

Patrick J. Harrington  
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January 16, 2017

File No. 121262

VIA EMAIL

**Toronto and East York Community Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Attn: Ellen Devlin, Secretariat Contact  
E-mail: teycc@toronto.ca

Dear Ms. Devlin:

**Re: TE21.19 - Application to Consider - Appeal by Oberon Development Corporation of the Chief Building Official's Decision to Refuse One Variance With Respect to One Proposed First Party Wall Sign at 615-617 Yonge Street (Ward 27)**

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I am counsel to Oberon Development Corporation, the applicant in the above-noted matter. I will be appearing before Toronto East York Community Council on January 17, 2017 on behalf of my client to speak to the merits of the application as approved by the Sign Variance Committee.

In making my presentation, I will rely upon the staff report (dated December 16, 2016) and the attachments thereto, which include my client's original application materials and the decision of the Sign Variance Committee dated September 27, 2016.

I will also be relying upon the re-submission material my client filed with the City in April 2016. A copy of the re-submission material (in the form of a memorandum from ERA Architects with attachments) is provided herein. I will bring hard copies for each member of Community Council.

Finally, I intend to use a photographic slide show during my remarks to Community Council. A copy of the slide show (in PDF format) is provided herein. Again, I will bring hard copies for each member of Community Council.

Please note that I have an item before Etobicoke York Community Council on the same day. I anticipate that my Etobicoke York matter will be heard and determined during Community Council's morning session, which will allow me to attend at Toronto East York Community Council for Item TE21.19, which I note has been earmarked for 1:30pm. If I am delayed for any reason, I will endeavor to inform staff so that the matter may be stood down if necessary.

January 16, 2017  
Page 2

Please advise if you require anything further from my office. Please also advise if you have any difficulty with the attachments.

Yours truly,

AIRD & BERLIS LLP

***Original signed by P.J. Harrington***

Patrick J. Harrington

PJH/np

Encl.

cc. Client  
ERA Architects  
Robert Bader, Supervisor, Sign By-law Unit  
Ted Van Vliet, Manager, Sign By-law Unit

28232752.1





ERA Architects Inc.  
10 St. Mary Street, Suite 801  
Toronto, Canada  
M4Y 1P9

**Attn: Brody Paul**

Sign By-law Unit, City of Toronto  
City Hall, Ground Floor, East Tower  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto ON, M5H 2N2

April 20, 2016

Dear Brody:

**Re: 615-617 Yonge Street Signage, file no. 15-256782**

We have prepared the revised proposal for signage at 615-617 Yonge Street on behalf of Oberon Development Corporation (Oberon). We understand that staff is concerned that the size and location of the proposed signage is not compatible and will have negative visual impacts on both the property and surrounding area.

The building was listed on the Heritage Register in 2013 and is designated under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act as a contributing building within the Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District.

The revised proposal is for a **substantially smaller, subtler** sign, to be painted on the building with mineral based paint. Mineral based paints, though not reversible, are relatively low-impact and commonly used on heritage buildings. They were commonly used during the period of significance described in the Historic Yonge Street HCD.

The revised proposal also includes a significant **conservation scope**. In order to accommodate new signage, Oberon will remove the existing peeling paint from the sidewall of the heritage building, then gently clean and re-point the masonry as necessary.

We have included a brief checklist to demonstrate that we have appropriately considered Section 5.15 of the **Historic Yonge Street HCD** regarding signage. We feel that the heritage character of Yonge Street — one of the Toronto's most vibrant commercial corridors — is dependent on

its dynamic and varied signage. As we demonstrated in our original application, which included a photobook of signage typologies along Yonge Street, signage has historically been located on both the primary façades and sidewalls of buildings throughout this district.

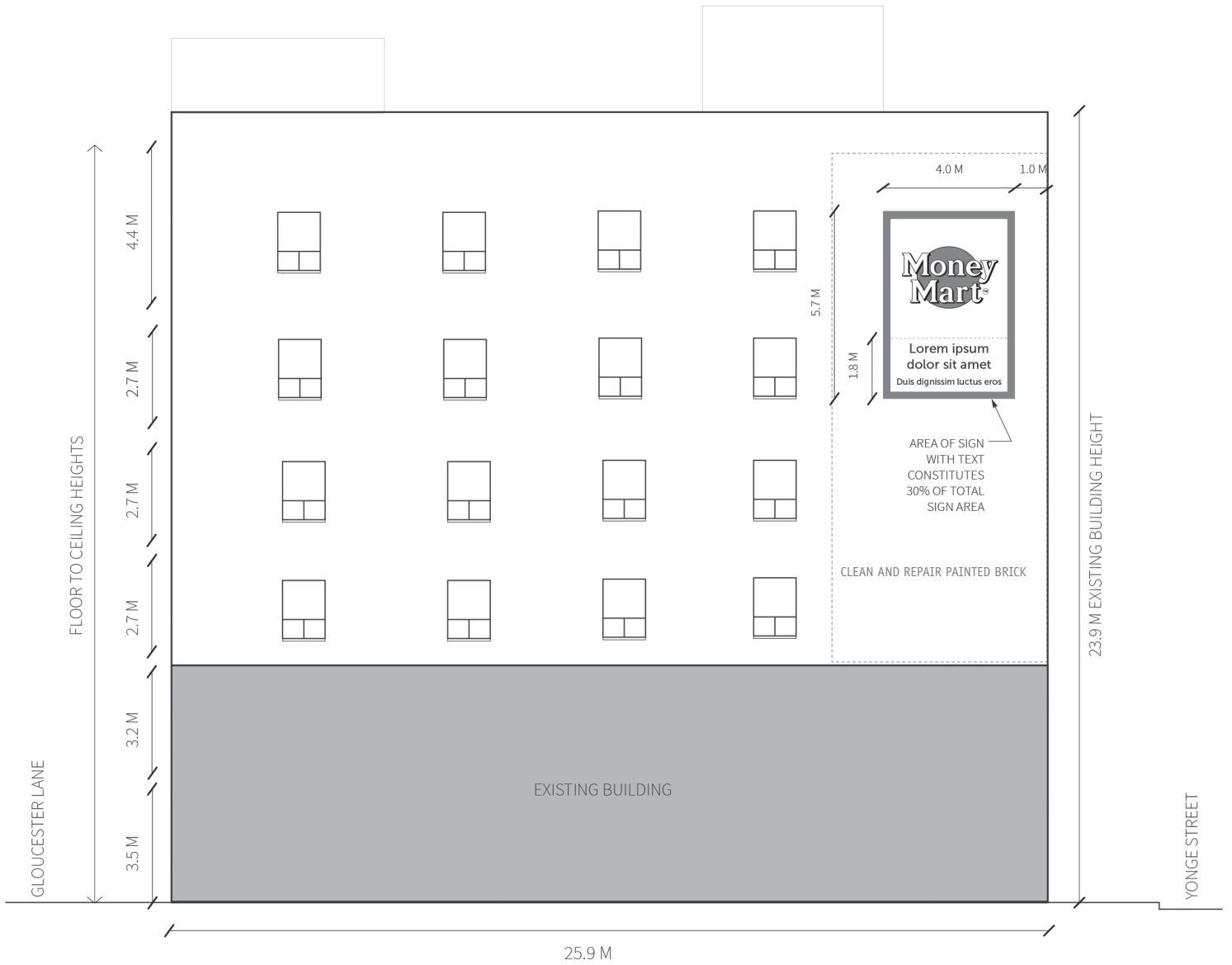
We have designed this sign with reference to **historic precedent, substantiated by photographs and documentary evidence**. There has been signage in this particular view corridor since before this building was constructed in 1915. Tenants of this building had a first-party painted sign on the sidewall during the period of significance (see photos attached) until at least the 1970s. Third party signs existed in this location thereafter.

We therefore feel that signage on the sidewall of this building is appropriate, from a heritage perspective, and sensitive to the building's heritage attributes and the character of the area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a vertical line with several loops and horizontal strokes, identifying Philip Evans.

Philip Evans OAA RAIC CAHP  
Principal, ERA Architects



615 - 617 YONGE ST  
TORONTO, ONTARIO

SIGNAGE DIAGRAM

**E R A**

E.R.A. Architects Inc., 10 St. Mary St, Suite 801, Toronto, Canada, M4Y 1P9  
T: (416) 963-4497 F: (416) 963-8761 info@eraarch.ca www.eraarch.ca



## Compliance with the Historic Yonge Street Heritage Conservation District

### Section 5.15

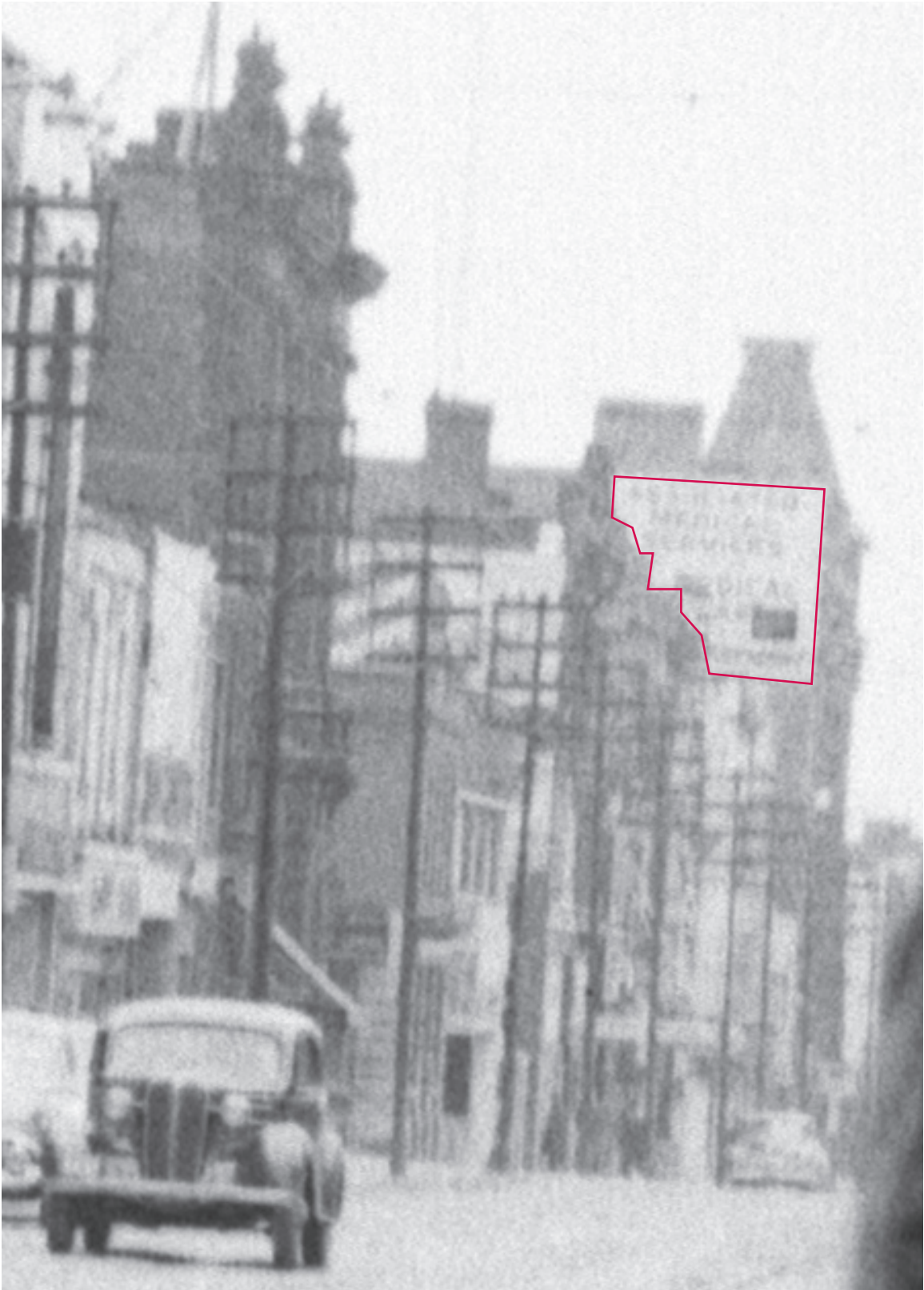
This section provides direction on incorporating commercial signage to conserve and not detract from the heritage attributes and cultural heritage value of HYHCD. Applications for new commercial signage will be reviewed in accordance with the City of Toronto's Sign By-law.

Commercial activity has been an element of daily life in HYHCD throughout its history. Signage advertising the services and commodities of businesses contributes a dynamic and varied quality to HYHCD's appearance. When preparing a design for new signage within HYHCD, property owners should first consider opportunities to reintroduce a historic signage configuration to a contributing property. This work should be informed by documentary evidence of a building's historic condition. (OUR EMPHASIS).

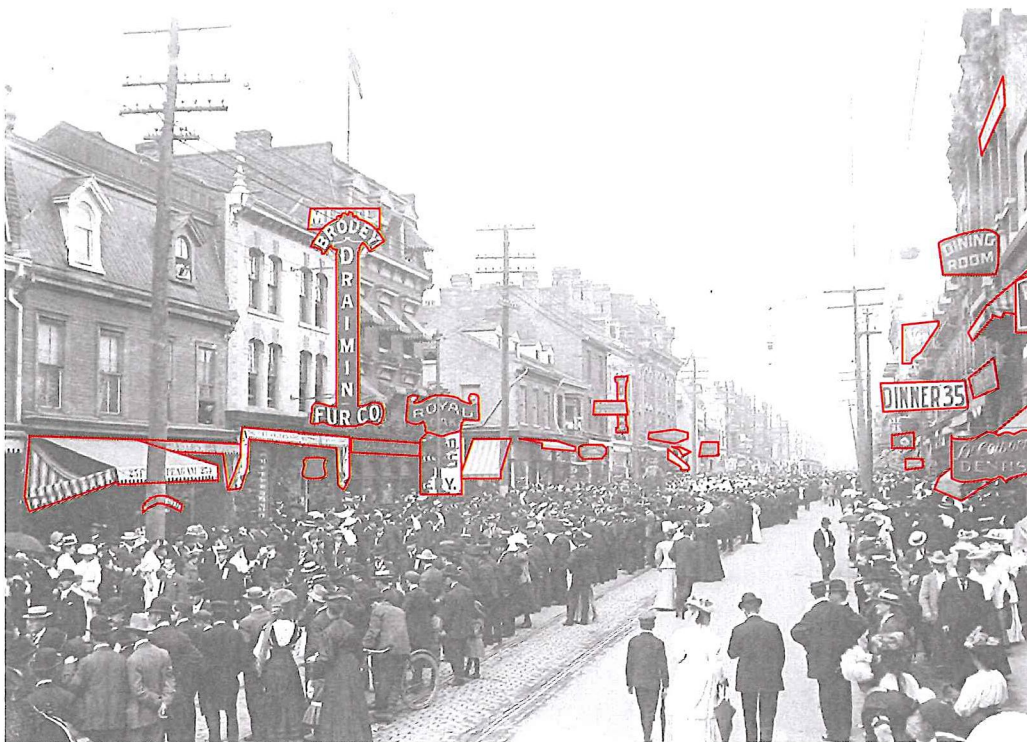
HISTORIC YONGE STREET HCD SECTION	CONSIDERED?	EVALUATION
5.15.1 Design signage for contributing properties to be physically and visually compatible with the heritage attributes and cultural heritage value of the HYHCD including the scale and rhythm of building frontages.	Yes	The proposal appropriately addresses and balances all subsections. While the signage is not limited to the first floor, its location is based on historical precedent and documentary evidence (see attached photos).
Locate and design signage so that it does not detract from or obscure the heritage attributes of a contributing property, including features of exterior walls, roofs, windows, storefronts, and the scale and rhythm of building frontages.	Yes.	The proposed sign is in a location that does not interfere with any of the building's heritage attributes (as described in the HCD); nor does it detract from the heritage character of the HCD, which acknowledges that "[s]ignage advertising the services and commodities of businesses contributes a dynamic and varied quality to HYHCD's appearance."
Signage must not cover windows.	Yes.	The proposed sign does not cover windows.
Signage should be limited to the first floor façade and should not extend to upper floors.	Yes.	The revised proposal has been lowered from its original location. Signage located any lower on the sidewall of the building would not be visible from the street. Furthermore, per Section 5.15.1, there is historical precedent for and documentary evidence of this configuration (see attached photos).
Consider using historical precedents to inform the design of new signage on contributing properties.	Yes.	Historical precedents dating to the period of significance suggest that new signage should be located on the upper portion of the north-facing sidewall, precisely where the proposed sign is located.
5.15.2 Design and mount signage so that its removal will not negatively impact the integrity of exterior walls, including material cladding of contributing properties.	Yes.	Integrity (as defined in the HCD and Official Plan) of exterior walls will not be impacted by a painted sign. Mineral based paints, though not reversible, are relatively low-impact and commonly used on heritage buildings. They were commonly used during the period of significance described in the Historic Yonge Street HCD.
If signage is being mounted directly on a building, make attachments through mortar joints and not masonry units, using non-corrosive fasteners.	N/A.	
5.15.3 The following signage types may be permitted on the first floor of contributing properties:	N/A.	
5.15.4 The following signage types will not be permitted on contributing properties:	N/A.	
5.15.5 Conserve painted signs on the sidewalls of contributing properties that date from the period of significance.	N/A.	This provision does not apply; however we note that there appear to be remnants of an historic painted sidewall sign covered by contemporary paint on this building.



View from corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets, with sign in red c. 1953 (City of Toronto Archives).



Detail of sidewall with sign for building tenant "Associated Medical Services Inc." in red c. 1953 (City of Toronto Archives).



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1568, f1568\_it0314

Figure 1: Example of early signage context of Yonge Street, near Shuter Street (Toronto Archives, annotated by ERA).

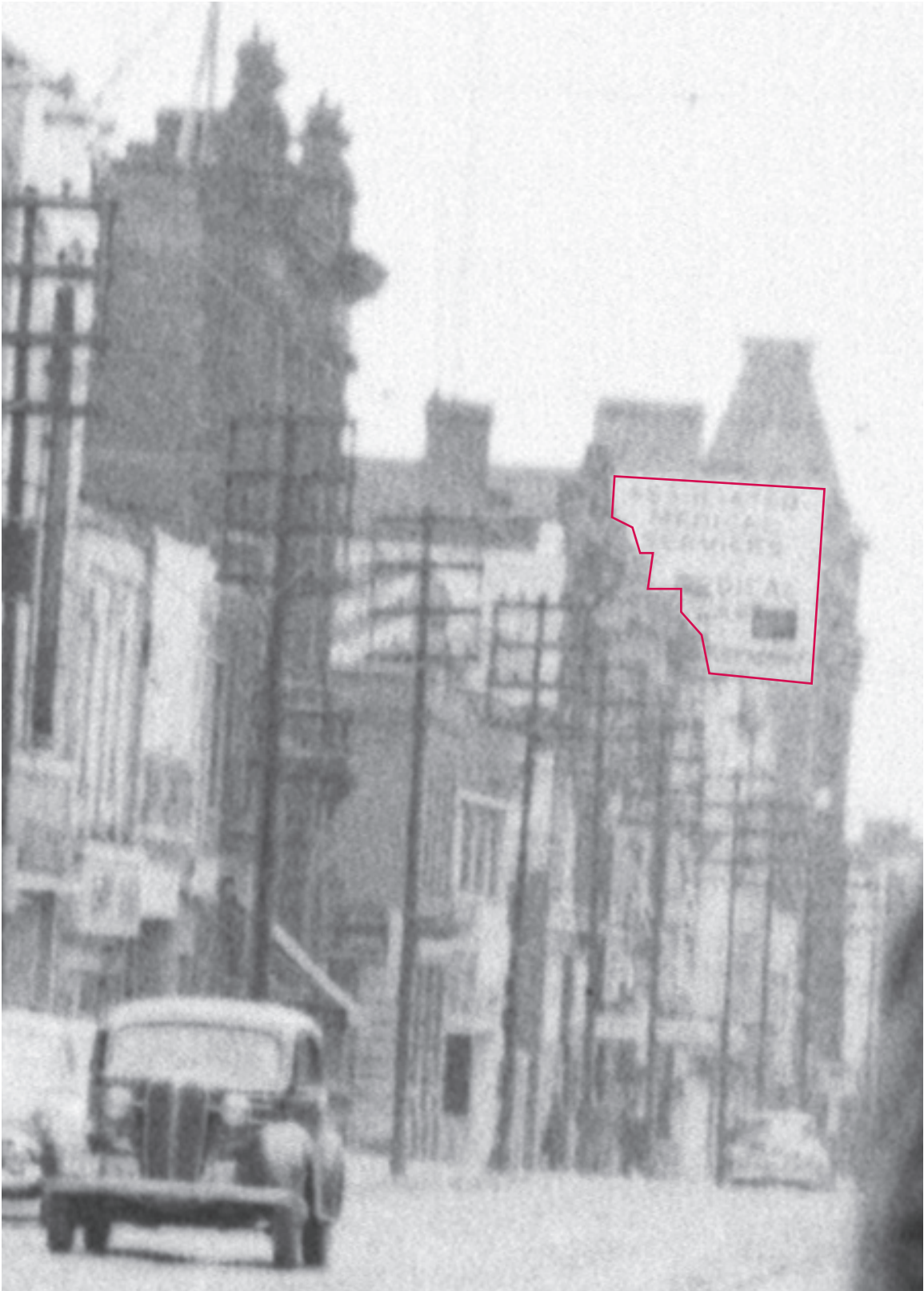
615-617 Yonge St.



Figure 4: 615-617 Yonge in 1924, showing the north elevation (Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231 Item 2021).



View from corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets, with sign in red c. 1953 (City of Toronto Archives).



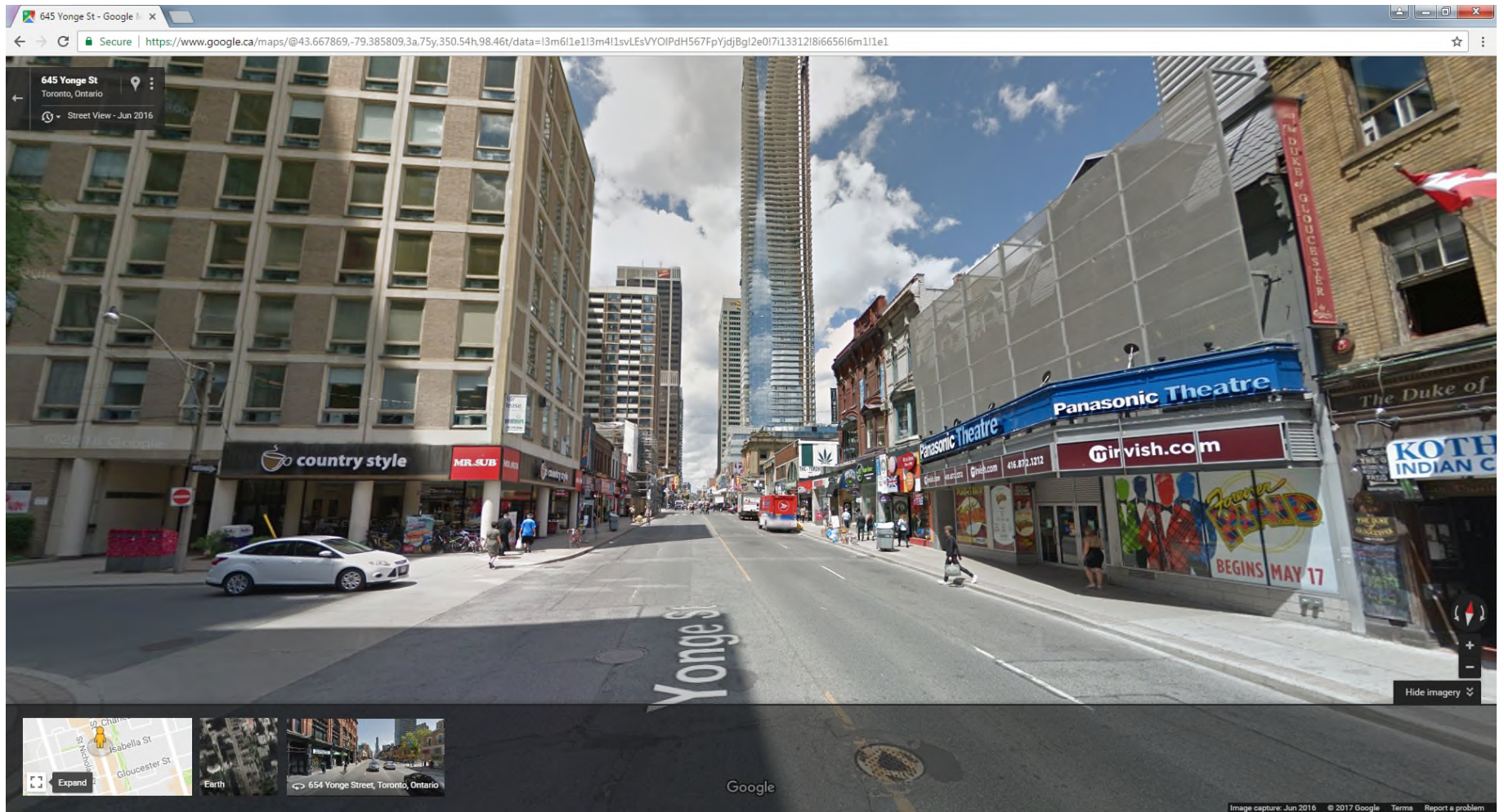
Detail of sidewall with sign for building tenant "Associated Medical Services Inc." in red c. 1953 (City of Toronto Archives).



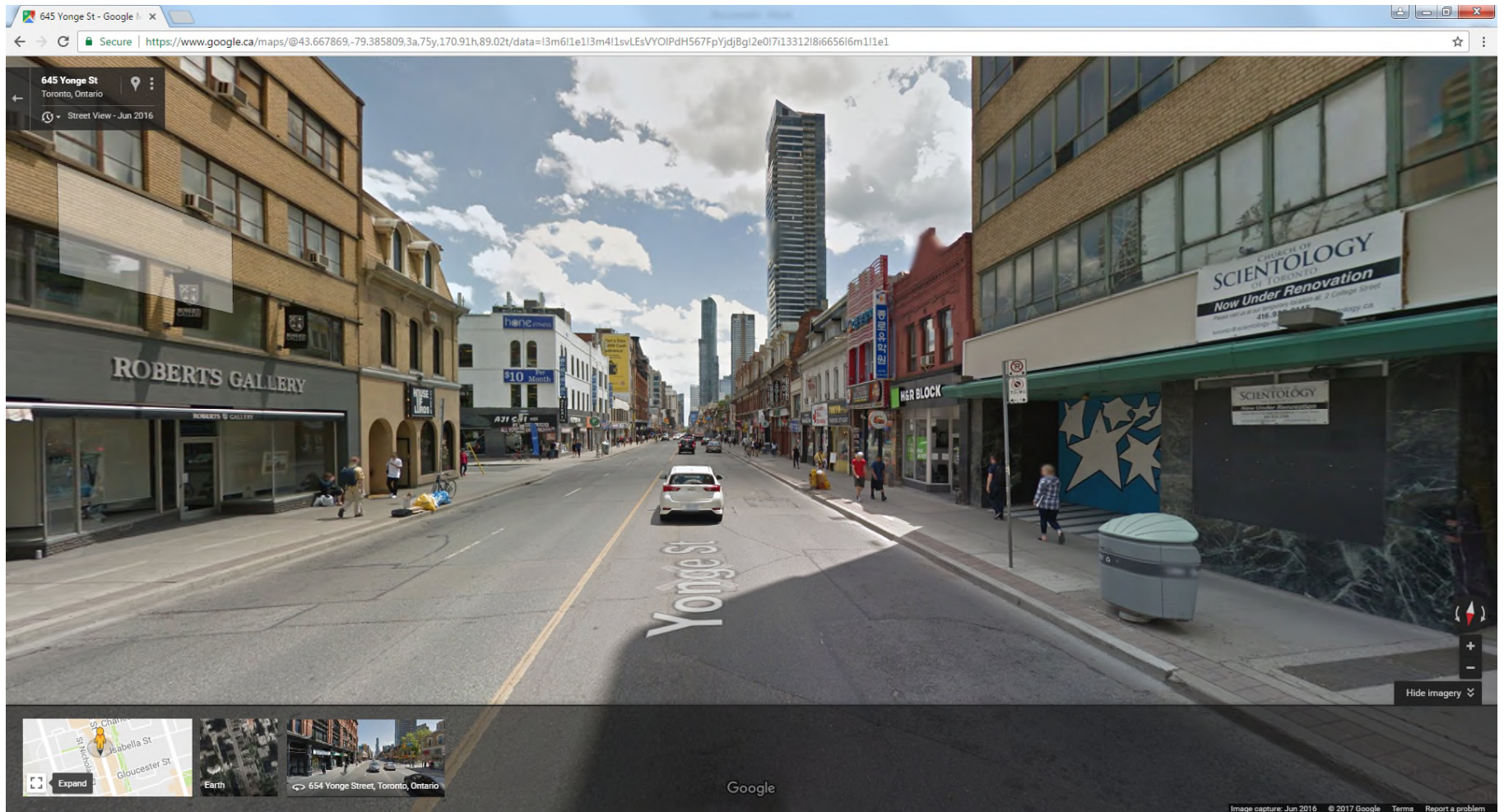
Figure 7: Third party sidewall painted mural signage on 615-617 Yonge Street (1987-89).



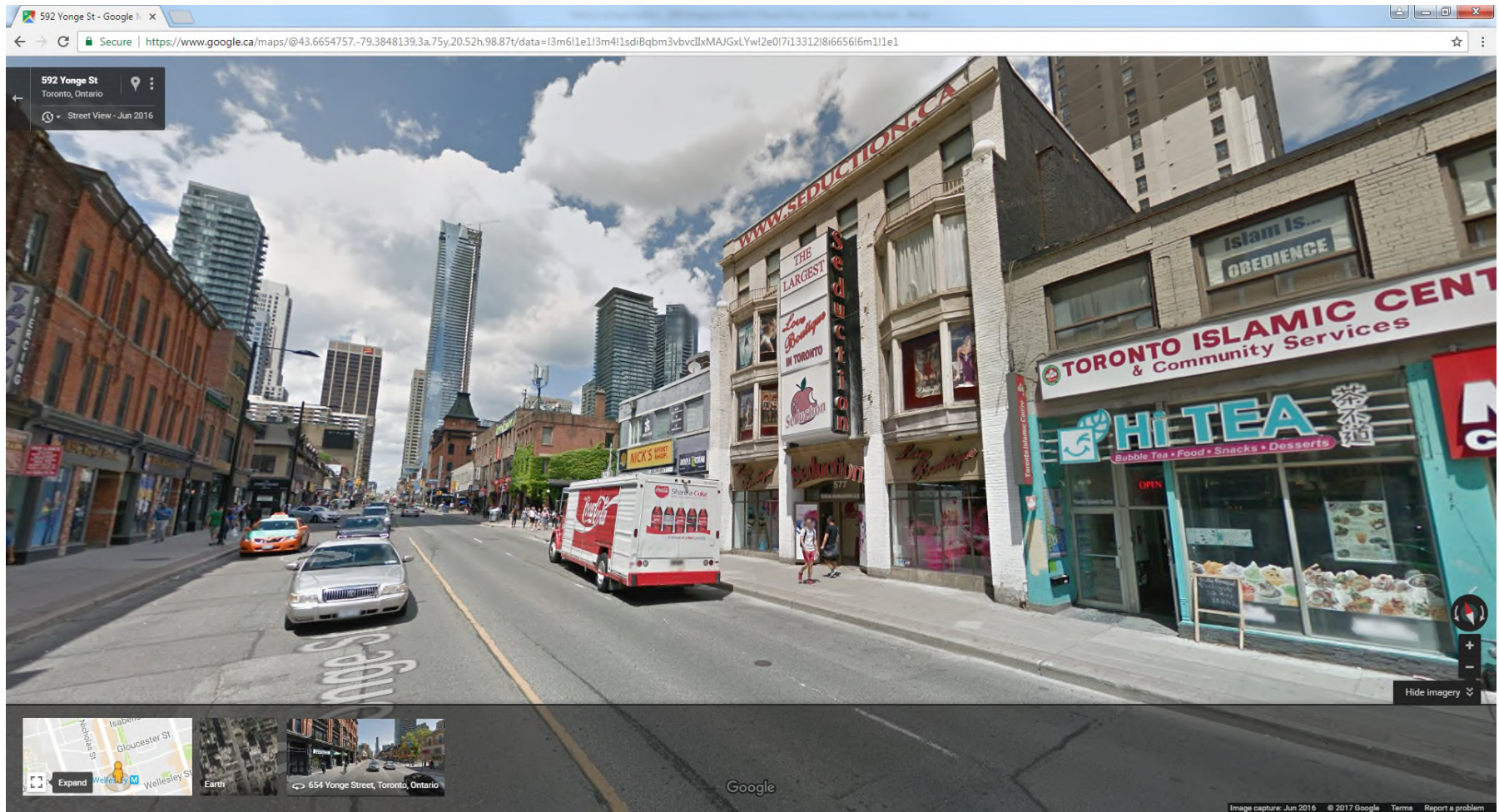
Figure 8: Blank sidewall following removal of mural at 615-617 Yonge Street.



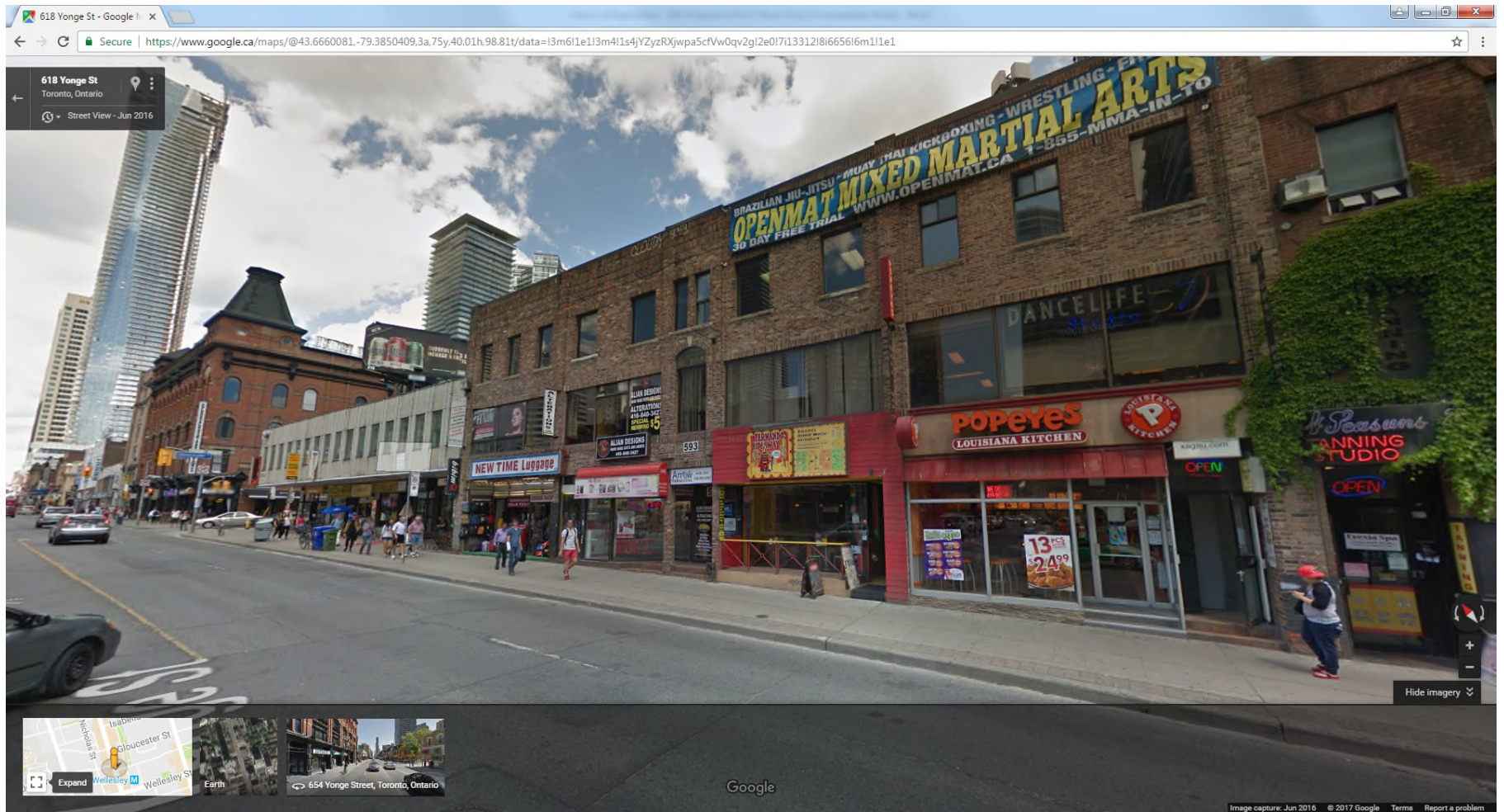
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