

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: 480 YONGE STREET ATTACHMENT NO. 3 (REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)

The property at 480 Yonge Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual values. The property was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now the Heritage Register) in 1974. City Council authorized the Historic Yonge Heritage Conservation District Study Area in 2012, including the property at 480 Yonge Street.

### Description

Located on the west side of Yonge Street between Grenville and Grosvenor Streets, the property at 480 Yonge Street contains a three storey commercial building. Archival records indicate that the structure originated as a combined commercial and residential building that was completed in 1864 by contractor John Bailey and first occupied as the business and residence of William Taylor, a grain and feed merchant. After the Blue Posts Hotel operated on-site in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the property was acquired in the early 1900s by John Britnell, a member of the famed book retailing family as the location of his book store and art gallery. Beginning in 1912, when the Bank of Montreal leased the property as its Carlton Street Branch and engaged Toronto architects Darling and Pearson to design an addition, the third storey and classical detailing were added. Motor cycle dealers Ross Cycles were among the retailers at 480 Yonge during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The property at 480 Yonge Street has cultural heritage value as an important surviving commercial building that recalls the evolution of this section of Yonge Street, north of College Street where the first generation of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century mixed commercial and residential buildings were modified with taller more decorative structures that signified their prominence on Toronto's "Main Street". The commercial building at 480 Yonge is set apart by its height in the block, exuberant classical detailing and prominent setting on the property beside the iconic clock tower of the former fire hall at 484 Yonge Street.

The associative value of the building at 480 Yonge Street is linked to its role in the historical development of Yonge Street as it evolved in the mid to the late 1800s from a local shopping destination for the adjoining residential neighbourhoods to its rebranding as Toronto's "Main Street" after Robert Simpson and Timothy Eaton opened landmark department stores further south. The building at 480 Yonge Street contributes to the Yonge Street story from its mid 19<sup>th</sup> century origins as a small-scale shop and residence and afterward a local hotel, to its acquisition in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as John Britnell's book store and the updates made for the Bank of Montreal's Carlton Street branch.

The property at 480 Yonge is historically associated with the notable Toronto architectural practice of Darling and Pearson. While the Canadian Bank of Commerce's Toronto headquarters (completed in 1931 and now Commerce Court North) was among Darling and Pearson's best-known commissions, during the opening decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the firm designed innumerable bank branches across Canada, including the updates for the Carlton Street Branch at 480 Yonge.

Contextually, the commercial building at 480 Yonge Street is valued for its contribution to the character of Yonge Street, north of College Street, which is typified by the surviving buildings that began and supported its transition in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as Toronto's main commercial corridor. It stands as one of the earliest remaining buildings in the section of Yonge north of College Street where the Oddfellows' Hall (1892) at 450 Yonge, the Bank of Montreal Building (1887) at 496 Yonge and the Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Stores (1883) at 664-680 Yonge are among the other surviving commercial blocks recognized on the City's Heritage Register.

The contextual value of the commercial building at 480 Yonge Street is also related to its historical and visual links to its surroundings on the west side of Yonge Street between Grenville and Grosvenor Streets where, with its height and decorative detailing it stands as a prominent local feature on the property beside the landmark clock tower of the former Yonge Street Fire Hall.

#### Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the commercial building on the property at 480 Yonge Street are:

- The placement, setback and orientation of the building on the west side of Yonge Street between Grenville and Grosvenor Streets
- The scale, form and massing of the three-storey building with the rectangular-shaped plan under the flat roofline
- The materials, with the brick cladding (which has been concealed with stucco) and the brick and stone detailing
- The principal (east) elevation, which is organized into three bays above the storefronts on the ground (first) floor (the storefronts have been altered)
- The window openings on the east elevation, with the trios of window openings set in the upper stories in surrounds with eared mouldings, including the round-arched openings with keystones in the second storey and the flat-headed window openings in the third floor
- The detailing on the east elevation, with the cornices above the first, second and third floors, the quoins on the outer edges of the wall, and the brackets, corbelled brickwork and pediment along the roofline