



Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District Study  
**Bracken Avenue**

**DRAFT**

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Figure 1. Balmy Beach, early 1900s

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## 1. Study Summary

In recognition of their special character and cultural heritage value, more than 70 areas in Ontario have been recognized as Heritage Conservation Districts under the Ontario Heritage Act. In maintaining their uniqueness and sense of place, 12 of these districts contribute to the rich history and dynamic landscape of the City of Toronto.

This report is the result of a City of Toronto by-law and a community polling process authorizing a Heritage Conservation District Study to be undertaken for six character areas in the Balmy Beach neighbourhood. All properties along Bracken Avenue including addresses 1 thru 37 have been defined by the City of Toronto as comprising one such character area.

This Heritage Conservation District Plan has been prepared for consideration of the property owners of Bracken Avenue and Toronto City Council. This Plan proposes the formal recognition of the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District - Bracken Avenue under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The key components of this Heritage Conservation District Plan are:

- To provide a comprehensive analysis of the historical and architectural character of Bracken Avenue as a means to evaluate and establish the heritage character of the street;
- To encourage and facilitate the participation and input of local residents, as well as the Municipality, in pursuing and promoting awareness of the preservation of the area's character;
- To develop design guidelines to assist property owners and decision makers in the assessment of appropriate changes and development proposals within the District.

Sanctioned under provincial and municipal heritage policy, this Plan includes an analysis of the historical development and an architectural evaluation of the built form along Bracken Avenue. It recognizes the Bracken Avenue as a part of Toronto's historic Balmy Beach neighbourhood worthy of protection for its historical development patterns, vernacular architecture (local building traditions and elements), and streetscape character. Based on this analysis, this Plan recommends the creation of a Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District – Bracken Avenue under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act and proposes heritage guidelines as a tool to aid the City and the residents of Bracken Avenue in strengthening and protecting the area's heritage character.

## 2. Study Background and Methodology

Balmy Beach is well known to many Torontonians as a neighbourhood of special character stemming from its historical evolution from a seasonal resort community to a mature Toronto neighbourhood. Its geographic location along the lakefront, east of Kew Beach, west of the Scarborough Bluffs and south of the Kingston Road ridge, has endowed this area with a special sense of place. It is one of only a few Toronto neighbourhoods that remain connected to its waterfront. Early 20<sup>th</sup>-century architecture and mature streetscapes preserve a strong relationship with the history of Balmy Beach and the historical development of Toronto. Recently, however, demolition and infill developments have begun to erode some of the unique and historic attributes of this Toronto community.

In response to recent development pressures evident in their neighbourhood, the Character Committee of the Balmy Beach Residents Association (BBRA) contacted city staff late in 2003 to find out more about Heritage Conservation Districts and how they can assist in the preservation and enhancement of their heritage streetscapes. Subsequently, the BBRA held a series of public meetings with city staff to inform residents of the study process and to gauge the community's interest in proceeding with a Heritage Conservation District Study of their neighbourhood. During these meetings support for this process was mixed and, at the urging of area residents, the city proceeded to conduct a poll within the proposed study boundary to accurately measure the community's support. As part of this polling process the study area was divided into fourteen character areas, each of which voted whether to continue the study process or not. Six character areas voted to continue the study process and agreed that a second poll would be taken on the studies were completed to gauge support for the adoption of the proposed Heritage Conservation District Plan for each character area.

Following this initial polling process, a group of Balmy Beach residents formed the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation Committee (BBHCC) to proceed with the study of the remaining character areas defined by the City as: Glenfern Avenue including properties along lower Silverbirch Avenue and the Lake Front (here after referred to as the Glenfern Area); Balmy Avenue; Kingswood Road between Queen and Bracken (Kingswood South); Kingswood Road between Bracken and Kingston Road (Kingswood North); Bracken Avenue (1 to 37) and Bingham Avenue (2 to 45). Under the advice and guidance of City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services staff, the BBHCC held an interview process and retained E.R.A. Architects Inc. (ERA) to act as a professional consultant for this study and appropriate District Plan(s) for the remaining character areas.

As part of the study process, a group of community volunteers led by Barbara Myrvold, a local historian and resident, photographed, researched and recorded the history of each property. Their research in Toronto City directories and assessment rolls, along with examination of historical maps and pictures were complemented by interviews and surveys of area residents. Barbara also prepared a history of Balmy

Beach and each character area. The materials gathered formed a property inventory used by the consultant team to develop an historical evaluation of the properties within each character area, to identify key patterns of neighbourhood development, and to prepare appropriate guidelines for the protection of the each area's heritage character.

In response to the public consultation process it was decided that the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District Study would consider the recognition of each character area separately, and that an individual study plan would be proposed for the consideration of the property owners of each character area at the time of the second poll. Following preliminary meetings with the BBHCC, two working groups were established of interested residents of the character areas south and north of Queen Street East. These groups met on November 23, 2005 and November 30, 2005 respectively. At these meetings residents were introduced to the consultant team, presented with a brief history of their neighbourhood, and were engaged in discussions regarding the defining features of their character areas and concerns about the nature of change in the area. An additional series of meetings are slated for June 2006 to review the findings and proposed recommendations of their respective study plans. Following the conclusion of this consultation process the second public poll is to be held.

### 3. Policy Provisions

The processes and procedures of the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District Studies were sanctioned under the terms laid out by Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act 1990, the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement and provisions of the City of Toronto Official Plan.

#### *The Ontario Heritage Act*

The Ontario Heritage Act represents the primary piece of Provincial legislation that regulates the protection of heritage resources within Ontario. According to Part V of the Act, as amended on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2005, the municipality may by by-law designate any area as a Heritage Conservation District. Based on these provisions, municipalities shall adopt a District Plan that identifies the cultural value of the District and provides principles for protecting that value<sup>1</sup>.

#### *The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement*

The purpose of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under the Planning Act, is to provide municipalities in Ontario with policy direction on matters related to land use planning and development. As it relates to this Heritage Conservation District Study, Part V, Section 2.6 of the PPS states:

- Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved.
- Development and site alteration may be permitted in adjacent lands to protected heritage property where the proposed development and site alteration has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Ministry of Culture, *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, *2005 Provincial Policy Statement* (Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2005), 21.

*The City of Toronto Official Plan*

The Official Plan outlines Toronto's vision for the future character of the City. As statutory policy, the Official Plan guides the City in its decisions on how best to achieve balanced change, growth, and development. In this case, the Official Plan addresses how the City of Toronto will implement and address municipal requirements set forth in the Ontario Planning Act and Ontario Heritage Act.

With reference to the identification and protection of heritage resources the Official Plan states:

- It is the policy of Council to designate property to be of architectural or historical value or interest and to take all necessary steps to ensure the preservation and conservation of all buildings, structures, and sites, including all areas in the public domain, within such districts.
- It is the policy of Council to designate Heritage Conservation Districts within the City on the basis of appropriate studies and to take all necessary steps to ensure the preservation and conservation of buildings, structures, sites, including all areas in the public domain, within such districts.<sup>3</sup>

Passed by City Council in November 2002, the new Official Plan is currently awaiting approval at the provincial level. Among other things, this new policy recognizes the importance of protecting stable neighbourhoods and heritage resources for their contributing qualities to the character of the city. The Official Plan states:

- Development will respect and reinforce the physical pattern and character of established neighbourhoods, with particular regard to...conservation of heritage buildings, structures and landscapes.
- Our heritage buildings, districts and landscapes create a unique sense of place and a rooted sense of local identity and continuity for Torontonians... Heritage conservation not only makes our neighbourhoods even more attractive, it also increases their desirability and value.
- Significant heritage resources will be conserved by... designating areas with a concentration of heritage resources as Heritage Conservation Districts and adopting conservation and design guidelines to maintain and improve their character.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> City of Toronto Planning and Development, *City of Toronto Official Plan 1996*, Section 5.

<sup>4</sup> City of Toronto Urban Development Services, *City of Toronto Official Plan 2002*, 46-47, 71-72.

#### 4. District Objectives

Developed as part of the historic neighbourhood of Balmy Beach, Bracken Avenue is a good example of the cultural patterns that contribute to the rich history of Toronto's urban landscape. Unfortunately, recent developments tend to be less characteristic of the area's established character and threaten to undermine the area's historic value.

It is the objective of this District Plan to identify the heritage attributes that define the character of this street and determine a framework to protect the cultural value of this community. It is the intention of this Plan to establish an understanding of Bracken Avenue within the historical evolution of Toronto and provide guidelines for future developments to complement and enhance this character.

#### 5. District Boundary

The house types and streetscape features of Bracken Avenue represent a settlement pattern that is unique to this area of Toronto, and that has been identified by the city as distinct from adjoining streets. This Heritage Conservation District Plan proposes a district boundary that includes the existing residential lots and structures fronting on Bracken Avenue from number 1 to 37.



Figure 2. Heritage Conservation District Boundary – Bracken Avenue



Figure 3. Looking east along the north side of Bracken Avenue

## 6. Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The nature of the heritage character of Bracken Avenue lies in its relationship to the early development patterns of the Beach area from a rural resort community to a mature Toronto neighbourhood. First planned as part of the subdivision of the old Munro estate in 1908, Bracken Avenue was slotted as a prime location for suburban beach development following the annexation of the Balmy Beach area by Toronto in 1909.

Development of Bracken Avenue as a permanent residential street began around 1912, with the bulk of construction taking place between 1915 and 1930, and development of all the original lots by 1941. Uniquely sited as the only east-west street within the old Munro estate, Bracken serves as a neighbourhood cross-street connecting Scarborough Road, Kingston Road, Bingham Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue. Exhibiting a broader period of growth and developed by both individual and larger landowners, Bracken Avenue shares characteristics with each of its adjoining streets. This process resulted in both 25 and 50 foot-wide lots and a unique mixture of vernacular architecture (local building traditions and elements). In drawing inspiration from classic Edwardian, bungalow, and English cottage styles, including proportion, massing and setbacks balance these variations and have established a cohesive architectural language to the street.

The comfortable siting and vernacular massing of the dwellings along Bracken create a rhythm to the streetscape. The front setbacks, shared driveways, rear garages and street oriented design of the homes maintain an open relationship with the street. The sensitive design of the built form has provided a relatively wide streetscape, has maintained a healthy proportion of green space defined by handsome front lawns, gardens and mature tree growth. Situated along the top ridge of the Neville Park ravine Bracken's spacious lots are oriented perpendicular to the lakeshore. This locality provides dramatic views of lakefront that complement the vernacular design of the street's dwellings and maintains a relationship with the area's rural past.

Bracken Avenue is a good example of the early development patterns of the Balmy Beach neighbourhood. The area's history, vernacular architecture, cohesive streetscape and natural landscape, contribute to a highly valued urban aesthetic that is worthy of recognition and protection.

## 7. District Analysis

Heritage attributes are the individual qualities of an area that add to the overall character of a place. As part of the heritage study undertaken in the development of this Plan, a number of heritage attributes have been identified for their significant contribution to the valued heritage character of Bracken Avenue. These attributes include: the street's historical relationship to the development of the Balmy Beach community; its vernacular architecture of the early-20<sup>th</sup> century; a cohesive streetscape representative of original lot patterns, consistent setbacks and massing; as well as a rich tree canopy fostered by its large lots.

### 7.1 Historical Development

#### *Balmy Beach – Early Landowners, Surveys and Subdivisions*

Toronto's Balmy Beach neighbourhood comprises the area south of Kingston Road to Lake Ontario, and east of MacLean Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue (originally the York and Scarborough Town line). It was first surveyed in the 1790s as part of lots 1 and 2 in the Broken Front and Concession I from the Bay, York Township. In the mid-1800s, two prominent Torontonians established country estates there. Merchant and former Toronto mayor George Munro<sup>5</sup> purchased part of lot 1 in 1847. Adam Wilson, a prominent lawyer and later a politician and distinguished judge, held part of lots 1 and 2 by 1853. Today's Scarborough Road marks the boundary between the Munro and Wilson properties.



Figure 4. George Munro, 1800?-78



Figure 5. Adam Wilson, 1814-91

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<sup>5</sup> George consistently spelling his last name as "Monro," the form used for his entry in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography, which also noted variant spellings, Munro and Munroe. "Munro" was used by some of his two sons and four daughters, for a park opened by the lake on his old estate in 1896, and the present street.

On January 19, 1876, Adam Wilson registered Plan 406, subdividing his property into 145 park lots and laying out Balsam, Beech, Birch (now Silver Birch), Pine, and Maple avenues (the last later becoming part of Queen Street). He also set aside a private promenade (Balmy Beach Park) adjoining the beach at the south end of Beech Avenue, for the “common use and enjoyment of lot owners.”<sup>6</sup>

Wilson developed Balmy Beach with some of his friends and business associates, who located their own summer residences there: “four other well-known gentlemen, Messrs. Robert Beaty, James Beaty, Dr. [Orlando] Winstanley, and Benjamin Morton, the latter of whom sold out to Mr. A. McLean Howard.”<sup>7</sup> The syndicate divided Balmy Beach into six parcels along its three north-south streets. Wilson retained the two easterly portions on both sides of Birch Avenue from the lake to Kingston Road; his Balmy Beach cottage was located on the lake west of Birch.

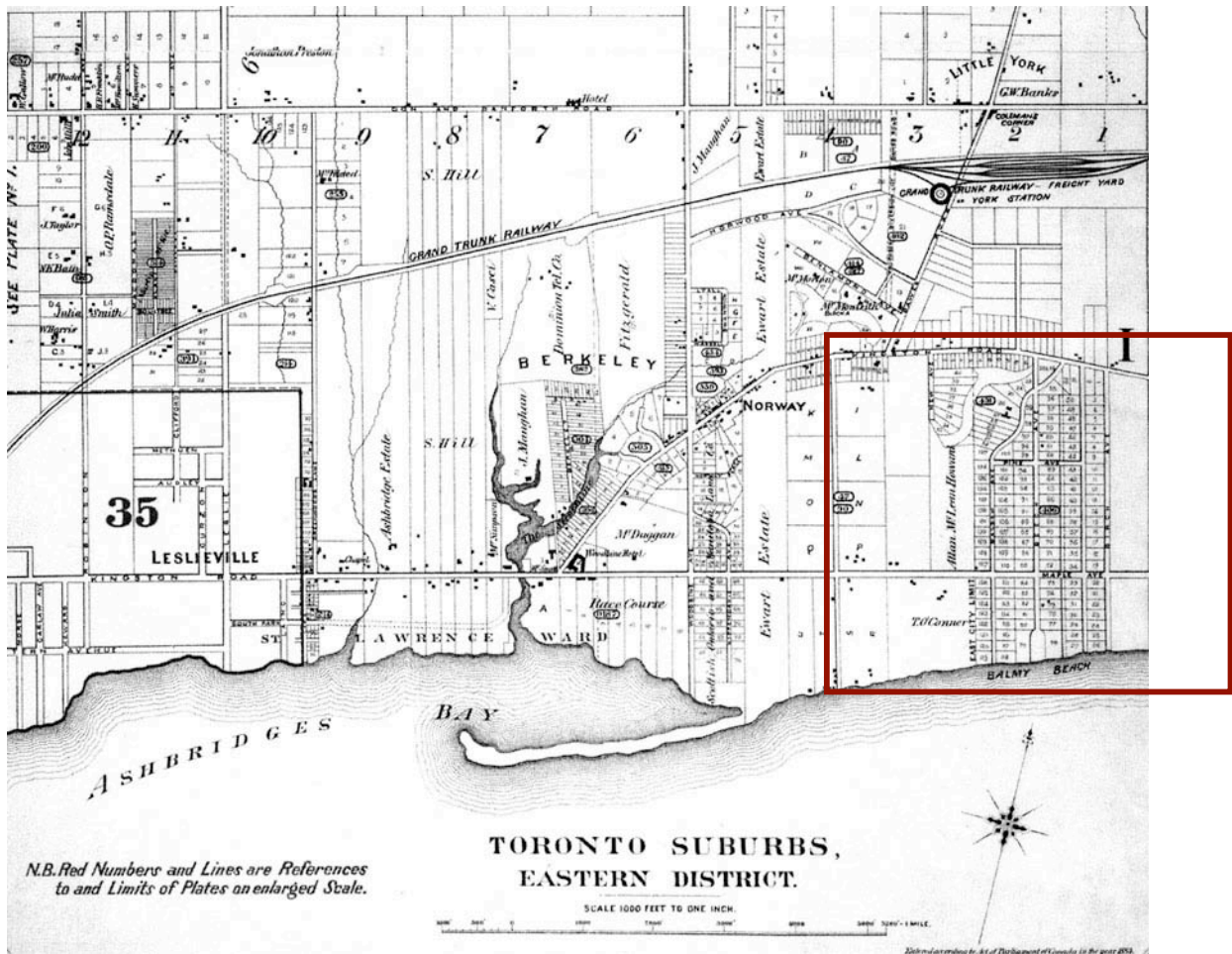


Figure 6. Goad's Atlas of 1884 showing Adam Wilson's Plan 406 for Balmy Beach

<sup>6</sup> Statutes of the Province of Ontario, 1903, 3 Edw. VII, ch. 50.

<sup>7</sup> “The Beaches become a populous suburb,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 21 April 1906. Reprinted in *Beach Metro News*, 1 August 1993,



Figure 7. Munro Park Streetcar, circa 1898

### *Summer Resort*

In the 1870s, the Beach district began to be served by steamer and streetcar and to be developed as a summer resort. The Toronto Gravel Road and Concrete Company started streetcar service along Kingston Road in 1875, and the horse-drawn trams served Woodbine Park (later Greenwood Race Track), which opened that same year. Victoria Park started east of Balmy Beach in June 1878 and excursion steamers made several trips a day from pickup points in downtown Toronto. Kew Gardens opened west of Balmy Beach the following year. By that time, several prominent Toronto businessmen and local landowners had opened the Scarborough' Heights Hotel, one of the area's first summer hotels located near Beech Avenue and Kingston Road. It was the site of an auction sale of "Park Lots at Balmy Beach!" held in September 1878 and advertised in the Toronto *Globe*:

Nine valuable park lots on Beech Avenue, Balmy Beach, each lot having a frontage of 135 feet by a depth of 257 feet...on which to build summer villas, being only four and a half miles distant from Toronto and about ten minutes walk from the most beautiful beach on Lake Ontario, where boating and bathing can be indulged in with perfect safety... about 15 minutes walk from Victoria Park between which and Toronto the steamer "Maxwell" plies constantly.<sup>8</sup>

During the 1880s, Queen Street was opened and the area began to be served by streetcar, two crucial factors in the growth of Balmy Beach. In 1880, York Township agreed to survey Queen Street east from Woodbine Park to the Scarborough Township boundary. The Toronto Street Railway Company (TSR) extended its streetcar service along Queen Street to Woodbine Park in 1887 and to Lee Avenue in 1889. Its successor, the Toronto Railway Company (TRC) extended service to Balsam Avenue in 1893 and into Munro Park in 1898, both during summer months only.

<sup>8</sup> "Sale of Park Lots at Balmy Beach!" Toronto *Globe*, 7 September 1878, 6.

During these two decades, Wilson and his partners in the original plan, along with other early cottagers and some developers registered about a dozen subdivision plans at Balmy Beach. Several new streets were laid out, including Balmy, Glen Fern, Oak (now Willow), a second Maple Avenue (now Scarborough Road), Cedar, Fir, Hazel, Spruce (now Spruce Hill), Howard (now MacLean) and Hughes (now Fernwood Park).

Many of the new streets were named for trees, continuing the tradition that Adam Wilson started in his original plan. This has become a way of distinguishing the area; or as one long-time Balmy Beacher remarked, if you're not on a street with a 'tree name,' you're not in Balmy Beach."<sup>9</sup>

Some of Balmy Beach's natural features were described a few decades later:

Its situation from many standpoints is unique. It is a natural pocket with a southern aspect and having a warm soil, the perfect drainage, and the proximity of the lake, the flora is exceptionally diversified and with the possible exception of part of the Niagara Peninsula, it has a greater variety of trees and plants than any other spot in Canada. Sassafras grows there to a height of twenty feet, and almost every rare Canadian plant can be cultivated successfully.<sup>10</sup>

In 1888, virtually all of lot 2 to the edge of the lake, including a large portion of the original Balmy Beach subdivision, became part of the Village of East Toronto.<sup>11</sup> Lot 1 remained in York Township. This included lots in Balmy Beach east of today's Willow Avenue as well as the largely undeveloped Munro estate.

Despite being divided politically, Balmy Beach continued to flourish as a resort community with vacationers staying in a growing number of tents, cottages, summer hotels and boarding houses. In 1891, the Church of England started a summer tent church at Balmy Beach for all denominations (the beginnings of St. Aidan's Anglican). Day visitors could use Munro Park, opened in 1896 on the lake just to the west of Victoria Park; soon both parks were operated and served by the Toronto Railway Company.

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<sup>9</sup> Cathy Commins, "A history of Balmy Beach," *Ward 9 News*, 25 March 1980, 3.

<sup>10</sup> "The Beaches become a populous suburb," *Toronto Daily Star*, 21 April 1906. Reprinted in *Beach Metro News*, 1 August 1993.

<sup>11</sup> East Toronto was incorporated as a village in 1888 and raised to a town in 1903. The community had developed in the vicinity of Main and Gerrard streets, near the Grand Trunk Railway's York Station.



Figure 8. Map of Toronto and Suburbs, East of the Don, including East Toronto Village, 1892



Figure 9. Balmy Beach Clubhouse, 1905-1936

### *Year Round Settlement*

By the end of the 1890s, Balmy Beach was beginning to change from a seasonal resort to a year-round settlement. In 1899, Balmy Beach residents sought their own post office, claiming 150 families. In that year, Allan McLean Howard Jr. advertised building lots for sale at Balmy Beach, “the most beautiful annex of Toronto, and the coming suburban residential part of the city,” offering the advantages of “city water and gas” and “no city taxes.”<sup>12</sup>

In 1900, the Balmy Beach Property Owners' Association was formed to lobby the East Toronto Council for better services. The municipality responded by building a permanent fire hall on Spruce Avenue in 1902 and opening Pine Avenue School (now Balmy Beach School) in 1906; it also placed its waterworks on the lakefront in 1905. The growing community also featured a new church, Beech Avenue Methodist Church (now Kingston Road United), and a private school, Balmy Beach College, both opened in 1907.

Social gatherings and sporting competitions were a big part of life at Balmy Beach, and many organizations were formed including a lawn bowling club, a hockey club, a baseball team, a skating and curling club, a gun club, a Masonic lodge, and a Bachelors' Club. Starting in 1903, many of these activities centred at the Balmy Beach Club, which continues to operate today. With assurances that a clubhouse would be built at Balmy Beach Park, “the demand for property within the prescribed limits – Howard ave. to Munro Park – has increased wonderfully,” the *Toronto Star* commented in August 1903. “The clubhouse will be for the use of owners and residents only, and this new move has made more people look towards Balmy Beach.”<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> “Balmy Beach,” *Toronto World*, 1 April 1899, 9.

<sup>13</sup> “At the Beaches; Balmy Beach,” *Toronto Daily Star*, 15 August 1903, 15.

The *Toronto Star* discussed developments at Balmy Beach in an article published on April 21, 1906:

None of the lots within the boundaries average less than 50 feet frontage, and no house of less value than \$2,000 can be built. This condition is almost invariable and has resulted in the erection of a splendid class of summer cottage. Since the advent of the [street] railway, the number of houses suitable for living in all year round has greatly increased and at least 250 families now spend the winter there. This is increased during the summer by about the same number of families so that estimating five to a family, the population during the summer months is about 2,500 and about half that in the winter. There is between 400 and 500 houses, most of which have been erected within the last five years, and 40 or 50 are being built this spring.<sup>14</sup>

In 1906, reports began circulating that the Grand Trunk Railway (GRT) and the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) planned to construct lines along the beach, and Canadian Northern Railway (CNoR) proposed a route just north of Queen Street. Local residents, fearing that their property values and the character of their district would be destroyed, rallied to oppose the "railway invasion,"<sup>15</sup> even sending a delegation to the railway commission in Ottawa. The community was successful in its fight, and the CPR and CNoR stayed north of the Danforth, and the GTR retained its old route north of Gerrard.

Neither Victoria nor Munro parks reopened in 1907 but Scarborough' Beach Amusement Park began lakeside operations in that year on the old Thomas O'Connor farm between Balmy Beach and Kew Beach. In 1908, the Munro family and its partner, Charles Millar,<sup>16</sup> subdivided their property in lot 1 north of Queen between Maple (now Scarborough Road) and Victoria Park avenues. Their plan 1408 created 205 building lots and laid out Lynwood (now Kingswood Road), Glendale (now Bingham Avenue) and Bracken avenues. The ravine between Lynwood and Victoria Park south of Bracken was set aside as "Block A." Other plans subdivided the Munro estate south of Queen, creating Munro Park Avenue and Neville Park Boulevard on the old park site.

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<sup>14</sup> "The Beaches become a populous suburb," *Toronto Daily Star*, 21 April 1906. Reprinted in *Beach Metro News*, 1 August 1993.

<sup>15</sup> "Beach District Aroused Over Railway Invasion," *Toronto World*, 21 December 1906, 1

<sup>16</sup> Charles Vance Millar (1853 – 31 October 1926) was a Toronto lawyer and financier. He is now known primarily for his will, whose playful bequests including giving the bulk of his estate to the woman who gave birth to the most children in the 10 years following his death. The resulting contest became known as the Great Stork Derby.



Figure 10. Construction of the Bingham Loop in 1922

### *Annexation to Toronto and City Suburb*

The annexation of East Toronto to the City of Toronto had been discussed for years. Most Balmy Beachers favoured annexation, seeing many possible advantages including paved streets, more reliable water and electric light systems, a good sewage system, better police and fire protection, a free postal delivery service, and extended streetcar service to the city. When East Toronto and the city finally agreed to join forces on December 15, 1908, one of the terms was that the area of the town south of Kingston Road would be "set aside as a residential district free from factories and hotels."<sup>17</sup> The annexation of "Balmy Beach," 187 acres between East Toronto and Scarborough Township, followed on December 15, 1909.<sup>18</sup>

After annexation, most of Balmy Beach's remaining undeveloped land was subdivided, often in places where ravines, streams and swamps had impeded growth. One long-time resident recalled that Willow Avenue south of Queen "was not opened up until 1914 or 15 when the swamp was filled with ashes from the city dump and the stream put into pipes."<sup>19</sup> Block A of the Munro estate was subdivided, extending Neville Park Boulevard north of Queen. In 1920, the last remaining portion of the McLean Howard estate north of MacLean Avenue and Queen Street was subdivided for residences.

<sup>17</sup> City of Toronto Council, Minutes, 1908, Appendix C, 20 Sept. 1908, 127-8.

<sup>18</sup> City of Toronto Council, Minutes, 1909, Appendix C, 12 Nov. 1909, 77-8.

<sup>19</sup> Olga Marie Porter Commins and Cathy Commins, "A history of Balmy Beach, *Ward 9 News*, 8 April 1980, 13.

The 1910 Goad's *Atlas of the City of Toronto and Suburbs* showed considerable development in the original Balmy Beach subdivision, including several brick buildings among the mostly wood structures. The old Munro estate appeared to be empty, except for two frame buildings on Lynwood Avenue (Kingswood) just north of Queen Street East.

By that time, a small shopping district had started to develop in the vicinity of Queen and Beech with 11 stores listed in the Toronto city directory for 1910. The Prince Edward Theatre, renamed the Fox in 1937, opened in April 1914, and a branch of the Bank of British North America (later Bank of Montreal) filled in the northeast corner in 1917.

After annexation, city services gradually were extended to Balmy Beach. Streetcar service, which often was cut back to Scarboro' Beach Park, was improved once the Ontario Railway Board ordered the Toronto Railway Company (in 1914) to provide regular service to Neville Park. This news encouraged the local real estate market. An advertisement in April 1914 proclaimed, "With better car service assured, values in this section will surely increase. Buy now for a good advance."<sup>20</sup>

The 1920s saw transportation improvements along Kingston Road encouraging development in the north section of Balmy Beach, which had lagged behind the south part adjoining Queen Street. The Bingham Loop opened on December 2, 1922, soon after the TTC took over service on Kingston Road between Queen Street and Victoria Park. Up to that time, the area was served by the Scarborough Radial Line to West Hill, but residents welcomed the new, more comfortable and more frequent city service.<sup>21</sup> In February 1923, the Toronto *Globe* observed "a very noticeable development of the vacant lots and a 'building in' of the property along the Kingston Road within the city limits."<sup>22</sup>

Building activity has increased to a large degree since the installation of the double trackage, and the frequent trolley services between King street and the city limits has stimulated interest in building property in the neighbourhood of Kingston road and Victoria Park avenue, the terminal of the city car.<sup>23</sup>

The newspaper went on to discuss a new subdivision on Bingham, Bracken and Victoria Park avenues, where 154 lots on St. John's Industrial School grounds, south of Kingston Road, had been placed on the real estate market in January 1923 and sold rapidly.

Several apartment buildings sprang up in Balmy Beach in the 1920s, generally two to three stories high containing six to 29 units. Most were located on Queen Street and Kingston Road, but a few were built on the Lake Front, including two east of Silver Birch Avenue.

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<sup>20</sup> "Munro Beach bargains," *Toronto Star*, 9 April 1914, 27.

<sup>21</sup> James Bow, "Venerable Bingham Loop" [<http://transit.toronto.on.ca/streetcar/4154.shtml>] (June 6, 2006).

<sup>22</sup> "Building active on Kingston Road," *Toronto Globe*, 23 February 1923, 10.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*



Figure 11. Victoria Park Pumping Station, December 17, 1936.

### *Waterfront Development*

The Depression of the 1930s saw two major City of Toronto projects along the waterfront in the Balmy Beach area. The first was the development of a waterfront park beginning around 1930 when some 211 dwellings and an unspecified number of boathouses were removed from the lakefront west of Silver Birch Avenue. In their place went a public boathouse, a refreshment booth, a lavatory building, an athletic field, and a 4,800-foot boardwalk. A crowd of 60,000 was present on Victoria Day in 1932 for the opening of the park, which, after some debate, became known as Eastern Beaches Park.

The second large project was the beginning of a water filtration plant at Victoria Park in 1932. The waterworks replaced the Toronto Board of Education's first forest school opened on part of the site in 1912, and a "boys" camp operated by the T. Eaton Co. for its male employees from 1917 to 1927 in another section. The west wing of the new waterworks was completed in 1935, but the matching east wing was not added until the mid-1950s. Nicknamed the "Palace of Purity," the plant was named in 1946 for Balmy Beach resident Roland Caldwell Harris, Toronto's Commissioner of Works from 1912 to 1945.

### *More Recent Developments*

After the completion of these major projects along the waterfront, development seemed to settle in the Beach area. In the 1960s, however this began to change as the aging housing stock, much of which had been built as summer homes, began being bought up for redevelopment.

The scale of buildings and the character of the Beach area might have been very different if it were not for the actions of local residents who rallied to defeat a scheme to build 17- and 25-storey apartment towers south of Queen Street between Lee and Leuty avenues. About 1200 people joined a ratepayers and residents association to fight the rezoning which would be necessary for the development to go ahead.

Robert Fulford dated the "discovery" of the Beach around 1970, when he began to hear people calling the area "the Beaches." That was when the area started to become fashionable, he said, and real estate prices began to climb out of the reach of those who had traditionally lived in the neighbourhood.<sup>24</sup> A group of architects, writing about the area in 1972, noted that:

This small precinct has become a very desirable and highly sought after area in which to live. ... Queen itself has a small town quality ... The Beaches, unfortunately, is under some pressure for redevelopment. It would be a pity if this occurred in a way which changed or altered its essential character.<sup>25</sup>

The previous year, the *Toronto Star* had reported that ForWard 9, "a broadbased local citizens' group" was attempting to deal with redevelopment and housing, although it had formed "as a reaction to the proposed construction of a downtown short take off and landing airport and the extension of the Gardiner Expressway through residential sections of the Ward."<sup>26</sup> A few years later the *Toronto Sun* noticed the addition of some "characterless low-rise apartments . . . adding an unwelcome feature to the quaint jumble of architectural styles that had grown out of the former cottages."<sup>27</sup>

Redevelopment pressures also threatened to change the balance of Queen Street's traditional mixture of commercial and residential uses, and led to new zoning for the section from Coxwell to the city limits in 1987. The Ontario Municipal Board approved this rezoning on January 6, 1989. In its decision, the OMB stated that it "prefers the city's evidence as supported by most area residents to maintain the character of the area and preserve the total residential community. To do otherwise would open the floodgates for redevelopment."<sup>28</sup>

Some of the contentious issues facing Beachers evaporated somewhat with the onset of the recession in 1989, which slowed the pace of redevelopment, brought real estate prices down to a more reasonable level and shifted the focus of Beach residents, in their traditional role of defenders of the area, to environmental issues such as sewage treatment, garbage incineration and water quality. However, the closure of Greenwood Raceway at the end of 1993 and the Ontario Jockey Club's decision to sell the 82-acre site rallied the community to demand a voice in the redevelopment of the property.

When the real estate market heated up again in the late 1990s, redevelopment pressures reappeared. Once again, Beach residents have rallied to protect the character of their neighbourhood.

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Fulford, "Memories of the Beach; the evolution of a village in our biggest city." *Canadian Geographic* (December 1989-January 1990): 60-66.

<sup>25</sup> Jack Klein, "The Beaches" in *Exploring Toronto*. (Toronto: Toronto Chapter of Architects in affiliation with Architecture Canada, 1972).

<sup>26</sup> Margaret Daly, "The Beaches: an old neighbourhood adopts a new strategy for growth." *Toronto Star*, 20 November 1971.

<sup>27</sup> Gregory Glover, "The Beaches: a state of mind." *Toronto Sun*, 21 April 1974.

<sup>28</sup> Sharon Hick, "OMB supports Queen rezoning." *Beach Metro News*, 7 February 1989, 1.

*The Development of Bracken Avenue*

Bracken Avenue is situated on what was once the north section of the country estate of George Monro, who bought the eastern 60.5 acres of lot 1 south of the Kingston Road in 1847. This property became known as the Painted Post Farm. Before he died in 1878, Monro had built a cottage and a barn near the Kingston Road and similar buildings by the lake. These he leased to farmers. On the former property, he planted more than 400 fruit trees and about three acres of strawberries.

In 1908, three of Monro's children, Amy G. Munro, Frances J. Neville, and Neville F. Munro, with Charles Millar, a Toronto lawyer, subdivided the Munro estate north of Queen Street between Maple (now Scarborough Road) and Victoria Park avenues. Their plan 1408 laid out Bracken Avenue as the subdivision's only east-west street, as well as Glendale (now Bingham Avenue) and Lynwood (now Kingswood Road) avenues.

Twenty-five building lots were created on Bracken Avenue. Between today's Scarborough and Kingswood roads, the lots were 55 feet wide and 100 feet deep. East of Kingswood, the lots were slightly narrower (mostly 50 feet) but those on the south side, which bordered an undeveloped ravine (called Block A on the plan) were usually 130 feet deep.

A large advertisement promoting the new subdivision appeared in the *Toronto World* on 5 September 1908:

See Munro Property Grow Between Kingston Rd. and Munro Park. The Healthiest, Highest and Cheapest Home Spots Around Toronto For Sale. Forty-five acres laid out in lots. Prices attractive to speculators and home-seekers. A down payment of twenty-five per cent only required. Lots from Nine dollars a foot up, according to location. Proper building restrictions to protect locality. Taxes at Township rate. Why pay rent when you can own your own home? Take a King or Queen Street car and see it for yourself. Maps and information at Queen Street end of property today and Monday. G. A. Case, Limited. Traders' Bank Building.<sup>29</sup>

Advertisement of Balmy Beach real estate continued throughout the 1910s. One ad in May 1912 described its attractions:

No section of the city offers such inducements to build a home as Balmy Beach – away from the city noise, dust, and smoke. Lots on restricted residential streets, nicely wooded, close to the cars and lake. Consider the [sic] and the fact that you can buy land in this choice district at prices which cannot be equaled in any other section...<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Toronto World*, 5 September 1908, 13.

<sup>30</sup> "Beach Properties see Sanagan & Co." *Toronto Star*, 25 May 1912, 17.

Lots were listed for sale on several local streets, including Bracken Avenue, at \$23 to \$35 a foot. The advertisement noted, “The above streets are all restricted to one spot to 50 feet, and are choice spots for bungalows”<sup>31</sup> Several months later, “Vacant Land for Speculator” was advertised, including “\$28 – Bracken avenue, corner lot.”<sup>32</sup>

Evidently these promotions met with some success. By 1912, C. Selden Richards, manager of the York Sand & Gravel Company, had moved his family from Scarborough to become the first residents on Bracken Avenue, living at no. 12. Gradually, over the next three decades, the rest of the lots on the street were developed.



Figure 12. Goad's Atlas 1923

<sup>31</sup> “Beach Properties see Sanagan & Co.” *Toronto Star*, 25 May 1912, 17.

<sup>32</sup> “For Beach Properties see Sanagan,” *Toronto Star*, 13 December 1912, 31.

In 1923, Goad's *Atlas of the City of Toronto and Suburbs* showed more than a dozen buildings with Bracken Avenue addresses, as well as some reconfiguration of the lots at the Kingswood Road intersection. Five buildings were on Bracken's south side, each occupying one of the original wide lots. The situation was the same on the north side between Scarborough Road and Bingham Avenue, where five buildings were shown.

A notable exception to this pattern was on the north side of Bracken east of Bingham, where seven detached brick houses were shown on the four original lots there. This different development model can be attributed to lot ownership. In 1922, the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of the Diocese of Toronto owned all seven lots on the north side of Bracken (as well as the lots on the east side of Bingham and the west side of Victoria Park avenues). They were the location of a playground for "Blantyre School."<sup>33</sup> The diocese likely had acquired the northeast block of Plan 1408 to increase the property of St. John's Training School, operated since 1895 in southwest Scarborough by the Christian Brothers for the "reform of truants, incorrigibles, and the care of orphans or neglected children."<sup>34</sup>

In February 1923, the *Toronto Globe* reported that these lots had been placed on the real estate market and now were being developed:

The Bingham avenue property, originally a part of St. John's Industrial School grounds, situated south of Victoria Park avenue [sic], although only placed on the real estate market in January, has sold rapidly. There are few of the 154 lots left unsold, and already excavations are being made for several homes on the Bingham avenue property. With a 25-foot frontage to each lot, and building restrictions running at \$3,500, this property has sold at \$50 and \$55 a foot. Most attractive is the grove of pine shading the Bingham avenue property and the Bracken avenue frontage especially appealing overlooking the lake.<sup>35</sup>

Several of the dwellings on this section of Bracken were of identical or similar design, indicating a few developers building at more or less at the same time. In May 1922, the *Globe* reported, "Activity in house sales is noted in the Bingham avenue subdivision... Charles Massey, who is building four houses, reports the sale of two seven-roomed, detached solid brick houses under construction on Bracken avenue."<sup>36</sup> The article went to note that the two houses had sold for \$7,500.

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<sup>33</sup> City of Toronto Assessment Rolls, 1922.

<sup>34</sup> Brother George Morgan FSC, "St John's Industrial School a Scarborough landmark; 1895-1957, the first 25 years." *Hark the Herald*, Christmas 1998, 6.

<sup>35</sup> "Building active on Kingston Road," *Toronto Globe*, 23 February 1923, 10.

<sup>36</sup> "Toronto real estate news...house sales in east," *Toronto Globe*, 17 May 1923, 17.

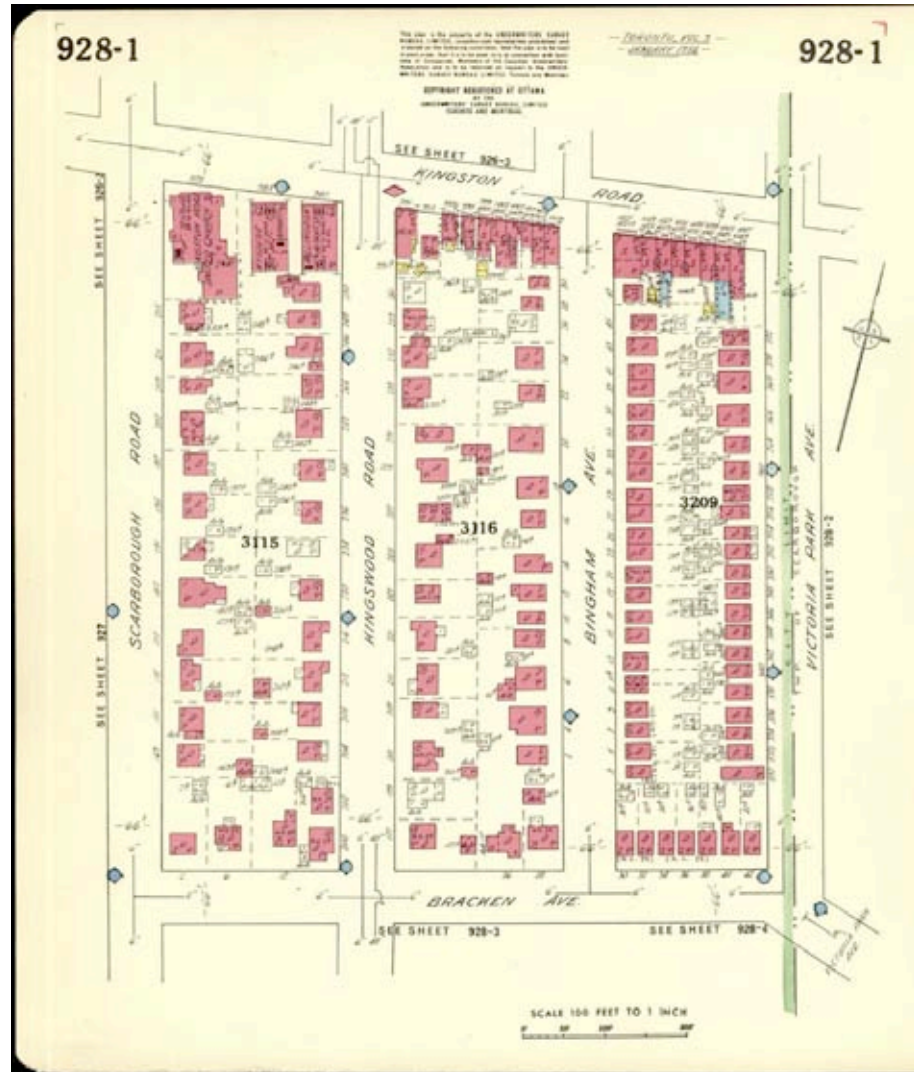


Figure 13. City of Toronto Fire Insurance Plan, 1956

In January 1956, when the next fire insurance plan was published for the area, Bracken Avenue showed 21 brick dwellings in a variety of sizes, with heights ranging from one storey to two-and-a-half storeys.

Like other streets in the neighbourhood, Bracken was developed and occupied by Toronto's middle class. Merchants, managers, travelers and engineers were among the first occupants on the homes on the street. Most were employed or owned businesses throughout the Toronto area, suggesting that by the 1920s the Balmy Beach area served as a suburb of Toronto.

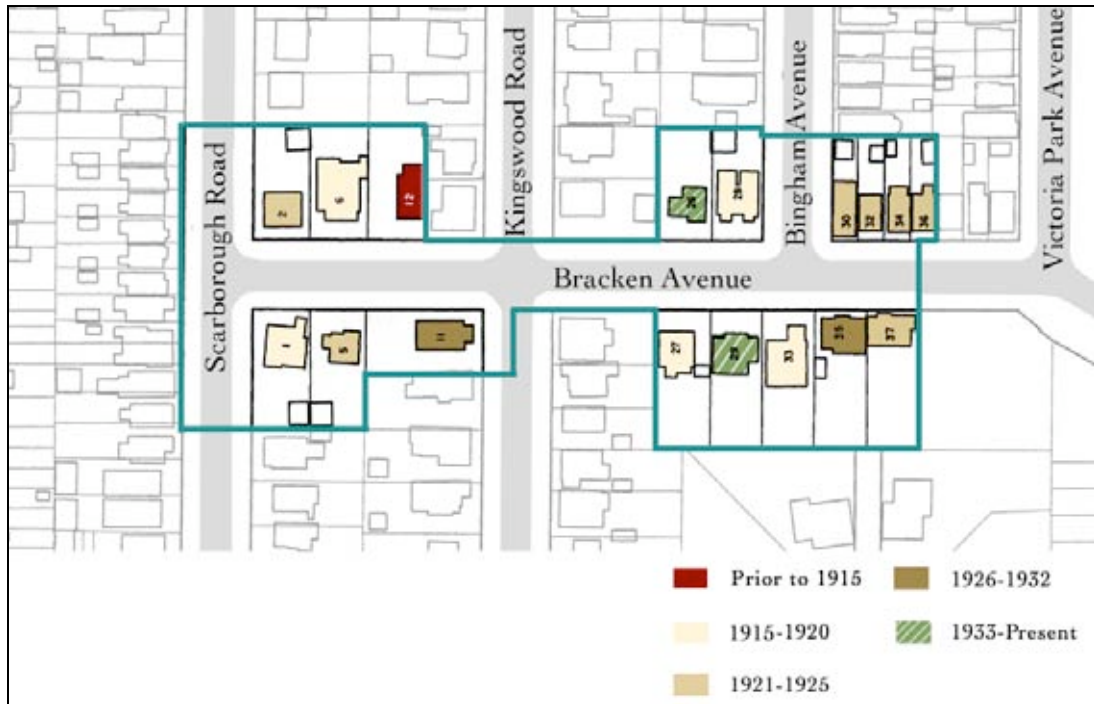


Figure 14. Periods of Development – Bracken Avenue

## 7.2 Architecture

The homes on Bracken Avenue date back in city directories and maps of the area as early as 1912, with the bulk of construction taking place between 1915 and 1930, and occupancy of all the original lots by 1941. Most lots appear to have developed in similar fashion as other streets in the area, where individual or small-scale landowners purchased and developed lots separately. This pattern contributed in a variety of vernacular architecture including Toronto variations of the craftsman bungalow, English cottage and Edwardian four-square styles. Its large lots, connections to adjoining streets and adjacency to the ravine resulted in a variety of detached homes of 1.5 to 2.5 storeys. The style and detailing of some of the earliest homes on the street suggest a real element of prestige, while the later bungalow designs, suggest more modest intentions and relate strongly to the street's position in the surrounding street grid.

Recent developments along the street have been less characteristic of the street's original development trends. The additions of second and third storeys have altered the massing of original homes. In some cases these new developments can be seen to interrupt the established rhythm and scale of the streetscape, often imposing over adjacent dwellings.

*Edwardian Classicism*

The number of the houses on the street can be identified as having distinct features of Edwardian Classicism with simple, balanced (if not symmetrical) designs, and many windows. This practical house type, often constructed of brick, displays robust but simple wood detailing. These homes present a degree of formality in contrast to the more casual bungalow styles on the street, but relate well through modest 2.5 storey massing, shared setbacks and rustic detailing.



Figure 14. 12 Bracken Avenue

*Beach Bungalows*

Bungalow refers to a style of house popularized in the United States before WWI and consists of low cottage-like houses of 1 to 1.5 storeys. A good number of the homes along Bracken Avenue exhibit low-pitched roofs, wide verandas and varied building materials, which are characteristic of Toronto versions of this style. This design's modest proportions and rustic textures, is common in the area and relates strongly to the Beach's seasonal past.



Figure 15. 5 Bracken Avenue



Figure 16. 34 Bracken Avenue

*English Cottage*

A good number of the homes along Bracken Avenue exhibit asymmetrical gables, shed roof dormers, irregular and multi-paned windows, and textured materials. Often, more generally classified as Period Revival, the characteristics of these homes contribute to a picturesque sensibility reminiscent of English Tudor designs.



Figure 18. 11 Bracken Avenue



Figure 19. 27 Bracken Avenue



Figure 20. Looking south from next to 37 Bracken Avenue

### 7.3 Streetscape and Open Space

Serving as a neighbourhood cross-street, Bracken Avenue exhibits characteristics of each of its adjoining streetscapes, while maintaining a distinct streetscape character of its own. In balancing 25 and 50-foot wide lots and a variety of 1.5-2.5 storey designs, Bracken acts as a zone of transition. Shared setbacks and vernacular massing along the street balance variations in both design and lot size, while creating a dialogue with the built character of adjoining streets.

As it is with most streets in the Munro block, development along Bracken assumed the presence of the automobile and, for the most part, provided for vehicles with side driveways and rear garages. As a result, this area has maintained an open relationship between the road and the front elevations of each dwelling that is no longer present in modern residential areas.

Bracken Avenue is unique in the neighbourhood for its orientation to the lake and relationship to the Neville Park ravine. It offers the only lots in the old Munro estate where the front-back relationship of the dwellings to the street is perpendicular to views of the lake. Complemented by the comfortable spacing of the built form, generous front lawns and a mature tree canopy maintain a relatively strong relationship with the area's rural past.

## 7.4 Heritage Evaluation

The architectural styles of Bracken Avenue are part of a chronology of the development of the Balmy Beach neighbourhood. As a whole, the vernacular designs, lot frontages and materials of these dwellings establish a handsome streetscape that represents the historical development patterns of Balmy Beach and the natural environment.

As part of a Heritage Conservation District, all buildings are recognized under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. In this District Plan each building in the study area has been categorized to help clarify which buildings contribute to the heritage character of Bingham Avenue and guide the nature of future change in the area.

Using the Ministry of Culture's Criteria for Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest a team of heritage professionals was consulted in order to determine the contributing quality of each property in the District. These evaluations are based on available documentation and existing architectural conditions. As the District character continues to evolve these evaluations should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that an accurate representation of their contributing qualities is maintained.

The Ministry of Culture's Criteria for Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest identifies the following criteria for evaluation:

### *Design or Physical Value*

The property:

- Demonstrates a rare, unique, representative or an early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method; or
- Displays a high degree of artistic merit or craftsmanship; or
- Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement; or
- Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of a particular builder, designer or theorist.

### *Historical or Associative Value*

- Has strong associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that has made a significant or unique contribution to a community; or
- Yields information that contributes to an understanding of a culture or community.

### *Contextual Value*

- Is particularly important in establishing the character of an area; or
- Provides a physical, historical, functional, visual lineage to its surroundings; or
- Creates a symbolic, aesthetic or visual landmark.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ontario Regulations 10/06, issued January 25, 2006.

The properties that meet one or more of the identified criteria have been categorized as ‘**Contributing**’. These properties are understood as having historical, cultural or architectural significance to the defined District. Conversely, those properties that fail to meet any one of the above criteria have been categorized as ‘**Non-contributing**’.

The majority of properties along Bracken Avenue are recognized for their contextual value in establishing a ‘visual lineage’. This aesthetic relates strongly to architectural attributes such as the proportions of porches, window openings and height, as well as the integrity of construction materials, palette and detail. A number of houses along Bracken Avenue have been altered and have been evaluated based on the reversibility of these changes and their representation of the street’s existing architectural character. As well, new developments have been evaluated on their ability to relate to the existing heritage features of the street.



Figure 19. Heritage Evaluation – Bracken Avenue

## 8. District Guidelines

The following guidelines are designed for managing property alteration and development of the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District – Bracken Avenue with a view to protecting and enhancing those elements that contribute to cultural heritage value of the District.

These guidelines are not intended as strict regulations but are to provide assistance in the design and decision-making process. All alterations visible from the street, demolition and new development within the District will require prior approval of City of Toronto Heritage Preservation Services, and in some cases Council, unless exempted under the terms of the delegation By-law 1005-2001 (see Section 9.1), in addition to other existing building and planning approvals. Assistance in interpreting these principles will be available from staff of Heritage Preservation Services.

As part of the study process all existing planning controls and policies of the study area have been reviewed for compliance with the following guidelines. It is recommended that the height limit and minimum lot frontages in the zoning by-law be reviewed and amended to more closely match the guidelines in this District Plan.

### 8.1 Definitions

The italicized terms included in these guidelines have the following meanings:

*Contributing Buildings:* Properties that contribute to the character of the District and/or are historically, architecturally or culturally significant as identified in the Heritage Evaluation or determined by further evaluation

*Non-Contributing Buildings:* Properties that do not contribute to the character of the District and/or are not historically, architecturally or culturally significant as identified in the Heritage Evaluation or determined by further evaluation

*District:* The Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District – Bracken Avenue, as identified in Figure 2.

*Heritage Character:* As defined by the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value in this Plan

## 8.2 Additions and Alterations to Contributing Buildings

Most construction in the *District* will occur as alterations and additions to existing buildings. It is the intent of these guidelines to encourage the preservation of existing *contributing buildings*, to aid sensitive and contextual design for new work and to strengthen and support the *heritage character* of the *District*.

**Principles and guidelines do not apply to alterations and additions that do not have significant visual impact when viewed from the street.**

- 8.2.1. Alterations and additions to buildings should maintain or enhance rather than detract from the existing architectural style and character of the building and those surrounding it.
- 8.2.2. Reasonable effort should be taken to repair rather than replace significant architectural elements.
- 8.2.3. Using contributing buildings in the *District* and the building concerned as a guide, alterations and additions should be consistent with their size, scale and proportion and level of detail.
- 8.2.4. No alteration or addition should visually overwhelm the building in question or neighbouring buildings.
- 8.2.5. Alterations and additions should maximize the use of materials that predominate in the building concerned or in buildings of similar architectural style in the *District*.
- 8.2.6. Existing wall to window ratio and proportion should not be materially altered.
- 8.2.7. Windows, doors and details should relate in scale and proportion to those of the existing building.
- 8.2.8. Height of an addition should not exceed the height of the ridge of an existing sloping roof or the height of the existing roof or parapet.
- 8.2.9. Integral garages (that are below grade or in front of the main wall of the house) are not permitted.

### 8.3 Alterations/Additions to Non-Contributing Buildings

- 8.3.1. Alterations and additions to *non-contributing buildings* should contribute to and not detract from the *heritage character* of the *District*.
- 8.3.2. Alterations and additions to *non-contributing buildings* should be designed to be compatible with the contributing buildings of the *District*, in terms of scale, massing height, setback, entry level, materials and windows.
- 8.3.3 The roof profile and the location of the eaves lines or the roof parapet should be designed so that the apparent height of the building is compatible with that of its neighbours and is not visually overwhelming to neighbouring buildings.

### 8.3 Demolition

The guidelines in this section are to be applied to all buildings in the *District*.

- 8.4.1 *Contributing buildings* should not be demolished.
- 8.4.2. Demolition of a non-contributing building will generally be permissible if the replacement building, as shown in the building permit application, contributes to the *heritage character* of the *District* and is acceptable under these guidelines and the zoning by-law.

### 8.5 New Buildings

- 8.5.1 New buildings should contribute to and not detract from the *heritage character* of the *District*.
- 8.5.2 New buildings should be designed to be compatible with the *District's contributing buildings* in terms of scale, massing height, lot coverage, setback, entry level, materials, and windows.
- 8.5.3 The roof profile and the location of the eaves lines or the roof parapet should be designed so that the apparent height and form of the roof is compatible with that of the streetscape.
- 8.5.4 Integral garages (that are below grade or in front of the main wall of the house) are not permitted.
- 8.5.5 The ground floor elevations of new construction should be designed so its height above grade is compatible with that of the streetscape.

## **8.6 Lot Frontages**

- 8.6.1 Existing lot frontages should not be subdivided.
- 8.6.2 Sideyard setbacks contribute to the established rhythm of the streetscape and should be protected.
- 8.6.3 Balanced setbacks and green frontages should be maintained in order to protect the open space character of the *District*.

## **8.7 Landscape and Streetscape**

The following landscape and streetscape guidelines are intended to guide future upgrading and enhancements that residents may wish to undertake as they maintain or redevelop their properties over the short and long term. These guidelines are not mandatory but are intended to set direction for public and private improvements to achieve consistency within the heritage district.

- 8.7.1 The preservation of existing landscapes, trees and mature vegetation, in both the public and private realm, is encouraged.
- 8.7.2 The open space character of the *District* should be maintained through balanced setbacks and green frontages.
- 8.7.3 The planting of species characteristic to the *District* is encouraged, especially when replacing dying specimens.
- 8.7.4 Protect existing street trees from damage due to site development, redevelopment and paving modifications, street and infrastructure works.
- 8.7.5 Views created by the canopy of mature street trees and sidewalks are essential to the character of the neighbourhood and should be protected.
- 8.7.6 An open view from the sidewalk to the building face contributes to the *District's* historical streetscape and should be maintained.
- 8.7.7 Sensitive and timely replacement of dead or dying street trees by the City of Toronto Urban Forestry staff and property owners is strongly encouraged.

### **8.8 Adjacent Properties**

Developments and alterations to properties adjacent to the defined *District* should be evaluated for their impact of the *heritage character* of the adjacent *District* under provision 2.6.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005.

## **9. Implementation**

In designating the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District – Bracken Avenue, City Council takes the following actions:

- The Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District – Bracken Avenue, with boundaries as illustrated in this Plan, is recognized as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- All individual properties within the District are added to the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties as part of the District under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.
- The District Plan is adopted by by-law to guide all development and demolition in the District.

Section 42 of the Ontario Heritage Act states that, no property owner in the Heritage Conservation District shall alter any part of the property, erect, demolish or remove any building or structure on the property, other than the interior of any structure without a permit.

## 9.1 Minor Alterations

Part V, Section 42(1) 1., of the Ontario Heritage Act specifies that permits are required for the alteration of any part of the property, **other than the interior of any structure or building** within a heritage conservation district. Therefore, under the Act and according to the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District Plan - Bracken Avenue, **no heritage permit is required for interior alterations.**

The City of Toronto has adopted a streamlined process for the issuance of permits in Heritage Conservation Districts through delegation **By-law No. 1005-2001** which outlines those circumstances in which exterior alterations maybe deemed minor in nature and no permit is required. Under By-law No. 1005-2001 Toronto City Council has provided that a permit be deemed to have been issued for certain alterations to the external portions of a building or structure. Therefore, no heritage permit is required for:

- **An alteration that is not visible from the street,**
- Exterior painting of wood, stucco or metal finishes,
- Repair, using the same materials, of existing exterior features, including roofs, wall cladding, dormers, cresting, cupolas, cornices, brackets, columns, balustrades, porches and steps, entrances windows, foundations and decorative wood, metal, stone or terra cotta,
- Installations of eavestroughs,
- Weatherproofing, including installations of removable storm windows and doors, caulking and weatherstripping, and
- Installations of exterior lights.

Although a permit is not required in the above instances, property owners and residents are encouraged to conform to the spirit and intent of the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value for the Balmy Beach Heritage Conservation District - Bracken Avenue.

## 9.2 Heritage Permits Issued by City Staff

In Heritage Conservation Districts, City Council has authorized City staff to issue Heritage Permits on behalf of Council when the work is compatible with the guidelines of the Heritage Conservation District Plan. The proposed work can involve construction of a building or structure or alteration to the exterior of a building or structure, excluding those matters set out in Section 9.1 of this Plan.

Permit applicants are encouraged to meet with City staff in the Heritage Preservation Services section of the Planning Division regarding proposed work. These meetings will help City staff to understand the proposal and assist applicants in meeting the guidelines.

For any work requiring the issuance of a building permit, the building permit, once approved by Heritage Preservation Services staff, is deemed to be the Heritage Permit; no additional permit will be required.

Should an alteration not require a building permit but relate to a matter not exempt from the requirement of a heritage permit as described in Section 9.1 of this Plan, City staff may issue a separate heritage permit. These Heritage Permits are for alterations visible from the street and include, but are not limited to, such matters as:

- new aerials, antennas and skylights;
- new vents on the roof or from the basement;
- exterior air conditioning units;
- masonry cleaning or painting;
- any change in existing architectural features, such as windows.

In delegating authority to staff, City Council may decide that it, rather than staff, will make a decision on any permit application. At any time prior to the issuance of a Heritage Permit, City Council, at the request of the Ward Councillor, may consider a Heritage Permit application.

### **9.3 Heritage Permits Issued by City Council**

When a heritage permit application does not, in view of City staff, comply with the District guidelines or when it involves the demolition of a structure in the Heritage Conservation District, City Council will decide on the application. In making its decision, Council will be provided with the advice of City staff and information provided by the applicant.

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## 11. Acknowledgements

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