



**City of Toronto**

Dundas - Roncesvalles Urban Design Guidelines

June 2018

# Table of Contents

## Mandate

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Location
- 1.2 Policy Context
  - 1.2.1 Provincial Policy Documents
  - 1.2.2 Official Plan
  - 1.2.3 Zoning By-law
- 1.3 Area Character
- 1.4 Development in the Area
- 1.5 Historical Overview

### 2.0 Precinct Areas

- 2.1 Dundas-Roncesvalles
- 2.2 Roncesvalles Main Street
- 2.3 Dundas Point
- 2.4 Roncesvalles South

### 3.0 Heritage

- 3.1 Heritage Register
- 3.2 Heritage Inventory
- 3.3 Heritage Conservation
- 3.4 Heritage and the Public Realm

### 4.0 Vision

- 4.1 The Vision Plan
- 4.2 Guiding Principles

### 5.0 Built Form

- 5.1 Dundas-Roncesvalles
- 5.2 Roncesvalles Main Street
- 5.3 Dundas Point
- 5.4 Roncesvalles South

### 6.0 Building Design

- 6.1 Rhythm and Articulation
- 6.2 Retail Frontage
- 6.3 Building Materials
- 6.4 Access and Loading

### 7.0 Public Realm

- 7.1 Special Areas, Parks and Open Spaces
- 7.2 Pedestrian Connections and Safety
- 7.3 Streetscape

### Appendix

- Appendix A History and Evolution of the Dundas-Roncesvalles Study Area
- Appendix B Building Typology and Heritage Inventory

# Mandate

On November 3, 2015, City Council requested that City Planning initiate a study of the lands fronting Dundas Street West between Sorauren Avenue and the intersection with Roncesvalles Avenue, Roncesvalles Avenue between Queen Street West and Boustead Avenue (excluding the west side of the street between Marion Street and Marmaduke Street), and Ritchie Avenue between Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West, in consultation with the Ward Councillor and the local community. The mandate was to conduct a review of the existing policy framework of the area and consider developing additional urban design and built form guidelines, including an assessment of heritage resources, to be used to inform the review of current and future development proposals, and to develop an understanding of what defines the character of the street.

These guidelines are intended to support vibrant, high quality, appropriately scaled mixed-use development in the Study Area and are consistent with the Official Plan and Area-Specific Policy No. 553 for the Study Area. The Area-Specific policy indicates that the guidelines will be used as a tool to evaluate proposed development in the area and ensure that such development conforms with the Official Plan. Further to this, the guidelines will provide an understanding of the area's local character, explain how development will respect and reinforce this local character, promote an animated public realm, provide built form guidelines and identify buildings of heritage interest.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Location

The urban design guidelines apply to properties that front onto Roncesvalles Avenue which are designated *Mixed Use Areas*, between Queen Street West and Boustead Avenue, but excludes the *Neighbourhoods* designated properties on the west side of the street between Marion Street and Marmaduke Street. The guidelines also apply to the properties fronting Dundas Street West between Sorauren Avenue and the intersection with Roncesvalles Avenue, which are also designated *Mixed-Use Areas*, save for the north side of the street between Morrow Avenue and Sorauren Avenue. The western half of this block has a split designation where the front portion of the properties are designated *Mixed Use Areas* and the rear portion are designated *Employment Areas*. The properties

within the eastern half of this block are designated *Employment Areas*. The properties fronting Ritchie Avenue are designated *Mixed Use Areas*. The Study Area also includes properties fronting Dundas Street West between Sorauren Avenue and the intersection with Roncesvalles Avenue which are also designated *Mixed Use Areas*, save for the north side of the street between Morrow Avenue and Sorauren Avenue. Within this block, the properties at 2032 – 2050 Dundas Street West are designated *Mixed Use Areas*, the properties between 2000 – 2022 Dundas Street West have a split designation where the front portion of the properties are designated *Mixed Use Areas* and the rear portion are designated *Employment Areas*. Finally, the properties at 1970 – 1982 Dundas Street West are designated *Employment Areas*. The properties fronting Ritchie Avenue are designated *Mixed Use Areas*.

## 1.2 Policy Context

### 1.2.1 Provincial Planning Documents

The Provincial Policy Statement (2014) provides policy direction province-wide on land use planning and development to promote strong communities, a strong economy, and a clean and healthy environment. The PPS addresses the complex inter-relationships among environmental, economic and social factors in land use planning and supports a comprehensive, integrated and long-term approach to planning, recognizing linkages among policy areas. All decisions of Council respecting planning matters shall be consistent with the PPS.

The PPS requires that cultural heritage and archaeological resources (identified as key provincial interests) be conserved alongside the pursuit of other provincial interests, including public health and safety and efficient and resilient development. Ontario's long-term economic prosperity, environmental health, and social well-being are considered to be dependent on the protection of these (together with other) resources.

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) provides a strategic framework for managing growth and environmental protection in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region including, among other matters, establishing minimum density targets within strategic growth areas; cultivating a culture of conservation and promoting a compact built form with better-designed communities and a vibrant public realm; building complete communities; retaining viable employment lands; and, minimizing negative impacts of climate change. All decisions by City Council affecting land use planning matters are required by the *Planning Act*, to conform with the Growth Plan.



The redesigned Roncesvalles Avenue streetscape incorporated bicycle lanes, open planting beds, and pedestrian amenities such as benches create a welcoming and vibrant retail main street.

## 1.2.2 Official Plan

### Avenues

Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West are identified as *Avenues* on Map 2 – Urban Structure of the Official Plan. Avenues are described as important corridors along major streets where re-urbanization is anticipated and encouraged to create new housing and job opportunities while improving the pedestrian environment, the look of the street, shopping opportunities and transit service (Section 2.2.3). Some *Avenues* function as main streets that serve the local and broader communities with a variety of non-residential uses.

The Official Plan notes that not all *Avenues* are the same as each is different in terms of lot sizes and configurations, street width, existing uses, neighbouring uses, transit service and streetscape potential. As such, there is no 'one size fits all' development program on *Avenues* and thereby, the framework for new development on each Avenue is generally established through an Avenue Study with the intent of encouraging reinvestment and intensification of underdeveloped *Avenues*.

### Mixed Use Areas

With the exception of the properties on the north side of Dundas Street West between Sorara Avenue and just east of Morrow Avenue, all properties in the Study Area are designated *Mixed Use Areas* in the Official Plan. This designation permits a broad range of commercial, residential and institutional uses, and includes policies and criteria to guide development. *Mixed Use Areas* are intended to accommodate most of the anticipated growth in the City with regard to retail, employment and housing. The development criteria for properties designated



A relatively consistent 'street wall' along Roncesvalles Avenue with predominately two to three-storey buildings lining the street. The street is mostly a 'main street' in character with a rich mix of retail and commercial uses.

*Mixed Use Areas* include:

- creating a balance of high quality commercial, residential, institutional and open space uses that reduce automobile dependency and meet the needs of the local community;
- providing for new jobs and homes for Toronto's growing population on under-utilized lands;
- locating and massing new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale;
- locating and massing new buildings to frame the edges of streets and parks;
- providing an attractive, comfortable and safe pedestrian environment;
- providing good site access and circulation, and adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors;
- locating and screening service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and,
- providing indoor and outdoor recreation space for building residents in every significant multi-residential development.

## Employment Areas

The Official Plan describes *Employment Areas* as this City's hothouses where we grow our enterprises and jobs. The properties on the north side of Dundas Street West, between Sorauren Avenue and just east of Morrow Avenue, are designated *Employment Areas*. The development criteria for properties designated *Employment Areas* include, but are not limited to:

- mitigating the effects of noise, vibration, dust, odours or particulate matter that will be detrimental to other businesses or the amenity of neighbouring areas;
- providing landscaping on the front and any flanking yard and adjacent to any public parks and open spaces to create an attractive streetscape and screening parking, loading and service areas;
- treating the boundary between *Employment Areas* and residential lands with landscaping, fencing, or other measures to minimize nuisance impacts;
- providing adequate loading and parking on-site; and,
- sharing driveways and parking areas wherever possible.

### 1.2.3 Zoning By-law

The majority of the properties in the Study Area are zoned 'Commercial Residential' in Zoning By-law 569-2013 (and 'Mixed Commercial Residential' in By-law 438-86), with the exception of the properties on the north side of Dundas Street West between Sorauren Avenue and Morrow Avenue. Within this block, the western half contains split zoning and properties are zoned 'Commercial Residential' for the first 33.5 metres closest to Dundas Street West and 'Industrial' for the back portion closest to the rail corridor. The properties within the eastern half of this block are zoned 'Industrial' and are only subject to By-law 438-86.

The properties fronting Roncesvalles Avenue between Queen Street West and Marmaduke Street have a maximum permitted density of 2.5 times the area of the lot; whereas, the properties on Roncesvalles Avenue north of Marmaduke Street and also most of the properties on Dundas Street West, permit a maximum density of 3.0 times the area of the lot.

The properties on the north side of Dundas Street West, between Sorauren Avenue and Morrow Avenue, permit densities of 3.0 times and 2.0 times the area of the lot for the commercial/residential uses and for the industrial use respectively.

## 1.3 Area Character

The Study Area comprises of two significant commercial historic main streets, Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West, which serve the surrounding community with a vibrant and varied mix of retail, employment, institutional, as well as residential uses.

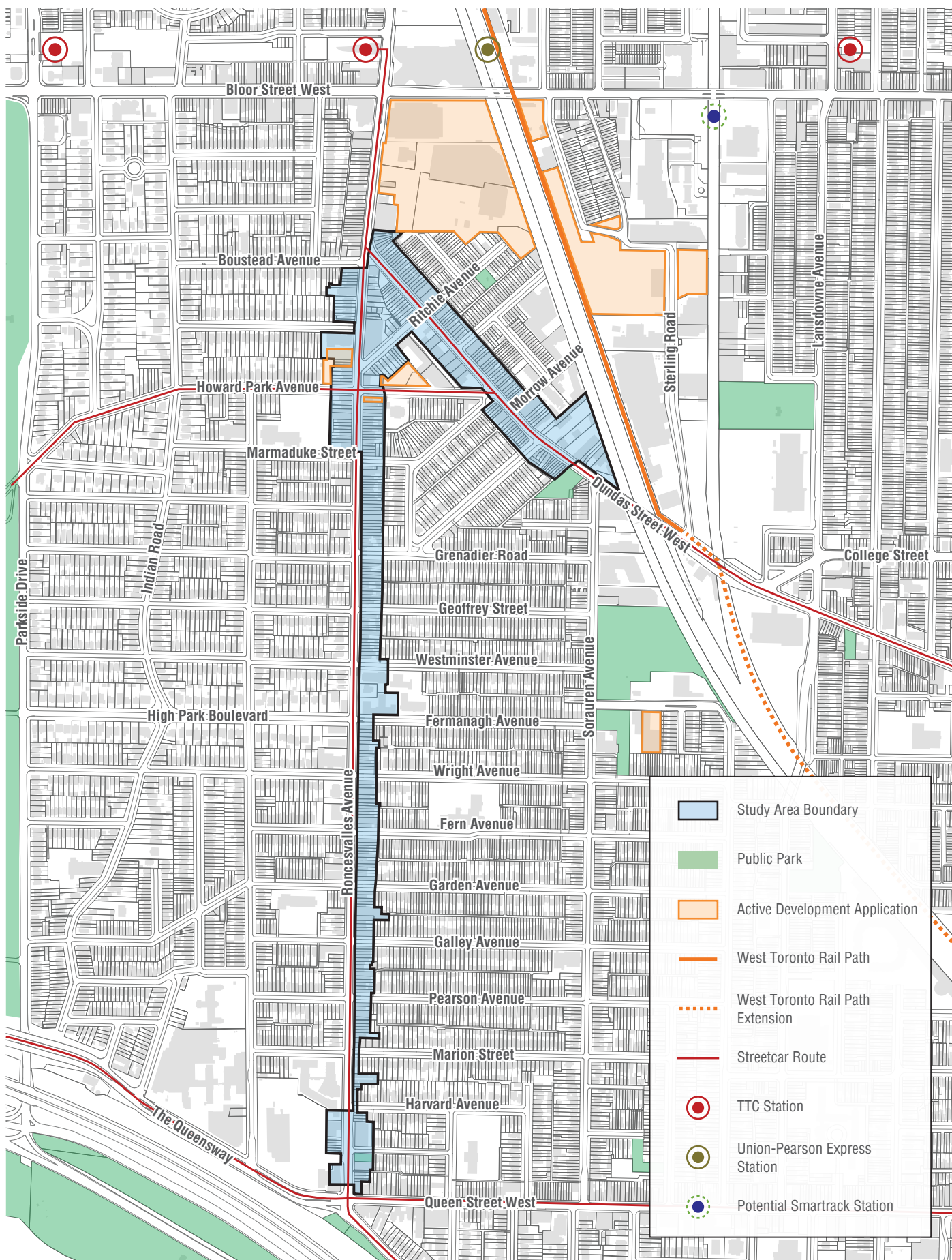
Roncesvalles Avenue is a successful and well-established commercial main street with commercial/retail lining the majority of the east side of the street and portions of the west side. The built form is consistent along most of Roncesvalles Avenue comprised mainly of two to three-storey mixed use buildings with commercial/retail at-grade. Two places of worship are located within the Study Area with taller building heights and greater building setbacks. A residential building at the corner of Roncesvalles Avenue and Ritchie Avenue is the tallest building within the Study Area but is not the prevailing built form.

The portion of Dundas Street West within the Study Area has a varied character with a mixture of commercial/retail outlets, warehouses, auto body shops, brewery, offices, surface parking, park land, as well as residential uses. Certain blocks on Dundas Street West are consistent in terms of character, built form, and height, however, the street does not have as cohesive a character when compared to Roncesvalles Avenue.

## 1.4 Development in the Area

The Study Area and the surrounding area are experiencing an increase in interest for new residential and commercial development. This interest can, in part, be attributed to the area's existing and planned transit connections to the Downtown and to other areas of the City and the region. Several large-scale and culturally significant projects moving into the area, such as the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), have raised the profile of the area as an attractive place for future development.

Recent mid-rise development projects at the north end of the Study Area have introduced a new built form typology which will require some sensitive design strategies to ensure that, in the future, similar development proposals will complement the existing character of the area.



Map A - Context Map



The Study Area as developed in 1878, showing the junction of Dundas Street West and Roncesvalles Avenue (at Lot 43), (Miles & Co., Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of York, detail)

## 1.5 Historical Overview

The current and unique urban form of the Dundas Roncesvalles neighbourhood is rooted in several key historic factors. Approximately 13,000 years ago, both Dundas Street West and Indian Road were part of an Indigenous Peoples' system of routes known as the Toronto Carrying Place. Dundas Street West was developed from a trail to a highway (Highway 5), beginning in the 1790s with the first British settlement of the Town of York as the capital of Upper Canada. Known as the Governor's Road (after Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe) historically and still in some parts of Ontario, this highway ran west from York to London. Roncesvalles Avenue originated in the 1850s when it was laid out by Colonel Walter O'Hara as the primary north-south route with the subdivision of his property known as Lot 34. The Colonel's property was crossed by Dundas Street West highway.

In the late 19th century, the triangular junction of Dundas Street West and the north end of Roncesvalles Avenue was part of the Village of Brockton. The southern end of Roncesvalles was part of the village, and then town, of Parkdale and the neighbourhood known as Sunnyside. By 1889 they had all been amalgamated with the City of Toronto.

Development was slow until the arrival of streetcars on both Dundas Street West and Roncesvalles by 1908. Access to transportation spurred rapid development so that within twenty years the area would acquire the urban street pattern and main street typology that gives the neighbourhood the unique character it enjoys today. Additionally, most of the significant community buildings, libraries, schools, churches and theatres were built within this growth period creating a legacy of important historic institutional and landmark properties.





1914 View of Roncesvalles Avenue looking north with High Park Boulevard on the left and the York Savings & Loan Co. converted to apartments on the right (BlogTO).

The southern end of Roncesvalles had a mix of commercial, transport and residential development on both sides of the street. Located at the junction of King Street West and Queen Street West, the proximity to early streetcar and railway transportation as well as the lake shore resulted in development which included transport terminals, a hotel and hospital. At the northern end of Roncesvalles near the junction with Dundas Street West, again there is small-scale commercial and residential development on both sides of the streets and Dundas was developed with narrower lots. Three banks (now adaptively re-used) and the Revue Theatre, which continues to be a social and cultural focus for the community, were located within this area a century ago. Numerous smaller industries were located along Dundas in proximity to the railway.

In between the north and south ends, Roncesvalles Avenue between Marmaduke Street and Marion Street has the unique characteristic of being low-rise commercial on its eastern side and primarily residential, including low-rise apartment blocks on its west side.

While the built form has been consistent since the early 20th century, following World War II, there was a significant social and cultural shift with the arrival of Polish, German and Lithuanian communities. With the opening of St. Casimir's church in 1954, Polish-language businesses, retirement home, credit union and the HQ of the Canadian Polish Congress followed, with the result that the area acquired a distinctly

Polish character which continues into the twenty-first century and is celebrated annually with the Polish Festival, one of the largest in North America.

In 2016, the Peace Garden was opened at the junction of Dundas Street West and Roncesvalles Avenue. As part of the Moccasin Identifier project, the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation designated the Peace Garden as a place of heritage and contributed to its creation recognizing the street's origin as an indigenous peoples' trail and the commemoration of the bicentennial anniversary of the War of 1812. The project was designed collaboratively by the various groups and local representatives, artists and landscape architects representing the contemporary as well as historical physical and social junctions that are collectively meaningful to these communities.

A more detailed History and Evolution of the Study Area may be found in Appendix A.

## 2.0 Precinct Areas

The Study Area is generally consistent in character in terms of building height and building characteristics with a few exceptions. However, upon closer inspection, there are distinct area characteristics which define the reasons why people reside in and visit the area. By dividing the Study Area into different precinct areas, more nuanced and context-specific guidelines can be developed to achieve the desired guidance for future developments of each Precinct Area. The study has been divided into four precincts by examining the following characteristics:

- Built Form
- Lot Size and Pattern
- Land Use
- Heritage
- Street Character
- Future Development Potential

### 2.1 Dundas-Roncesvalles

The Dundas-Roncesvalles Precinct includes both, the north and south side of Dundas Street West, except for a portion of the north side just east of Morrow Avenue. The northern part of Roncesvalles Avenue and Ritchie Avenue is also included in this precinct.

The lot pattern within this precinct is mixed with narrow-deep lots or larger irregular lots. The existing built form on the north side of Dundas Street West is relatively consistent with 2 to 3-storey mixed-use buildings. The south side of Dundas Street West is more varied, however, within each individual block, a consistent character of low-rise residential or commercial buildings can be found.



Dundas-Roncesvalles Precinct - Generally consistent built forms on some blocks with a few exceptions.

### 2.2 Roncesvalles Main Street

The Roncesvalles Main Street Precinct can be considered as the 'main street' of the Study Area. The lot sizes, built form, and heights are generally consistent within this precinct. The majority of buildings are low-rise, mixed-use buildings with places of worship and one, five-storey apartment building being the few exceptions.

The majority of properties in this precinct faces and backs onto areas designated *Neighbourhoods* in the Official Plan. It is a unique characteristic of Roncesvalles Avenue to be a 'one-sided' street where only the east side of the street is a commercial/retail street, whereas the west side contains a predominantly residential and house-form character.



Roncesvalles Main Street Precinct - Typical three-storey mixed use buildings.

### 2.3 Dundas Point

Dundas Point Precinct is located on the eastern-most edge of the Study Area on the north side of Dundas Street West, between Morrow Avenue and the rail corridor. Lots in this precinct are generally larger than the ones found in other parts of the Study Area. Most of these lots still contain light industrial and auto-related services.

This Precinct has a diverse built form including warehouse buildings on large lots, smaller commercial buildings and even house-form residential buildings. This portion of the Study Area is not consistent in terms of the streetscape or built form, however, many of the services offered by these businesses are valued by the community and much needed in the City.



Dundas Point Precinct - A mix of built forms from house-form buildings to warehouses.

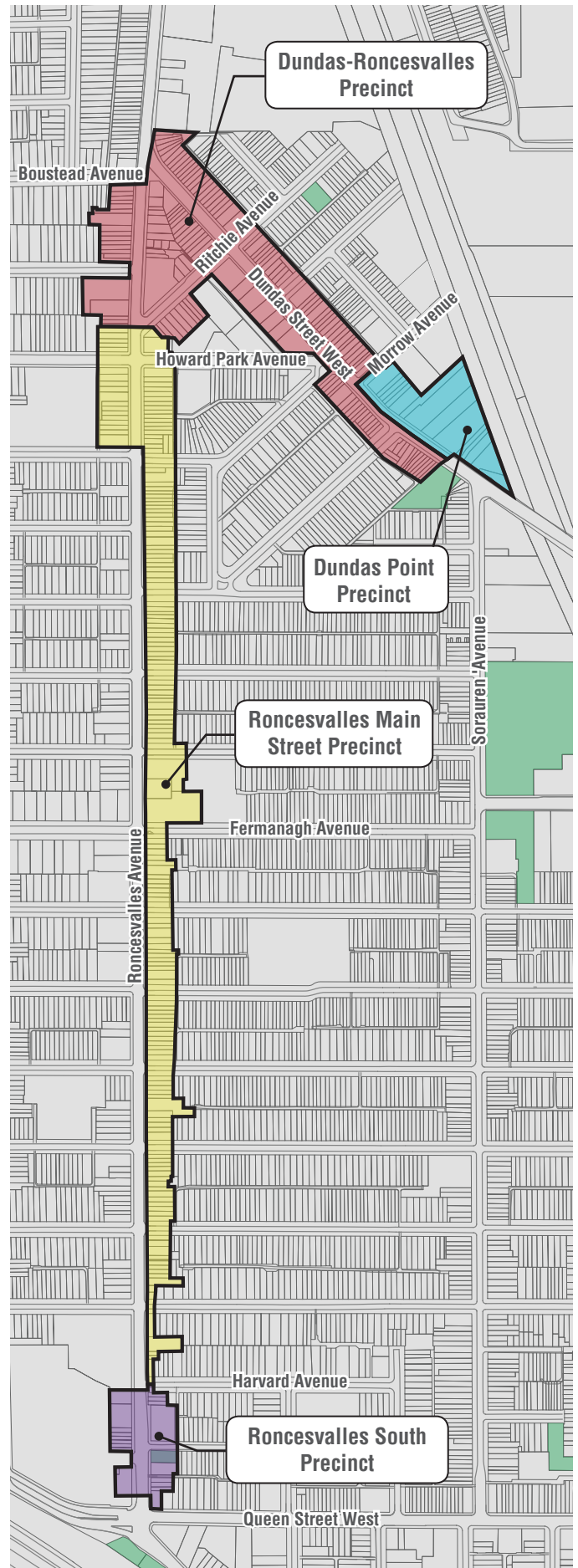
## 2.4 Roncesvalles South

Roncesvalles South is at the south end of the Study Area located between Queen Street West and Harvard Avenue. The character of this area is different from the consistent 'main street' character seen in the Roncesvalles Main Street Precinct to the north. Here, the character is more varied and includes a collection of small-scale office buildings, mixed-use and house-form buildings and a commercial plaza.

Roncesvalles South Precinct has a history of being the gateway into Toronto with the former Grey Coach bus terminal (currently a McDonald's restaurant) and the former Edgewater Hotel (currently the Howard Johnson Inn). However, the development of this area did not take advantage of this history and the current area character does not reflect this heritage.



Roncesvalles South Precinct - A mix of low-rise apartment buildings, mixed-use buildings and commercial buildings.



Map B: Precinct Areas

## 3.0 Heritage

As stated in the City of Toronto's Official Plan, "Cultural heritage is an important component of sustainable development and place making. The preservation of our cultural heritage is essential to the character of this urban and liveable city that can contribute to the other social, cultural, economic and environmental goals of the City." Section 3.1.5 of the Official Plan provides the official plan policy framework for heritage conservation in the City.

### 3.1 Heritage Register

Properties currently listed on the City's Heritage Register will be conserved in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Official Plan's heritage conservation policies, the Ontario Heritage Act (OHA), and the Provincial Policy Statement, and with regard to the Standard and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada.

### 3.2 Heritage Inventory

To understand and identify the cultural heritage, values and attributes of the Study Area, staff undertook research on the area's history and evolution (Appendix A), and conducted a building survey to create a Heritage Inventory of properties in the Area (see Map C and Inventory in Appendix B). The Dundas Roncesvalles Heritage Inventory includes Study Area properties which are already on the City's Heritage Register and properties having potential cultural heritage value or interest to be evaluated for possible listing on the Register. In order to shorten the time it takes to research and evaluate properties for listing, staff will undertake an abbreviated approach, one that still applies provincial criteria as required in the Official Plan, but which sets out a preliminary, not exhaustive, set of values. An understanding and articulation of contextual value will be prioritized and, where information is readily available, additional values may be identified. The primary aim will be to achieve an informed and timely listing of properties.



A view looking north on Roncesvalles Avenue with landmark buildings such as the York Savings & Loan Co. and the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in the background.

### 3.3 Heritage Conservation

The heritage research and heritage property survey have informed the heritage inventory, the Urban Design Guidelines and the Site and Area Specific Policy. These tools will promote the conservation of the cultural heritage values of the Study Area, including the urban pattern, the fine-grained and low-rise scale of the existing main street village character and the individual building attributes with context-sensitive new development.

New development or alterations within the study area will respect, conserve and maintain the integrity of existing and potential cultural heritage properties. Heritage Impact Assessments will be required for development applications that affect existing and potential heritage properties within the Study Area.

### 3.4 Heritage and the Public Realm

Within the context of streetscape or public realm improvements or through the review of development applications, opportunities to contribute to the interpretation of the Study Area's history in collaboration with appropriate City Divisions and in consultation with indigenous communities and representative stakeholders are encouraged. A recent local example of this is the Dundas Roncesvalles Peace Garden.



2154 Dundas Street West



2201 Dundas Street West



421 Roncesvalles Avenue



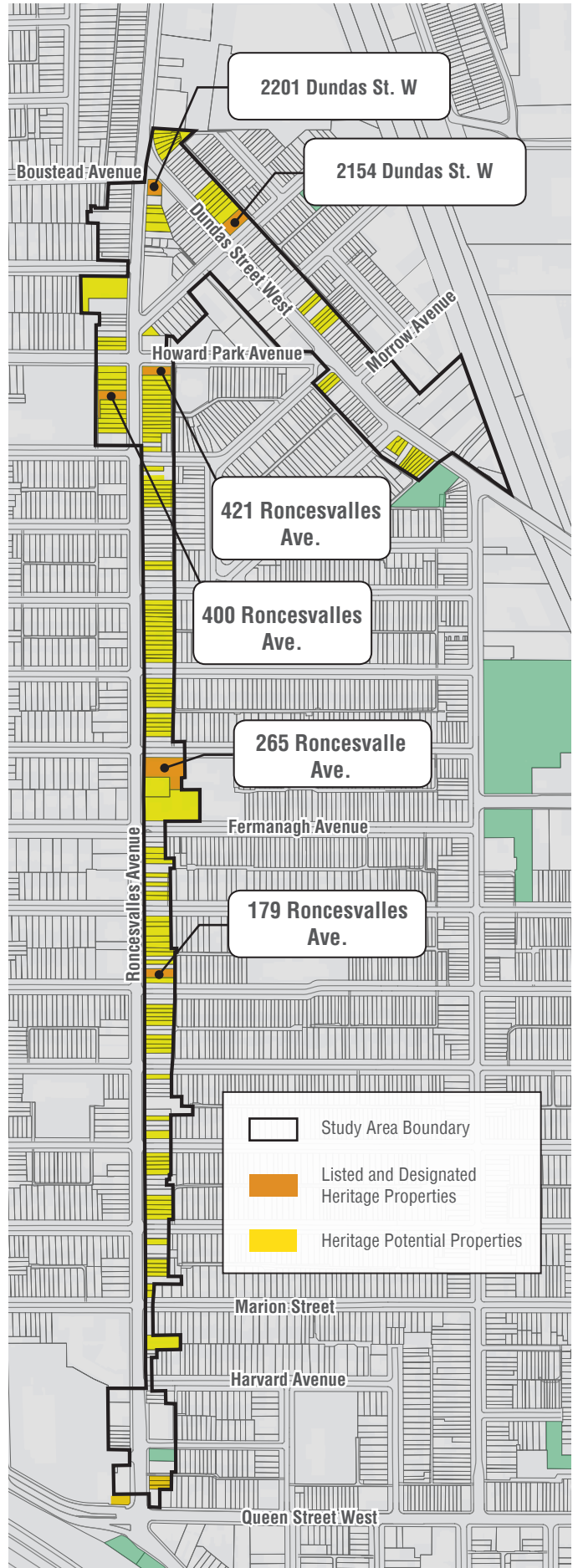
400 Roncesvalles Avenue



265 Roncesvalles Avenue



179 Roncesvalles Avenue



Map C: Properties with heritage and Potential Heritage Value



A conceptual image of the intersection of Dundas Street West and Howard Park Avenue looking West. Mid-rise buildings frame the street with widened sidewalks and new open spaces in special places.

## 4.0 Vision

### 4.1 The Vision Plan

The Vision Plan sees the most potential for change and development in the Dundas-Roncesvalles precinct, Dundas Point precinct, and the Roncesvalles South precinct. These areas have the most opportunity to become increasingly vibrant with ground floor retail, employment/commercial opportunities, public spaces, and residential dwellings. These areas have existing and planned connections to transit which will further enhance the connectivity and mobility of residents and visitors. New development will integrate with the surrounding neighbourhood by respecting the area's heritage, character, built form, public realm, and other special attributes.

Roncesvalles Main Street precinct is the area's focal point with a well-designed and historic street dating back to the first quarter of the twentieth century. The precinct continues to function as a successful retail street teeming with street life. The Vision Plan targets specific areas of improvement in the public realm, such as enhanced boulevard spaces, to further improve and beautify the public realm. New development within the Roncesvalles Main Street precinct is envisioned to be in the form of small infill projects, similar in scale to the prevailing lower-scale built form and stepped back on the upper floors to conform with the prescribed angular planes in these Guidelines. Opportunities for additions of a couple of floors on existing buildings are possible when designed sensitively to integrate with the surrounding buildings and the wider context.



Improvements to the streetscape has positively impacted the enjoyment of Roncesvalles Avenue for visitors and residents.

Within the Study Area, there are existing places where people congregate and which serve as markers for the neighbourhood. These spaces can be further enhanced and connected to new special places to create an area-wide identity. To this end, these Guidelines identify Entry Nodes, Focus Areas, and some Boulevard Spaces to direct future implementation of these special places with the involvement of the City, private developers, and/or business/resident associations.

## 4.2 Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles help to provide direction for future developments to achieve the vision for the Dundas-Roncesvalles Study Area.

1. **Enhance and protect existing neighbourhood character.**
  - a. Ensure new development and additions fit-in with the existing neighbourhood scale and character to strengthen the relationship with the area's history.
  - b. Ensure buildings are designed to reflect the character of the neighbourhood, respond to the area's historic context, and complement its surroundings.
  - c. Protect and conserve heritage properties and ensure surrounding development properly respects the scale, form, and massing of such buildings.
2. **Support responsible development to create a complete community.**
  - a. Provide well-designed, attractive, and sensitive development to create a community for people to live, work, and play.
  - b. Ensure places are designed to be family-friendly to accommodate children of all ages.
  - c. Create places and environments to support workers, businesses, and visitors to the area.
  - d. Offer spaces and environments to encourage social interaction as well as places of leisure.
3. **Provide connections to surrounding neighbourhoods and opportunities.**
  - a. Seek opportunities to build connections within the neighbourhood and with surrounding areas, including future development sites, the rail corridor, as well as transit infrastructure.
  - b. Formalize and enhance existing connections to improve pedestrian comfort and experience.
  - c. Create safe cycling connections to offer more mobility options and expand the cycling network.
4. **Improve and expand the public realm.**
  - a. Enhance and beautify the streetscape with generous sidewalks, high-quality materials, bicycle parking, and healthy growing conditions for trees.
  - b. Encourage developments to provide publicly accessible plazas, forecourts, and gardens to reinforce a sense of place.



Fine-grained retail along Roncesvalles Avenue with attractive public realm creates an inviting and vibrant 'main street' character.



Well-designed outdoor patio spaces create additional animation on the public realm enhancing the character and vitality of the area.



Open space in front of a restaurant creates an inviting public space and sense of entry into the neighbourhood.



New development should transition down in building height and scale to provide better fit with the existing context. Image above shows a fairly recently constructed building which does not provide appropriate built form transitions towards the adjacent low-scale buildings.

## 5.0 Built Form

A wide range of considerations have been included in determining the appropriate built form for the Dundas-Roncesvalles Study Area to provide guidance for sensitive and appropriate development. The following are some of the considerations:

- prevailing built form character and height;
- overall depth of sites within the Study Area;
- distance to adjacent properties designated *Neighbourhoods* and *Parks and Open Space Areas*;
- proximity to properties with heritage status; and,
- contribution to the overall vision and adherence to the Guiding Principles of this Guideline document.

The Study Area includes areas of distinct characteristics with diverse built forms. However, the majority of the Study Area has a unifying built form presence in large blocks of consistent buildings. The Built Form section of this Guideline document aims to provide clarity for future development proposals to ensure new buildings further enhance, reinforce and contribute to the character of the various precincts.



Roncesvalles Avenue has relatively consistent built form ranging from single-storey commercial buildings to three-storey mixed-use buildings.



A view looking down Ritchie Avenue shows different built forms fitting into the existing context with varying levels of success.

The City's Official Plan and the Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Study identifies Dundas Street West and Roncesvalles Avenue as an *Avenue*. In general, growth is anticipated and mid-rise is the built-form contemplated for areas designated as *Avenues*. The Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Study also identifies the majority of the Study Area as 'Character Areas', which requires new developments to adhere to additional performance standards to ensure proposed development fits-in with the existing built context.

Furthermore, in June 2016, City Council adopted amendments to the Avenue and Mid-Rise Buildings Study to reduce the maximum building height for properties within a 'Character Area' to a height equal to 80% of the width of the adjacent right-of-way. This provision means that, for properties within



'Character Areas' on Dundas Street West and on Roncesvalles Avenue, the maximum building height should be 16.0 metres as the width of the respective right-of-way is 20 metres.

Through the course of this Study, a context-specific approach to the Avenue and Mid-Rise Building Study was applied to the Study Area. While these Guidelines respond to the context-specific opportunities and the neighbourhood concerns for each of the four precinct areas, the general intent of the Avenues and Mid-Rise Buildings Study is maintained.

The Study Area includes several important, well-defined and consistently frequent building types. The most common type combines commercial use with residential accommodation above and has three variations – commercial block with residential above, corner store with residential above and house-form building with integrated commercial use at grade. The others, including landmark community buildings, low-rise apartment blocks, and institutional buildings, are less frequent but contribute to the overall character which is typically defined by low-rise, brick clad buildings constructed between 1908 and 1924. Other types include the house-form building, either as a single dwelling or semi-detached which is less typical of the study area and includes one church rectory.

The Built Form section of this document makes recommendations on the following:

- Building Height
- Building Setback
- Angular Plane
- Building Setback

### Heritage Properties - Additions and Infill

Heritage property(s) or property(s) adjacent to heritage property(s) will require additional consideration and alternate design solutions, which may include upper level stepbacks of the addition or infill.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) may be required as an evaluation of the impact to the scale, form, and massing to the heritage property(s).

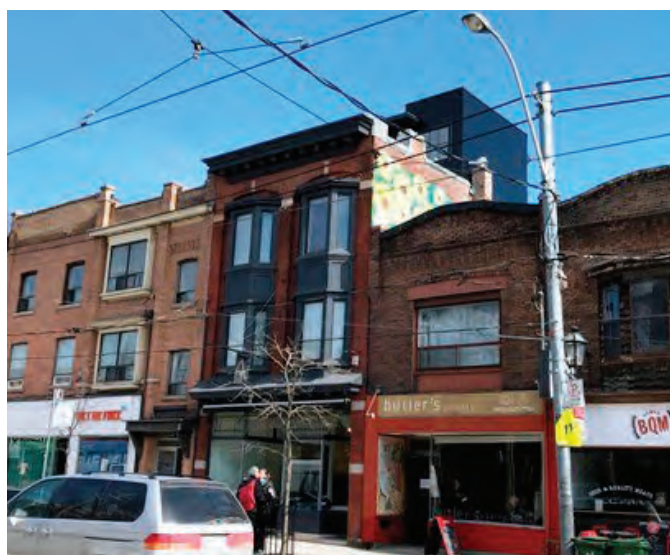
Development applications on heritage property(s) will be reviewed by City Planning on a case-by-case basis.



Dundas Street West has a range of built forms creating a varied street character from a more 'main street' character to an industrial one.



A stair access addition to a two-storey building.



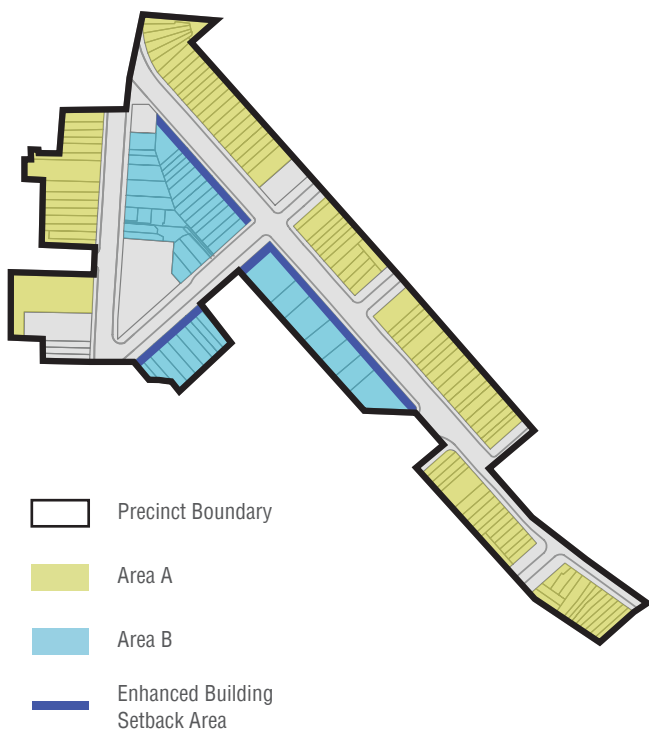
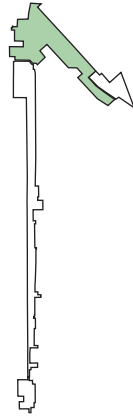
An addition to a three-storey building is carefully setback from the building face to retain the visual integrity of the existing building.

## 5.1 Dundas-Roncesvalles

For the Dundas-Roncesvalles precinct, a mid-rise built form character is contemplated and is the desired built form for this emerging main street. However, there are two unique areas within this Precinct which require different built form standards to create new opportunities and address concerns.

Ground floor setbacks provide opportunities for wider sidewalks and retail animation zones at grade. A minimum setback of 4.8 metres is required in Area A along the north side of Dundas Street West. Further, to improve the streetscape along the south side of Dundas Street West, an Enhanced Building Setback Area from the street is required for most properties in Area B. Refer to Map D, Section Diagram A and B for details.

The rear yards of the properties in Area A are immediately adjacent to properties designed *Neighbourhoods*. To reduce the impact on these abutting *Neighbourhood* properties, rear yard angular planes are required. In Area B, however, properties abut properties designed *Mixed Use Areas*, therefore, no rear yard angular planes are required. Refer to Map D, Section Diagram A and B for details.



Map D: Dundas-Roncesvalles Precinct Built Form Map

### GUIDELINES

#### Building Height

- a. Maximum building height of 20.0 metres.
- b. Maximum mechanical penthouse height of 5.0 metres above the roof level.
- c. Maximum ground floor height of 4.0 metres in Area A and 4.5 metres in Area B.

#### Building Setback

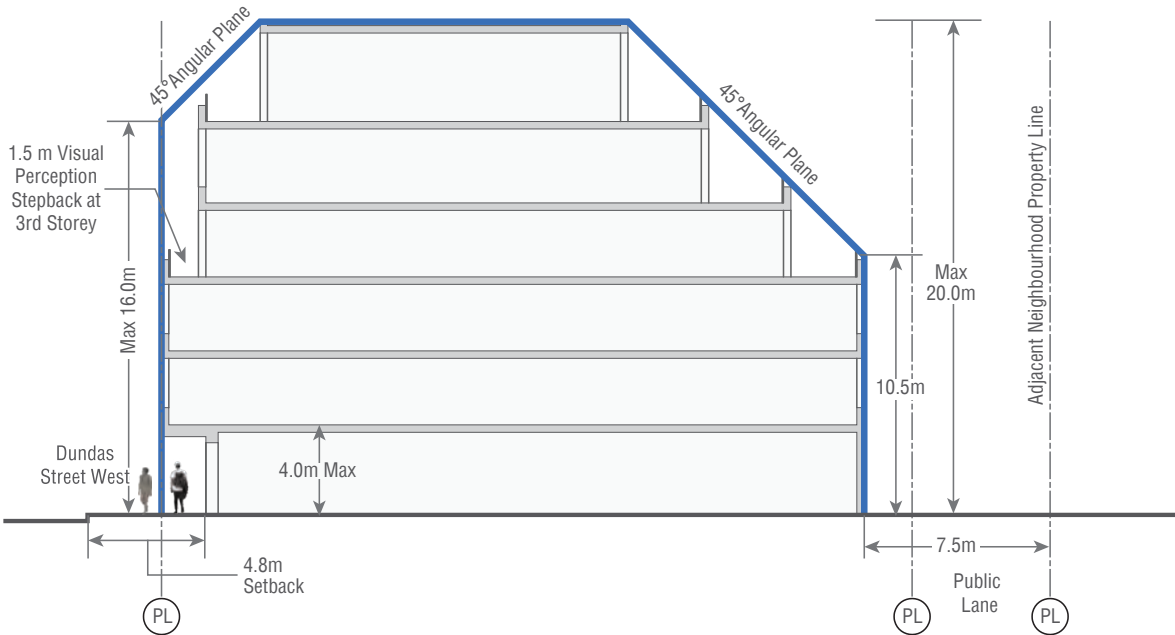
- d. Provide a minimum building face to curb distance of 6.0 metres in the Enhanced Building Setback Area and 4.8 metres in all other areas.
- e. Provide a minimum 7.5 metre rear yard setback when adjacent to properties designated *Neighbourhoods*.
- f. Provide a minimum 11.0 meter separation distance from existing building(s) on the same lot, or a minimum 5.5 metre rear yard setback from adjacent properties designated *Mixed Use Areas* and/or from the centre of a public lane.

#### Angular Plane

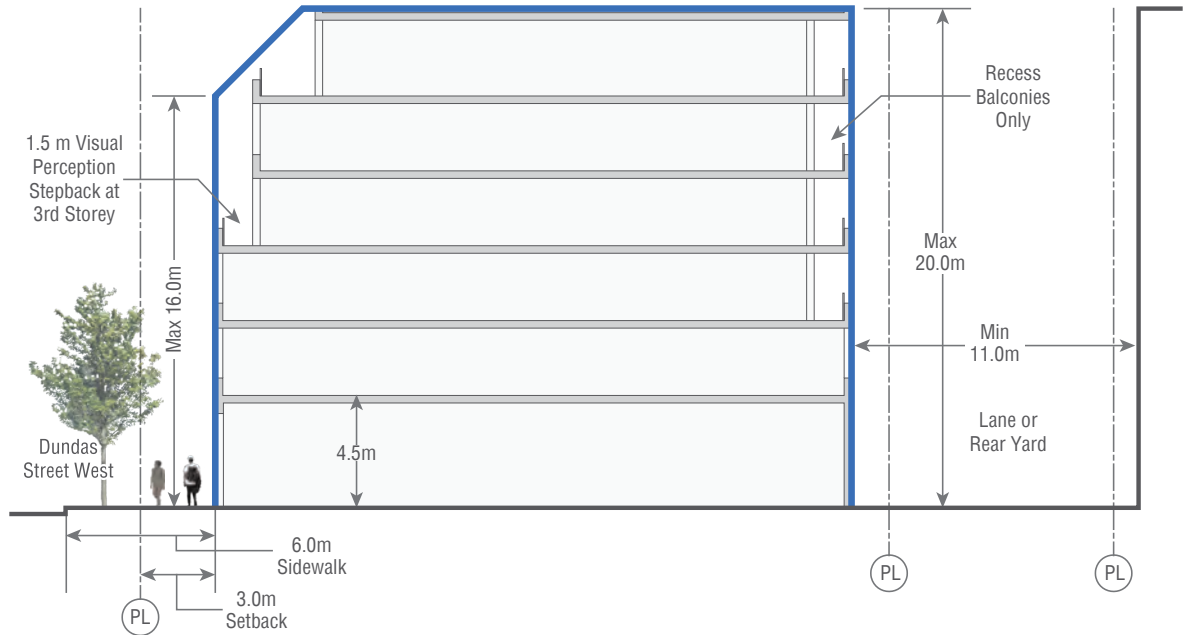
- g. In Area A and B, provide a 45 degree angular plane taken at a height equivalent to 80% of the right-of-way width along the street frontage.
- h. In Area A, provide a rear yard setback of 7.5 metres from the rear lot line or, in the case of an abutting public lane, from the opposite side of the lane, and provide a 45 degree angular plane from a height of 10.5 metres above the 7.5 metre setback line.

#### Building Stepback

- i. In Area A, provide a minimum 1.5 metre pedestrian perception stepback at a height of 10.5 metres.
- j. In Area B, provide a minimum 1.5 metre pedestrian perception stepback at a height of 10.5 metres and a minimum 3.0 metre stepback at a height of 16.0 metres along the Dundas Street West frontage and from any flanking street in the case of corner lots.
- k. New vertical additions on heritage properties will step back from street facing elevations. The stepback distance will be determined based on design, scale and massing of the proposed addition.



Section Diagram A - Dundas-Roncesvalles Built Form Section, Area A



Section Diagram B - Dundas-Roncesvalles Built Form Section, Area B

## 5.2 Roncesvalles Main Street

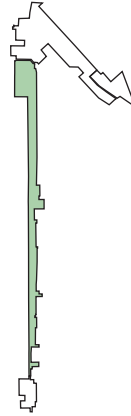
The Roncesvalles Main Street precinct can be considered as the 'main street' of the Study Area as it is characterized by a strong retail and commercial presence. This precinct contains mostly two and three-storey buildings located on the street property line forming a consistent street wall. The lot sizes, built form, and heights are generally consistent within this precinct with places of worship and one, five-storey apartment building being the few exceptions.

New development should reinforce the low-rise character of existing buildings by setting-back new additions and conforming to the angular plane requirements identified for this precinct. New development should be designed to reflect and consider adjacent buildings to emphasize and/or complement the main street character where traditional materials and architecture are evident.

The majority of properties in this precinct both face and back onto areas designated *Neighbourhoods* in the Official Plan. It is a unique characteristic of Roncesvalles Avenue to be a 'one-sided' street where only the east side of the street is a commercial/retail street facing a predominately residential and house-form street frontage. This built form relationship further illustrates the importance of minimizing the impact of new development on this special character of Roncesvalles Avenue.



Smaller and fine grained commercial space at grade creates a lively and active streetscape. The pedestrian perception of the area's low-rise character is important to preserve the local experience.



A typical city block on Roncesvalles Avenue with consistent built form, rhythm, and architectural design.

### GUIDELINES

#### Building Height

- a. Maximum building height of 16.0 metres.
- b. Maximum mechanical penthouse height of 3.0 metres above the roof level.
- c. Maximum ground floor height of 3.5 metres.

#### Building Setback

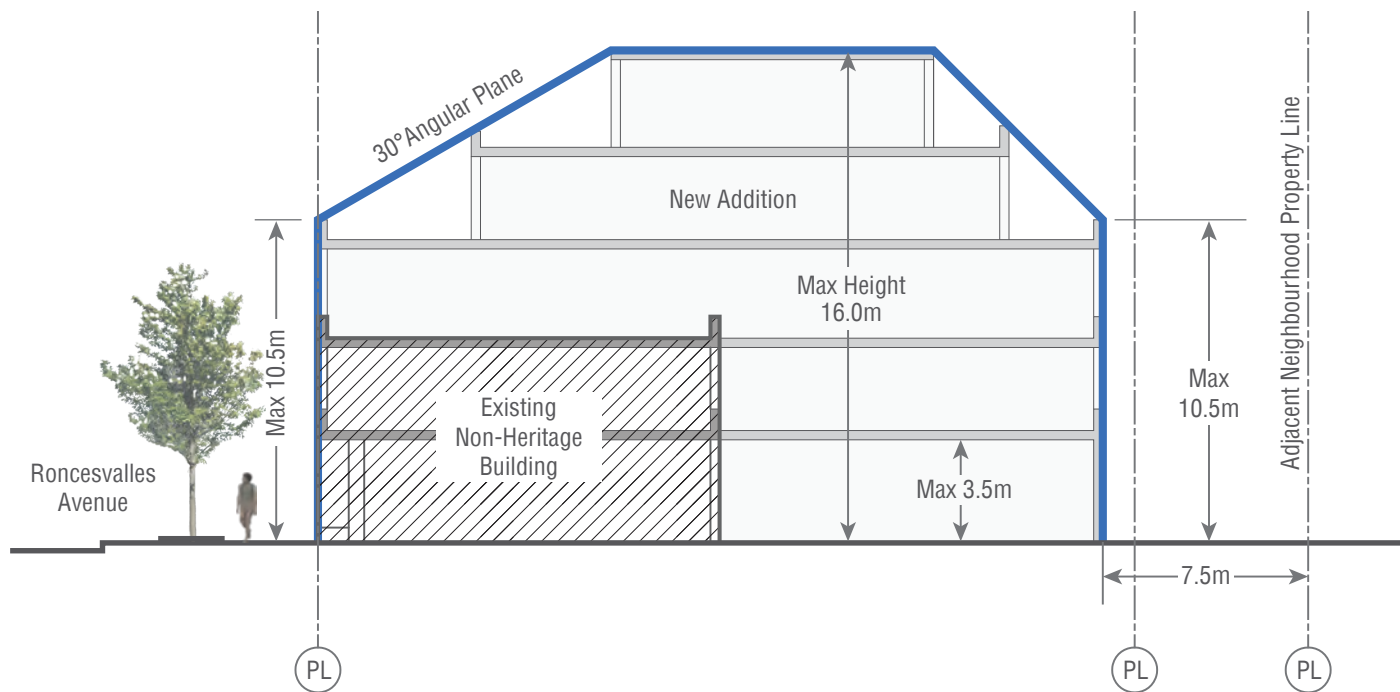
- d. Align front facades of new buildings with the prevailing street wall on Roncesvalles Avenue.
- e. Provide a minimum 7.5 metre rear yard setback when adjacent to properties designated *Neighbourhoods*.

#### Angular Plane

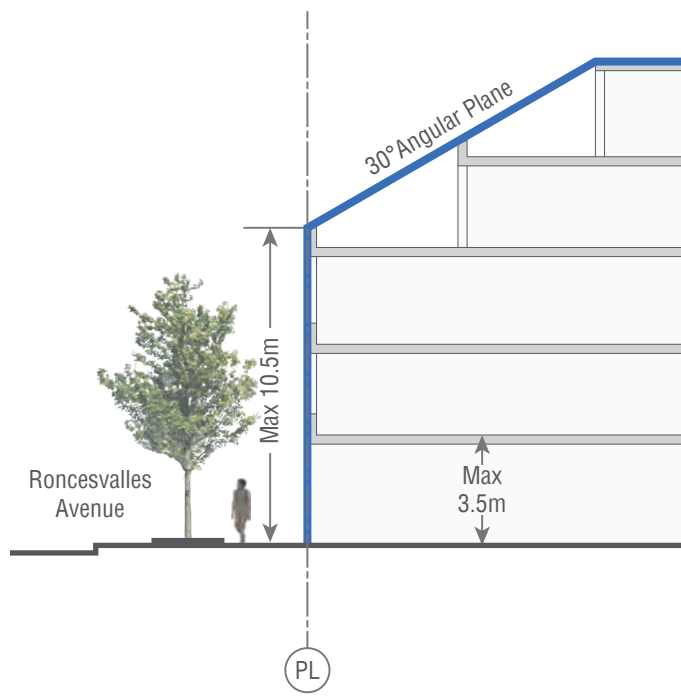
- f. Provide a 30 degree angular plane taken at a height of 10.5 metres along the Roncesvalles Avenue street frontage and along any flanking street in the case of corner lots.
- g. Provide a rear yard setback of 7.5 metres from the rear lot line or, in the case of an abutting public lane, from the opposite side of the lane, and provide a 45 degree angular plane from a height of 10.5 metres above the 7.5 metre setback line.

#### Building Stepback

- h. Stepback upper levels to fit within the angular planes.
- i. New vertical additions on heritage properties will step back from street facing elevations. The stepback distance will be determined based on design, scale and massing of the proposed addition.



Section Diagram C - Roncesvalles Main Street Built Form Section. Section showing a new addition on an existing building within the Roncesvalles Main Street Precinct.



Section Diagram D - Roncesvalles Main Street Built Form Section. Section showing a new building.



An example of an addition to an existing building that is setback to maintain the main building's architectural integrity and preserving the pedestrian scale and experience of College Street (outside of Study Area).

## 5.3 Dundas Point

The Dundas Point precinct consists of some of the largest sites in the Study Area with uses which are predominately commercial, warehouse, and auto-related. This precinct is envisioned as an area of employment with predominately commercial, office, and retail uses in the future. The desired built form will anticipate these uses in low-rise or mid-rise built forms.

Along Dundas Street West, buildings will have commercial and retail at grade to create an active streetscape. In larger developments, consideration for publicly accessible open spaces, pedestrian connections, and streets will be required to create a attractive places for people who will be working and visiting the area.

### GUIDELINES

#### Building Height

- a. Maximum building height of 20.0 metres.
- b. Maximum mechanical penthouse height of 5.0 metres above the roof level.
- c. Maximum ground floor height of 6.0 metres.

#### Building Setback

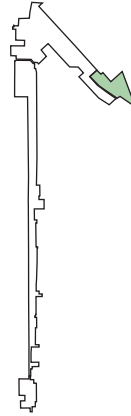
- d. Provide a minimum distance from curb to building face of 4.8 metres at grade.
- e. Provide a minimum separation distance of 11.0 meters from existing building(s) on the same lot, or a minimum setback of 5.5 metres from adjacent properties designated *Mixed Use Areas* or *Employment Areas*.
- f. Setback requirements to rail corridor to be determined by the appropriate transit agency/authority.

#### Angular Plane

- g. Provide a 45 degree angular plane taken at a height equivalent to 80% of the right-of-way width along the Dundas Street West frontage and from any flanking street in the case of corner lots.

#### Building Stepback

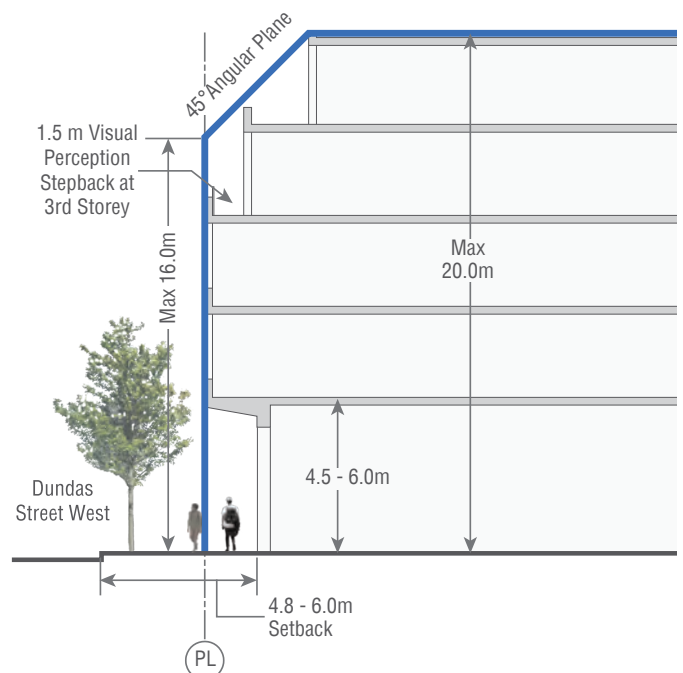
- h. Provide a minimum 1.5 metre pedestrian perception stepback at 10.5 metres along the Dundas Street West frontage.



Auto-related uses such as auto body shops, car wash, gas station occupy most of the area in the Dundas Point Precinct. This area has large paved surfaces with very little greenery.



A view looking towards the intersection of Dundas Street West and Sorara Avenue which can be an Entry Node into the area.

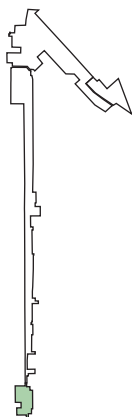


Section Diagram E - Dundas Point Built Form Section.

## 5.4 Roncesvalles South

The Roncesvalles South precinct does not have a consistent built form when compared to the Roncesvalles Main Street precinct. This precinct has a mixture of low-rise apartments, mixed-use buildings, mid-rise office buildings, as well as strip plazas with surface parking and an 11-storey apartment building.

The east side of this precinct has limited redevelopment potential. The majority of development opportunities will be on the west side of the precinct. Due to the TTC rail yard to the west, mitigation strategies may be required if development is contemplated within close proximity to the rail yard.



- e. New buildings on the west side of Roncesvalles Avenue are to provide a minimum building face to curb distance of 4.8 metres at grade.
- f. A minimum 7.5 metre rear yard setback from properties designated *Neighbourhoods*.
- g. A minimum 5.5 metre rear yard setback from properties designated *Mixed-Use Areas*.

### Angular Plane

- h. A 45 degree angular plane taken from a height equivalent to 80% of the right-of-way width along the Roncesvalles Avenue frontage and along any flanking street in the case of corner lots.
- i. If adjacent to a property designated *Neighbourhoods*, provide a rear yard setback of 7.5 metres from the rear lot line or, in the case of an abutting public lane, from the opposite side of the lane, and provide a 45 degree angular plane from a height of 10.5 metres above the 7.5 metre setback line.

## GUIDELINES

### Building Height

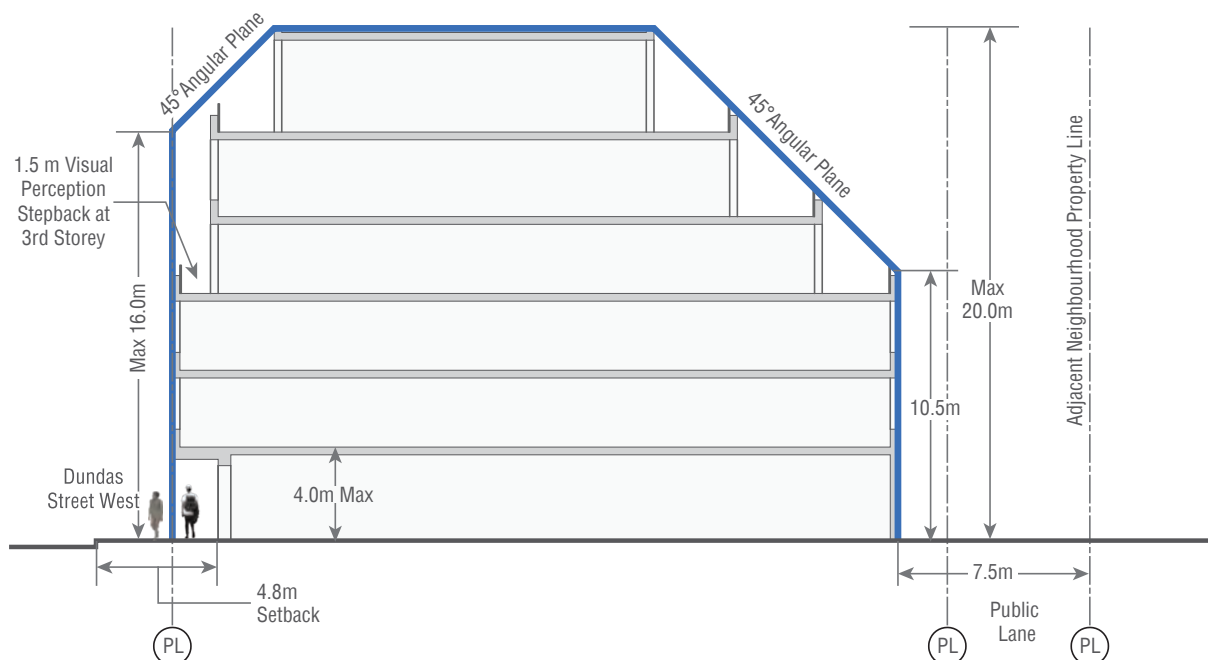
- a. Maximum building height of 20.0 metres.
- b. Maximum mechanical penthouse height of 5.0 metres above the roof level.
- c. Maximum ground floor height of 4.5 metres.

### Building Setback

- d. New buildings on the east side of Roncesvalles Avenue to align with the prevailing street wall.

### Building Stepback

- j. A minimum 1.5 metre pedestrian perception stepback on the third storey or at 10.5 metres along the Roncesvalles Avenue frontage and along any flanking street in the case of corner lots.
- k. New vertical additions on heritage properties will step back from street facing elevations. The stepback distance will be determined based on design, scale and massing of the proposed addition.



Section Diagram F - Roncesvalles South Built Form Section



A building on Dundas Street West taking advantage of the corner location with active use at-grade to animate an important intersection in the neighbourhood. The building bays and articulation address both frontages effectively to create a strong neighbourhood identity.

## 6.0 Building Design

### 6.1 Rhythm and Articulation

In general, the prevailing pattern of buildings in the Study Area are smaller-scaled buildings with narrow frontages ranging from 4.5 metres to 8.0 metres in width. The fine-grain pattern of buildings create a comfortable rhythm on the street, contributing to the character of Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West.

The design of the front façade should have a rhythm of bays that generally range from 6.0 metres to 8.0 metres wide, similar to the traditional storefronts found in the Study Area. This articulation can be achieved through the introduction of vertical elements or changes in materials. A combination of horizontal and vertical elements will help to create interest and a rhythm for building façades. Large areas of glass may be appropriate in certain locations, but should still include elements that break up the length of buildings.

#### GUIDELINES

- a. Provide a rhythm of building bays that generally range from 4.5 metres to 8.0 metres.
- b. Provide articulation through the introduction of vertical elements for buildings with frontages wider than 8.0 metres to reduce visual length.

- c. Reference horizontal datum lines and vertical bays of adjacent buildings, such as cornices, signage band areas, and recessed entries etc. to maintain a consistent architectural rhythm on the street.
- d. Limit large areas of glass or provide architectural elements to visually divide the surface area.
- e. Provide articulation on visible side elevations to avoid blank walls.
- f. For corner properties, provide a rhythm of building bays and articulation to address both frontages.



Due to the larger built forms and the lack of distinguishable architectural rhythm, articulation, or respect for datum lines, this portion of Roncesvalles Avenue is less cohesive when compared to the Roncesvalles Main Street Precinct.





Diagram G - A potential new building fitting in with the existing architectural rhythm of the street by creating vertical bays similar in width to existing buildings.

## 6.2 Retail Frontage

Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West have retail frontages which are typical of Toronto main streets, with fine-grain units of smaller retail stores. Horizontal signage bands mimic traditional cornice lines reinforcing a prominent ground floor, and vertical elements such as recessed entrances help create interest and rhythm for building façades along the street.

New developments should continue this pattern of small-scale, narrow retail frontages in order to provide visual interest and also to encourage small, independent retailers by creating small retail floor plates at grade. This is consistent with the area's character of local shops and independent retailers and business owners.

### GUIDELINES

- Provide recessed entrances to retail stores or to entrances accessing upper floors to articulate the ground floor frontage.
- Limit the use of large continuous glass store frontage that is not characteristic of the prevailing retail frontages.
- Consider the signage band design and integrate features such as awnings and canopies where appropriate.
- Avoid large back-lit signage boxes.



A well-designed storefront with seasonal seating creates a comfortable and attractive streetscapel



Retail entrances are to be recessed to maintain the existing rhythm of entrances.

## 6.3 Building Materials

Buildings within the Study Area should be clad in high quality materials reflective of the character the street. A combination of traditional materials such as brick and stone should be used to reinforce the main street and industrial character of the Study Area. The use of large and continuous glass surfaces on buildings and retail storefronts should be limited or be used in locations which do not have a fine-grained retail character.

### GUIDELINES

- Use solid materials such as brick and stone to reflect and reinforce the architectural character of the area.
- Avoid large and continuous glass surfaces on buildings and retail storefronts or break-up glass areas to create fine-grained character.



Well positioned and high quality doors, windows, and architectural details such as a canopy, railing, screen, and planting areas all work together to enhance the public realm.

## 6.4 Access and Loading

Improvements to the public realm should be paramount as part of any new development in the Study Area. Features that detract from the public realm, including curb cuts, surface parking, servicing and loading should be avoided. Parking are to be contained within below-grade structures of new developments, and vehicular access should be located and designed to minimize interruptions to pedestrian movement (e.g. access from rear lanes or side streets). Where adjacent lanes or existing driveways are available, new curb cuts for vehicles on Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West will not be permitted as they interrupt the pedestrian environment and prohibit continuous streetscape improvements.

### GUIDELINES

- Incorporate parking garage ramps, access stairs, garbage collection/storage areas, and loading areas into the building.
- Provide access to site servicing and parking at the rear of the building/site, from a lane, or from a shared driveway.
- Limit the negative impact of a service area or elements on the public realm by locating the area out of view and by screening with attractive architectural features and landscaping.
- Avoid any curb cuts, vehicular access, and loading areas from Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West.



Solid building materials combined with fine-grained retail create an attractive streetscape. With access and loading activities at the rear of properties, the primary street frontage can be uninterrupted by service activities.



Avoid freestanding underground garage ramps and access stairs, but rather incorporate these within the building.

# 7.0 Public Realm

## 7.1 Special Areas, Parks and Open Spaces

**Entry Node** - A place of entry into an area or neighbourhood.

Entry Nodes should be the celebrated entrances into the neighbourhood where special features such as public art, public open spaces, and area-defining features are located. The Peace Garden, located at the intersection of Dundas Street West and Roncesvalles Avenue, is a good example of an Entry Node. This open space welcomes visitors into the neighbourhood and nurtures a sense of community and pride.

**Focus Area** - A community gathering place where many community uses, attractions, and day-to-day activities occur.

Focus Areas are places where most activities occur. These can be areas where people come to shop, congregate and come together for special events and activities. Additional attention should be paid to enhance, strengthen, and improve these areas to ensure Focus Areas function as the focus for the Study Area. Proposed development adjacent to Focus Areas must contribute to the vitality of the area.

**Boulevard Space** - Publicly owned portions of the right-of-way on side streets which are not typically used for publicly accessible uses.

The boulevard space between the curb and private property lines where side streets meet the main street are opportunities for public realm improvements. These boulevard spaces are on public property, however, they are often fenced off, neglected, or used for surface parking. In some instances, these spaces are used for restaurant patios or for seasonal retail and are essential to the profitability of many businesses. Some of these publicly owned boulevard spaces should be included for use by the public. They should be designed to contribute to the streetscape, public realm, and included as part of the community's open space areas. The boulevard spaces prioritized to become public spaces are located in the Focus Areas (found on Map E), and should be designed to create community focus and be made accessible to the public.

**Park and Open Space** - Parks are publicly owned land for recreational uses. Open spaces can be made up of public or privately owned land mainly for recreational/community uses.

Local public parks and open spaces are not plentiful within the surrounding the Study Area. The eastern-most edge of High Park, the City's largest park, is located within a walking distance, however, much of this park's community amenities such as playgrounds and off-leash dog runs are centrally located within the park and thereby are far from the Study area. Other parks such as Sorauren Park and Columbus Parkette are very well used with a strong sense of community.

Other open spaces, such as the Peace Garden at the intersection of Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West, are vital to creating an inviting place.

### GUIDELINES

- Development in proximity to, or within, an Entry Node and Focus Area will consider providing additional Open Space and/or additional building setbacks to create a place of entry to the neighbourhood in the form of a forecourt, plaza, or other publicly accessible open space (See POPS Guidelines).
- Boulevard Spaces will be designed and upgraded to provide additional public realm improvement opportunities, bicycle parking, and pedestrian amenities.



Fenced-off boulevard space privatizes the public right-of-way.



An example of an under-used boulevard space transformed into a small parkette on Dundas Street West (outside of Study Area).

## 7.2 Pedestrian Connections and Safety

### Pedestrian Connections

The Study Area generally has good pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods. However, some major barriers, such as the rail corridor and irregular street intersections, impede the access to other areas of the city and destinations. Map E shows potential locations for new pedestrian connections and existing connections to be enhanced to improve the integration of the Study Area to the surrounding area and amenities.

### Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is a key concern for the community and an important part in creating a walkable and pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood. Key concerns include vehicular speed, large pedestrian crossings, and narrow sidewalks.

The Study Area also has multiple challenging intersections for pedestrians due to the angled orientation of Dundas Street West, the triangular point where Dundas Street West and Roncesvalles Avenue merge together, and the point where The Queensway, King Street West, Queen Street West and Roncesvalles Avenue intersect. These intersections should be improved to create safer pedestrian and cycling crossings and more seamless access to the surrounding neighbourhood, amenities, and open spaces.

Below is a list of areas identified as Pedestrian Safety Improvement Areas which should be studied and road safety interventions should be considered to improve the overall safety.

### GUIDELINES

- Provide pedestrian connections to improve connectivity throughout the Study Area and the surrounding neighbourhoods, including connections to parks and open spaces such as High Park, Sorauren Park, Sunnyside Park, and Lake Ontario.
- Consider future developments and opportunities to connect across rail corridors where possible.
- Consider opportunities to improve pedestrian safety at key intersections and pedestrian crossings. See Map E.



An example of a pedestrian-oriented mid-block walkway that connects different streets and neighbourhoods in a pleasant and safe environment.



The intersection at Howard Park Avenue and Dundas Street West has long pedestrian crossings and large turning radii for vehicles.



The intersection at Roncesvalles Avenue and Dundas Street West is another irregular intersection in the Study Area.