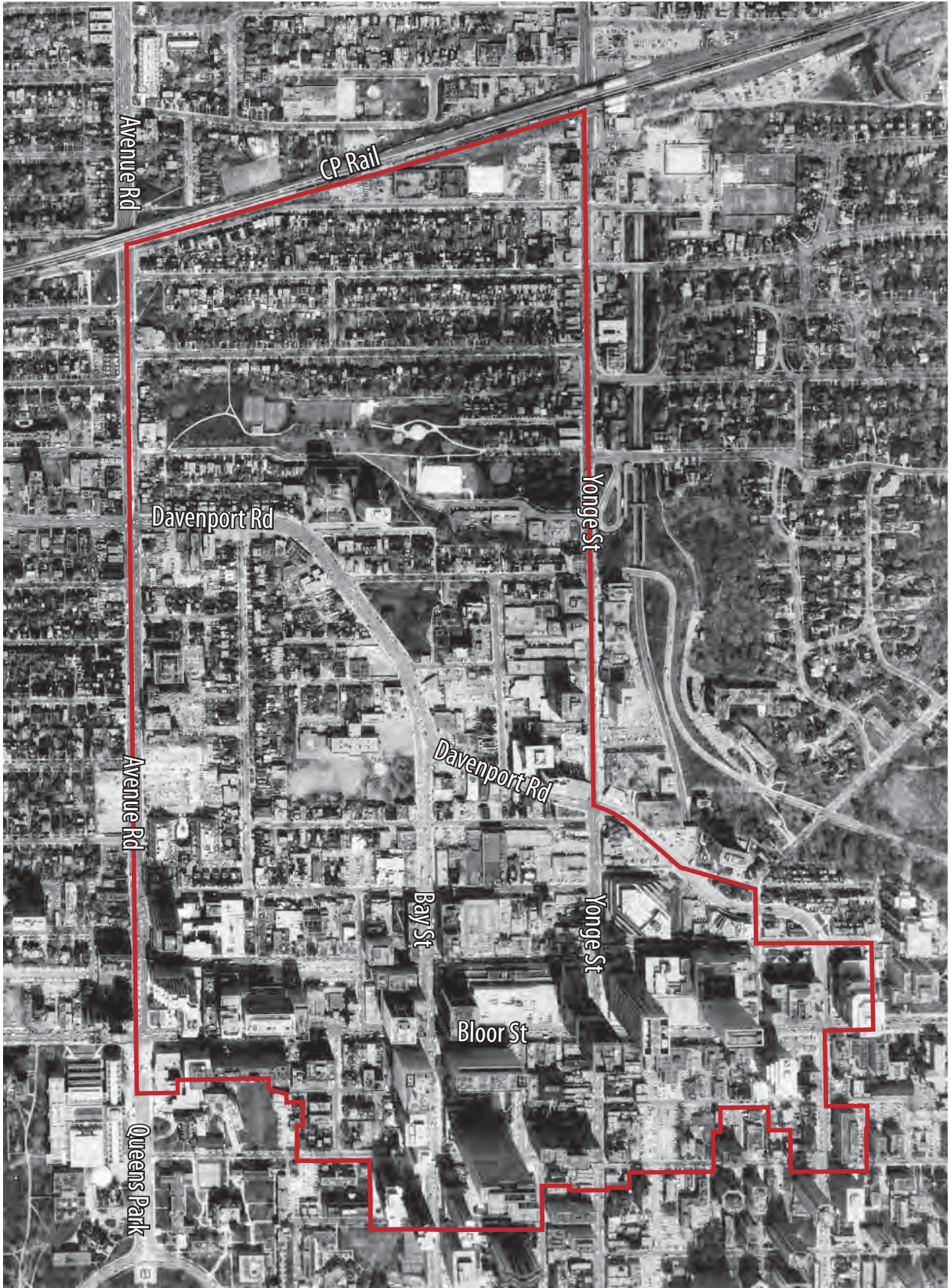


Period of Change: 1950s to Present

The period of change for Yorkville can be identified as commencing with the construction of the Bloor-Danforth subway line in the 1950s. The loss of the 19th century row houses on Cumberland Street west of Bellair to allow for the construction of the subway line caused local controversy and was indicative of future development patterns. Through the 1960s, the character of Bloor Street began to change in response to the subway line with the consolidation of land and the development of larger scale commercial buildings appearing. The increasing real estate values of the Area quickly led to high-rise development along Bloor, Avenue, Bay and Church Streets and the conversion of 19th century residential buildings north of Bloor into high-end boutiques, galleries, restaurants and cafés. By the late 1970s and 1980s, high-rise development became the predominant built form along the commercial corridors and intensification has continued to the present day. Interestingly, however, the residential neighbourhoods have remained, for the most part, intact. While development has occurred on the edges of these neighbourhoods, development north of Bloor Street, and between Avenue Road and Yonge Street has generally not encroached to the interior of these neighbourhoods and, as such, they have become highly coveted places to live based on their location “in the City”, their historic character and tree lined streets.



1971



1983



1992

Current Heritage Planning Context

Within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, several forms of heritage protection are established including individual property designations under the Ontario Heritage Act, Heritage Conservation District under the Ontario Heritage Act and buildings that are listed on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties.

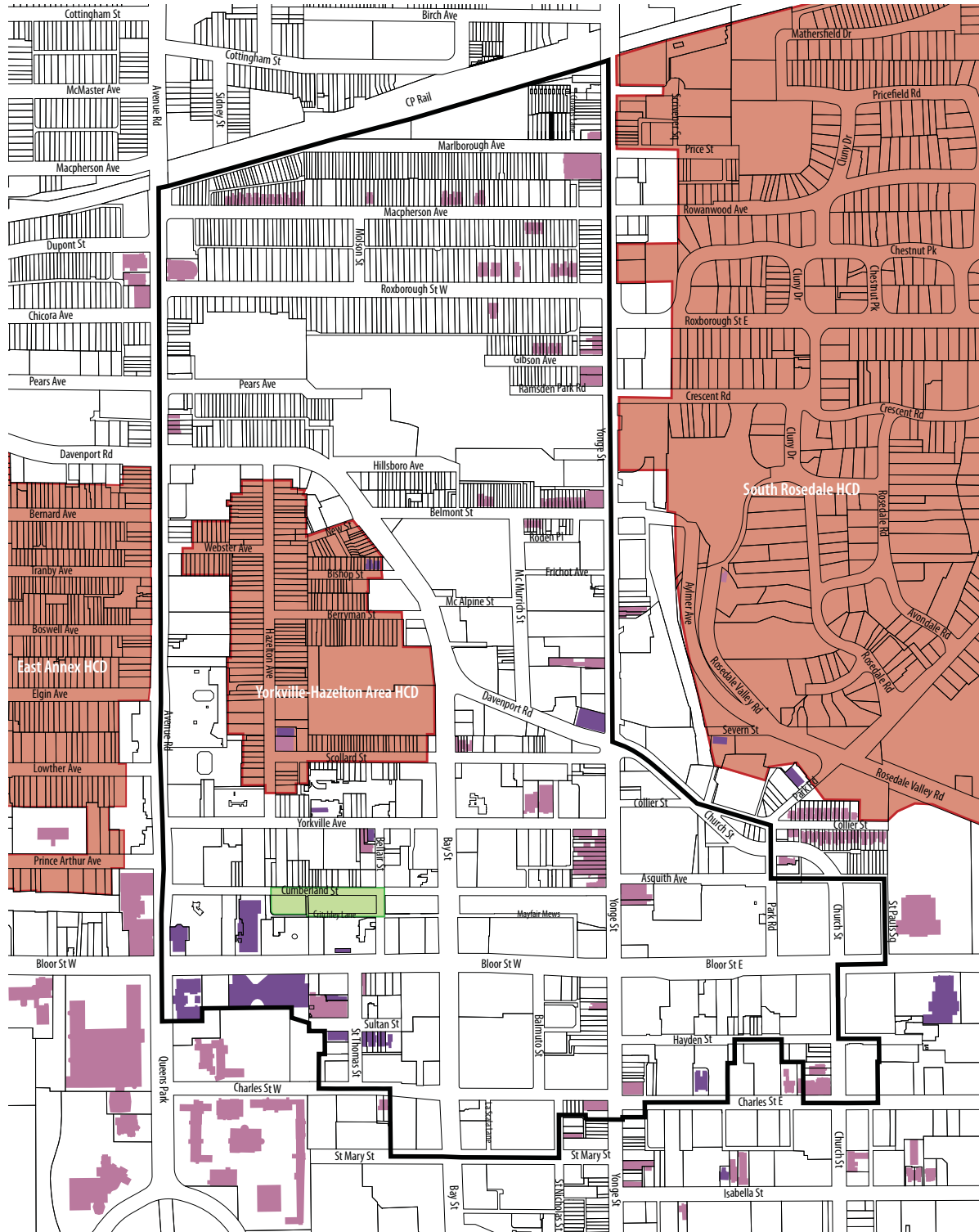
The Yorkville-Hazelton Area has been designated as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Heritage Act. The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is also affected by the East Annex Heritage Conservation District to the west of the Area, and the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District to the east of the Area. In addition, the Area also includes an array of buildings either designated under Part IV of the Heritage Act, or listed on the City's inventory of Heritage Properties.

Together, the Heritage Conservation Districts, the designated listed buildings provide a strong indication of the important heritage character of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area. This heritage character is one of the key elements that make this Area an extremely desirable place to live, to work and to visit.



Protected Heritage Properties (2013)

The plan below shows the currently protected heritage properties within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area.



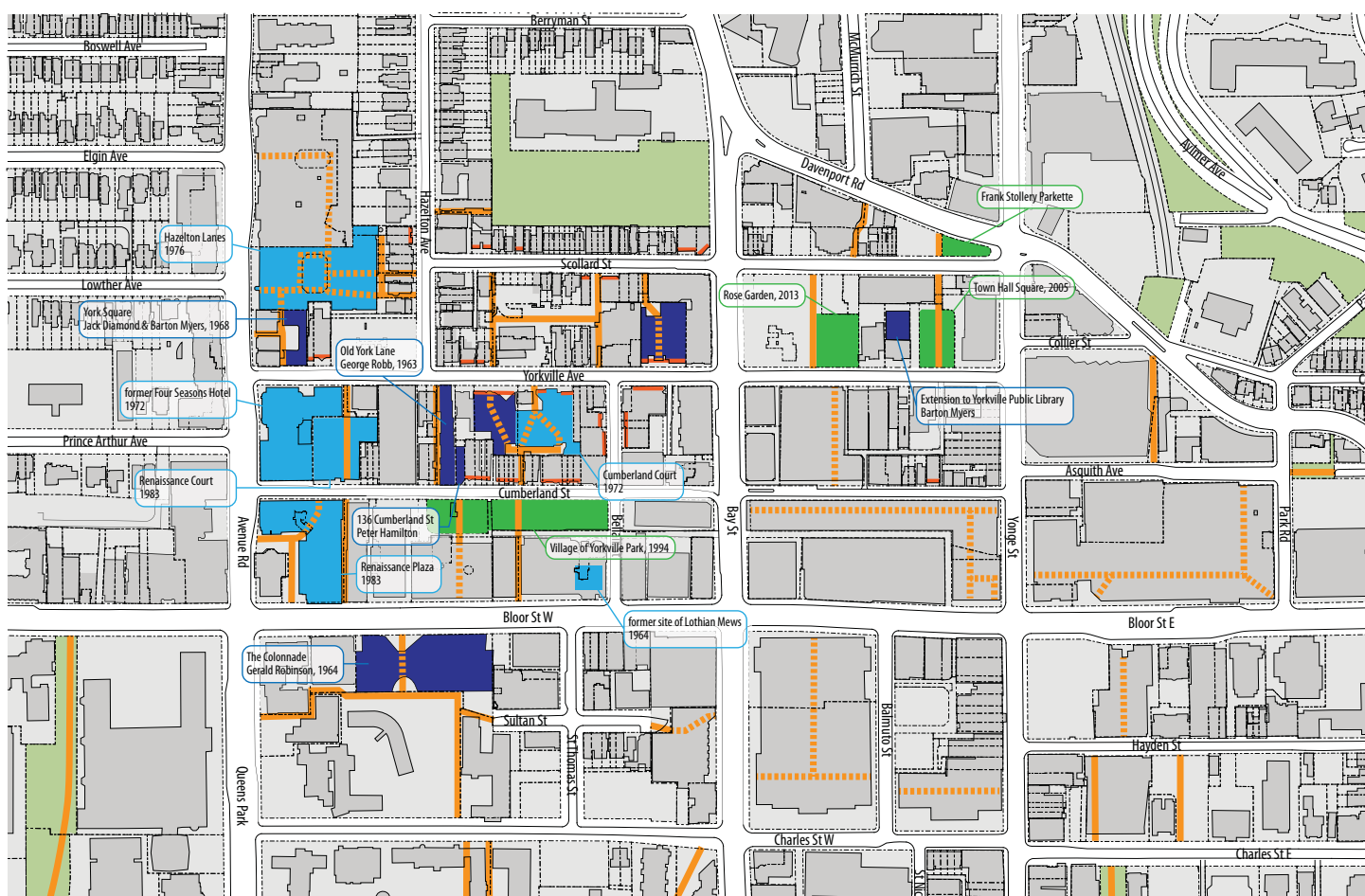
Protected Heritage Properties, 2013

- Designated Part IV Heritage Building
- Listed Heritage Building
- Designated Part V Heritage Conservation District
- Potential Cultural Heritage Landscape

Post War Design Culture

This plan shows the significant and indelible influence of post war design culture on Bloor-Yorkville (the southern part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area). Throughout the 1960s to 1980s, Bloor-Yorkville was reinvented. Older Victorian houses were renovated and adapted to commercial use, including the re-design of façades and new building forms that creatively combined contemporary architecture with traditional building forms. WZMH Architects designed many buildings that shaped the character of Bloor-Yorkville, including Lothian Mews (demolished 1984), Cumberland Court and Hazelton Lanes. A key aspect of this period was the design and inclusion of mid-block pedestrian connections

within and adjacent to buildings. These connections, combined with the introduction of open-air courtyard style development and new public parks, extended the Pedestrian Realm Network in a unique way. The Village of Yorkville Park is an excellent example of combining contemporary park design with the historic development patterns of the Village as the park design creates a series of linear divisions that reflect the former 19th century row housing and connect with adjoining mid block pedestrian connections. This award-winning park has the potential to be designated as a cultural heritage landscape under the Heritage Act, based on its critical contribution to the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area



Post War Design Culture

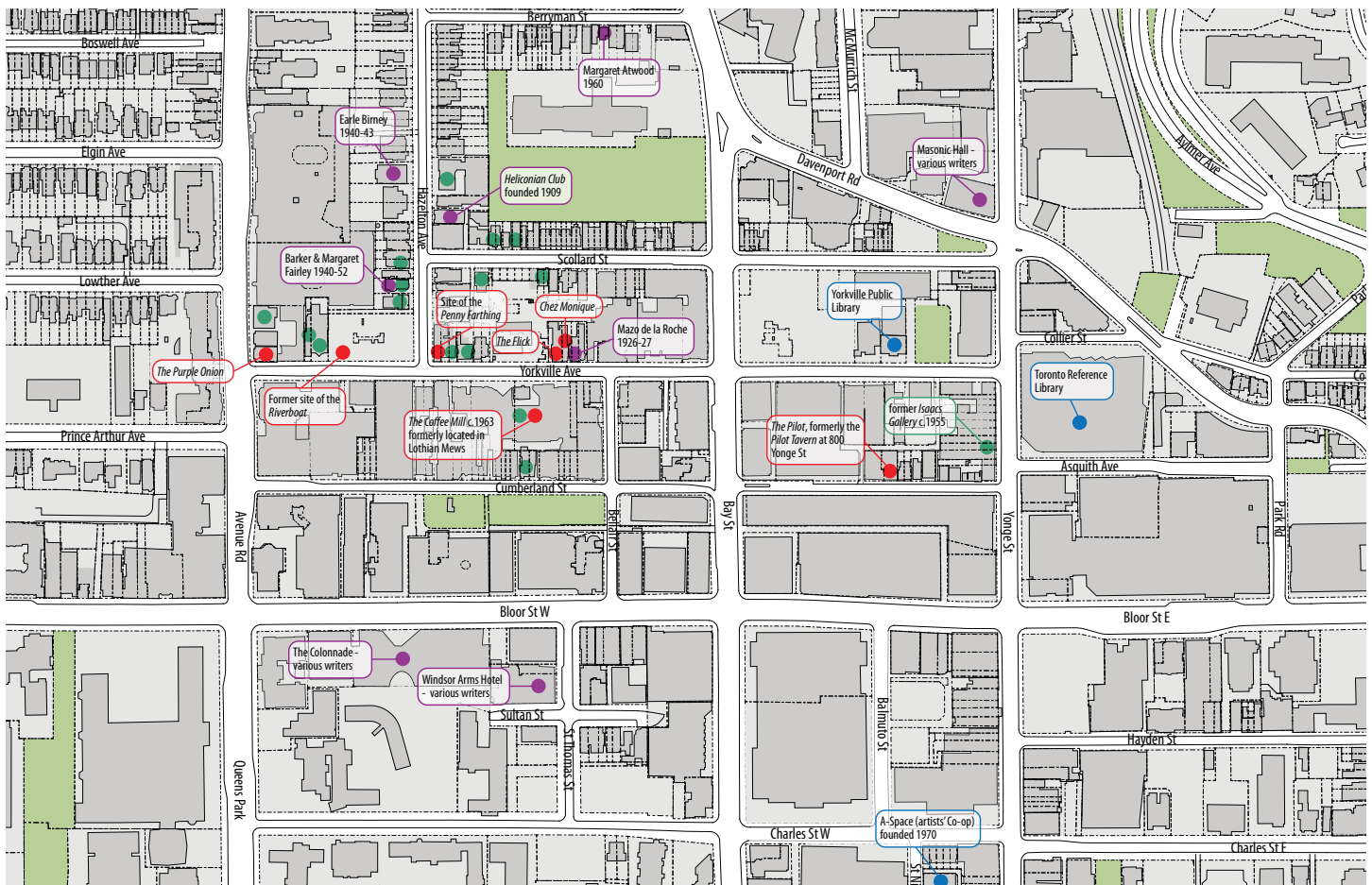
- Webb Zerafa Menkes Housden Buildings
- Notable Buildings of the 1960s, 70s & 80s
- Parks
- - - Mid Block Pedestrian Connections - Exterior/Interior
- - - Examples of Lower Level Commercial Entrances



Cultural Heritage

The plan below identifies the high density of cultural activity in Bloor-Yorkville (the southern part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area), past and present. Throughout the life of Yorkville, the village has been home to many famous writers, including Mazo de la Roche and Margaret Atwood. A colorful and well-known period of Yorkville's history is the coffee house and music culture, which began in the 1950s. A number of Hungarian and English immigrants who had run coffee houses in the Gerrard Street village, which predated Yorkville as the beatnik neighbourhood, moved to Yorkville after being pushed out by high rents. These new coffee houses provided an alternative to licensed

bars and offered espresso coffee, chess and music, beginning with folk, jazz and blues and eventually giving way to psychedelic rock. At one point there were as many as 40 clubs and coffee houses. Although these establishments have long since closed their doors, many of the buildings still stand and house other commercial uses. The makeover of the Bloor-Yorkville area in the 1970s led to a proliferation of upscale art galleries and this trend continues today.



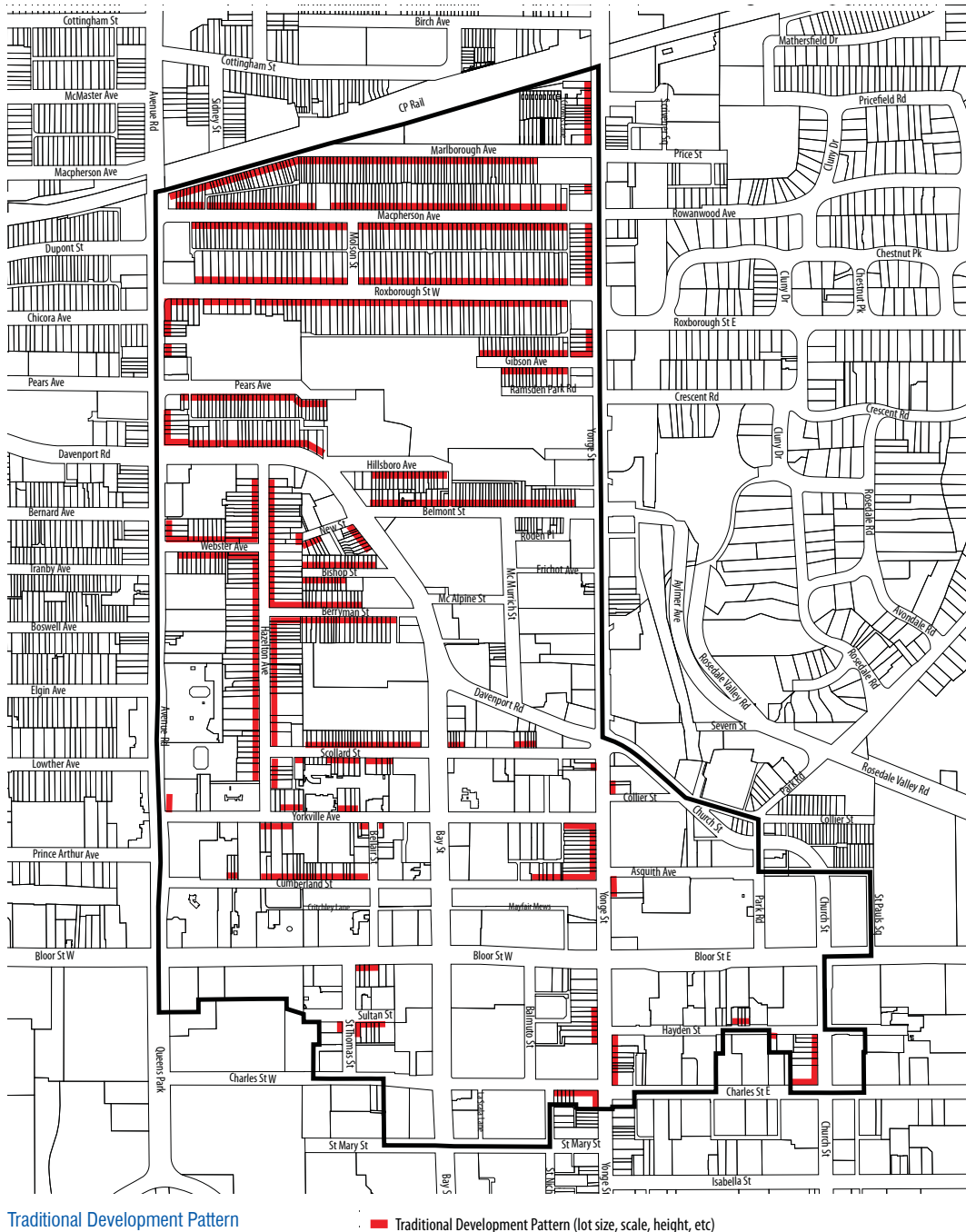
Cultural Heritage

- 1960s Coffee Houses/Music Venues
- Current Art Galleries
- Literary Residences & Institutions
- Other

Traditional Development Pattern

Lastly, the plan below demonstrates that despite past and current development pressures in Bloor-Yorkville (the southern part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area), several streetwalls continue to exhibit

narrow frontage and small scale massing with buildings that are 2 or 3 storeys.





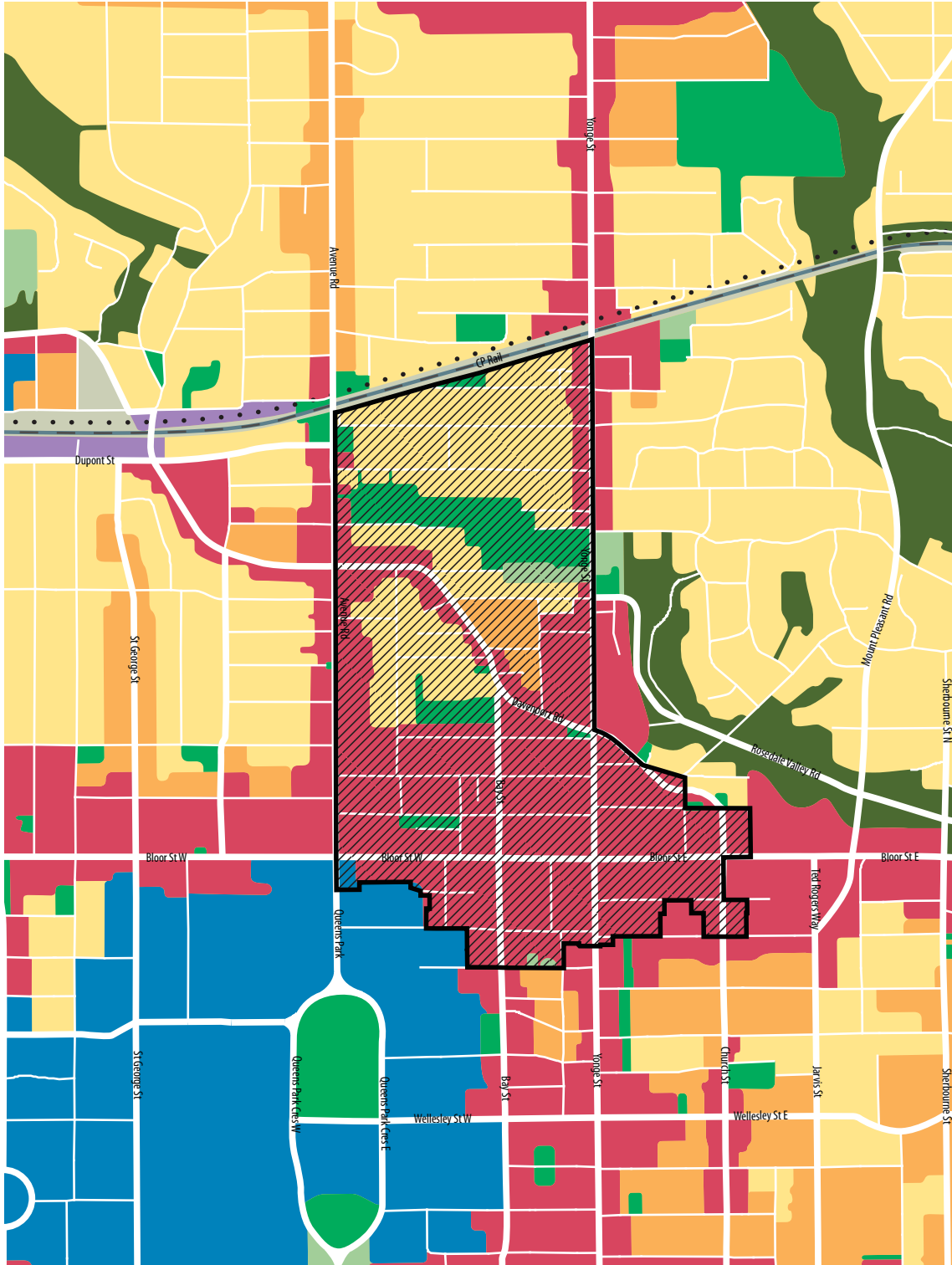
3 Development Planning Context

Official Plan

Within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, the City of Toronto Official Plan maps out six primary land uses: Neighbourhoods, Apartment Neighbourhoods, Mixed Use Areas, Institutional Areas, Parks and Other Open Space Areas:

- Neighbourhoods consist of lower scale buildings such as single detached houses, semi-detached houses, duplexes, triplexes and Townhouses. Renovations/moderate infill are the predominant forms of revitalization within these Neighbourhoods;
- Apartment Neighbourhoods are higher density areas that include apartment buildings. Parking for these apartment buildings is offered in the form of surface and/or parking garage access;
- Mixed Use Areas are intended to be a combination of a diverse array of retail and services, offices, residences, institutions, entertainment, recreational and cultural activities, parks and open spaces. These are areas where people can live, work, shop and access other amenities within proximity, which encourages walking and helps to animate the Pedestrian Realm Network;
- The Institutional Area recognizes the University of Toronto campus, and the Royal Ontario Museum; and,
- Parks and other Open Spaces offer a range of environments, from urban parkettes to green playing fields. The Village of Yorkville Park, Asquith Green Park, Ramsden Park, Jesse Ketchum Park, and Frank Stollery Parkette are identified within the Area.

- Neighbourhoods
- Apartment Neighbourhoods
- Mixed Use Areas
- Institutional Areas
- Employment Areas
- Utility Corridors
- Open Space Areas
- Natural Areas
- Parks
- Other Open Space Areas



Toronto Official Plan Land Use Map



Zoning (Draft Proposed 2012)

Current Zoning - Land Use

The majority of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is zoned Residential (R/RD), which permits almost exclusively residential formats of development. Other permitted uses include nurseries, community centres, group homes, home occupations, municipal shelters, places of worship, public utilities, renewable energy, retail stores, seniors community houses, tourist homes, and transportation uses. The southern part of the Area are primarily zoned Commercial Residential (CR), which permits a mix of complementary commercial and residential uses.

The areas zoned Open Spaces (O/OR/ON) in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area include Open Spaces, Natural Zones, and Recreation Zones. Combined, these designations allow for parks, public utilities, transportation uses, agricultural uses, art galleries, community centres, nurseries, places of assembly, museums, and sports areas.

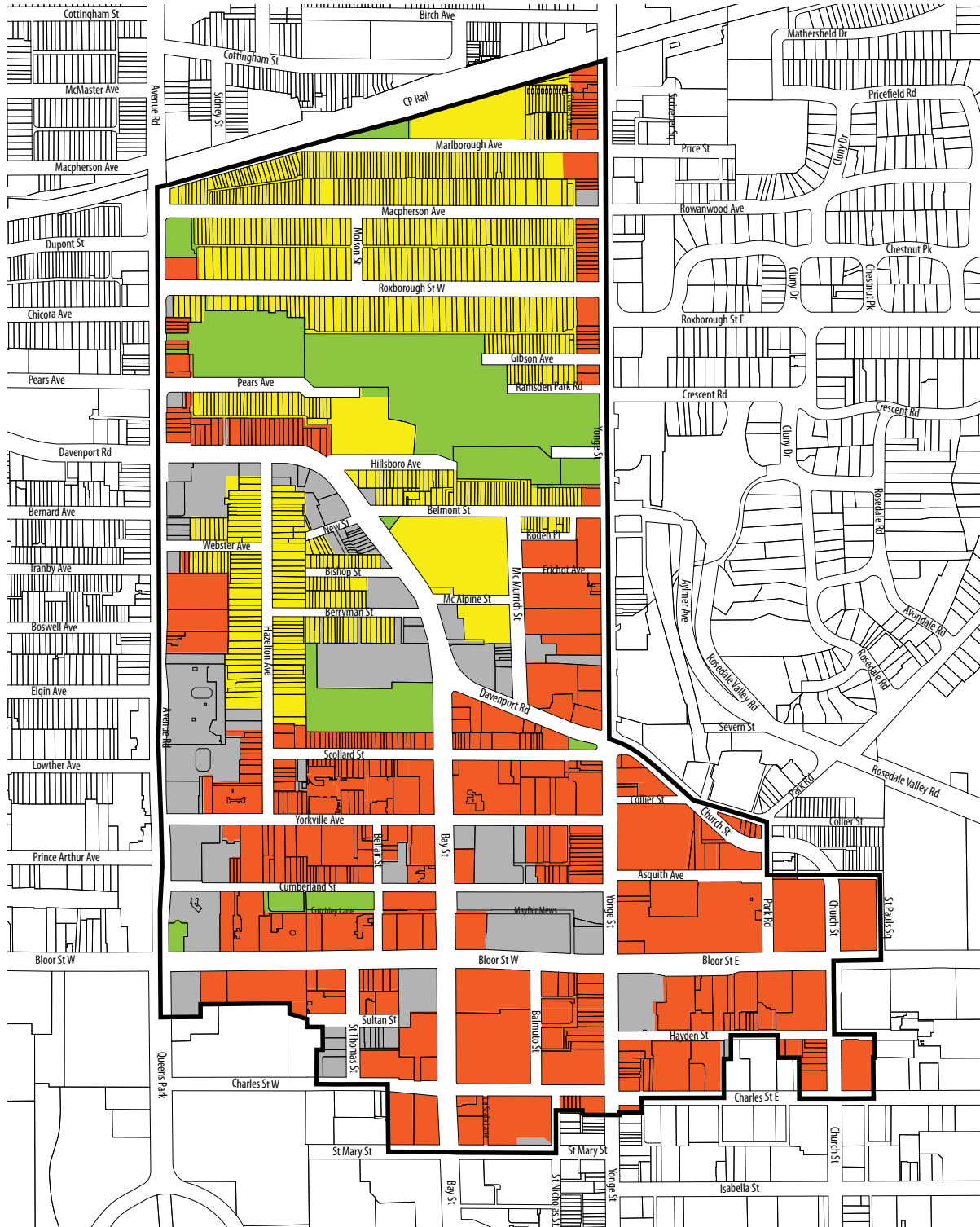
A small portion of the Study Area is zoned Utility (UT), which permits Public Utility, Park and Transportation Uses.

Zoning Heights

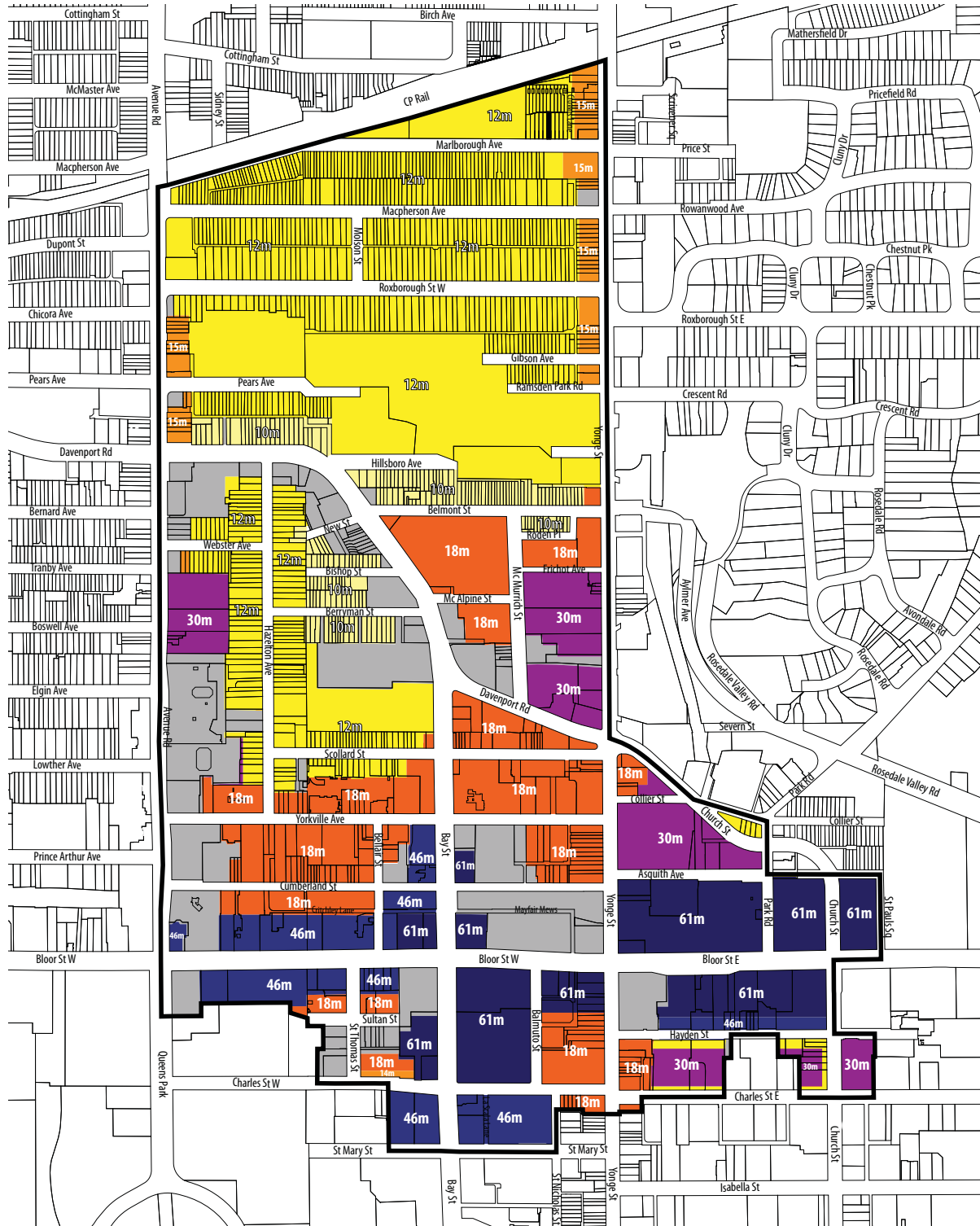
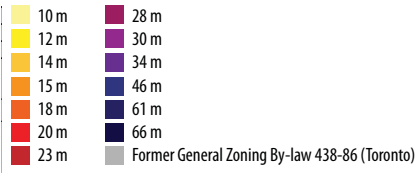
The range of permitted building heights within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area varies widely. The tallest permitted height zone is 66 metres, while the lowest is 10 metres.

The heights of actual buildings within the study area are much higher than 66 metres, due to height density bonusing agreements made under Section 37 of the Planning Act. This provision enables developers to provide community benefits to the neighbourhood in exchange for additional building height allowances.

- Utility (UT)
- Open Space (O/OR/ON)
- Residential (R/RD)
- Commercial Residential (CR)
- Former General Zoning By-law 438-86 (Toronto)



Zoning Map (By-law 569-2013)



Zoning Heights (By-law 569-2013)

Area Development

Recent/Planned Development

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area has experienced a steep influx in development in the last 15 years, primarily focused on Bloor-Yorkville (the southern part of the Study Area). The plan on the facing page shows developments in this southern area built since 2000 in gold, and developments currently under construction are identified in hatched gold.

Recently approved developments (solid blue) include 1-9 Sultan Street, 34-38 Hazelton Avenue, 50 Cumberland Street and 94 Cumberland Street. Active applications include 21 Avenue Road, 89 Avenue Road, 50 Bloor Street West, 33-45 Avenue Road & 140-148 Yorkville Avenue, 27-37 Yorkville Avenue, and 145-185 Davenport Road. The majority of these development applications are condominium towers with mixed-use podiums.



18 Yorkville Avenue



60 Yorkville Avenue



6 Scollard Street



116 Yorkville Avenue

Recent Developments in Yorkville

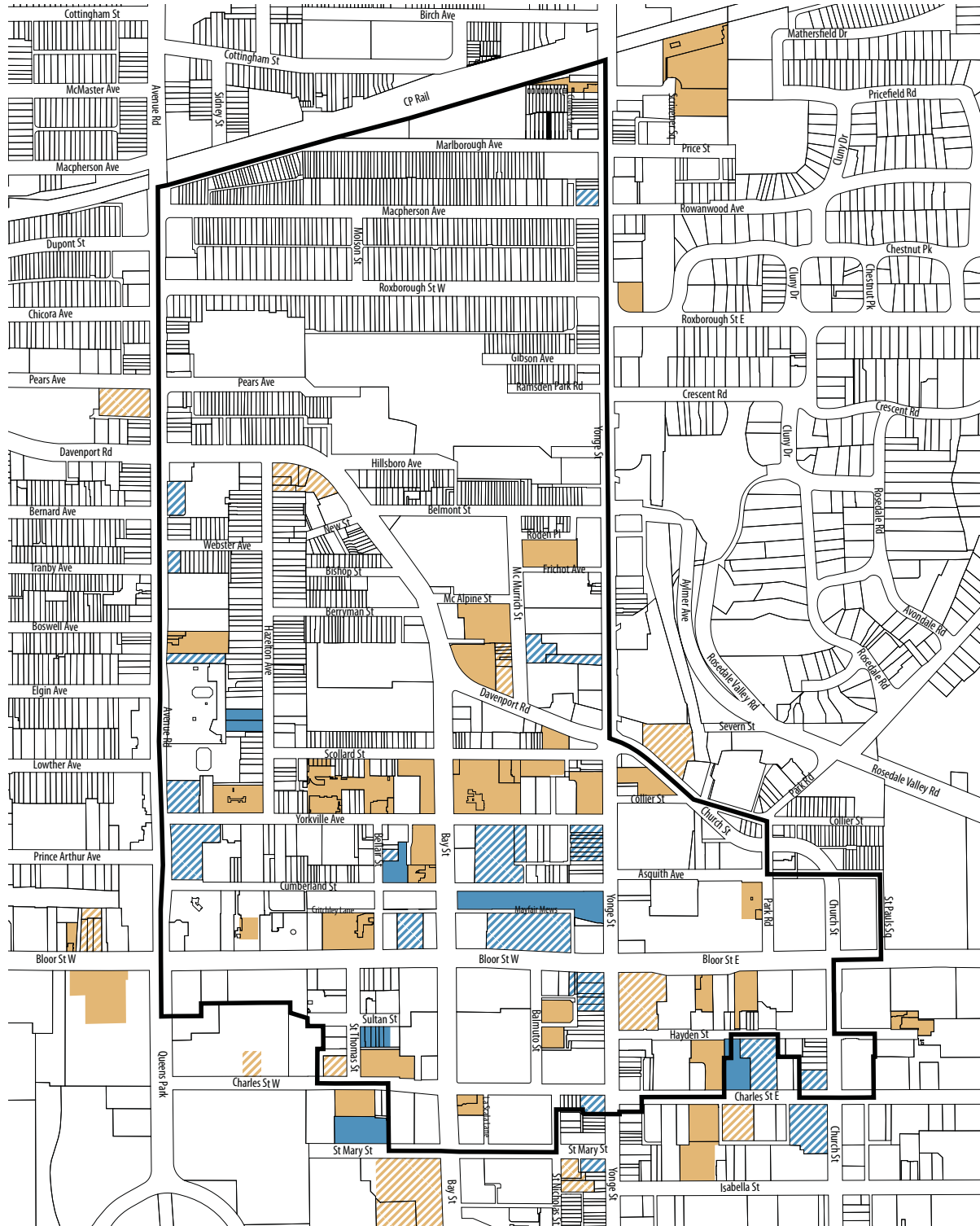
New development on Yorkville Avenue has had a significant impact. While street-related elements have provided a reasonable pedestrian environment, taller elements threaten the low scale, heritage feel of this crucial part of the neighbourhood.



Bird's Eye View of Model of Urban Village Area



- Recent Development (Since 2000)
- Under Construction
- Development Approved
- Development Application

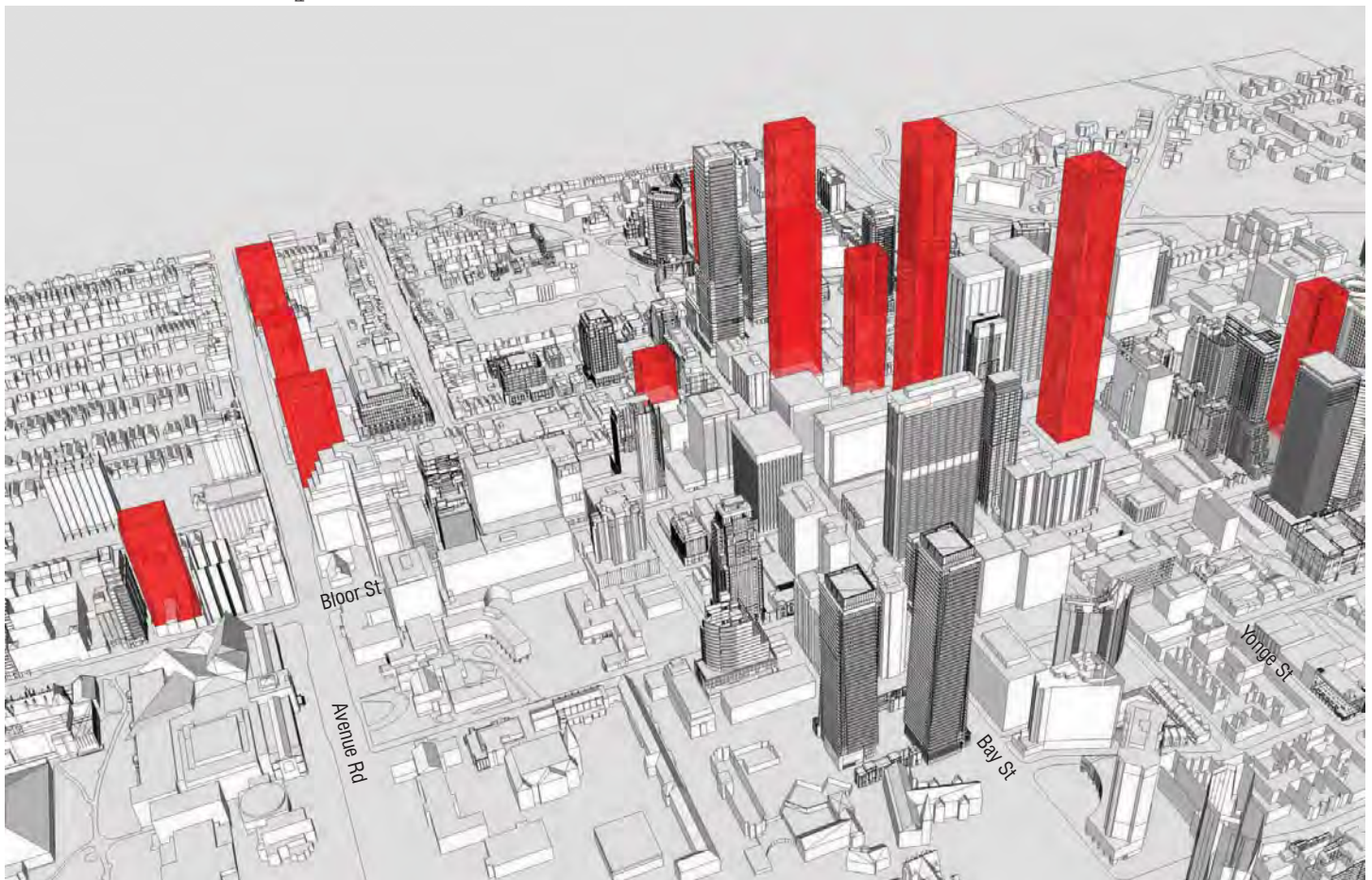
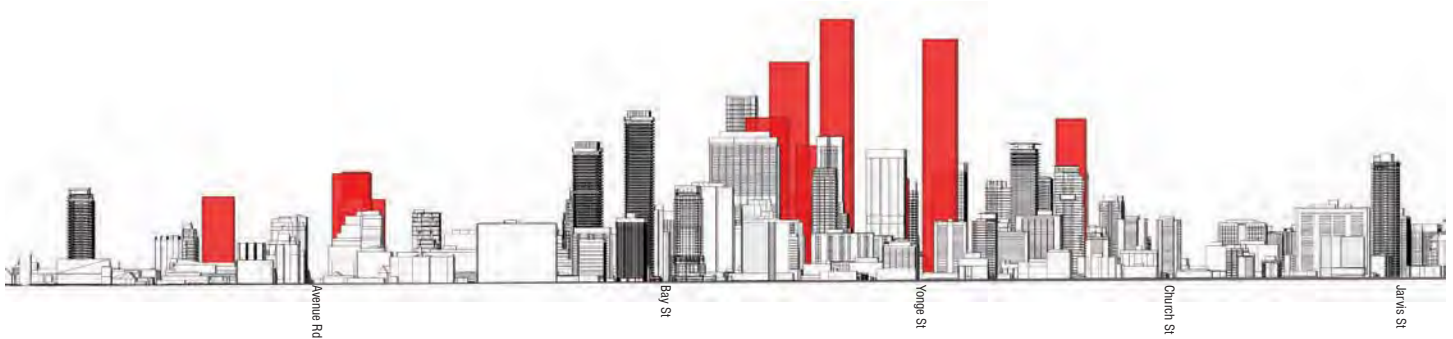


Recent/Planned Development

Tall Building Heights

The plan on the facing page and the model below illustrate the heights of existing, under construction, approved and proposed buildings in Bloor-Yorkville (the southern part of the Study Area) where the vast majority of recent development has occurred. Currently, there are four existing or under construction buildings in the Area over 150 metres in height, with

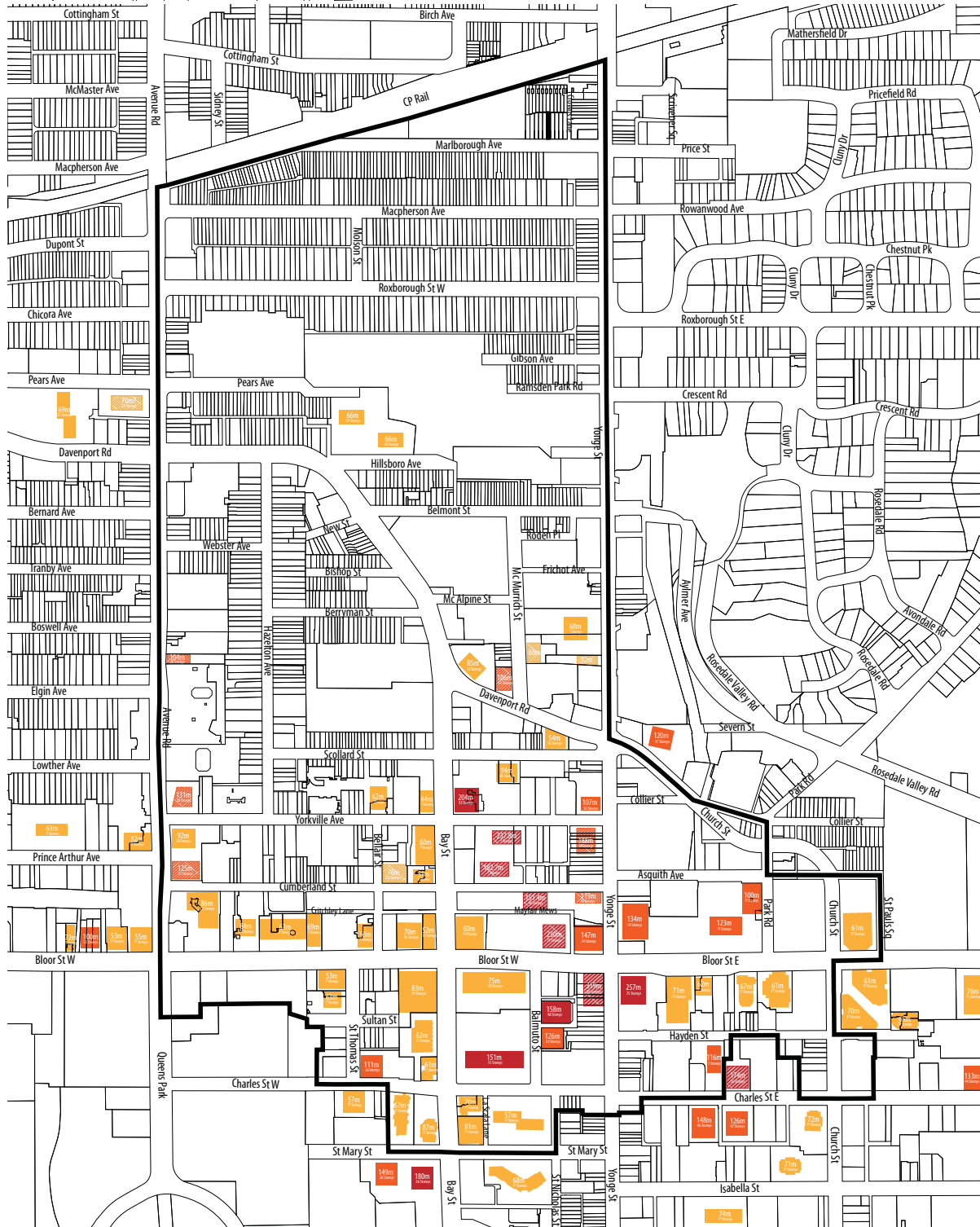
the tallest standing at 257 metres. There are five additional buildings that are approved or proposed over 150 metres, the tallest of which will stand at 237 metres. These new buildings will have a considerable impact on the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, significantly altering the 'look and feel' of the neighbourhood.



Existing/Proposed Tall Building Heights

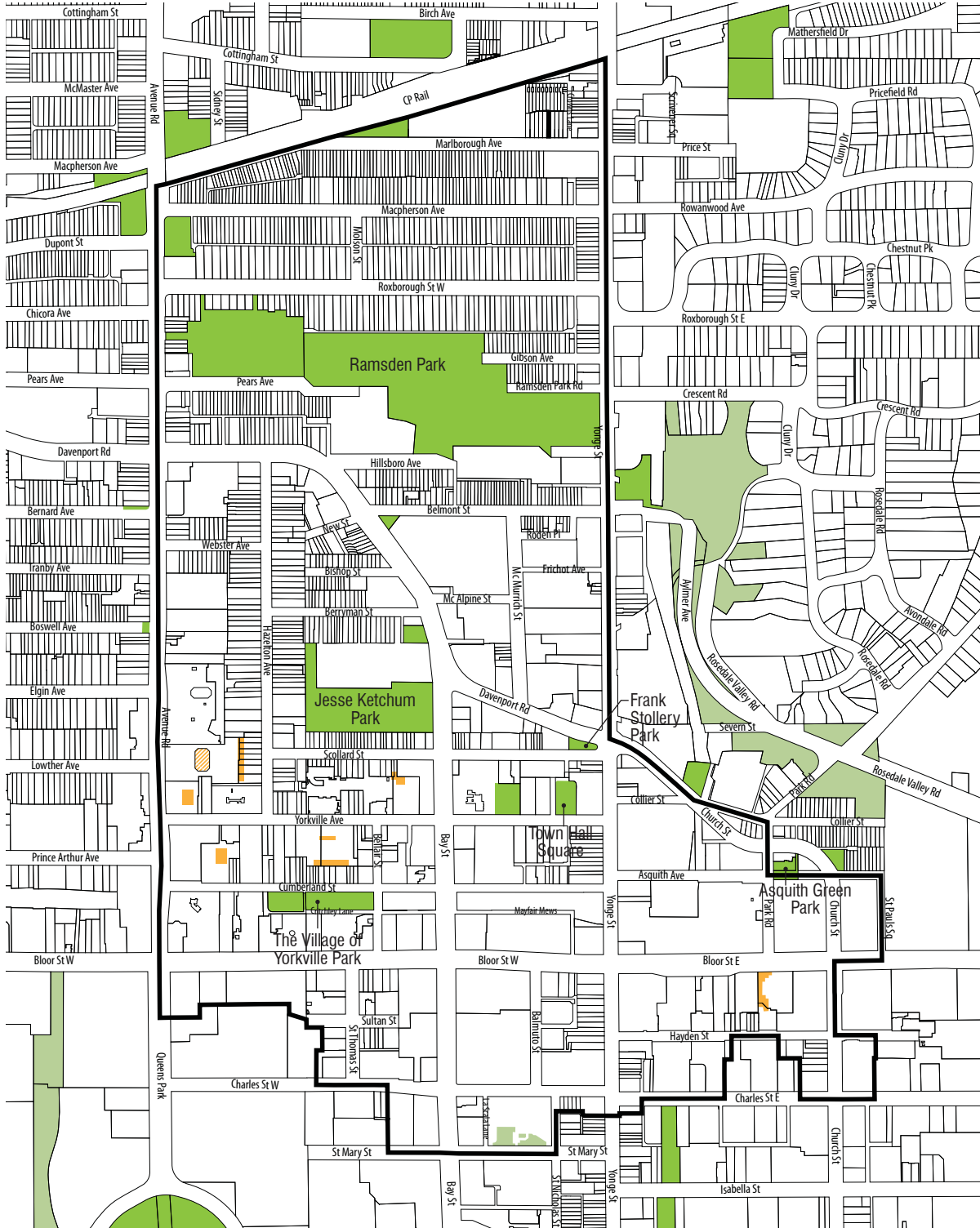


- Existing/Under Construction Tall Buildings over 150m
- ▨ Proposed/Approved Tall Buildings over 150m
- Existing/Under Construction Tall Buildings 100m to 150m
- ▨ Proposed/Approved Tall Buildings over 100m to 150m
- Existing/Under Construction Tall Buildings 50m to 100m
- ▨ Proposed/Approved Tall Buildings over 50m to 100m



Existing/Proposed Tall Building Heights

- Public Park
- Other Open Space
- Exterior Courtyards
- Interior Courtyards



Open Space



4 Pedestrian Realm Network

Simple, well crafted and useable open spaces

In addition to the inherent heritage character, another key component that enhances the appeal of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is the diverse Pedestrian Realm Network, and existing streetscapes. The appeal of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area as a place to live, work and shop is putting enormous pressure on its open spaces. Bloor-Yorkville is one of the most walkable neighbourhoods in the City. The open spaces have to be welcoming, useable, have sun pockets, places to people watch, eat lunch and socialize with friends. The Area's open spaces must provide places of respite, as well as places for events and celebrations. Many of the existing parks are designed in a manner that renders most of the precious space unusable due to lack of seating, and shade, complicated landscape architecture, and limited adjacent ground floor uses that help to activate the space and a sense that they are private spaces.

A simple diverse, well crafted and programmable Pedestrian Realm Network is an important part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area today, and will become even more important in the future. Key issues include:

Ramsden Park: Ramsden Park is a large scale park with multiple functions. It is the Centre piece of the Pedestrian Realm Network, and a key element of the residential neighbourhoods it serves.

Scale of space: Some of Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area's most appealing spaces are small scaled urban squares and courtyards. Clear direction is required to ensure the publicly accessible space is appropriately scaled.

Animated edges: Publicly accessible spaces are most successful when lined with shops, restaurants and cafes that animate and give life to the space. Animated edges help to ensure the space appears truly public.

Shade trees: Many of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area's public spaces have complex landscapes that limit useable space. Raised planters, sloping shrub beds and hard surface areas eliminate space that could be used for simple shade tree planting.

Benches with backs: Yorkville's public spaces need benches, preferably with backs to truly be inviting places to sit, eat lunch and socialize with friends. Seating must meet the basic needs of human comfort. Edges of concrete planters and backless benches do not provide a welcoming environment for people to sit, especially in all seasons.

Simple and well crafted: The simplicity of the landscape and well crafted amenities in public space are key to providing an appealing environment.

Useable and programmable: The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area's open spaces must be useable and programmable. They are the settings to watch the theatre of public life and they must also be suitable for informal use. Complex landscape design renders much of the very limited open space unusable.



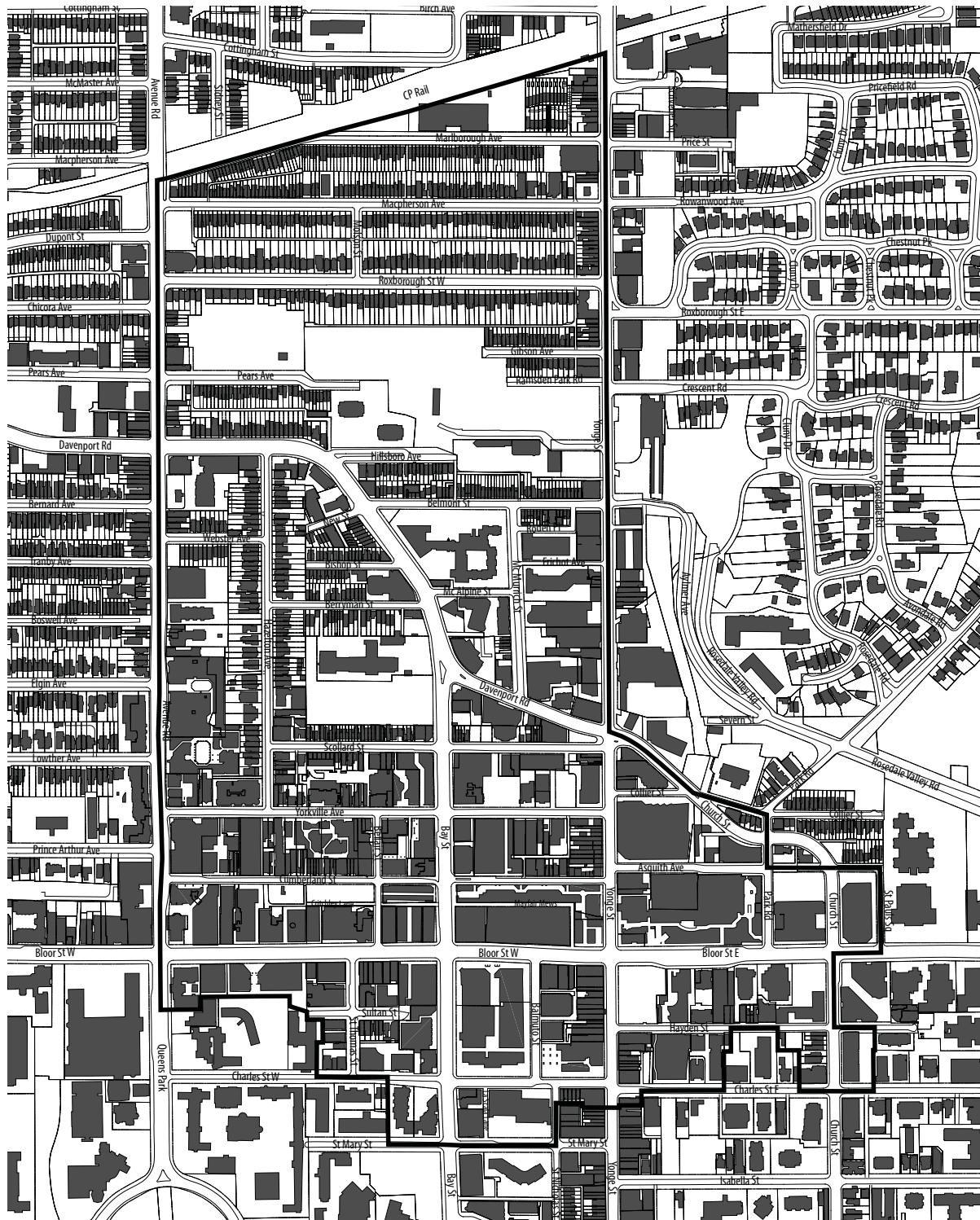
Examples of Successful Small Open Spaces



Bloor-Yorkville Existing Pedestrian Realm Network

Drawn at the same scale as the Nolli Plan of Rome, below is a map of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area (note that the buildings are in black). Bloor-Yorkville (primarily the southern part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area) has similarities to the Nolli Plan, as the street and pathway network become fine-grained and publicly accessible.

This Pedestrian Realm Network pattern is a crucial component of Bloor-Yorkville. As one moves northward, into the residential neighbourhoods the focus is on private lands - backyards and front yards, and larger elements of the Pedestrian Realm Network.

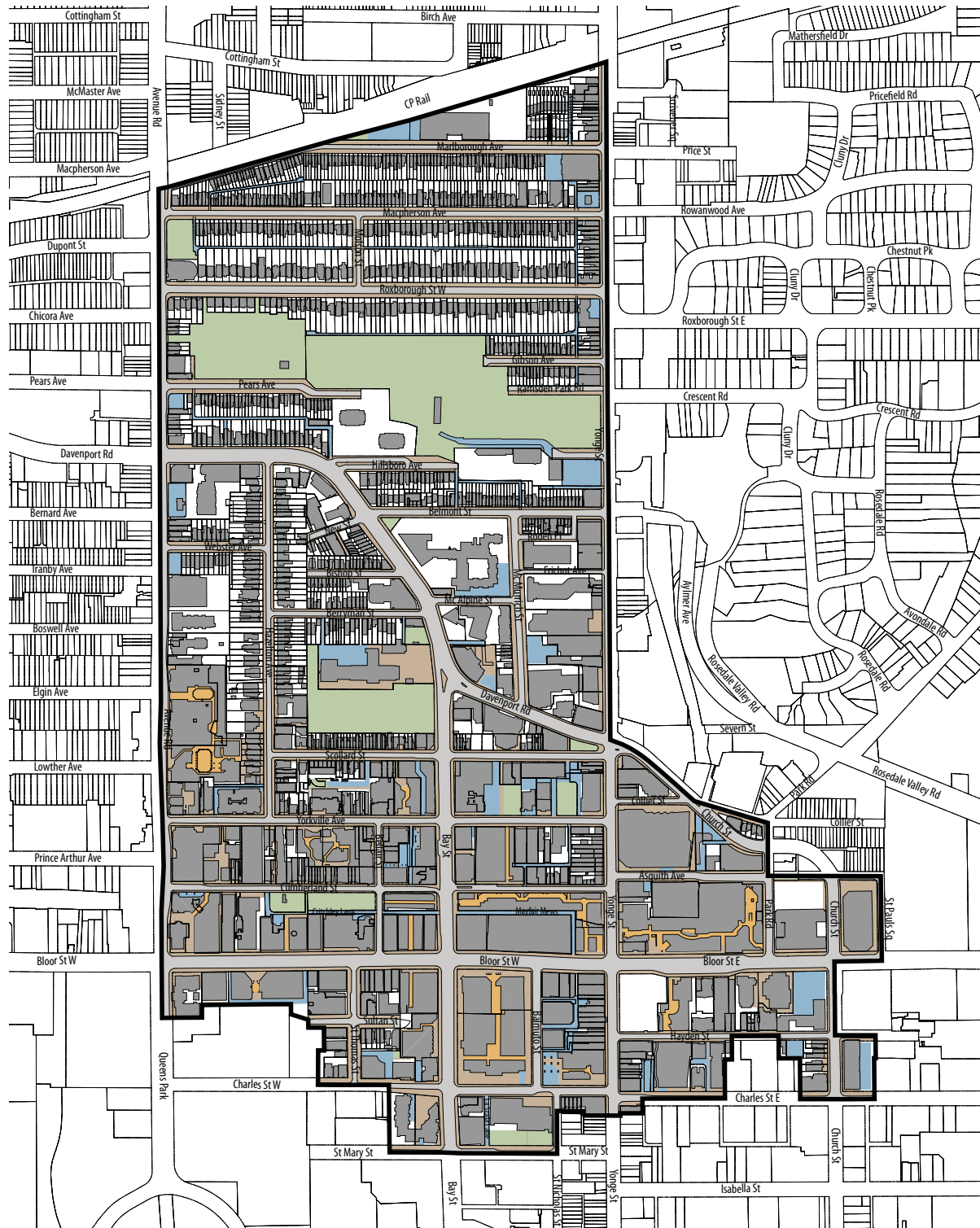


Bloor-Yorkville Area Shown with the Same Technique at the Same Scale

Bloor-Yorkville Existing Pedestrian Realm Network

Publicly accessible spaces in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area (primarily the southern part of the Area) are comprised of interior public connections, parks, urban squares, courtyards, lanes and streets. The map below depicts the key elements of the Pedestrian Realm Network.

- Buildings
- Interior Public Space/Connections
- Public Realm/Pedestrian Space
- Parks/Other Open Space
- Vehicular-Oriented Public Realm
- Road Surface



Classification of Pedestrian Space in Bloor-Yorkville



Parks & Urban Squares

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is home to six Public Parks, which include The Village of Yorkville Park, Town Hall Square, Frank Stollery Park, Asquith Green Park, Jesse Ketchum Park, and Ramsden Park. The Open Space in front of the Four Seasons Hotel on Yorkville Avenue is also identified.

Outside of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown boundaries, but within the context of this study, are a number of other Public Parks, including Milner Parkette, and George Hislop Park, and various other Open Spaces.

Village of Yorkville Park

This former parking lot was repurposed into a public park at the heart of the Village of Yorkville, directly above the Bloor-Danforth Subway Line. Following an international design competition held in 1991, the winning design was constructed in 1994. The park reflects Yorkville's long history, and references Canada's diverse landscapes through a succession of different planting and paving treatments. The park features a variety of seating options, including benches, tables and chairs, and informal seating on 'The Rock' and planter edges.

The Village of Yorkville Park received the American Association of Landscape Architects Award, the City of Toronto Urban Design Excellence Award, and the International Downtown Association Award of Merit.

The neighbourhood is well-known for its characteristic outdoor and indoor courtyards. These spaces are mainly located in the Village Core, along Cumberland Street, Yorkville Avenue and Hazelton Avenue, between Bay Street and Avenue Road. The majority of these courtyards are privately owned and publicly accessible.



Town Hall Square

Built in 2005, Town Hall Square is a small park located on Yorkville Avenue, just west of Yonge Street. The park was constructed in coordination with the adjacent condominium at 18 Yorkville Avenue, under a Section 37 agreement.

Town Hall Square commemorates the site of Yorkville Town Hall, and is adjacent to the Yorkville Public Library and the Yorkville Fire Hall - both listed heritage buildings.

The park includes a limited number of backless benches, a series of tall hedge rows, a discrete public art installation, and an informational plaque commemorating Yorkville Town Hall.



Asquith Green Park

Asquith Green Park is located on Park Road at Church Street.

The small park features one backed bench, and a public art installation. Asquith Green Park is heavily used by dog walkers in the area.



Frank Stollery Parkette

Frank Stollery Parkette is a small park located on the west side of Yonge Street, between Scollard Street and Davenport Road. The park was reconstructed in 2010 with funds derived from a Section 37 agreement with the neighbouring Lotus Condominiums.

The park contains a number of backed benches, planting areas and a series of panels that display maps and text commemorating an ancient Aboriginal trail that once ran through the site.





Ramsden Park

The 13.7 acre Ramsden Park, one of the largest in Downtown Toronto, is centrally located with convenient access to the Rosedale Subway Station. The Park is mostly framed by residential neighbourhoods, with some mixed-use on the western edge of the Park on Avenue Road. It is a hub of recreational activity, housing a baseball diamond, a wading pool, playgrounds, tennis courts, ice rinks, and a dog run.

The Park is the former site of the Yorkville Brick Yards, and was purchased by the City of Toronto to be used as a public park in 1904. The Ramsden Park Revitalization Project is currently underway.



Jesse Ketchum Park

Located adjacent to Jesse Ketchum Public School, this 1.2 acre park is located on Bay Street at Davenport Road and serves the school and local residential community.

Jesse Ketchum Park is a popular recreational destination, with sports fields and play equipment, and is heavily used by dog walkers.



Planned Revitalization of Public Parks

The City of Toronto is embarking on a number of park revitalization projects within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area. Beautiful, interesting and safe public parks are key components to a successful Pedestrian Realm Network, and are all the more important in a dense, urban neighbourhood like Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown, particularly in the southern part of the Area. The following projects will be undertaken in the next few years and aim to improve the quality of public parks for both residents and visitors.

As the heart of the Bloor-Yorkville neighbourhood, the **Village of Yorkville Park** is a priority in park revitalization efforts. The original design will be maintained, but a number of restoration initiatives have been identified. These include; assessing and replacing trees in poor health, adding more tables and chairs, fixing the lights in the pine grove, and ensuring there are sufficient seating opportunities for park users.

Ramsden Park is the largest park in the study area and is currently in the midst of a major Revitalization Project, which began in 2013. The Revitalization will focus on addressing heritage elements, improving recreational facilities, ensuring a healthy landscape, and making the Park more accessible to its diverse users. Walkways, seating areas, and gateways must all be considered to improve circulation and ensure a safer and more welcoming park environment that addresses the needs of the community.

Although small, **Asquith Green Park** is an important green space as it serves a large number of people who work and live in its immediate vicinity. The park has struggled in recent years due to the growing impact of dog walking, the deteriorating condition of materials and plantings, and a lack of public amenities. In addition to planned upgrades to seating, trees and plantings, there is potential for a complete redesign of Asquith Green Park which could help accommodate all park users - including dog walkers, residents and visitors - in a more effective manner.

Jesse Ketchum Park and adjacent school grounds have undergone major upgrading with new sports fields, walkway, play equipment and tree planting. The area along the west side of Bay Street is being considered for a redesign. The park has high pedestrian traffic and a large and growing number of dog walkers who enjoy using this space. The enhanced level of usage has created challenges for maintaining plants and ensuring a clean, safe environment for other users. Additional seating is needed, and there is a possibility of establishing a small off-leash dog area.



Pedestrian Routes

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is well known as a pedestrian friendly neighbourhood. With a broad mix of residences, retail, services, commercial uses, and restaurants, both visitors and residents can easily walk to access amenities. Furthermore, the small, narrow streets and on-street parking along secondary streets (such as Yorkville Avenue, Cumberland Street, Hazelton Avenue and Scollard Street) are much more conducive to pedestrians than vehicular traffic. Similarly, the wide sidewalks along major routes such as Bloor Street, Bay Street and Yonge Street accommodate a large volume of pedestrian traffic.

The southern part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is also home to a large number of interior and exterior pathways and lanes. These mid-block pedestrian connections allow pedestrians to move through the neighbourhood quickly and easily, and provide distinct areas of interest that are often animated with plantings, outdoor seating and storefronts.

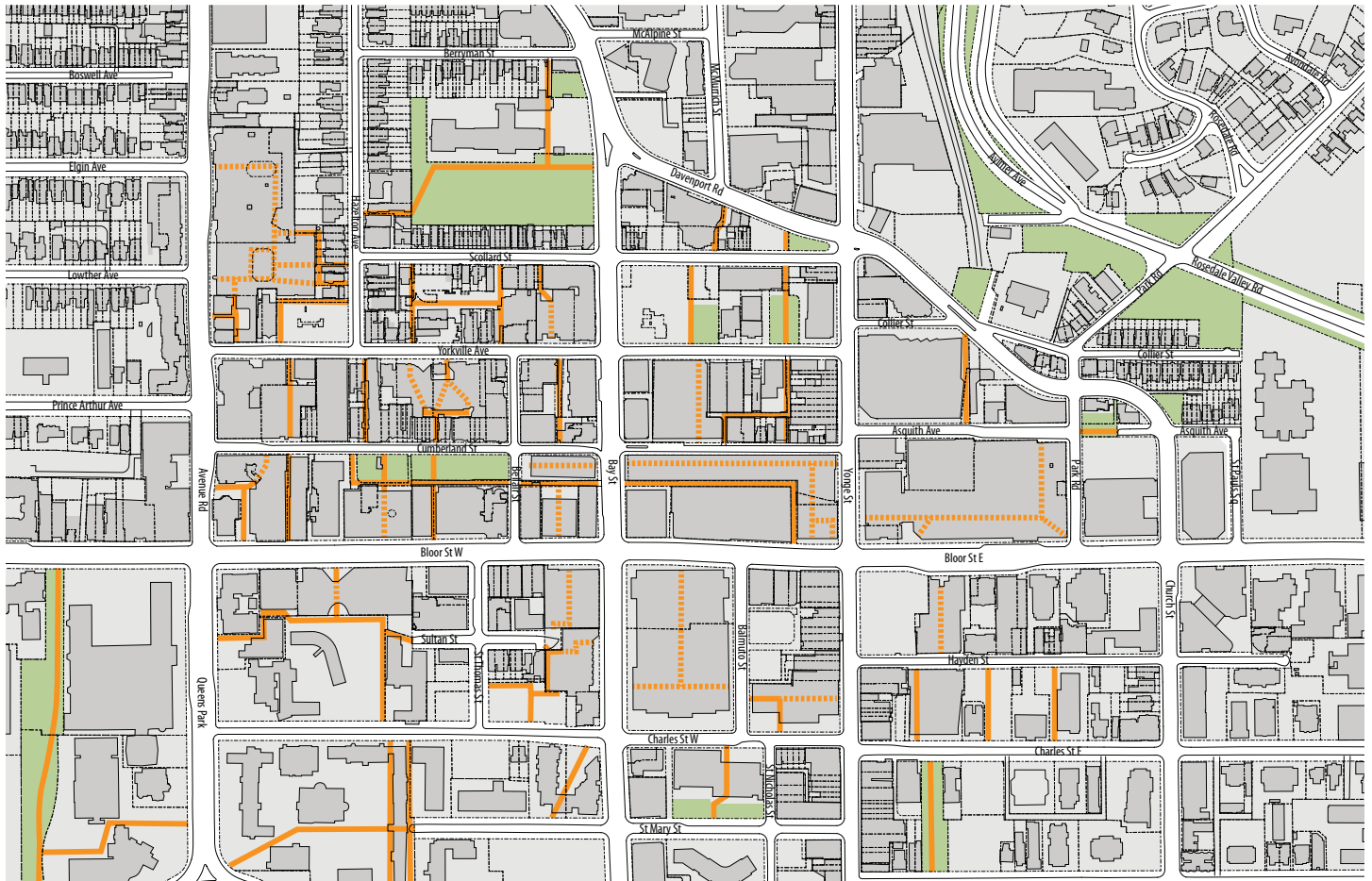
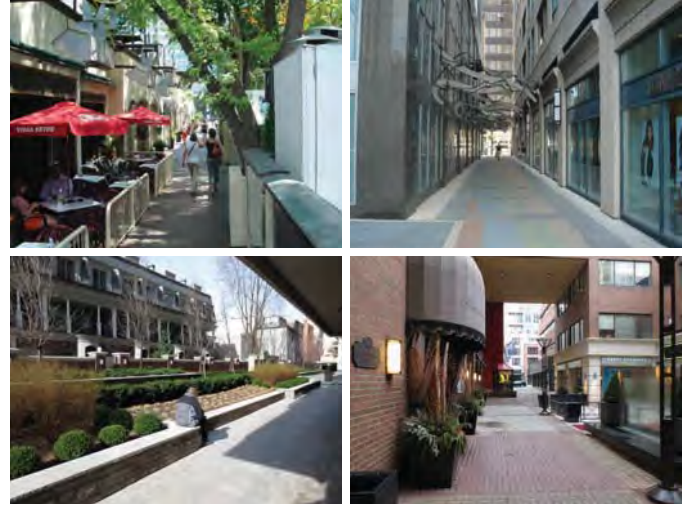
Prioritizing the pedestrian experience is a main objective of the Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy. Enhancing existing, and creating new mid-block pedestrian connections will further animate the Pedestrian Realm Network by providing greater opportunities for additional retail and restaurant frontages, encouraging people to walk rather than drive through the neighbourhood, adding visual interest and protecting key views.



Mid-Block Pedestrian Connections

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area (primarily the southern part of the Area) is beloved for the number of small, intimate lanes that weave in, out, behind and in between buildings in the neighbourhood. These indoor and outdoor spaces are sometimes public, and often privately-owned and publicly accessible. Although they all enable pedestrians to travel through the neighbourhood quickly and easily, some are destinations unto themselves with outdoor seating, restaurant and retail frontages, and unique public art.

These connections should be protected and enhanced as they are vital to the established character of the neighbourhood.



Mid-Block Pedestrian Connections

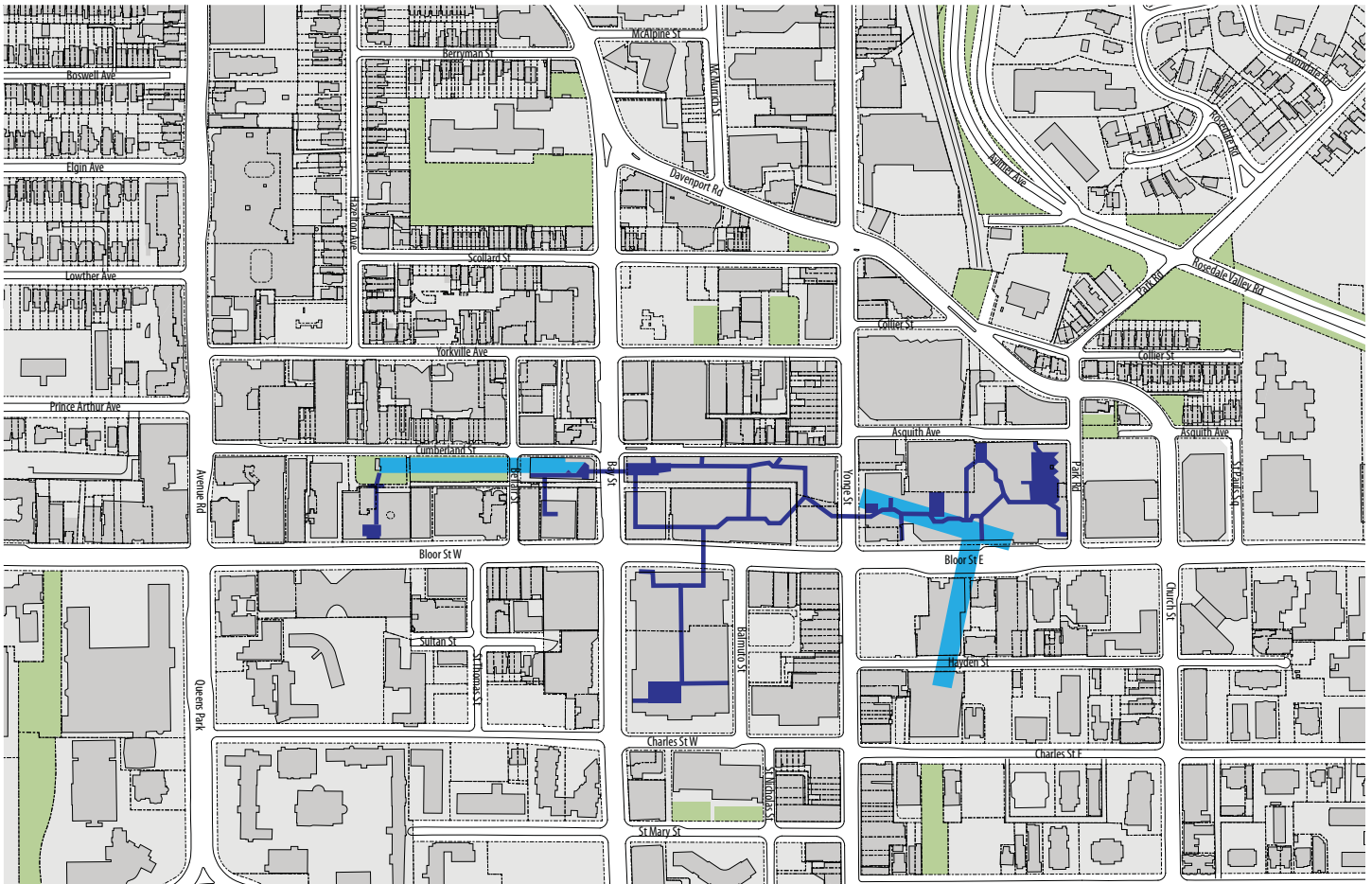
— Mid-Block Pedestrian Connections - Exterior/Interior



Underground Pedestrian Network

An extensive Underground Pedestrian Network exists within the southern part of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area.

The underground pedestrian mall runs one floor below grade, traversing the area between Avenue Road and Park Road, south of Cumberland Street and north of Charles Street. These pathways are flanked by retail frontages, include multiple access points to the street level, and are well used - especially in the winter months. The underground pedestrian network is also connected to the two subway stations in the neighbourhood; Bay Station and Yonge Station.



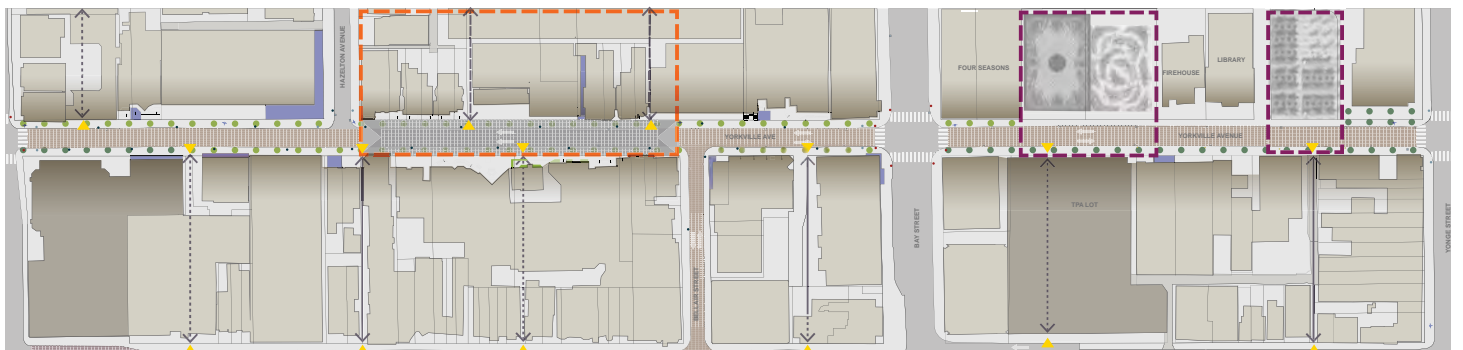
Underground Pedestrian Network

- Existing Underground Pedestrian Mall System
- Subway Station



Transforming Cumberland Street into an exciting public corridor and unique destination

- | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|---|-------------------------|
| | Existing unit paved road surface | | Existing patios | | Unit paved road surface |
| | Proposed unit paved road surface | | Existing trees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• unit paved road surface• typical City of Toronto concrete sidewalk with Yorkville standard | |
| | Proposed table top road | | Proposed trees | | Table top road surface |
| | Proposed Yorkville plaza | | Existing access to mid-block connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• unit paved road surface• unit paved sidewalk• rolled curb | |
| | Existing public parks | | Existing exterior mid-block connections | | Proposed street trees |
| | | | Existing interior mid-block connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• combination of enhancing growing environment for health of existing trees• adding new trees as per City Standard | |



Proposed Yorkville Avenue Pedestrian Realm Improvements



Streets

The maintenance and ongoing improvement of streets within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area is critical to the success of the Pedestrian Realm Network. Collectively, the streets in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area comprise the largest percentage of neighbourhood open space - which solidifies their importance as a defining feature of the Pedestrian Realm Network. Streets and lanes can be engaging and safe outdoor places with beautiful trees and plants, seating, shade and public art for everyone to enjoy. The condition of the streetscapes in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area should reflect the high quality character of the neighbourhood.

The neighbourhood is home to a wide variety of pavement widths and right-of-ways, which requires a flexible approach to streetscape treatments throughout. Currently, there exists an inconsistent palette of sidewalk treatments and streetscape elements. Street trees on smaller neighbourhood streets are generally healthy, but trees on major routes are struggling.

The 2008 Bloor-Yorkville Streetscape Improvement Master Plan, led by the BIA, aimed to improve streetscape conditions by creating a long-term plan for creating defined and continuous planting zones, expanding the street hierarchy to include Special Pedestrian Streets and Special Urban Streets, introducing a unified palette of street furnishings, taking a coordinated approach to utilities, and creating a better balance between pedestrian and vehicular traffic. In partnership with the City of Toronto, the BIA initiated many of these projects within the Bloor Street Transformation Project, which began in 2008.

A number of projects are also moving forward through the ongoing “A Vision For Yorkville Avenue” streetscape enhancement plan, which will be completed in 2015, and the more recent “Cumberland Street Reimagined”, which is a longer term enhancement initiative.



Rendered View of Cumberland Mews

Street Hierarchy

The plan on the adjacent page illustrates the street hierarchy throughout the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area.

The **Urban Streets** are major routes for cars, cyclists and pedestrians that are wider than other streets, with four travel lanes. Urban Streets usually include wider pedestrian sidewalks and are fronted by large-scale retail.

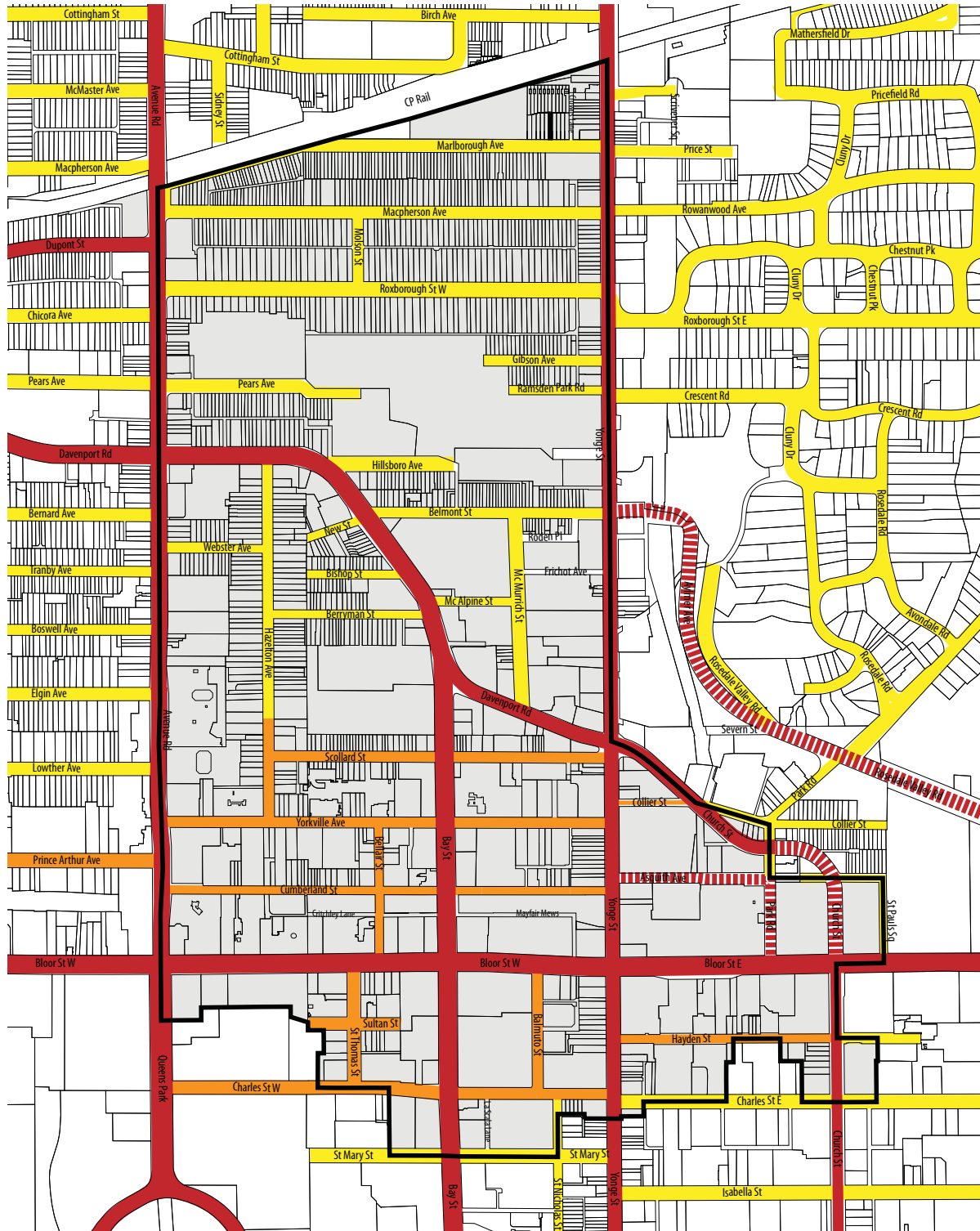
Connector Streets run between Urban Streets and are often used to connect to other neighbourhoods.

Primary **Pedestrian Streets** are narrower than Urban and Connector Streets, and include on-street parking and a maximum of two travel lanes which slows traffic and contributes to the creation a safer environment for pedestrians. Many of these streets are fronted by small-scale retail and commercial services, and residential uses.

Neighbourhood Streets are mainly residential streets, with a maximum of two travel lanes and on-street parking, and are often quieter.



- Urban Street
- ▨ Connector Street
- ▨ Primary Pedestrian Street
- ▨ Neighbourhood Street



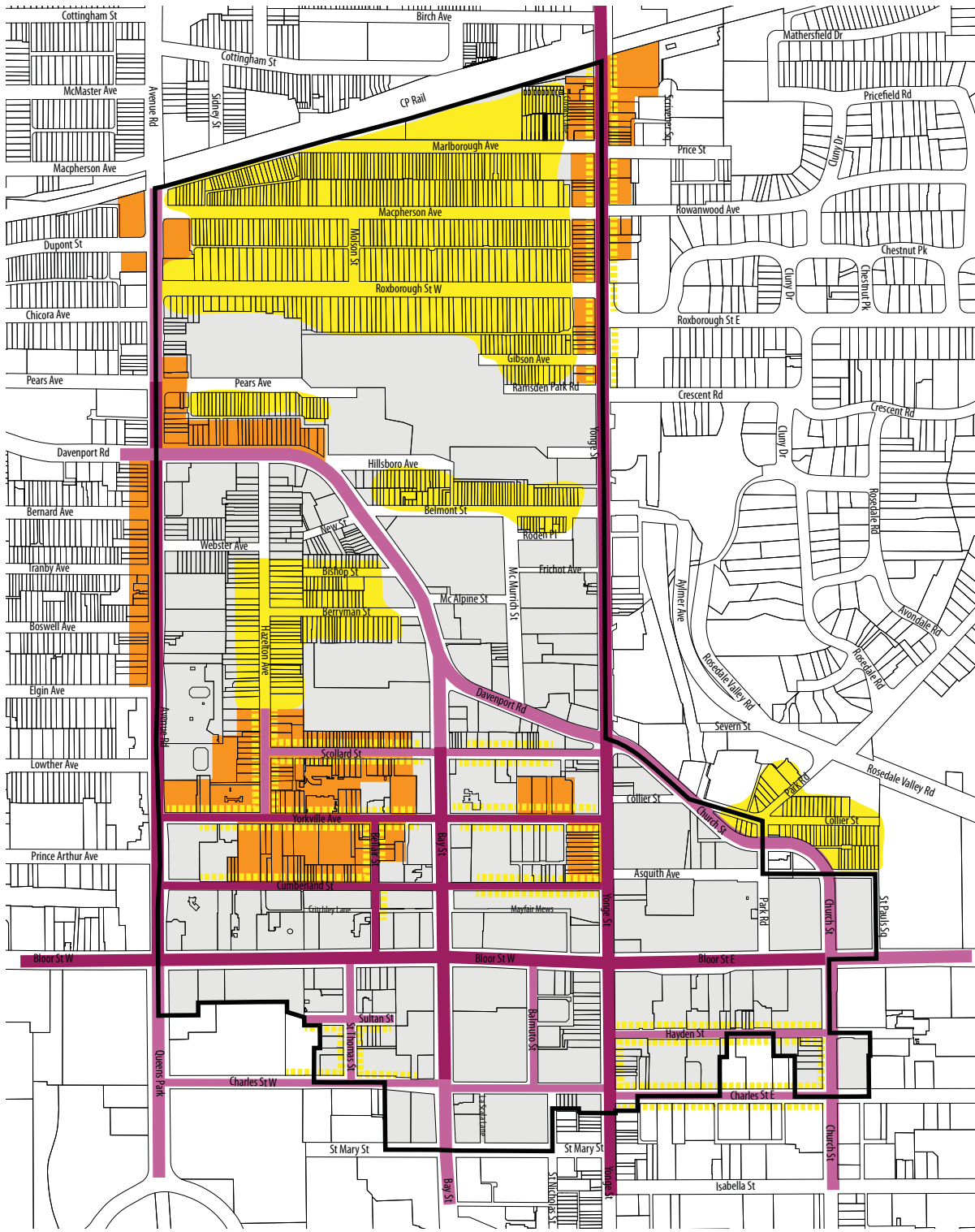
Street Hierarchy

Street Edge

Street edge conditions vary throughout the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, and are related to the street hierarchy. Highly Animated Street Frontages exist along major streets, including Bloor Street, Avenue Road, Bay Street and Yonge Street (which are all Urban Streets), and along Yorkville Avenue, Cumberland Street, and Bellair Street. These are the main shopping streets in the area with mainly retail and restaurant frontages on ground level, including patios, interesting building façades, and highly permeable storefronts. Animated Street Frontages also have retail and restaurant frontages, but contain a broader mix of uses at ground level. Both Highly Animated Street Frontages and Animated Street Frontages also include Low-Rise buildings at Street Edge.



- Highly Animated Street Frontage
- Animated Street Frontage
- Low Rise at Street Edge
- Character Areas
- Low Rise Residential Neighbourhoods



Street Edge





5 Emerging Directions

Building A Plan

The information and analyses presented in this Background & Emerging Directions Report establishes the basis upon which a long-term vision for the future of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area will be built. The Policy Approach component of this Planning Framework and Implementation Strategy will stipulate where and what kind of development should occur, which will help to protect the significant heritage buildings and cultural landscapes and honour the Area's social history. The Policy Approach will also promote significant development in key locations, in order to continue the Area's contribution to the economic success of the City.

Creating a Policy Approach that addresses recent and current development applications, and envisions a consistent and connected Pedestrian Realm and building stock, is one part of this initiative. Creating a coherent implementation strategy through the Policy Approach will be key to ensuring the strength and success of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area. Improving the pedestrian environment, enhancing accessibility, protecting the integrity of heritage buildings and landscapes, creating beautiful and safe public spaces, promoting public art and ensuring new development fits within the context of the neighbourhood all depend on the success to which the Policy Approach is implemented through the statutory planning tools. A thorough analysis of existing policy directives, such as the Official Plan, the Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines and the City's Tall and Mid-Rise Buildings Guidelines, is inherent to the Policy Approach articulated in this document. Implementing the Policy Approach as a statutory Secondary Plan will help Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown to flourish with continued investment in development at the right scale, and in the right places. Some elements of the Policy Approach may also be suitable for inclusion in the City's Zoning By-law.

The Emerging Directions presented in this Report are based on the team's analysis of existing policies and key themes that emerged from the stakeholder engagement process. The Policy Approach reinforces the established vision and creates a plan of action for its realization by equipping the City of Toronto and all other stakeholders with the knowledge and tools necessary to protect and enhance Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area as a place to live, to work, to shop, to visit and to invest.

Emerging Directions

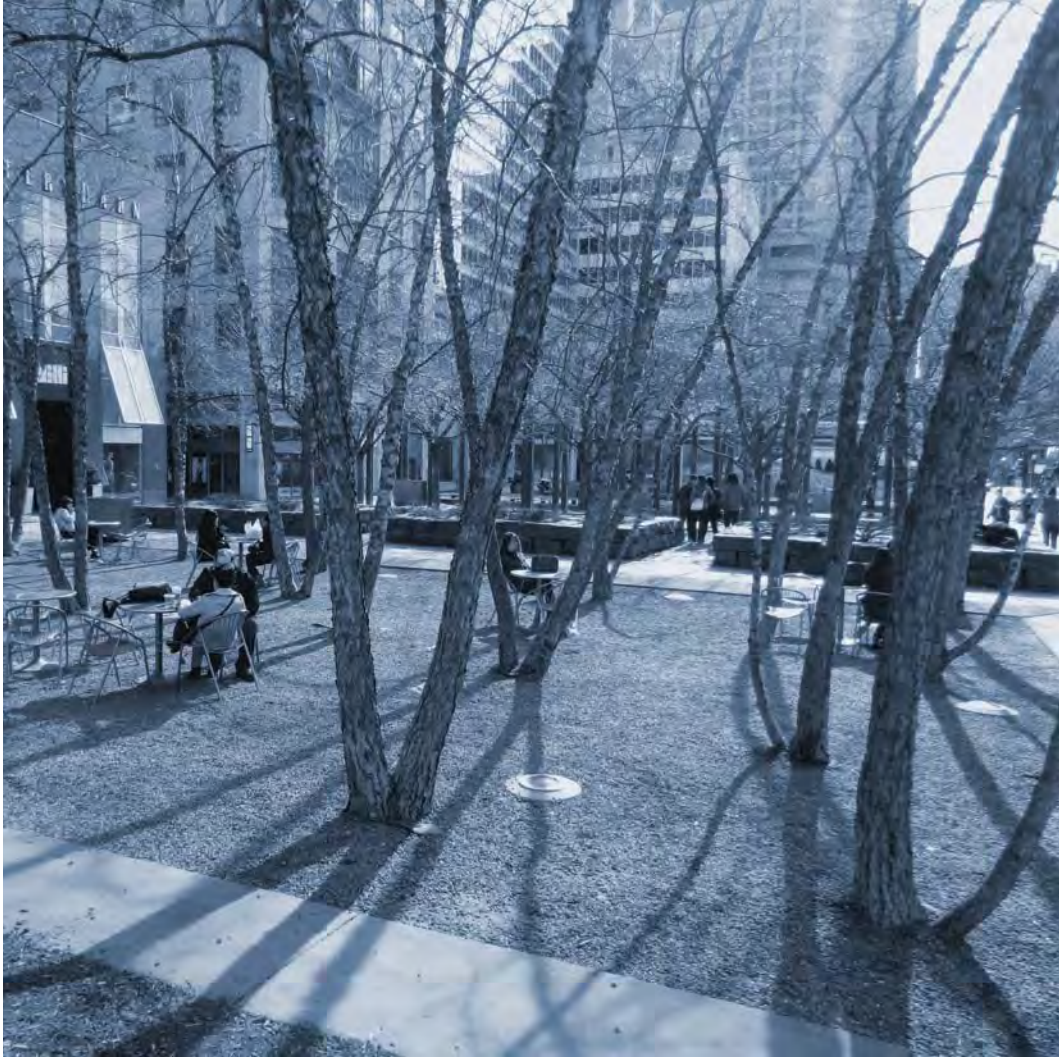
Emerging directions were shared for input during the April 2013 Workshop. The directions were developed following a synthesis of the key and challenges presented from our understanding of the area's cultural heritage, development planning context, streets and Pedestrian Realm Network. The emerging directions are:

- 1 Clear framework to guide development in distinct character areas and ensure heritage character is retained
- 2 Simple, well crafted and useable open spaces
- 3 Fine grained network of pedestrian spaces
- 4 Beautiful streets

Objectives for the Policy Approach

The objectives for the Policy Approach for the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area are to:

- Recognize the current structure of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area and direct new development or redevelopment activity to appropriate locations, ensuring appropriate transitions from higher density areas to established lower density residential areas, and to protect sensitive areas from new development or redevelopment activity .
- Ensure that the City recognizes the link between growth and the requirements for a full array of community facilities, including public parks and schools, as well as the infrastructure improvements required to accommodate growth.
- Provide clear principles, policies and design guidance that:
 - + Protects and enhances the character and viability of the 'Urban Village' and 'Neighbourhood' areas; and,
 - + Promotes the 'Urban Core', 'Urban Ridge' and 'Urban Corridor' areas as the focal areas for investment in commercial, institutional, cultural, entertainment and residential uses.
- Create new programs, planning and/or financial mechanisms to ensure a high standard of urban design for all new forms of development in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area.
- Promote a high degree of interconnectivity between and among buildings, and with the Subway System, both at grade and below grade. These connections are to be accessible and animated spaces, reflecting the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area's long tradition of mid block connections adjacent to, and through buildings.
- Protect the employment function of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area, particularly the office function, as a key component of the desirability of the Area, and its ongoing economic success.
- Enhance the appearance and encourage a high level of property maintenance for buildings and their surroundings.
- Ensure that public improvement projects are undertaken within an overall design and implementation program that is consistent with the policies of this Plan.
- Ensure that the cumulative impacts of new development are considered in a comprehensive way. Incremental decisions based on an evaluation of site specific issues fails to appropriately consider community-wide impacts on character, service infrastructure, the Pedestrian Realm Network and community benefits and facilities.
- Ensure that public funds that are generated by new development through Development Charges, and Sections 37, 40, 42, and 51.1 of the Planning Act, are spent by the City on appropriate improvements within and in proximity to the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Area.





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