

## 2.4 Public Realm Constraints

Dense urban areas, such as the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area require ample, well-designed open spaces to ensure a high quality of life. Acquiring open spaces in such areas may be a challenge due to:

- Land availability for parkland acquisition, park expansion, etc.
- Fixed right-of-ways (ROW): Most of the ROWs are predetermined within the City of Toronto Official Plan and create constraints for sidewalk expansion. Reducing or narrowing traffic lanes may result in adverse traffic impacts; therefore, traffic studies and Environmental Assessment (E.A.) studies may be required for such initiatives.





Figure 87. Example of fixed frontage of existing heritage buildings within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area

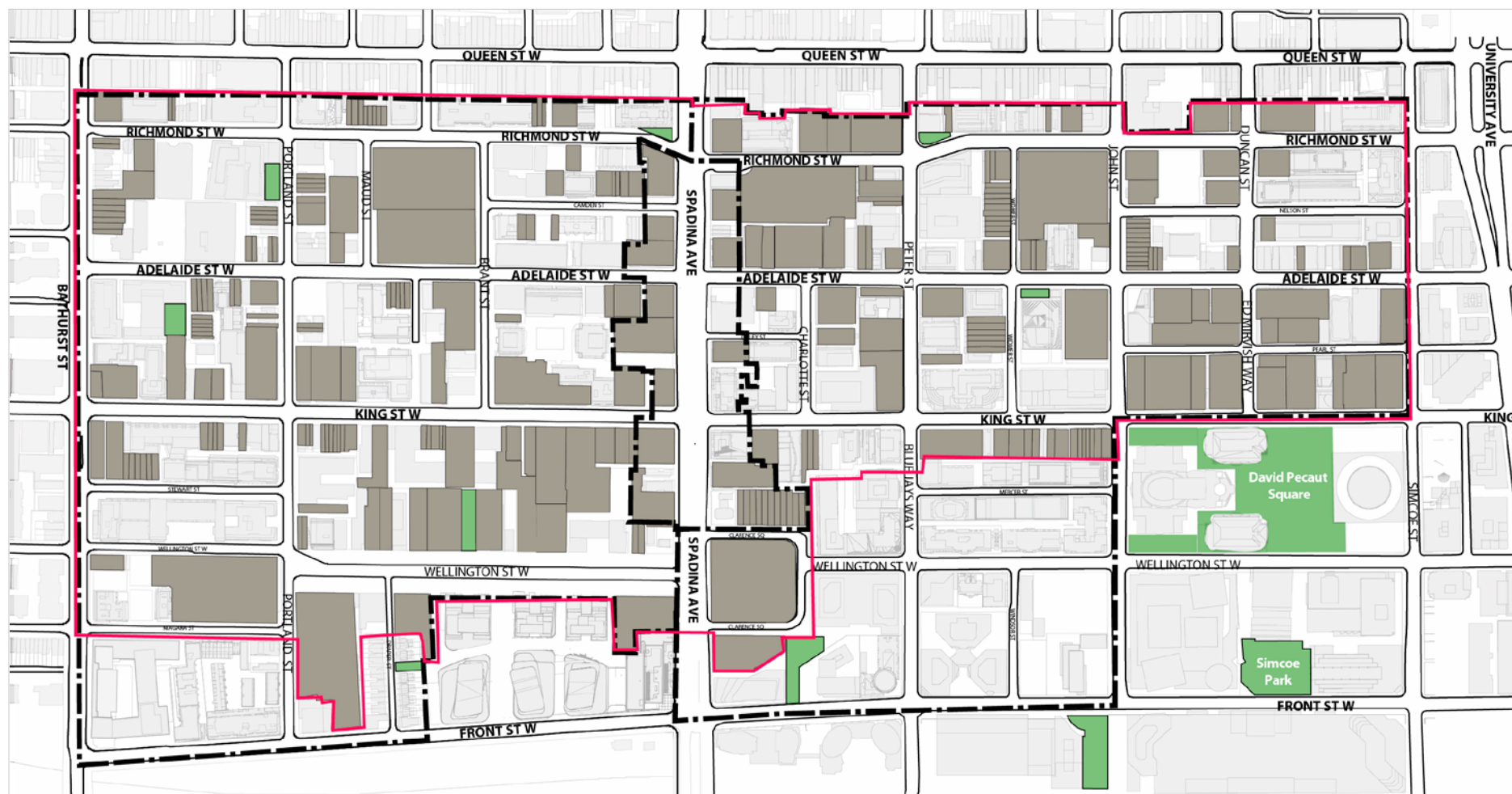
- Land value: as a result of fast-paced growth in recent years, land value has increased dramatically, which has made public realm expansion through acquisition more of a challenge.
- Mature urban fabric and hard frontages: These conditions limit opportunities for future POPS and/or sidewalk widening on private property. Examples include the presence of a strong heritage fabric or fixed frontages established by existing major developments
- Recently approved and/or under construction development: The mature urban fabric includes registered condominiums, recently built and under construction buildings, as well as recently approved Zoning Amendment applications. The combination of heritage buildings along with these newer developments results in many fixed frontages as reflected on Map 18.
- In contrast, buildings or properties with flexible frontages can provide potential future opportunities for small scale urban open spaces, such as forecourts, parkettes and front landscaped areas. Additionally they can contribute to the widening of sidewalks and creating wider zones for tree planting and street furniture.
- Taking into account the high density and limited opportunities within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area and especially within the East Precinct, innovative approaches should be considered for the creation of a more desirable, more enhanced and a more sustainable public realm network.

Note: This map is based on the King-Spadina Heritage Conservation Plan (HCD), adopted by City Council in 2017. The map shows the property outline of properties containing a contributing building. It does not show the building footprint. Contributing buildings can be either listed, designated or have the potential to be added to the Heritage Register.

## Legend

 King-Spadina HCD boundary

 Contributing properties



Map 17. Contributing properties according to King-Spadina Heritage Conservation District Plan (Adopted by City Council in 2017)





Figure 88. Example of fixed frontage of recently built buildings with an existing heritage building in the East Precinct (355 King Street West)



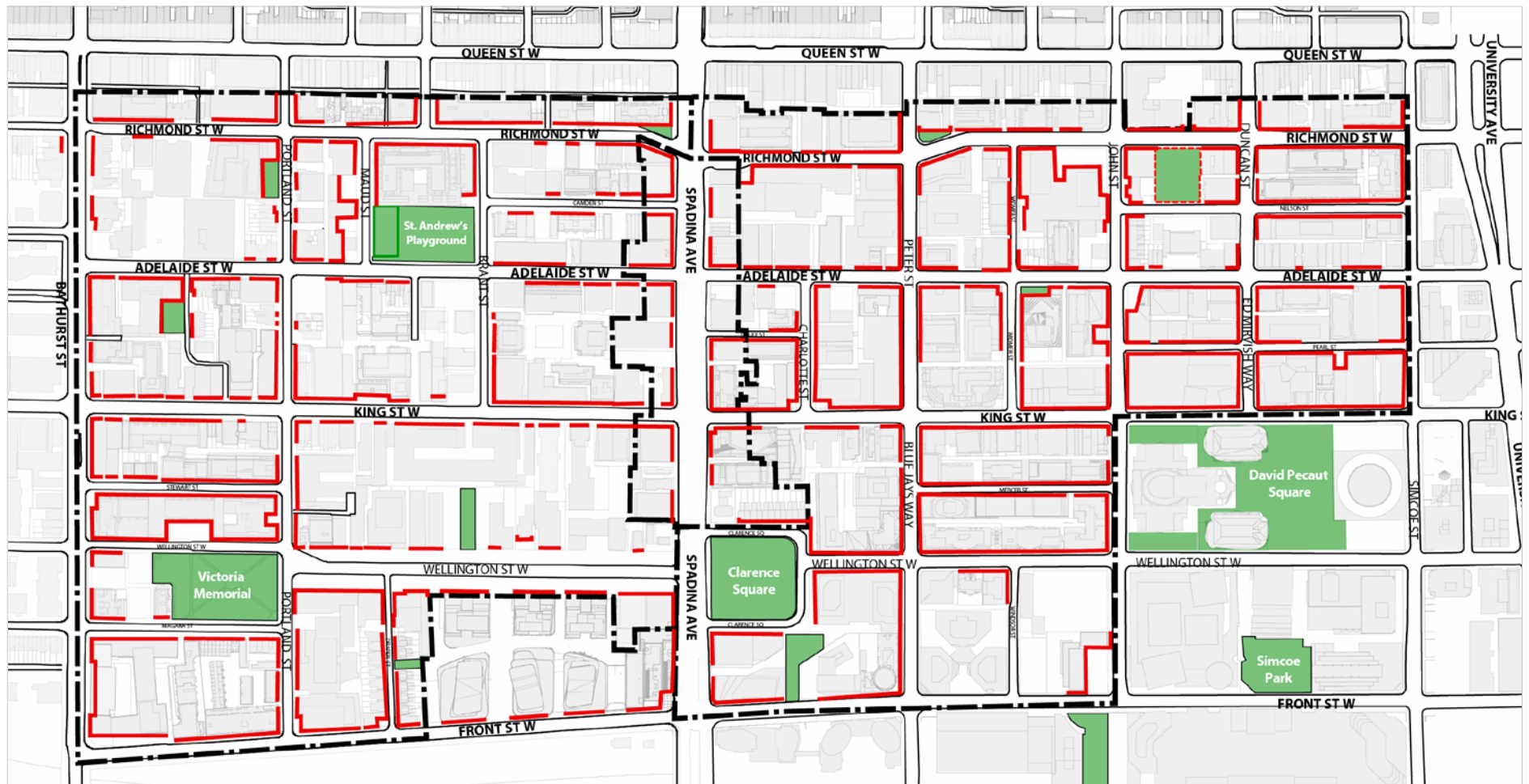
Figure 89. Example of fixed frontages of existing condominiums within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area



Figure 90. Example of fixed frontage of approved applications within the area (400 King Street West)  
Rendering and design: BDP Quadrangle, Developer: Plazacorp

## Legend

- Existing and planned public parks & open spaces including on-site and off-site parkland dedication
- City's acquisition
- Expansion of existing parks
- Fixed frontages



Map 18. Fixed frontages







# 3. Public Realm Strategy

In this section, opportunities for public realm enhancements will be discussed. In general, the public realm network can be improved by:

- Expanding, enhancing and improving the existing parks and open spaces
- Creating new public parks and open spaces
- Designing POPS in different shapes and forms, including forecourts, plazas and green spaces
- Designing front landscaped areas to complement the streetscape design of streets
- Providing opportunities for better and easier movement

To ensure quality, safety and comfort, new public realm elements should be:

- Accessible
- Barrier free
- Visible
- Well designed for the enjoyment of all users
- Efficient
- Well-lit
- Well-programmed
- Well-connected to the larger public realm network
- Designed with places to gather and sit

A number of opportunities have been informed by the Toronto Downtown West BIA (Formerly known as Entertainment District BIA) Master Plan for the East Precinct, as well as the outcome of the public realm analysis, which will be discussed on the following pages.

There may be a few minor changes in the maps provided in this section and the maps in the updated King-Spadina Secondary Plan. The reason being is that a couple of previously identified opportunities are no longer available.

Figure 91. North side of Wellington Street West  
(Image on the opposite page)

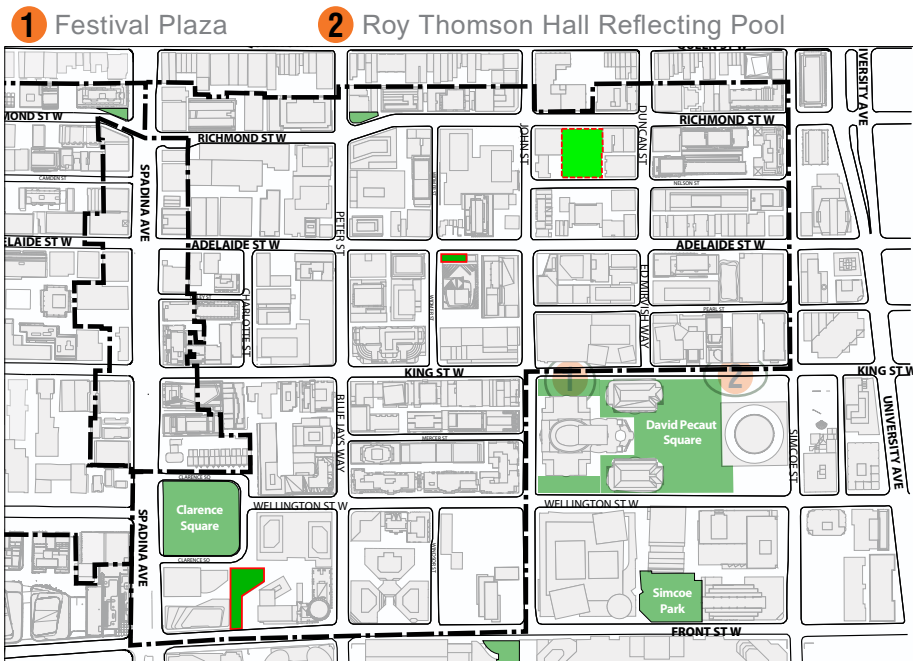


# 3.1 Potential future parks and open spaces

## 3.1.1 Toronto Downtown West BIA Master Plan Initiatives

Toronto Downtown West BIA (Formerly known as Entertainment District BIA) suggests two major public realm improvements at the periphery of the King-Spadina East Precinct boundary as follows:

**Festival Plaza:** Potential transformation of the area in front of Metro Hall and at the southeast corner of King Street West and John Street into an Urban Plaza (Festival Plaza). Please refer to Page 56 in the Toronto Downtown West BIA Master Plan and see Map 19 below.



Map 19. Key map showing the location of Festival Plaza and Roy Thomson Hall Reflecting Pool

**Roy Thomson Hall Reflecting Pool:** As stated in the Toronto Downtown West BIA (Formerly known as Entertainment District BIA) Master Plan, "Transforming the reflective pool in front of Roy Thomson Hall into a major attraction and urban oasis on King Street West. This will be achieved by introducing new uses such as restaurant, sitting places, stage area, cascading water fountain to the PATH and enabling the pool to become an ice skating ring during winter time." Please refer to page 58 in the BIA Master Plan and see Figure 93 on the opposite page.

These public realm initiatives are important and are part of the open space network as contemplated by this Public Realm Strategy.

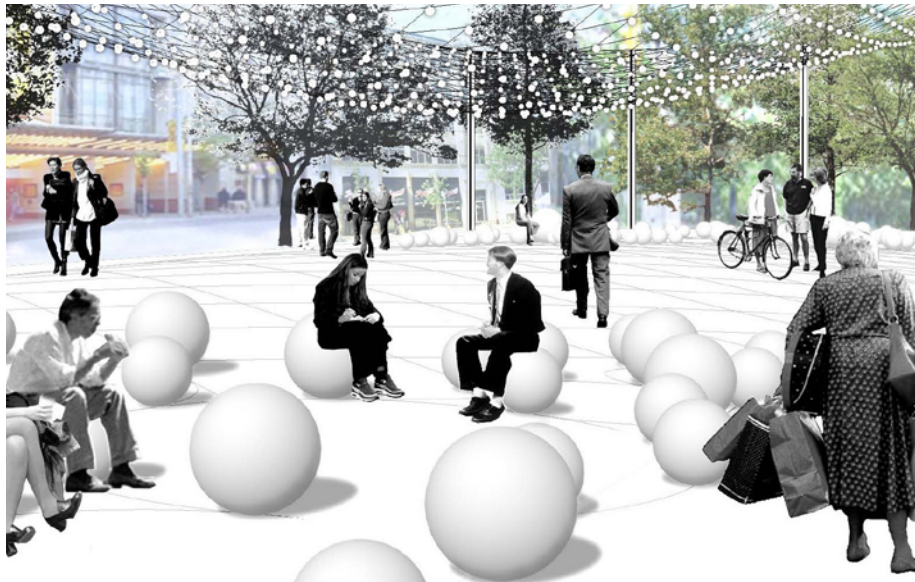


Figure 92. The Urban Ball Room (winning design for Festival Plaza), Image extracted from page 57 of the "Toronto Downtown West BIA Master Plan" (February 2013, as amended) by The Planning Partnership



Existing condition of the reflecting pool looking west towards David Pecaut Square



Illustration of improvements and utilization of the space during the day in the winter months



Illustration of improvements and utilization of the space during the day in the warmer months

Figure 93. Roy Thomson Hall Reflecting Pool, Images extracted from page 58 of the "Toronto Downtown West BIA Master Plan" (February 2013, as amended) by The Planning Partnership



### 3.1.2 Sites Under Study and Potential Open Space Enhancements

City Staff have studied all the properties within the King-Spadina Secondary Plan Area and identified opportunities for further public realm enhancement. These opportunities are referred to as "sites under study" throughout this document. Additional sites may be identified through development applications. The sites under study (Map 20 on page 71) will include:

- surface parking lots
- parking decks
- existing buildings in need of repair
- other properties

The sites under study will provide different opportunities depending on their location, size and their relationship with their adjacent properties and the larger context. The size and programming of these open spaces is not determined yet and Map 20 on page 71 only reflects potential locations for future enhancements. Some sites may provide opportunities for future parks or POPS (as part of development applications), while some may have the potential for front landscaped areas, forecourts and/or wider sidewalks. Other improvement include the combination of POPS and mid-block connections, which will be further discussed in this document.



Figure 94. Grange Park, Toronto



Figure 95. Combination of mid-block connection and outdoor patios, King Street West, Toronto, ON



Figure 96. The open space at 990 Bay Street, Toronto, ON



Figure 97. Linear park on Wellington Street West, west side of Spadina Avenue, Toronto, ON



Figure 98. The POPS at 300 Front Street West, Toronto, ON, Image: Courtesy of Tridel, Design: Claude Cormier + associés



Figure 99. Example of front landscape area at 11 Soho Street, Toronto, ON