

Identify Signage Character Areas

Building on the distinction of each particular area within the 'Yonge Strip' Precinct, a hierarchy of intensity, animation and scale can be defined according to Signage Character Areas.

Yonge-Dundas Square:

The area around Dundas Square is the heart of the precinct and currently includes the largest and most recent major signage installations and is appropriate for the highest 'peak' for signage intensity, animation and scale. Dundas Square will remain the focal point for signage within the precinct.

Yonge-Dundas Square to Gerrard:

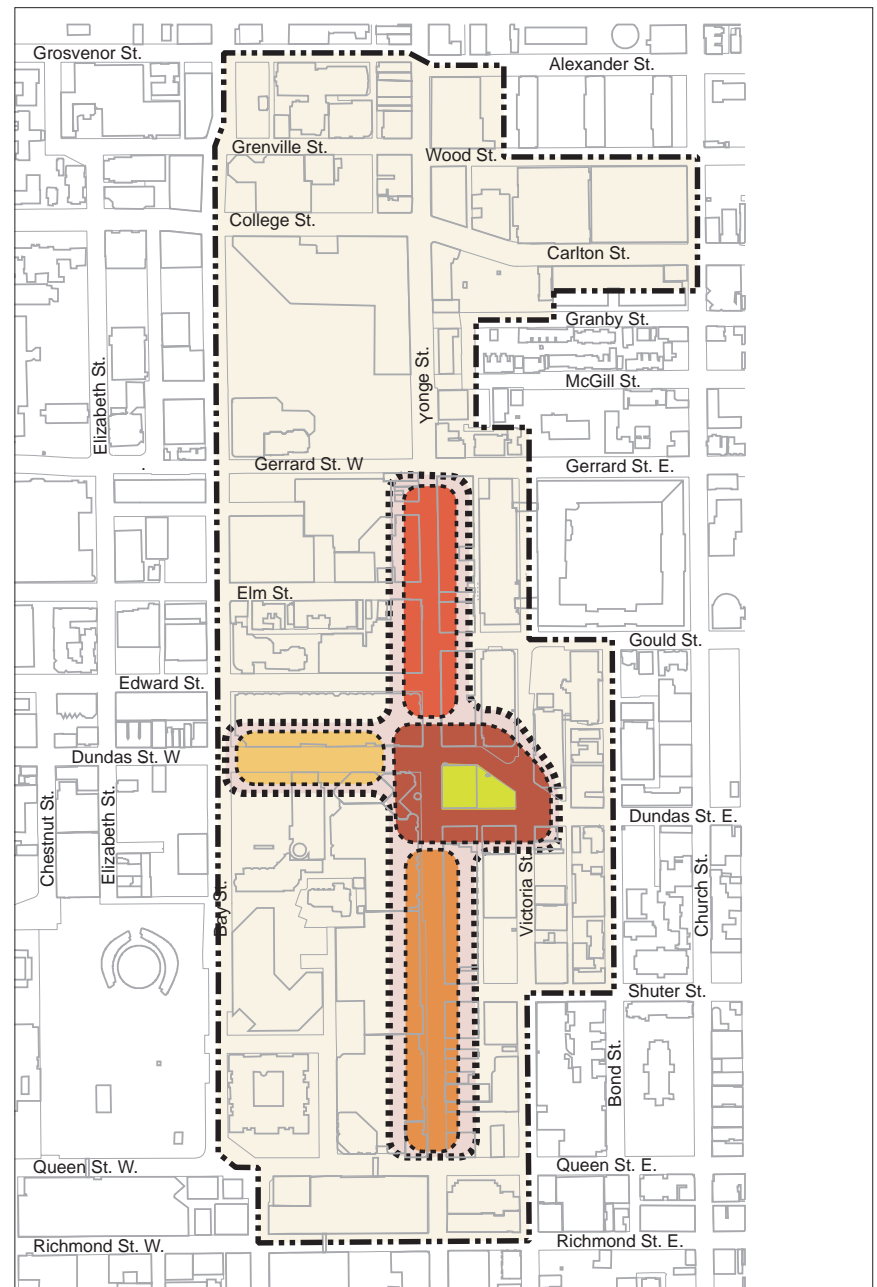
The approach to Yonge-Dundas Square from the north is the area historically associated with large-scale vibrant signage but generally limited in heights of no more than 4 storeys. Signage here can continue to be vibrant, illuminated and animated but within a height range that respects the street proportions.

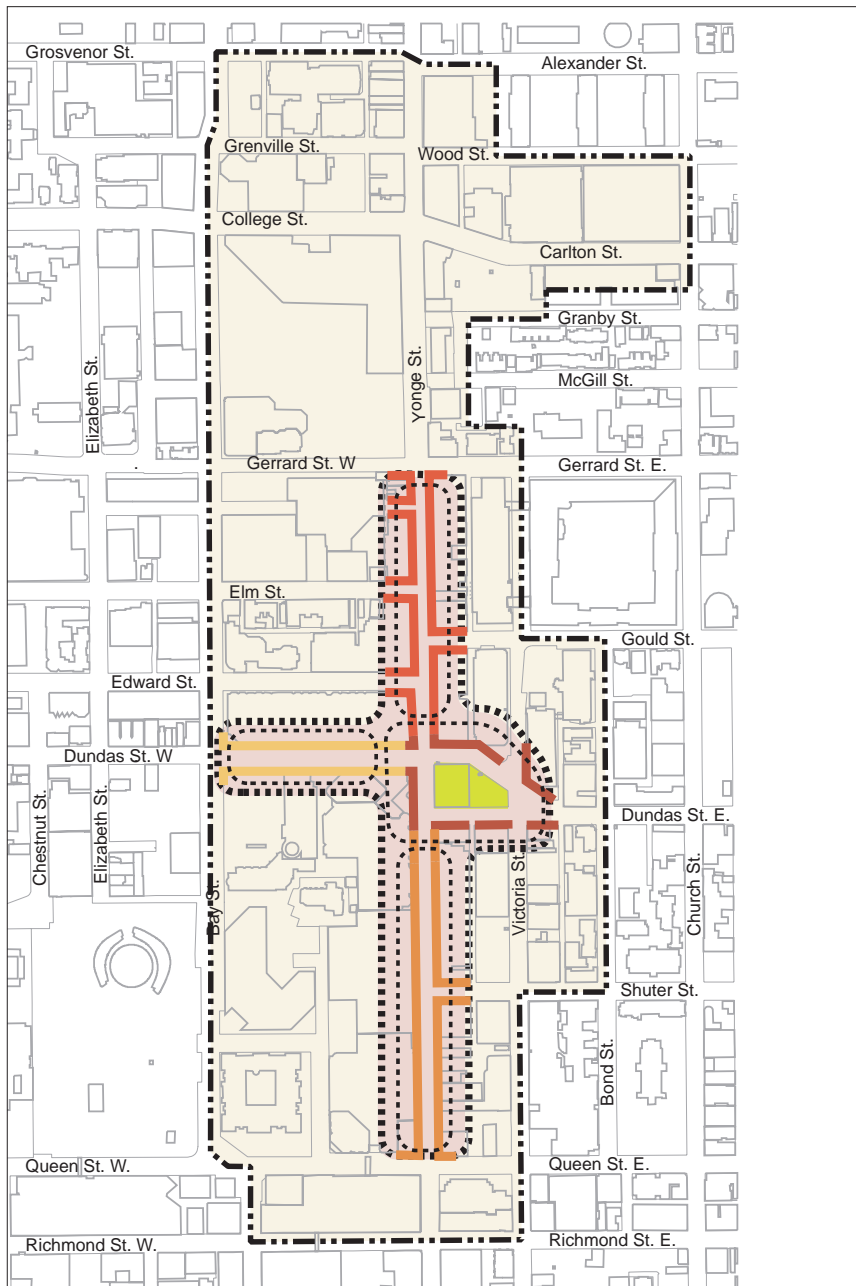
Yonge-Dundas Square to Queen:

The approach to Yonge-Dundas Square from the south is generally framed by taller buildings, many of them of heritage stock. This condition is also reflected in greater height permissions in the zoning by-law. Signage here should be of a height that is consistent with the existing street wall; complementary of the heritage character; and, of less vibrancy and animation than Yonge-Dundas Square or the strip between Dundas Square and Gerrard Street.

Yonge-Dundas Square to Bay:

The segment of Dundas Street between Yonge and Bay Streets is framed by three major non-residential functions that are closely linked to the 'Yonge Strip' Precinct: The Eaton Centre, The Atrium on Bay and Ryerson University. Large-format first-party signage already exists or is anticipated along this corridor. To serve as an approach to Yonge-Dundas Square from the west, bold and large-scaled signage may be accommodated within the existing street wall heights. However, it should only be first-party signage and there should be a notable reduction in the level of illumination and animation moving from Dundas Square towards Bay Street.





Appropriate Enclosure of Public Space

Signage should reinforce the street wall by consolidating signage in a manner that will lend to the area's continuity and cohesion and that will enhance the pedestrian experience. Reinforcing the street wall is accomplished primarily through consistent heights and setbacks and design integration. Signage should as much as possible be designed to not appear to have a 'billboard' quality and character. Principles for ensuring appropriate enclosure include:

- Signage should not extend beyond the prescribed heights outlined below
- First-Party signage should be predominant at the grade and second levels with commercial uses that are clearly legible and that engage with the sidewalk
- Signage above buildings should not be setback relative to the front building wall and should be designed and integrated in such a way that it appears to extend the street wall
- New buildings should be designed to architecturally integrate signage within the street wall in a manner that is consistent with the objectives of this vision
- Signage along the street wall is the most visible to the pedestrian and should therefore be of the highest possible material and architectural quality

Principles specific to the Signage Character Areas are as follows:

Dundas Square:

Yonge-Dundas Square is a key part of the City's parks and open space areas and preserving usability of the Square for public functions is of critical importance. The scale of the square permits the greatest street wall heights to ensure the space is provided with an appropriate sense of enclosure. In general, signage should be consistent with a 36 metre street wall height. Signage that generates significant shadows on the Square will not be permitted. Where minimal shadows on the Square are of concern, review should consider the desire for sun penetration and providing the space with appropriately proportioned enclosure and the area's use and function in all seasons and at night. Alternative solutions to constraining height when shadowing is a concern may include:

- setting back the signage; and,
- other potential design solutions to the structure or material quality that permits adequate sun penetration, such as the use of translucent signage.

Not all sites surrounding the Square are equal and will be considered in the context of their impact on the public realm. Landmark signage opportunities identified for sites with heritage buildings will need to be treated differently than those without heritage buildings, with particular respect for heritage values and features. This can include considerations of different scale, size, placement and materials at these locations.

Dundas Square to Gerrard:

Signage heights should not exceed the existing 16 metre height restrictions for the street wall (current zoning permits 20 metre heights subject to a 44° angular plane beginning at a 16 metre base height). At identified Key Visual Sites, modest additions in height above the prescribed street wall may be permitted subject to the design principles.

Dundas Square to Queen:

Signage heights should not exceed the existing 28 metre height restrictions for the street wall (current zoning permits 30-76 metre heights subject to a 60° angular plane beginning at a 28 metre base height). At identified Key Visual Sites, modest additions in height above the prescribed street wall may be permitted subject to the design principles.

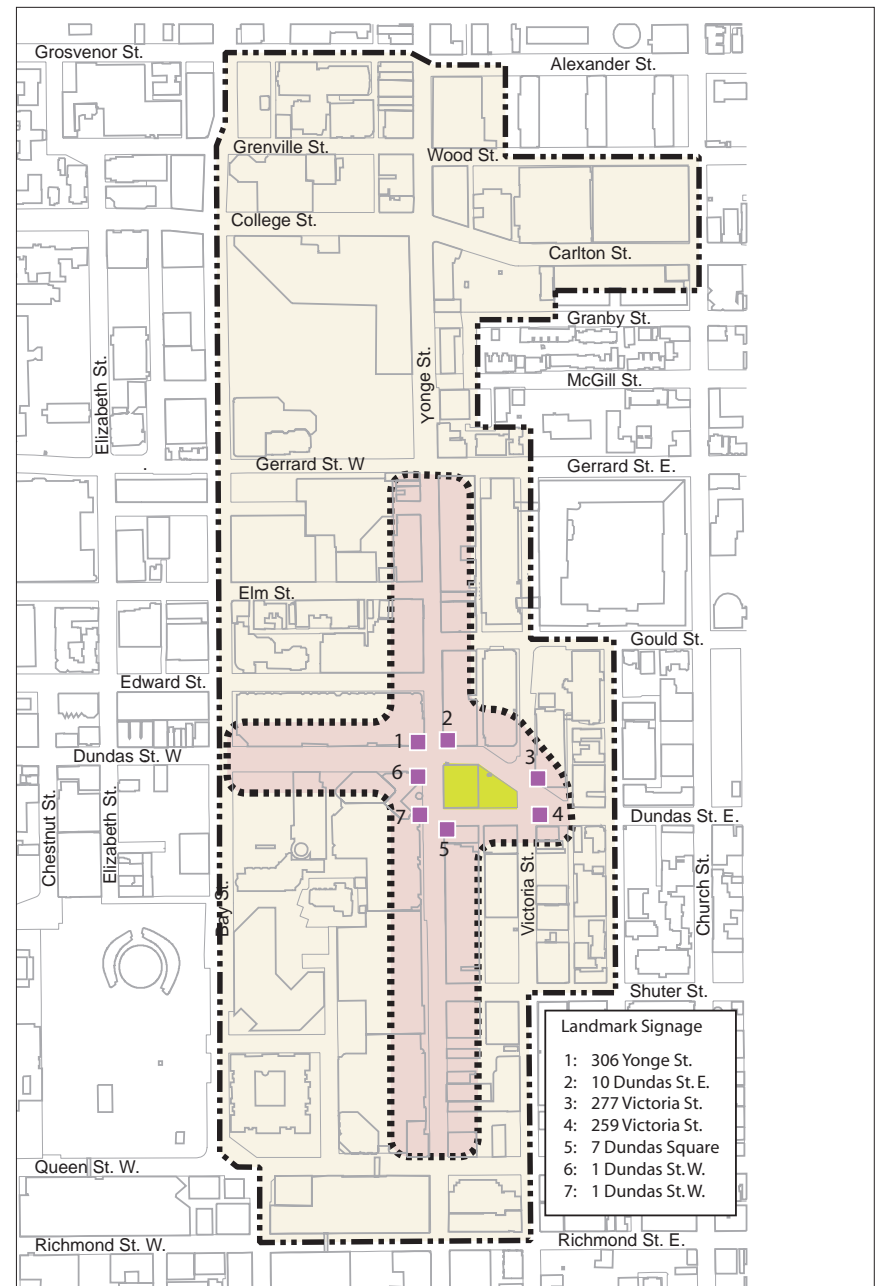
Dundas Square to Bay:

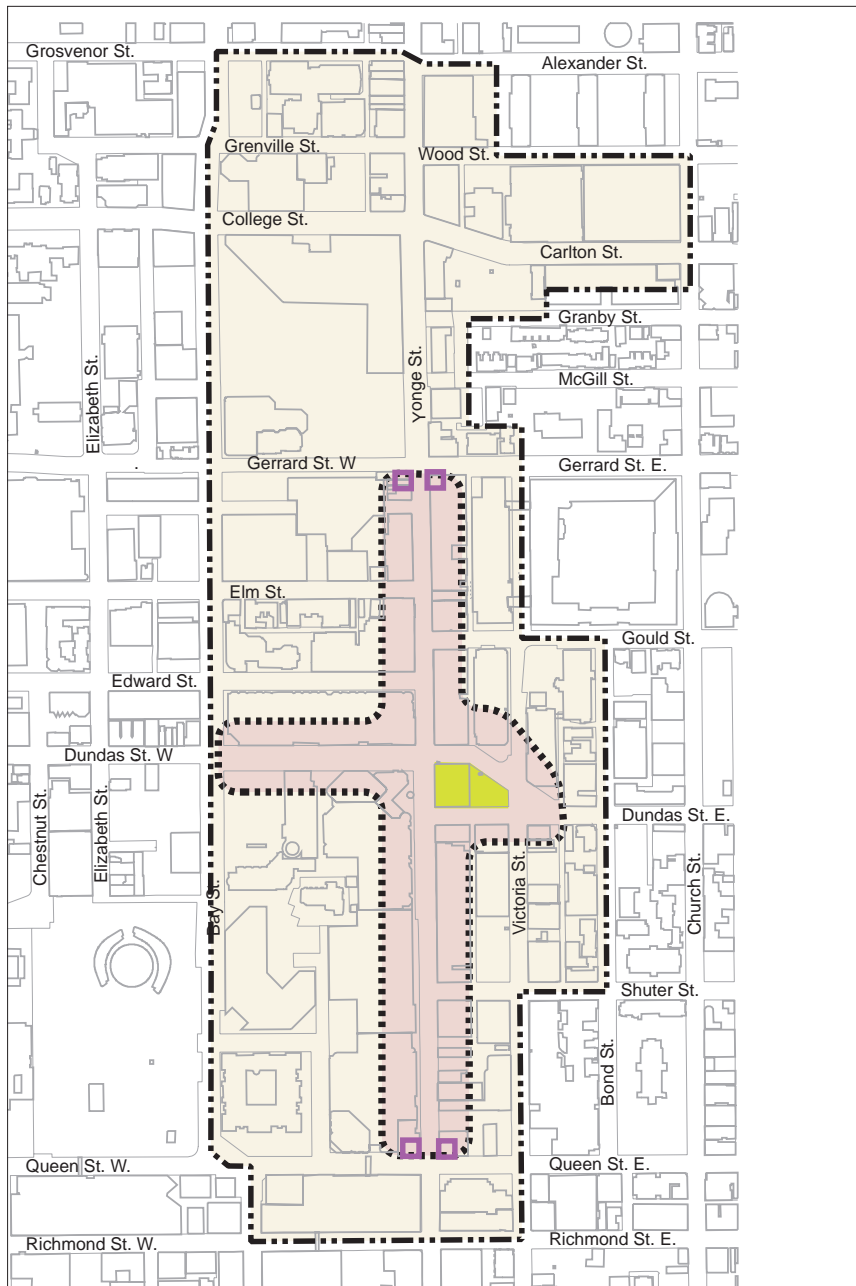
Signage heights should not extend beyond the existing building street wall.

Key Visual Sites: Dundas Square Landmark Signage

Landmark Signage for key visual sites are identified for Dundas Square to reinforce the primary importance of this area within the precinct. Design principles include:

- Should be located at key corners and view terminus sites
- Should be of the highest architectural quality and design
- Some of these sites are appropriate for the tallest signage structures in the strip, and consideration must be given to the context of the site.





Key Visual Sites: Gateway Signage

To accentuate key entry and egress points of the precinct, signage that perform as Gateway markers are permitted. Design principles include:

- To be constrained to the corners locations of the property
- To accentuate the gateway treatment, signage at the corner is permitted to be taller than the allowable street wall height, but not to exceed the maximum permitted zoning height
- Slender architectural features excluding signage may extend beyond the permitted zoning height
- Should be designed as much as possible to twin with adjacent gateway signage in scale and architectural quality, without necessarily being identical
- These sites oblige the highest possible quality in architectural design, lighting and framing
- All four of the gateway sites are heritage buildings and must be considered appropriately; refer to the heritage inventory map on page 31 and the full list in Appendix A.
- Where signage wraps onto a cross-street to the 'Yonge Strip', signage may have no more than 15 metres of frontage from the corner.

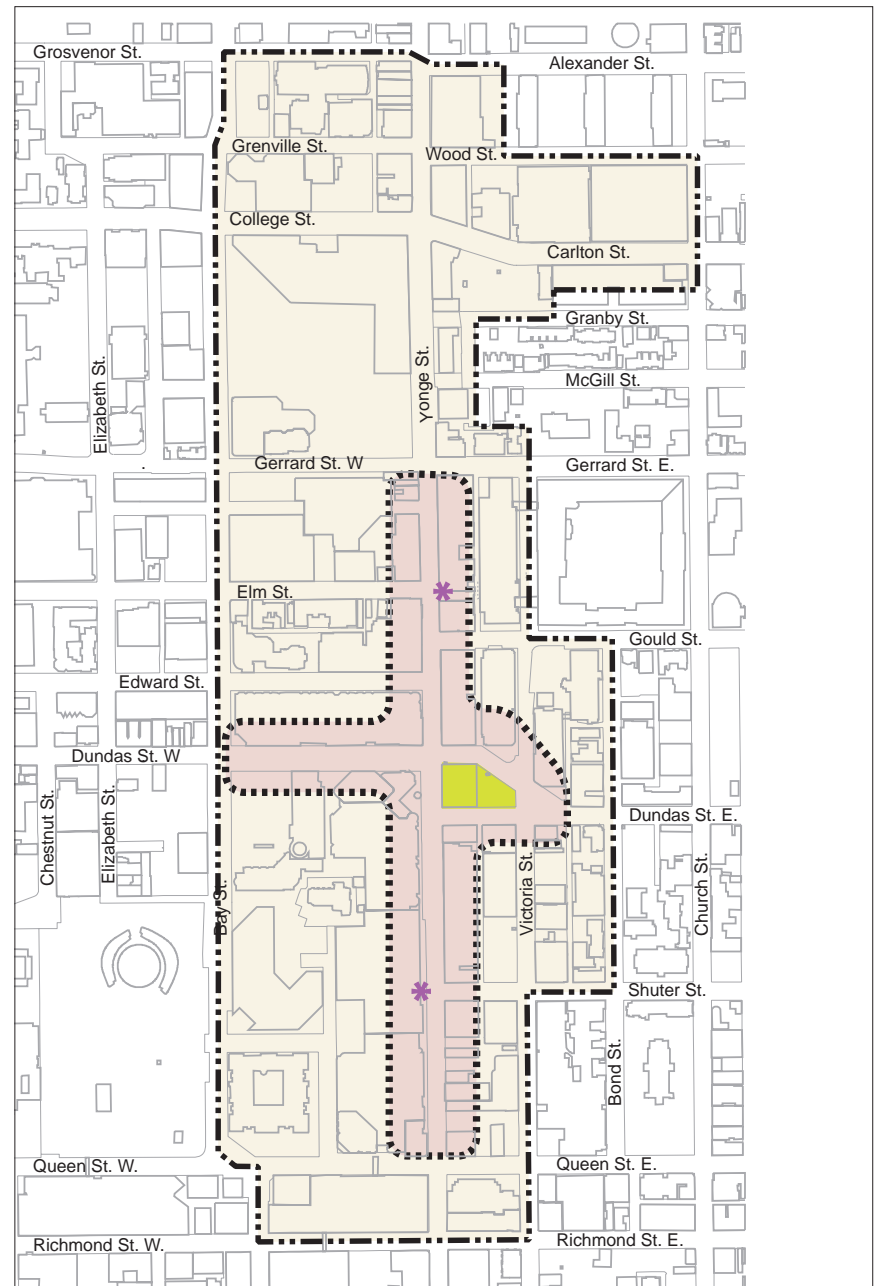
Significant residential developments are anticipated at the north-west corner of Yonge and Gerrard Streets and the south-west corner of Dundas and Bay Streets. The proximity of dwellings facing these gateways will constrain the amount and intensity of illumination at these locations.

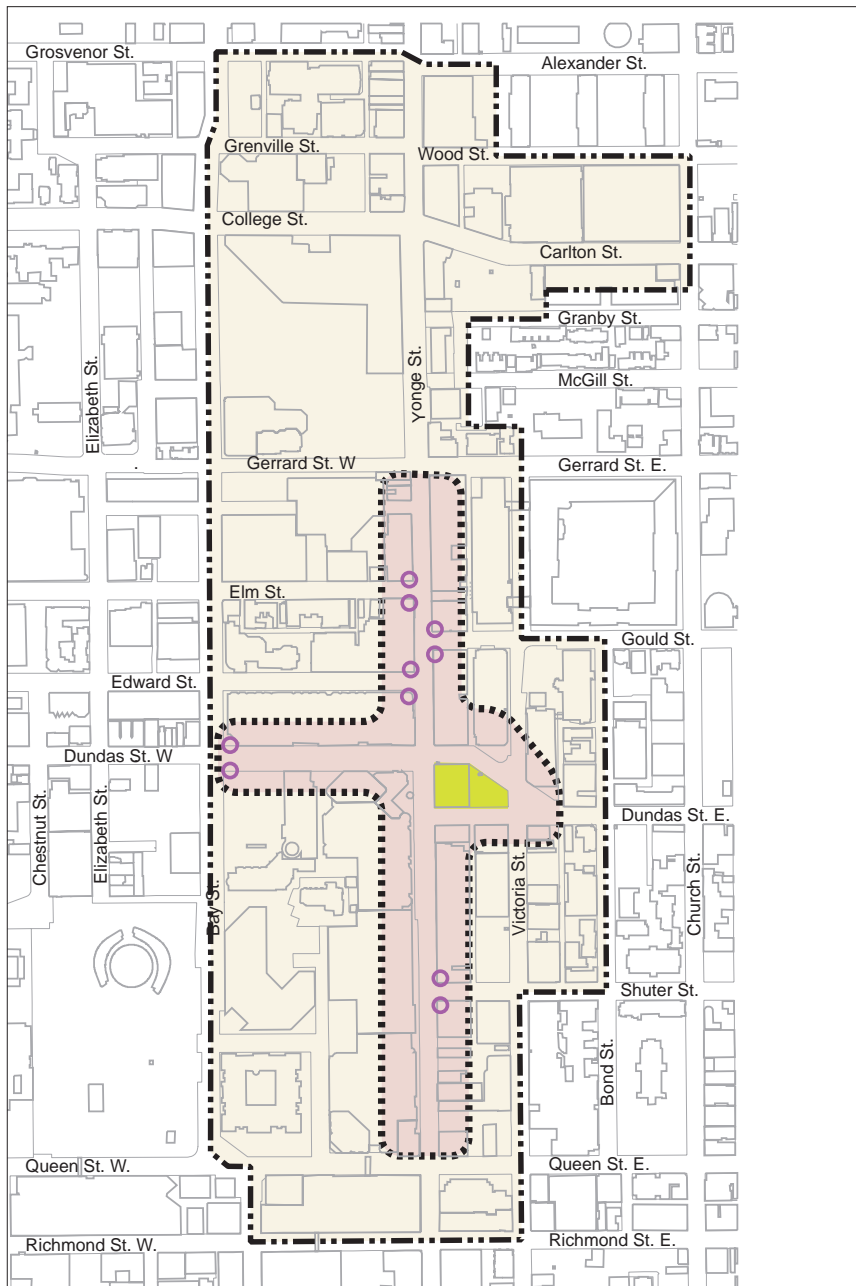
The Urban Design Strategy

Key Visual Sites: Terminating Signage

To accentuate where important cross streets visually terminate at Yonge Street, unique Terminating Signage treatments are permitted. Design principles include:

- Slender architectural features excluding signage may extend beyond the permitted zoning heights
- Should be designed to respond directly to the view axis by orienting signage and architectural features to be centred on the view corridor
- These sites oblige the highest possible quality in architectural design, lighting and framing
- Terminating signage treatments should be set back from the street wall.





Key Visual Sites: Corner Sites

To accentuate sites at important intersecting streets, unique Corner Signage treatments are permitted. Design principles include:

- Should be oriented to the primary corner
- These sites oblige the highest possible quality in architectural design, lighting and framing
- Many corner buildings are heritage buildings and must be considered appropriately; refer to the heritage inventory in appendix A.
- Signage is encouraged to reinforce the corner in its orientation and design.
- Where signage wraps onto a cross-street to the Yonge Strip, signage may have no more than 15 metres of frontage from the corner.



Integrate and Conserve Heritage Buildings

Numerous heritage buildings exist in the area that are to be retained and enhanced. The strategy for signage within the 'Yonge Strip' does not intend to supersede good heritage conservation principles and objectives. The implementation of this plan should endeavour to conserve heritage in the area. Additions should not diminish the impact of the heritage buildings and should be sympathetic to architectural orders, rather than harmonize with them. However, because the 'Yonge Strip' is recognized as a unique area for signage within the city, an exceptional approach has been considered for signage on heritage buildings. These exceptions apply only to this precinct while heritage in other areas continue to be subject to standard guidelines for signage as outlined in separate City policy documents. Any buildings with heritage potential can be put forward for listing or designation by Council at any time.

Design principles for integrating signage include:

Buildings Not Appropriate for Large-Format or Third-Party Signage

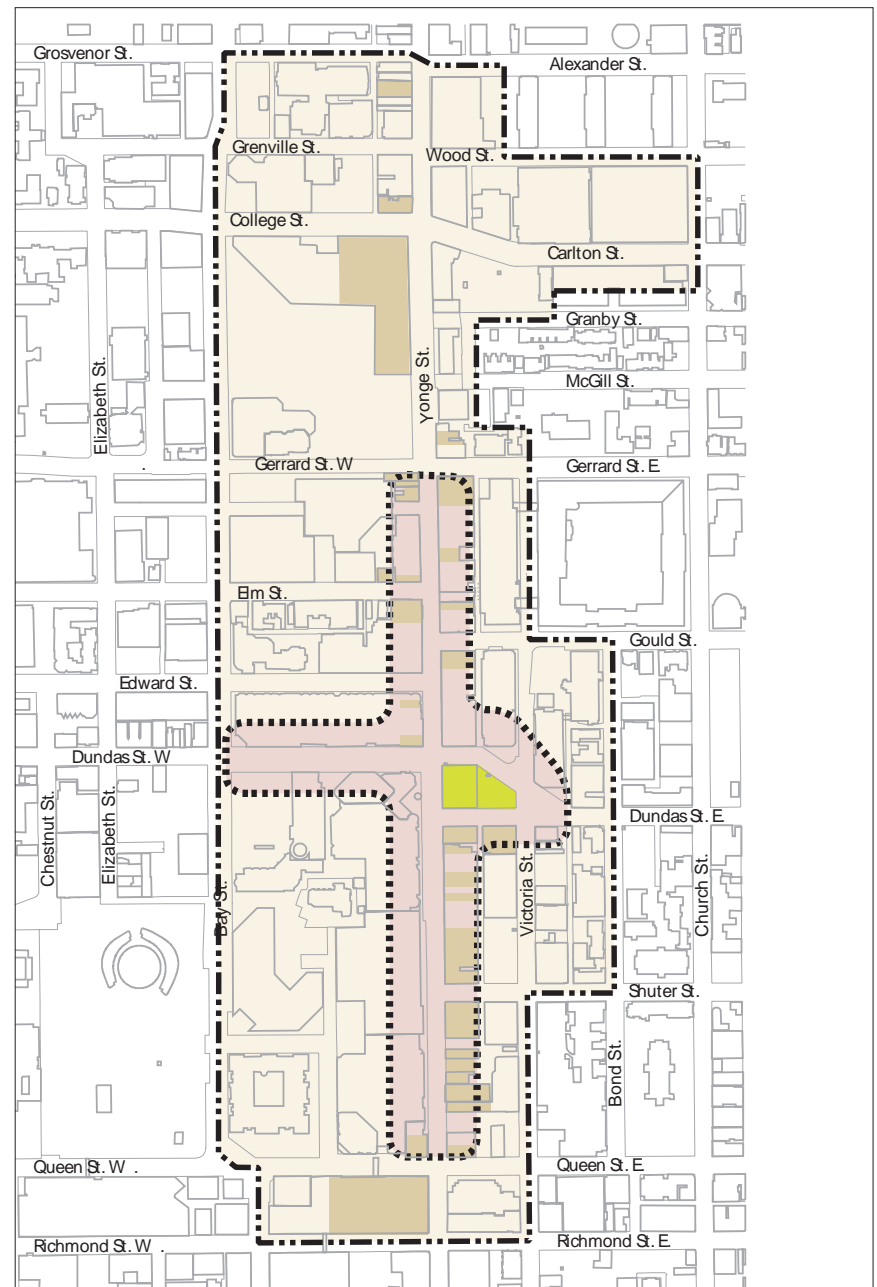
Not all heritage properties are appropriate for new signage. Some structures have characteristics and significance which cannot accommodate large-format signage despite the intention of the larger signage program for the Yonge Street BIA corridor, such as rooftop, structured, and fixed signage. These structures include, but are not limited to:

- Temple banks
- House form buildings
- Buildings with irregular or angled roofs that could not easily accommodate a new signage structure or where the roof is a recognized attribute
- Heritage buildings with pre-existing heritage signs

General Standards for Signage on Heritage Buildings

General standards to be adhered to in considering large-format signage for heritage buildings (source: *The Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*):

- Conserve the heritage value of a historic place. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable character defining elements. Do not move a part of a historic place if its current location is a character defining element.
- Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention.



- Evaluate the existing condition of character defining elements to determine the appropriate intervention needed. Use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.
- Conserve the heritage value and character defining elements when creating a new addition to a historic place or any related new construction. Make the new work physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.
- Create any new additions or related new construction so that the essential form and integrity of a historic place will not be impaired if the new work is removed in the future.

Guidelines for Signage on Heritage Buildings

Signage Should Retain the Visual Prominence of Heritage

- Signage should not obscure character-defining materials, forms or spatial configurations, including unique and visible roof forms and lines
- Smaller signage along horizontal and vertical orders is preferable so that no character-defining elements are hidden
- Promote signage atop or separate from the building itself, ensuring that the building is not damaged or destroyed by the signage
- The type of signage and its display method should be as inconspicuous as possible
- Whenever possible, the design of a large-format sign on a heritage building should be designed to minimize its impact upon the building while allowing for effective signage.

Signage as Additions to Heritage Resources

- There should be a clear distinction between what is historic and what is an addition
- All roof top signage should create a visual 'break' or 'gap' between the bottom of the sign and the top of the building's nearest structural component (parapet, roof top, building edge, etc.) to ensure it is visually separate from the building.
- Additions should be "visually compatible":
 - Signage should fit within existing architecture wherever possible.



Photo by Ian Mulloo

Signage as an addition to a heritage building that fits in with its context.



Photo by Ian Mulloo

Distinctive historic signage such as the one at the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre should be protected.

- Additions should be compatible in mass: The size and scale of signage should be limited to its relationship with the heritage building; signage should not be larger than the building itself
- Additions should be designed to harmonize with the architectural 'orders' of the heritage building – the key vertical and horizontal articulations in the façade

Signage Framing

- When installed on heritage buildings, framing should be minimized as much as possible to reduce the visual interference with the heritage building.

Signage Material and Lighting

- Additions to heritage buildings should generally be sympathetic, subordinate and compatible to the heritage building. It is desirable to encourage signage types on heritage buildings which respect the heritage of the area while complimenting the larger signage vision. Historic material types (such as neon) on dynamic displays, or static displays are preferred. Backlighting is acceptable, however other forms of lighting that are more sensitive to the heritage building are strongly preferred.

Signage as Banners

- Banners can be incorporated into some buildings provided it is compatible with the architecture of the building, for example, suspended between columns on a classically inspired building. These may only be appropriate as temporary signage, but must adhere to the standards and guidelines.

Tilting Signage

- Tilting signage diminishes the impact of the façade and proportions of the buildings and should be eliminated to ensure the proportions of the building are protected and complimented.

Visual Permeability of Signage

- Signage that is not solid or does not have a solid background may be preferred on some buildings. This will minimize the impact of the signage on the building while still allowing for effective advertising.

Historic Types & Grandparenting Old Signage

- Distinctive historic signage types and forms should be protected such as the sign at The Canon Theatre, and the Elgin and Winter Garden. Not only should these be conserved, they may offer technology types or design cues that are desirable for other signage in the area, such as:
 - neon tubing which was prominent in the History of downtown Yonge Street.
 - visual permeability.
 - perpendicular or projecting signage.
- In many cases, signage currently exists in the precinct that does not represent a historic type or form. In these cases, it is the expectation of the City that signage inconsistent with this Vision will be removed. Heritage Preservation Services should be consulted before removing any aged signage in the area.

Scaffolding as Signage

- Where scaffolding is required for construction, the image of the building should be the predominant feature of the scaffolding.

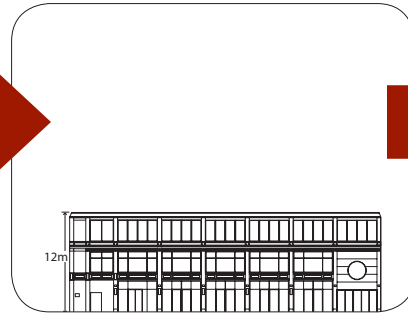
Heritage Conservation

- Signage development should correspond to the highest possible level of conservation of heritage properties and is an expectation of the City.
- The financial benefits of signage in the precinct ought to be passed on to heritage properties that do not have signage opportunities. For example, an option may be a formal system whereby annual signage fees are pooled in a fund administered by the City with grants back to property owners upon completion of heritage conservation work.

Demonstrations of how signage can be applied to heritage buildings are illustrated in the following section.



7 Yonge-Dundas Square



Existing Heritage Structure



Horizontal & Vertical Orders

Street Wall Height 30 metres
Subject to Shadow Impacts

Corner Identified for Yonge-Dundas Square Landmark Signage. Adverse shadow impacts on Yonge-Dundas Square will not be permitted.

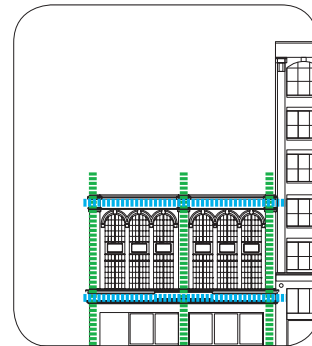
Urban Design Considerations



221 Yonge Street



Existing Heritage Structure



Horizontal & Vertical Orders

Street Wall Height 28 metres maximum

Corner Identified for Corner Treatment. In a context where neighbouring buildings are taller, would suggest taller orders are appropriate.

Urban Design Considerations



385 Yonge Street



Existing Heritage Structure



Horizontal & Vertical Orders

Street Wall Height 16 metres maximum

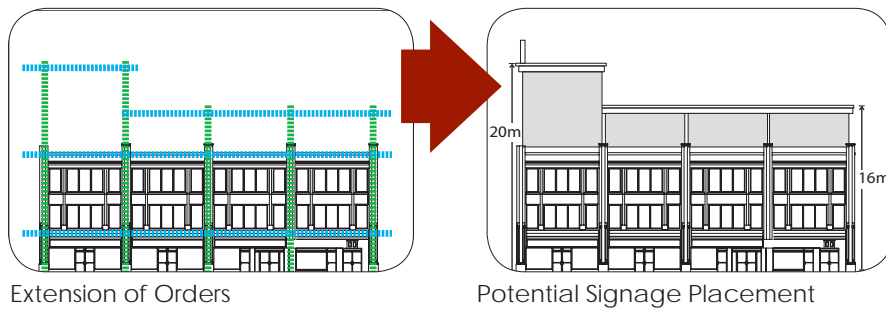
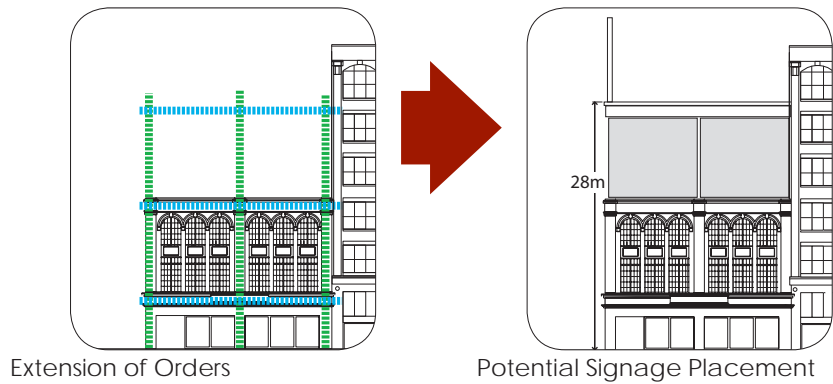
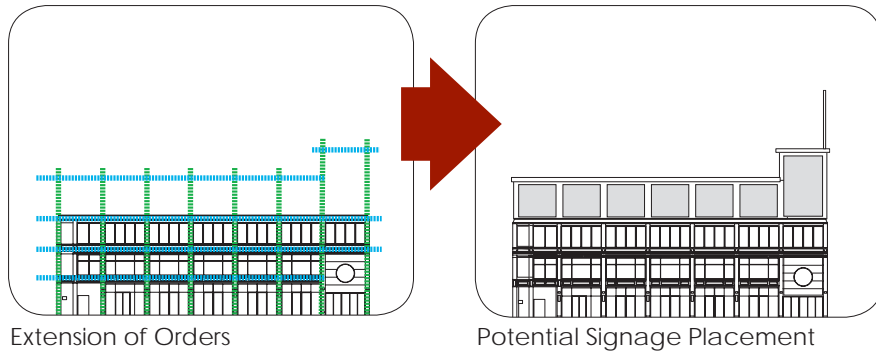
Corner Identified for Gateway Treatment - 20 metres maximum

Urban Design Considerations

The Urban Design Strategy

Demonstration of Design Principles for Signage on Heritage Buildings

The following illustrations are intended to demonstrate how the design principles for signage on heritage buildings would be applied. Three heritage buildings in different Signage Character Areas were selected to illustrate how the different design principles in these respective locations translate into a framework for signage on these specific sites. Signage additions to heritage buildings should be sympathetic to the architectural orders of the building and should not diminish or alter the sense of scale, symmetry and balance of the building.





After: reinforcing the street wall



Before: inconsistent quality of signage and discontinuity in the street wall

After: reinforcing the street wall and enhancing heritage

Before: inconsistent intensity of signage and discontinuity in the street wall



The Urban Design Strategy

Demonstration of Urban Design Strategy

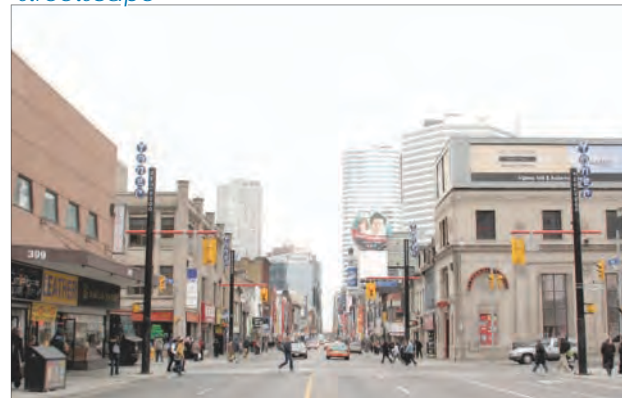
The images on these pages are intended to show 'before' and 'after' photomontages that demonstrate how different areas within the 'Yonge Strip' Precinct could potentially be transformed with the application of the recommended Urban Design Strategy.



After: reinforcing the street wall and defining gateways



Before: inconsistent signage quality and incoherent streetscape



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DIVISION OF SNIDERMAN'S MUSIC HALL

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DIVISION OF SNIDERMAN'S MUSIC HALL

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Other Considerations & Implementation

6

The following implementation strategies arose through the course of the study process and are intended to provide recommendations for unresolved matters that would generally fall within the City's jurisdiction for addressing signage. Some of these ideas were raised in consultation and identified as relevant for consideration in subsequent studies and plans that may emerge in devising implementing polices for large-format signage in this area.

Implementation:

Require Site Plan Approval

All signage that consists of a structure extending beyond the building should require Site Plan Approval to ensure compliance with urban design standards and to secure design and material quality.

Require Licensing

To ensure ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the buildings, licensing large-format signage was raised as a potential means for enforcement. Licensing could be administered by the City and would require on-going renewal so as to ensure the highest possible property and signage standards are maintained. Furthermore, the New City of Toronto Act (2007) provides new opportunities such as tying signage standards and their continual maintenance by making it a requirement under the renewal of a business licence.

Exceptions to the Principles

The design principles in this report are intended to provide benchmarks but are not intended to discourage creative design solutions that may not necessarily meet the standards recommended. Signage design and technologies are constantly evolving and exceptions may be considered where the intent and objectives of the vision and the integrity of the urban design strategy remain intact.

Toronto Preservation Board

The Toronto Preservation Board should be consulted whenever an application for large-format signage is considered for sites on or adjacent to existing heritage resources, so they may provide



Other Considerations & Implementation

guidance with respect to the appropriate mitigation measures (if necessary) and ensure that the signage is compatible with heritage resources.

Signage Peer Review Process

A signage peer review process may be appropriate in this context to uphold the design intent of this vision. Applicants could be required to formally submit their signage applications to be peer reviewed in a timely manner, wherein either refinements could be suggested/negotiated, and/or a recommendation would be made for approval/refusal.

This panel should be professional and representative by nature, including relevant City staff and representatives from the BIA. To ensure that heritage resources within the 'Yonge Strip' Precinct are protected and enhanced, this panel should also include members of the Toronto Preservation Board to ensure their input and involvement in the signage application approvals process.

This will ensure that good heritage conservation principles and objectives are maintained and that no heritage building or its attributes will be compromised as a result of the approval of large-format third party signage on or adjacent to heritage buildings. The peer review process may be administered by the City and paid for by the applicant as part of the signage application fee.

Phasing-in the Vision Should not be Necessary

Much like the evolution of buildings in an urban environment wherein not all buildings will fill out their allowable building envelope at the same time, it is to be expected that the installation of signs in the precinct will evolve in an incremental manner. The district itself is consolidated to an extent that ensures an intensity of signage will be maintained regardless of the sequencing of installation, given that a critical mass of signage currently exists in this area. It can be anticipated that within this consolidated area a momentum for bold and improved signage can take hold. In concert with

the corresponding improvements to individual properties and the overall enhancement of the public realm, this vision can come to fruition.

Other Considerations:

Temporary Signage

Signage on temporary structures such as hoarding around construction sites or on buildings facades or the sides of buildings may not meet the principles recommended in this report but should be held to the same quality standards. To some degree, all signage has an ephemeral or temporary state relative to buildings, but they contribute equally to the quality of the public realm. Consequently, to ensure that the 'Yonge Strip' continues to improve in quality, temporary signage in this area should be held to a higher standard than would generally be considered in other parts of the city.

Fascia Signs

Within the 'Yonge Strip' Precinct, fascia signs that are hung on building walls can be accommodated subject to being consistent with the spirit and intent of this Vision. In other words, greater permissions for fascia signs may be considered within this area, however a higher design standard would also apply. Particularly on blank exposed walls, fascia signs of a high graphic quality can contribute to the area's enhancement. Specific principles to consider include:

- The scale and dimensions of the fascia sign should be proportional to the building wall it occupies.
- On heritage buildings, fascia signs must be consistent with the principles provided in this document.
- The highest graphic design standards are to be considered on all fascia signs.

Temporary hoarding around the Hudson's Bay Store on Queen Street showing an image of the building underneath.



Contributions to Public Art & Public Realm Improvements

Special permissions and exceptions for signage should result in a reasonable public art and public realm contribution that will result in the area's overall enhancement and furthering the objectives of the DYBIA Streetscape Master Plan. Improvements such as lighting, landscaping, and sidewalk improvements should be considered.

An Integrated Public Art Concept

To enhance the area's distinction on the global stage, consideration should be given to generating a unique approach to public art within a signage context. The advanced technology being used for signage today presents tremendous opportunities for creative approaches that would not otherwise exist in other areas. Thinking big about how public art might contribute to a pedestrian's movements and experience of the entire district could be considered and each signage installation might play a role in this concept. A design competition may be appropriate to define an approach to an integrated public art concept.

Integrating Ryerson University

The undeniable presence of Ryerson University both in proximity and in its existing and potential frontages within the 'Yonge Strip' Precinct offers an opportunity to integrate a civic institution within the urban design vision. On one hand a unique approach to signage can showcase the distinction of the University and on the other hand it ensures that the area's vibrancy is one that is truly mixed-use. The University should be encouraged to apply the highest possible design standards (that may include design competitions) to firmly establish its presence in this context.

Develop Comprehensive Signage Guidelines

This report was intended to provide a vision and rational approach to dealing with large-format signage. The scope of the study did not allow for more detailed standards generally associated with Signage Guidelines. It may be appropriate to develop guidelines that can further deal with matters such as signage types, the nature of sign structures, the levels of illumination and other factors that may prove to be important considerations in decision-making.

Listing and Designated Heritage Properties within the Yonge Strip

Address	Building Type	Reason
173 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Context
176 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural Historical Context
184 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural Contextual
188 Yonge Street	Demolished	Architectural Contextual
189 Yonge Street	Miscellaneous	Architectural Contextual
193 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural Historical Contextual
195 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural Historical Contextual
197 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Historical Contextual
199 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Historical Contextual
201 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Historical Contextual
203 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Historical Contextual
205 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Contextual
211 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
215 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
219 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
221 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
223 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
225 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
227 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural

229 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
231 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
233 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
235 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
236-242 Yonge Street	Demolished	Architectural
241 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
248 Yonge Street	Demolished	Architectural Contextual
253 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
261 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural Historical
263 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural Historical
274-278 Yonge Street	Demolished	Architectural Contextual
275-277 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
279-283 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
302 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Contextual
335A Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
335 Yonge Street	Residential	Architectural Contextual
340 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
347 Yonge Street		Signage 'Sam the Record Man'
349 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
363 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
364 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
365 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
372A Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
372 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
374A Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
374 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
376A Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
376 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural

378 Yonge Street	Financial	Architectural Contextual
385-395 Yonge Street	Commercial	Architectural
7 Dundas Square	Commercial	Architectural
17 Dundas Square	Commercial	Architectural
19 Dundas Square	Commercial	Architectural
21 Dundas Square	Commercial	Architectural
33 Dundas Square	Commercial	Architectural
2 Queen Street East	Financial	Architectural Contextual
2 Queen Street West	Commercial	Architectural Contextual
5 Shuter Street	Commercial	Architectural
7 Shuter Street	Commercial	Architectural
15 Shuter Street	Public	Architectural Historical Contextual
297 Victoria Street	Commercial	Architectural Historical
1 Gould Street	Residential	Architectural Contextual
3 Gould Street	Residential	Architectural Contextual
8 Elm Street	Commercial	Architectural Contextual
20 Gerrard Street East	Miscellaneous	Architectural Historical Contextual
1 Gerrard Street West	Financial	Architectural Contextual

Items in **red bold** font are designated properties under the Ontario Heritage Act.

