

## **835 and 839 Yonge Street - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act**

**Date:** January 25, 2023

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board

**From:** Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning

**Wards:** University-Rosedale - Ward 11

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the listed property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (including the entrance address of 837 Yonge Street) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value.

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Yonge/Church Streets and Davenport Road, across from the Masonic Temple and adjacent to the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District, in the Rosedale neighbourhood. The property, commonly known as the Canadian Tire Store, comprises, amongst other structures, portions of the Grand Central Market, a two-storey commercial market building designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in 1929 by Henry Wilkinson, the in-house architect for Associated Development Corporation Ltd, the financial and real-estate firm that developed the property.

The design of the new market was conceived as a "stop and shop" modern market that would service the local community and offered an alternative to the more established St. Lawrence Market, where one would purchase directly from the producer. The concept for the Grand Central Market palatial building for over 100 of Toronto's better retail merchants was short lived. In 1936, the property was acquired by Canadian Tire Corporation to serve as the company's headquarters and flagship store along Toronto's famous Yonge Street. The Canadian Tire retail store has continuously operated for nearly 90 years at this location and this association with a national legacy business, established in Toronto in 1922, further contributes to the cultural heritage value of the property and the historic commercial character of Yonge Street at Davenport Road in the Bloor/Yorkville area.

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (previously 837 Yonge Street) has been recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register since February 24, 1986 when Canadian Tire redeveloped the property by incorporating 6 of the symmetrical 7-bay designed principal elevation and portions of the south elevation of the Grand Central Market building into its new flagship store along Yonge Street. This 1980s project was an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto.

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street and determined that the property meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, for its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values. As such, the property is a significant built heritage resource.

The City Clerk issued a complete application notice on December 9, 2022. The City received Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications related to the proposed redevelopment of the subject property. The proposal is for a mixed-used residential and commercial development that would add two towers (45 and 49 storeys) to the property and incorporate into the podium of the proposed development the retained, in-situ, and restored 1935 west and south elevations, as well as reinstate the primary pedestrian entrance on the west elevation.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) completed by ERA Architects Inc. and dated August 15, 2022 was submitted to support the application. An HIA is required for all development applications that affect listed and designated properties and will be considered when determining how a heritage property is to be conserved. Designation also enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance

In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The Bill 108 Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act came into force on July 1, 2021, which included a shift in Part IV designations related to Planning Act applications that would trigger a Prescribed Event. Section 29(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act now restricts City Council's ability to give notice of its intention to designate a property under the Act to within 90 days after the City Clerk gives notice of a complete application.

A "Prescribed Event" is a point of time when the application for an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application has been deemed complete and the City Clerk provides notice of that complete application to the public in accordance with the Planning Act.

The City Clerk issued a complete application notice on December 9, 2022. The property owner provided a waiver to extend the 90-day timeline established under Bill 108 through April 14, 2023. Council must make a decision at its March 29-31 meeting to provide sufficient time for City Clerk to issue a notice of intention to designate before the waiver expires.

On November 28, 2022, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) received Royal Assent. Schedule 6 of the More Homes Built Faster Act amended prescribed event requirements under section 29(1.2) of the Ontario Heritage Act and came into effect on January 1, 2023.

As of January 1, 2023, should a property be subject to an Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application that would trigger a Prescribed Event, the property must be listed in the heritage register prior to the Prescribed Event occurring to designate a property. This requirement does not apply to a Prescribed Event that has occurred prior to January 1, 2023.

The application currently under review was deemed complete prior to Bill 23 changes to the Ontario Heritage Act coming into force, however, the Part IV designation must be in compliance with the Province's amended O. Reg. 9/06 under the Ontario Heritage Act, which is effect as of January 1, 2023. The revised regulation establishes nine provincial criteria for determining whether a property is of cultural heritage value or interest.

A property may be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, if it meets two or more of the nine criteria. The property meets four criteria relating to design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values.

Designation also enables City Council to review proposed alterations or demolitions to the property and enforce heritage property standards and maintenance.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (including entrance address at 837 Yonge Street) under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance; 835 and 839 Yonge Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3, to the report, January 25, 2023 from the Senior Manager, Heritage Planning, Urban Design, City Planning;
2. If there are no objections to the designation, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the Bill in Council designating the property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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At its meeting of February 24, 1986 City Council adopted on consent the inclusion of the property at 837 Yonge Street on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/HeritagePreservation/search.do>

## **BACKGROUND**

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### **Heritage Planning Framework**

The conservation of cultural heritage resources is an integral component of good planning, contributing to a sense of place, economic prosperity, and healthy and equitable communities. Heritage conservation in Ontario is identified as a provincial interest under the Planning Act. Cultural heritage resources are considered irreplaceable and valuable assets that must be wisely protected and managed as part of planning for future growth under the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020). Heritage Conservation is enabled through the Ontario Heritage Act. The City of Toronto's Official Plan implements the provincial policy regime, the Planning Act, the Ontario Heritage Act and provides policies to guide decision making within the city.

Good planning within the provincial and municipal policy framework has at its foundation an understanding and appreciation for places of historic significance, and ensures the conservation of these resources are to be balanced with other provincial interests. Heritage resources may include buildings, structures, monuments, and geographic areas that have cultural heritage value or interest to a community, including an Indigenous community.

The Planning Act establishes the foundation for land use planning in Ontario, describing how land can be controlled and by whom. Section 2 of the Planning Act identifies heritage conservation as a matter of provincial interest and directs that municipalities shall have regard to the conservation of features of significant architectural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest. Heritage conservation contributes to other matters of provincial interest, including the promotion of built form that is well-designed, and that encourages a sense of place.

The Planning Act requires that all decisions affecting land use planning matters shall conform to the Growth Plan and shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy

Statement, both of which position heritage as a key component in supporting key provincial principles and interests.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13>

The Provincial Policy Statement provides policy direction on land use planning in Ontario and is to be used by municipalities in the development of their official plans and to guide and inform decisions on planning matters, which shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement. The Provincial Policy Statement articulates how and why heritage conservation is a component of good planning, explicitly requiring the conservation of cultural heritage and archaeological resources, alongside the pursuit of other provincial interests. The Provincial Policy Statement does so by linking heritage conservation to key policy directives, including building strong healthy communities, the wise use and management of resources, and protecting health and safety.

Section 1.1 Managing and Directing Land Use to Achieve Efficient and Resilient Development states that long-term economic prosperity is supported by, among other considerations, the promotion of well-designed built form and cultural planning, and the conservation of features that help define character. Section 2.6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology subsequently directs that "significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved". Through the definition of conserved, built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscape and protected heritage property, the Provincial Policy Statement identifies the Ontario Heritage Act as the primary legislation through which heritage conservation will be implemented.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-policy-statement-2020>

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020) builds on the Provincial Policy Statement to establish a land use planning framework that supports complete communities, a thriving economy, a clean and healthy environment and social equity. Section 1.2.1 Guiding Principles states that policies in the plan seek to, among other principles, "conserve and promote cultural heritage resources to support the social, economic, and cultural well-being of all communities, including First Nations and Metis communities". Cultural heritage resources are understood as being irreplaceable, and are significant features that provide people with a sense of place. Section 4.2.7 Cultural Heritage Resources directs that cultural heritage resources will be conserved in order to foster a sense of place and benefit communities, particularly in strategic growth areas.

<https://files.ontario.ca/mmah-place-to-grow-office-consolidation-en-2020-08-28.pdf>

The Ontario Heritage Act is the key provincial legislation for the conservation of cultural heritage resources in Ontario. It regulates, among other things, how municipal councils can identify and protect heritage resources, including archaeology, within municipal boundaries. This is largely achieved through listing on the City's Heritage Register, designation of individual properties under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, or designation of districts under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the authority to maintain and add to a publicly accessible heritage register. The City of Toronto's Heritage Register includes individual heritage properties that have been designated under Part IV, Section 29, properties in a heritage conservation district designated under Part V, Section 41 of

the Act as well as properties that have not been designated but City Council believes to be of "cultural heritage value or interest."

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o18>

Ontario Regulation 9/06 sets out the criteria for evaluating properties to be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act. The criteria are based on an evaluation of design/physical value, historical and associative value and contextual value. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060009>

The Ontario Heritage Toolkit provides guidance on designating properties of municipal significance, including direction on the purpose of designating heritage properties and information about how the Provincial Policy Statement and the Ontario Heritage Act provide a framework for the conservation of heritage properties within the land use planning system. In June 2019, the More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019 (Bill 108) received Royal Assent. Schedule 11 of this Act included amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. The Bill 108 Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act came into force on July 1, 2021, which included, amongst other matters, amendments to the listing and designation processes. Guidance from the Province related to the implementation of Bill 108 and Bill 23 Amendments has yet to be released.

[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage\\_toolkit.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_toolkit.shtml)

On November 28, 2022, the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) received Royal Assent. Schedule 6 of the More Homes Built Faster Act amended various sections of the Ontario Heritage Act. Majority of the key changes to the Act came into effect on January 1, 2023.

The City of Toronto's Official Plan contains a number of policies related to properties on the City's Heritage Register and properties adjacent to them, as well as the protection of areas of archaeological potential. Indicating the integral role that heritage conservation plays in successful city-building, Section 3.1.6 of the Official Plan states that, "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 other social, cultural, economic and environmental goals of the City."

Policy 3.1.6.4 states that heritage resources on the City's Heritage Register "will be conserved and maintained consistent with the Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, as revised from time to time and adopted by Council."

Policy 3.1.6.6 encourages the adaptive re-use of heritage properties while Policy 3.1.6.26 states that, when new construction on, or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register does occur, it will be designed to conserve the cultural heritage values, attributes and character of that property and will mitigate visual and physical impacts on it.

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>

<https://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>

## COMMENTS

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### 835 and 839 Yonge Street

Today, the subject property has the following entrance address: 837 Yonge Street. The subject parcels of land have two primary addresses, 835 and 839 Yonge Street.

In the 1980s, Canadian Tire redeveloped the property making significant changes by retaining only the west and a portion of the south elevations of the Spanish Colonial Revival building and incorporating them into a new structure. These alterations constitute an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto. The proposal includes the retention of the structure and restoration of the decorative Spanish Colonial Revival features of the Yonge Street elevation including the windows, storefronts, and pyramidal roof of the Grand Central Market building.

### Research and Evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06

While the research and evaluation of the property referenced above is, in staff's determination, sufficient to support the designation of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street, it should be noted that new and additional relevant information on the subject property further expanding on its cultural heritage value following community input and additional access to archival records may be incorporated in the final version of a Part IV designation by-law.



Figure 1: Current image showing 835 and 839 Yonge Street, including the entrance address at 837 Yonge Street, the former Grand Central Market, c.1929 (completed in 1935) (Heritage Planning, 2022).

## 1. DESCRIPTION

| 835 and 839 Yonge Street - GRAND CENTRAL MARKET/CANADIAN TIRE STORE |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ADDRESS                                                             | 835 and 839 Yonge Street                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| WARD                                                                | Ward 11 - University-Rosedale                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| LEGAL DESCRIPTION                                                   | (839 Yonge Street) PLAN 241Y PT LOTS A-E 1-3 14 CON 2 FTB PT LOT 20 & RP 66R 20461 PARTS 2 3 6 TO 8 & PT PART 1 63R3760 PARTS 1-7 14<br><br>(837 Yonge Street) TSCP 2503 LEVEL 25 UNIT 7 LEVEL D UNIT 29 PKG LEVEL D UNIT 115 LKR<br><br>(835 Yonge Street) PLAN 682E PT LOT 10 PLAN 42Y PT LOTS 4 & 5 PART SEVERN ST (CLOSED) RP 63R3760 PART 10 |
| NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY                                             | Rosedale-Moore Park                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| HISTORICAL NAME                                                     | Grand Central Market                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| CONSTRUCTION DATE                                                   | c.1929; completed by 1935                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| ORIGINAL OWNER                                                      | Associated Development Corporation Ltd.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| ORIGINAL USE                                                        | Commercial                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| CURRENT USE*                                                        | Commercial                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER                                          | H. Wilkinson (architect); Frontier Construction (builder)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS                                       | Stucco, stone, terracotta roof tiling                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| ARCHITECTURAL STYLE                                                 | Spanish Colonial Revival Style                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS                                               | See Section 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| CRITERIA                                                            | Design/Physical, historical/associative, contextual                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| HERITAGE STATUS                                                     | Listed (February 24,1986)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| RECORDER                                                            | Heritage Planning: Ana Martins and Cecilia Nin-Hernandez                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| REPORT DATE                                                         | January 2023                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street, and applies evaluation criteria as set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 to determine whether it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest. The application of the criteria is found in Section 3 (Evaluation Checklist). The conclusions of the research and evaluation are found in the Conclusion of the report. Maps and Photographs are located in Attachment 1. The archival and contemporary sources for the research are found in Attachment 2. The Statements of Significance are contained in Attachment 3.



## i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

| Key Date | Historical Event                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|          | The area now known as the City of Toronto is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit (1805), and the Williams Treaties (1923) signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. |
|          | The present-day Davenport Road is the former shoreline of the ancient post-glacial Lake Iroquois and was a footpath for hunting, fishing, and a portage trail used by the Wendat, Anishnaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples well until the 19th century. This route offered an overland connection between the Humber and Don Rivers and functioned as a trade route connecting this region to the Upper Great Lakes, the Atlantic Coast, and the Midwest.     |
| 1796     | Township Lot 20, Second Concession from the Bay is granted by Governor Simcoe to United Empire Loyalist, Captain George Playter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 1835     | John Severn purchases an existing brewery on the subject property and it becomes known as Severn Brewery, a major industry and employer in early Yorkville.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1846     | By 1846, Yonge Street has been straightened and macadamized as far as Richmond Hill.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1853     | The Village of Yorkville is incorporated as a municipality.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1883     | The Village of Yorkville is annexed by the City of Toronto and becomes St Paul's Ward.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 1884     | Goad's Atlas for 1884 shows Severn Brewery on the subject property and Severn Street to the east.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 1913     | Goad's Atlas for 1913 indicates that Severn Brewery is no longer extant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 1922     | Canadian Tire is founded by two brothers, Bill and Alf Billes, in the Riverdale neighbourhood in Toronto, and five years later Canadian Tire officially becomes a corporation. The business started by selling care tires and was the first company to sell tires on credit as a business pitch to expand their growing customer base.                                                                                                                     |
| 1928     | Tax assessment rolls for 1928 indicate that the property is owned by brokers Frances Fox and William C. Fox, along with James Ness, with an office at 47 Wellington Street. The Toronto Daily Star reports in August 13, 1928 that Associated Development Corporation Limited has leased the subject property and will be constructing a new shopping centre on Yonge Street, east side at Severn Street, opposite the Masonic Temple.                     |
| 1929     | Land registry records indicate that in March 1929 Grand Central Markets Limited, an entity within Associated Development Corporation Ltd, leases the property. The Toronto Daily Star reports that construction is underway for the Grand Central Market, located on the subject property. Construction is to be completed by August of the same year.                                                                                                     |

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|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1929      | In October 1929, the City approves the extension of Church Street northwesterly to Yonge Street and the widening of Davenport Road from Yonge Street to Mc Alpine Avenue, a civic improvement plan that would relieve traffic congestion at Bloor and Yonge.                                                              |
| 1931      | The Globe and Mail reports that Grand Central Markets Limited declares bankruptcy and the property, consisting of an incomplete building, is for sale.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| July 1932 | Land registry records indicate that at this point in time, the property is owned by James Norris (Chicago industrialist and owner of the Detroit Red Wings hockey team) and the estate of William Claude Fox.                                                                                                             |
| 1935      | In May 1935, local newspapers announce the official opening of Grand Central Market. It operates as a commercial market for approximately a year and a half.                                                                                                                                                              |
| 1936      | Land registry records indicate that in November and December the Billes brothers and the Canadian Tire Corporation acquire the subject property when the company expands owing to a series of commercial innovations. Canadian Tire relocates from their Yonge and Isabella location to this larger building.             |
| 1945      | In the post-war period, the growth of suburban development, promoted by the government through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the reliance on the automobile led to significant growth for Canadian Tire Corporation as the one-stop retail store for automobile-related and outdoor activities. |
| 1958      | A stand-alone gas bar is constructed on the southwest corner of the subject property and the concept for Canadian Tire Money is launched.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 1986      | On February 24, 1986 the property at 837 Yonge Street is Listed on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 1986      | Significant alterations were undertaken including the construction of a new Canadian Tire building incorporating the 1935 facades of the Grand Central Market. The remainder of the 1935 building is demolished to accommodate a new parking lot.                                                                         |
| 1988      | The gas bar is demolished and rebuilt.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2002      | Additions to the 1986 Canadian Tire building are made.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2022      | The City received Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications related to the proposed redevelopment of the subject property.                                                                                                                                                                         |

## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following section outlines the history and facts related to the property which is the basis for determining historical or associative value of Criteria 4, 5 or 6 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

### The Village of Yorkville and Yonge Street

The location of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is shown on the property data map (Image 1) where it stands on the east side of Yonge Street, north of the intersection with Church Street/Davenport Road. The subject property is located in the neighbourhood historically understood to be part of the Village of Yorkville, a suburban

village prior to becoming the first municipality annexed by the City of Toronto in 1883; the neighbourhood is now referred to as Rosedale-Moore Park, which is immediately west of the western boundary of the South Rosedale Historic Conservation District and just beyond the Yorkville-Hazelton Heritage Conservation District.

The site was originally part of Township Lot 20 in the 2nd Concession from the Bay, granted to Loyalist Captain George Playter. Yonge Street was originally surveyed in the late 1700s as part of a larger colonial initiative. In anticipation of an American invasion, Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe ordered the construction of a new military road known as Yonge Street, connecting York with the Upper Great Lakes. Although originally constructed for military use, Yonge Street also facilitated the settlement of the farms lots north of the First Concession Road (present-day Bloor Street) during the early-19th century, including Lot 20, and played a significant role in expanding Toronto's northern boundaries.

Yonge Street formed part of an important thoroughfare for the eventual settlement of the Village of Yorkville, which began as a crossroads community around the Red Lion Inn, a tavern constructed c.1808 on the east side of Yonge Street, north of Bloor Street (demolished in 1888). The establishment of a tollbooth at Yonge and Bloor Streets in the 1830s further enhanced the strategic location of the Inn just outside the jurisdiction of the tollbooth.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the Red Lion Inn, other buildings important to village life were located in the village core then located on Yonge Street between Bloor Street and Davenport Road, including the Yorkville Town Hall (1859; demolished), located on the west side of Yonge Street, opposite Collier Street and the first non-denominational cemetery in York, the York General Burying Ground, opened in 1826 on the northwest corner of Yonge and Bloor. Shortly thereafter, due to the area's rich clay deposits, fertile ground, and proximity to the Don River, the area began attracting farms and market gardens as well as several industries including brick yards and breweries (Image 2). One such brewery, the Severn Brewery, which was located on the subject property, had been established on the east side of Yonge Street by 1835 and can be seen in early maps of the area (Image 3).

During this period of early European settlement and development, lands were subdivided to accommodate housing, shops, and services for the influx of people to the area, and the Village of Yorkville was incorporated in 1853 with a population of 800. The approximate boundaries of the village were: Bloor Street to the south, Sherbourne Street to the east, Walker Avenue to the north and Bedford Avenue to the west. At the time of its incorporation, commercial development was concentrated along Yonge Street between Bloor Street and Davenport Road. Further development and population growth in the area was encouraged first by the establishment of an Omnibus service, a series of horse-drawn stage coaches that ran between the St. Lawrence Market and the Red Lion Inn along Yonge Street, and later in 1861, when a horse-drawn street railway line was introduced by the Toronto Street Railway (TSR) along Yonge Street.<sup>2</sup> The TSR

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<sup>1</sup> Stephanie Hutchenson, *Yorkville in Pictures 1853 to 1883*. Toronto: Metropolitan Toronto Library, 1978, p. 2

<sup>2</sup> Hutchenson, *Yorkville in Pictures*, p.3

was founded by Yorkville resident Alexander Easton and the company's head office was located in the Yorkville Town Hall.<sup>3</sup>

The Village of Yorkville was annexed by the City of Toronto in 1883 and the area became St. Paul's Ward. This annexation was the first of several by the City as it experienced successive periods of rapid growth, and it precipitated its transformation from a rural village to an urban neighbourhood. The annexation to the City resulted in the enhancement of civic services and institutions. The first period of growth and development began in the years leading up to the 20th century and the second in the years preceding WWI, with development occurring along and adjacent to the main thoroughfares - Davenport Road and Yonge Street. In 1918, the Masonic Temple was built at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road. Designed by architect William F. Sparling in the Renaissance Revival style, the building features fine masonry detailing and Classical design elements including a portal with three round arches springing from Doric columns. The Masonic Temple also became a cultural landmark, known for hosting a long list of musical performance events.

The affluent neighbourhood of South Rosedale, which is located immediately east of the subject property and was also originally part of the Village of Yorkville, likewise saw a period of rapid subdivision and development between 1900 and 1920 (Image 4). South Rosedale, which became a Heritage Conservation District in 2003, is characterized by the residential architectural styles of the early 20th century, including Arts and Crafts, and Tudor and Georgian Revival.

Municipal infrastructure projects also influenced the development of the area. A number of major alterations to the area's road network were made in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s to address congestion and streamline the city's street networks as well as support civic improvement schemes.<sup>4</sup> In 1920, the City began the extension of Bay Street north to Davenport Road, which required the demolition of several properties. However, with the increase of automobile use in the city, an extension to Church Street was planned to create a direct connection with Davenport Road north of Bloor Street. On October 7, 1929 the City's works committee passed a \$1.1 million lengthening of Church Street from Bloor Street to Davenport Road.<sup>5</sup> The Mayor at the time praised the extension as "an asset not only to the district immediately affected, but to the city at large and will be an aid to transportation and business".<sup>6</sup> The four corners where Yonge Street meets Davenport Road and Church Street were envisioned to be redeveloped as a commercial node north of the intersection of Yonge and Bloor Streets, but the proposal was never fully realized.<sup>7</sup> The modernization of the road networks led to a transformation of the area from a suburban rural village to an urban neighbourhood.

The area fell into decline during the post-War period, and the resulting affordability attracted artists and members of the creative community. Low real estate values

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the Advisory City Planning Commission with Recommendations for the Improvement of the Central Business Section of the City of Toronto*, 1929.

<sup>5</sup> Bradburn, J. *Historicist: Extending Church Street*, September 3, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Listing Report for 837 Yonge Street, City of Toronto's Heritage Register, February 24, 1986.

attracted some development interest, and the area saw many conversions of formerly residential properties into restaurants, art galleries, and other small specialty shops during the 1950s and 1960s. The opening of two subway lines in close proximity during this same period (the Yonge line in 1954 and the Bloor line in 1966) also augmented its development potential. The development projects initiated during the 1970s were at a much larger scale than the area had seen previously, and they helped to influence the transformation of the formerly bohemian and artistic community into the high-end retail environment that it continues to be known for today.

## **Grand Central Market**

Associated Development Corporation Limited, a financial and real-estate corporation that included the business interest of Grand Central Market Limited, acquired a 21-year lease on the subject property in December 1928.<sup>8</sup> However, news of the leasing agreement and the announcement of the construction of Grand Central Market, "an important new shopping centre for the city" on Yonge Street, was reported a few months earlier in the local Toronto Daily Star (Image 5).<sup>9</sup> The design of the new market was conceived as a "stop and shop" market that would service the local community similar to ones in the United States.<sup>10</sup> It was a business venture intended to be duplicated in other parts of the city given the success of this type of market in the U.S. The in-house architect for Associated Development Corporation Ltd, Henry Wilkinson<sup>11</sup>, designed the architectural plans for the market at Yonge and Church Streets (Image 6).

In May 1929, the Toronto Daily Star ran an advertisement for the Grand Central Market indicating that the "palatial building where over 100 of Toronto's better retail merchants" would open in August of that same year to be the "first market of its kind in Canada".<sup>12</sup> The cost of its construction was reported to be \$947 000.<sup>13</sup> The marketing campaign for Grand Central Market emphasized the market's modernity: space to accommodate 5,000 shoppers, an enclosed retail experience designed to minimize food handling by customers, free parking spaces for over 300 vehicles, modern refrigeration, heating and cooling systems, and a floodlight lighting system (Image 7). The market was designed with a mezzanine overlooking the Rosedale Ravine at the rear of the building, to be used as a lounge area for shoppers, and the stalls' flooring consisted of black and white vitrolite glass with red tiling throughout the building (Image 7). Tenants included grocers, butchers, produce merchants, florists, confectioners, druggists, and a bank, and advertised as providing "Toronto's better retail merchants".<sup>14</sup> It was purported to be the third largest retail centre in the city.

However, the delay of the Grand Central Market's opening was likely impacted by the Stock Crash of 1929 and the subsequent global economic collapse associated with the

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8 LRO, Lot 20, Block 1, Con 2, Book 362

9 Toronto Daily Star, August 13, 1928, p.2.

10 Ibid.

11 City of Toronto Directory, 1929 indicates Henry Wilkinson as architect for Associated Development Corp, which aligns with the information captured on the 1929 architectural plan for Grand Central Market.

12 Toronto Daily Star, May 17, 1929, p.2.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

Great Depression. By July 1931, the Toronto daily Star indicated that the subject property was “for sale by tender” and consisted of an incomplete building known as the ‘Grand Central Markets’ with a value of \$390,000 built on leasehold lands (Image 8). By September 1931, Grand Central Market Ltd had declared bankruptcy.<sup>15</sup>

In May 1935, the Grand Central Market was officially opened by the Hon. Duncan Marshall, Minister of Agriculture (Images 9 and 10). The Globe and Mail reported that the “45,000 square foot space was shared by 80 merchants” and offered an alternative to the more established St. Lawrence Market, where one would purchase directly from the producer.<sup>16</sup> Its opening at Yonge and Church Streets was seen as playing a “favourable influence in the rebuilding of the district”.<sup>17</sup>

The concept for the Grand Central Market was short lived. The property was sold in September 1936 for \$158 000 with the building valued at \$133 000. James E. Norris, a successful Chicago industrialist in the grain and cattle industries and owner of the Detroit Red Wings (a hockey team in the National Hockey League) and the William Claude Fox estate were the property owners at the time of sale.<sup>18</sup> The property was then sold to the Billes family and the Canadian Tire Corporation.

## **Canadian Tire**

Canadian Tire Corporation was founded in 1922 by J.W. and A.J. Billes, two brothers, when they purchased the Hamilton Tire and Garage Ltd. in Toronto. They opened their first new store at the northeast corner of Yonge and Isabella streets in 1924 and expanded to open its second location immediately across the street at 625 Yonge Street. Canadian Tire primarily repaired and distributed tires at these two locations and this component of their business was formalized as part of the brand when the company incorporated as the “Canadian Tire Corporation Ltd” in 1927. In that year, Canada had the third-highest car ownership per capital in the world and the automotive industry was growing.<sup>19</sup> Today, Canadian Tire is a significant Canadian business, and it continues to have a presence on Yonge Street at its store location at 835 and 839 Yonge Street. Canadian Tire celebrated its centenary in 2022.

The Canadian Tire Corporation has been at the forefront of retail innovation since 1922 when it purchased the single auto garage at the corner of Gerrard and Hamilton Streets, in the Riverdale neighbourhood in Toronto. As an auto-oriented business, the growth of the company aligned with the steady growth of the automobile industry in Canada and in particular, in the post-war period's suburban planning of development.

The company's early marketing campaigns included mailing free road maps with a product catalogue on the reverse to current and potential customers, a mail-order

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<sup>15</sup> The Globe, September 23, 1931, p.18.

<sup>16</sup> The Globe, May 30, 1935, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Toronto Daily Star, September 18, 1936, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Jonathan McQuarrie, "Canadian Tire", October 7, 2022,

[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-tire-corporation-limited](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/canadian-tire-corporation-limited)

business that instigated Canadian Tire's network of Associate Dealers and the foundation of today's Canadian Tire chain, and its unconditional guarantee on tires helped launch the business on to the path of success. This network expansion of associated dealers selling Canadian Tire-made and approved products necessitated a larger warehouse space and prompted the move to the 69,000 square foot<sup>20</sup> building formerly known as the Grand Central Market (Image 12). After the sale of the building to Canadian Tire Corporation in 1936, a number of alterations to the two-storey building were undertaken in order to accommodate the new business including space for "a store, warehouse, machine shops, electrical departments and general sales and executive offices" to provide "motorists and trade a most complete automotive service".<sup>21</sup> Building records indicate that amongst the alterations was a two-storey addition added to the rear of the building in the early 1940s.

When Canadian Tire moved into the Yonge and Church Streets location, the building's massive stock area required a new way of completing orders at the service counter. To speed up service, salesclerks began wearing roller-skates to retrieve orders for customers. By 1940, there were 105 Canadian Tire locations throughout Ontario and Eastern Canada, and in 1944, the company went public selling 100,000 shares of stock at \$10 per share.<sup>22</sup>

In the post-war period, Canadian Tire expanded its interests to include camping and outdoor leisure products. The move towards outdoor and camping supplies aligned with growing business opportunities provided by suburban background leisure activities and an increased popularity in visiting national parks.<sup>23</sup> Its success in the post-war period can also be attributed to the growth of suburban development, promoted by the government through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the reliance on the automobile led to significant growth for Canadian Tire Corporation as the one-stop retail store for automobile-related activities.

In 1958, Canadian Tire's first gas bar opened at this location along with the concept for Canadian Tire Money, redeemable on merchandise at Canadian Tire stores, which is understood to be the first loyalty program in Canada (Images 14 - 16). In that same year at Yonge and Church Street, Canadian Tire introduced North America's first quick-service lube and oil change, performed by servicemen working in a pit underneath the vehicle.<sup>24</sup> The company began issuing its own MasterCard in 1998, allowing cardholders the ability to earn Canadian Tire Money on the card, and by 2003, the company had established the Canadian Tire Bank. In the past 10 years, Canadian Tire Corporation has built its assets with strategic acquisitions and partnerships including the purchase of SportChek, the Norway-based outdoor brand Helly Hansen, the Forzani

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20 ERA Architects Inc., "Heritage Impact Assessment 837 Yonge Street", 2022, p 38. However, at the time of the building's construction in the 1930s, local newspaper articles indicated that the building occupied an area of 45,000 square feet with additional land dedicated to customer parking.

21 Toronto Daily Star, "Canadian Tire Buys Large Market Site", 25 September 1936, p.42

22 McQuarrie, "Canadian Tire", October 7, 2022

23 McQuarrie, "Canadian Tire", October 7, 2022

24 ERA Architects, "HIA 837 Yonge Street", August 15, 2022

Group, and Sports Experts, amongst others. It is now a national chain of over 1,700 stores and gas outlets.<sup>25</sup>

With the financial growth and business success, Canadian Tire developed the property in 1986, adding a new structure to the north of the 1935 structure and demolishing most of the Grand Central Market building with the exception of the west façade and a portion of the south façade. As such, the property is also an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto when Canadian Tire Corporation undertook work to develop the property and incorporate a portion of the 1935 structure into the new development (Images 17 and 18).

### **iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

The following section provides an architectural description and analysis related to the property which will establish the basis for determining design or physical value of Criteria 1, 2 or 3 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (including entrance address at 837 Yonge Street) comprise two buildings including a gas station building dating to 1988 and a separate two-storey commercial building. The two-storey commercial building, originally built in 1986, incorporated the principal (west) façade and a portion of the south façade of the former 1935 Grand Central Market building. The 1986 main building underwent renovations in 2002 and 2017. It has a rectangular footprint and a flat roof, with the west façade composed of glazed bands on the first and second levels, with metal panelled cladding. A rectangular shaped section extends to the south, fronting onto Yonge Street, and incorporates the 1935 façades. The 1935 façades were designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, identifiable by the use of classically inspired and somewhat understated adornment, expressed in elements including, but not limited to, metalwork, carved stone detailing such as pilasters, arched window openings and floral themed medallions, stucco surfaces or insets and a red terracotta roof tile, sometimes combined with parapets and flat roofs. The style was inspired by elements of Spanish architecture and found throughout its former colonies, which together with other colonial revival styles became popular in Canada from 1900-present.<sup>26</sup>

The original 1929 design for the west façade of the former Great Central Market building included a symmetrical 7 bay design, divided by stone pilasters that project past the parapets with a terracotta tile roof line, metal cornice under the eaves and a taller slightly wider central bay, with a basket-handle arched central main entrance with a large, fixed window with vertical divisions, five blind stone arched decorative recesses linked by a stone band and flanked by full height carved stone pilasters, culminating in a pyramidal red terracotta tiled roof (Image 19). The entrance also included an entrance canopy, partly hanging from chains connected to iron anchors. While the canopy has been removed, the iron anchors are still extant. The northernmost bay was removed as part of the work undertaken in 1986, which also removed the remainder of the former Grand Central Market building. The remaining 6 bays still convey the intent of the original design with its Spanish Colonial revival style elements which in 1936 became

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<sup>25</sup> McQuarrie, "Canadian Tire", October 7, 2022

<sup>26</sup> John Blumenson, *Ontario Architecture*. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1990, p. 138.



the Canadian Tire Company's flagship store when the corporation acquired the property.

The elevation design in all bays, except for the prominent taller bay, is composed of two carved stone arched windows with fixed aluminum framed glazing, each over a decorative recessed stucco panel framed in carved stone. The arched window openings were originally designed with tripartite steel sash windows composed of a fixed centre sash and two flanking casement windows. On the ground level, each bay has been re-configured to serve different purposes. Starting with the northernmost bay moving southwards, first is the entrance to the Canadian Tire store, the next two bays are open and serve as vehicular entrances (one of them was the former main entrance bay) to the rear parking lot on the site, and the remainder three bays have storefronts with aluminum frames (Images 20 and 21). The south elevation is one bay wide and has the same composition as the typical bays on the primary elevation, having a storefront on the ground level with aluminum framed display window and two carved stone arched windows on the second level with fixed aluminum framed windows. According to architectural drawings from 1929 (Image 6), the ground level was originally designed to contain shop fronts placed at each bay, with the exception of the main entrance bay, with a rectangular display window and transom, which was composed of a contiguous row window panes separated by muntin bars. However, when the building was finally completed in 1935, an archival image from that year shows the rectangular display windows without the transoms, and the shop fronts with single door entrances. The storefronts flanking the main entrance bay have offset entrances while the others are centrally located within the storefront composition.

#### **iv. CONTEXT**

The following section provides contextual information and analysis related to the property which is the basis for determining contextual value of Criteria 7, 8 or 9 according to O. Reg. 9/06 Criteria.

The location of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is shown on the map included as Figure 1 in Attachment 1 (Maps and Photographs).

The property is located on the east side of Yonge Street, north of the intersection with Davenport Road to the west and Church Street to the east. On the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road is the Masonic Temple, completed in 1918 and a prominent landmark at the intersection (Image 22). Both buildings, the Masonic Temple along with 835 and 839 Yonge Street, were envisioned as part of a civic improvement plan to redevelop the four corners where Yonge Street meets Davenport Road and Church Street as a commercial node north of the intersection of Yonge and Bloor Streets.<sup>27</sup> However, the plan was never fully realized.

Surrounding the subject property, Yonge Street features a predominately late-20th century mid- and high-rise character, along with a few remnant built forms from the late-19th and early-20th centuries, and contemporary high-rise developments (Image 23).

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27 Listing Report for 837 Yonge Street, City of Toronto's Heritage Register, February 24, 1986; Globe and Mail, May 30, 1935, p. 11.

Surrounding properties on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register include the Part IV designated Masonic Temple (1918) at 888 Yonge Street, the John I. Ridpath's company showroom and workshop (1928) at 905 Yonge Street, and a grouping of three listed late-19th century two-storey commercial main street buildings at 885-889 Yonge Street (Image 24). The South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District is immediately east of the subject property (Image 25).

### 3. EVALUATION AND APPLICATION OF O.REG 9/06 CRITERIA

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act, and the City of Toronto is also required to use these criteria when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. There are a total of nine criteria under O. Reg 9/06. A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets two or more of the provincial criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest.

The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or "✓" if it is applicable to the property, with explanatory text below.

#### DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

| The property has design value or physical value because it                                                           |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method. | ✓   |
| 2. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit                                                           | N/A |
| 3. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement                                                   | N/A |

*Rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method*

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street has design value as a representative example of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, which is evident in the design of the west and south elevations of the former Grand Central Market building façades. Elements of the style are expressed in the classically inspired metal cornice under the eaves, carved stone pilasters, arched window openings and floral themed medallions, stucco insets, red terracotta roof tile, and the distinct main entrance bay, which is higher than the overall roofline and wider than the typical bay width, topped with a pyramidal red terracotta tile roof. The main entrance bay is distinct from the rest, having a stone basket-handle arch, five blind stone arched decorative recesses, linked by a stone band, and the bay is flanked by full height carved stone pilasters.

The property is a remnant example of a rare early-20th century commercial market building typology as evident in the design of the two-storey flat roof massing with a distinct main entrance feature that is higher than the overall roofline, culminating in a pyramidal Spanish red tile roof. It is also evident in the façade composition of the west (primary) and south elevations. The west and south façades retain the multi-bay arrangement that accommodated storefronts at ground level, originally constructed with display windows and single door entrances. The storefront flanking the main entrance

bay originally had offset entrances while the others were centrally located within the storefront composition. Additional features include a prominent main entrance bay flanked by carved stone pilasters and carved stone arched window openings to ancillary uses on the second level. The arched window openings were originally designed with tripartite steel sash windows composed of a fixed centre sash and two flanking casement windows. A 7th bay originally existed, giving the building a symmetrical composition to the west façade. The extant iron anchors that once held the main entrance canopy also support the typology.

## HISTORICAL OR ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

| The property has historical value or associative value because it                                                                        |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 4. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community | ✓   |
| 5. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture                     | N/A |
| 6. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community   | N/A |

*Direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community*

The property is valued for its association with Canadian Tire Corporation, a legacy business established in Toronto in 1922 by brothers J. W. and A. J. Billes. Incorporated in 1927, the company is one of Canada's most recognizable retail chains and it now operates a network of 1711 stores and gas bars across the country. Canadian Tire purchased the Grand Central Market building in 1936 as its flagship location owing to the company's expansion with the growth of the automotive market in Canada and its branding of "do-it-yourself" maintenance. The company has continuously operated a retail store at this location ever since. Canadian Tire's commercial innovations such as the launch of Canada Canadian Tire Money, which was the first loyalty program in Canada, were inaugurated at this location. The alterations to the property undertaken in 1986 constitute an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto.

The property also has value for its association with Grand Central Market, a business venture conceived as a "stop and shop" modern market that would service the local community, similar to ones in the United States. It offered a business model for retail markets based on tenancies, a model which was considered to be the first of its kind in Canada.

## CONTEXTUAL VALUE

| The property has contextual value because it is                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 7. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.     | ✓   |
| 8. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings. | ✓   |
| 9. a landmark.                                                                    | N/A |

*Important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area*

Contextually, the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street has cultural heritage value as it defines, maintains and supports the historic commercial character of this portion of Yonge Street. With the delineated bays along the extant 1935 façades, intended to function as individual storefronts, the property is an important contributor as it is consistent with the rhythm produced by fine-grained late 19th and early 20th storefronts along the streetscape.

Both the Masonic Temple along with 835 and 839 Yonge Street were envisioned as part of a civic improvement plan to redevelop the four corners where Yonge Street meets Davenport Road and Church Street as a commercial node north of the intersection of Yonge and Bloor Streets.

*Physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings*

Designed in 1929, the commercial property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is visually, physically, and historically linked to its surroundings as a representative example of a commercial building with its form, massing, and stylistic details such as its series of storefront window openings that are characteristic of late 19th and early 20th century development along the city's main commercial thoroughfares such as Yonge Street.

The property is also historically and visually linked to the neighbouring early 20th century properties that have been included on the City's Heritage Register. In particular, it complements the Masonic Temple (1918), located at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road, with which it shares architectural details such as arches and floral medallions.

## **CONCLUSION**

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The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Yonge/Church Streets and Davenport Road, across from the Masonic Temple and adjacent to the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District, in the Rosedale neighbourhood. The property, commonly known as Canadian Tire Store, comprises, amongst other structures, portions of the Grand Central Market, a two-storey commercial market building designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in 1929 by Henry Wilkinson, the in-house architect for Associated Development Corporation Ltd, the financial and real-estate firm that developed the property.

The design of the new market was conceived as a "stop and shop" modern market that would service the local community and offered an alternative to the more established St. Lawrence Market, where one would purchase directly from the producer. The concept for the Grand Central Market palatial building for over 100 of Toronto's better retail merchants was short lived. In 1936, the property was acquired by Canadian Tire Corporation to serve as the company's headquarters and flagship store along Toronto's famous Yonge Street. The Canadian Tire retail store has continuously operated for nearly 90 years at this location and this association with a national legacy business, established in Toronto in 1922, further contributes to the cultural heritage value of the property and the historic commercial character of Yonge Street at Davenport Road in the Bloor/Yorkville area.

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (previously 837 Yonge Street) has been recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register since February 24, 1986 when Canadian Tire redeveloped the property by incorporating 6 of the symmetrical 7-bay designed principal elevation and portions of the south elevation of the Grand Central Market building into its new flagship store along Yonge Street. This 1980s project was an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto.

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street and determined that the property meets 4 out of 9 criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Act. As such, the property should be designated.

The Statement of Significance (Attachment 3) 835 and 839 Yonge Street comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

## **CONTACT**

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Heritage Planner, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning  
E-mail: ana.martins2@toronto.ca

## **SIGNATURE**

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Mary L. MacDonald, MA, CAHP  
Senior Manager, Heritage Planning  
Urban Design, City Planning

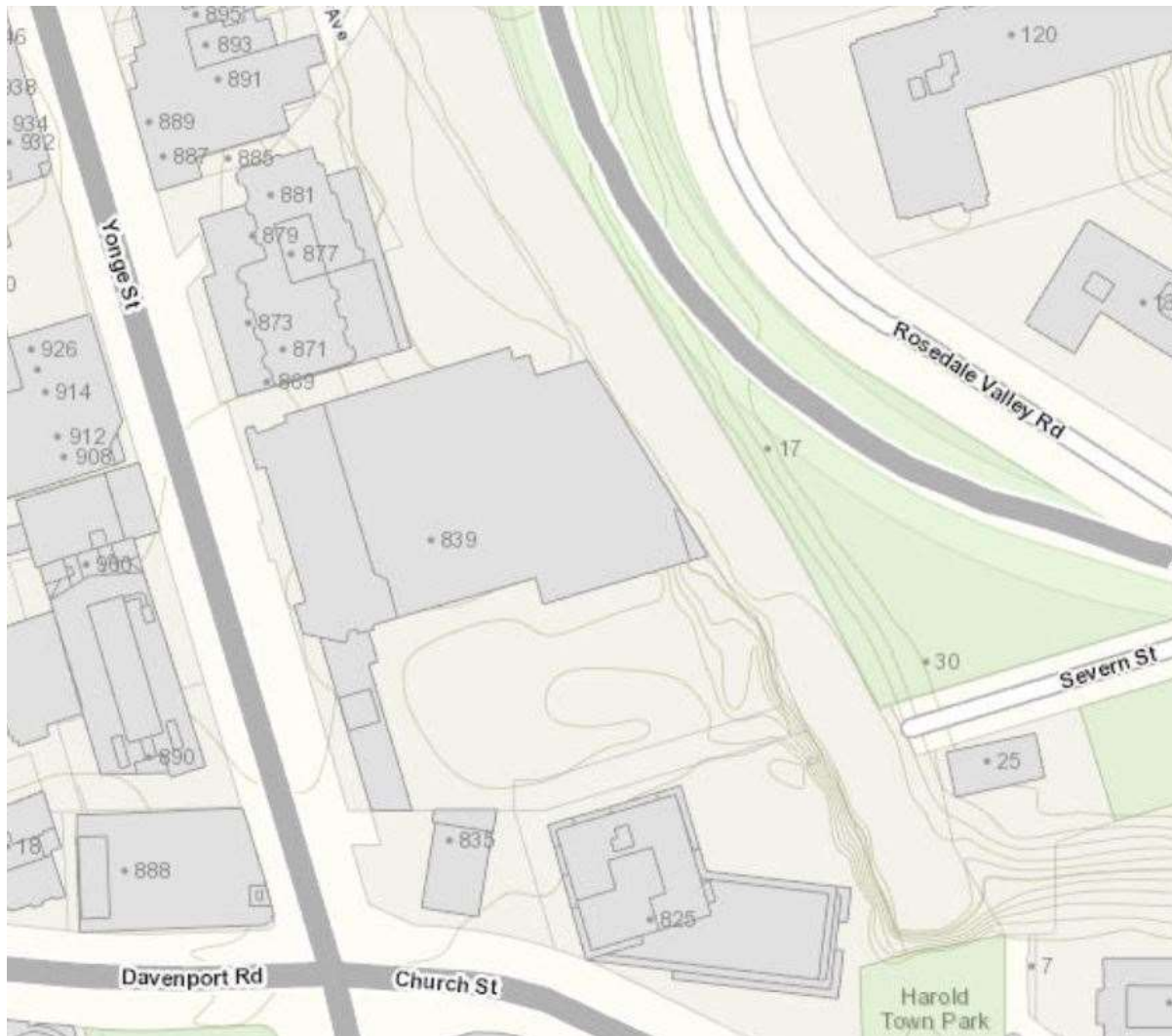
## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1 – Maps and Photographs  
Attachment 2 – List of Research Sources  
Attachment 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)

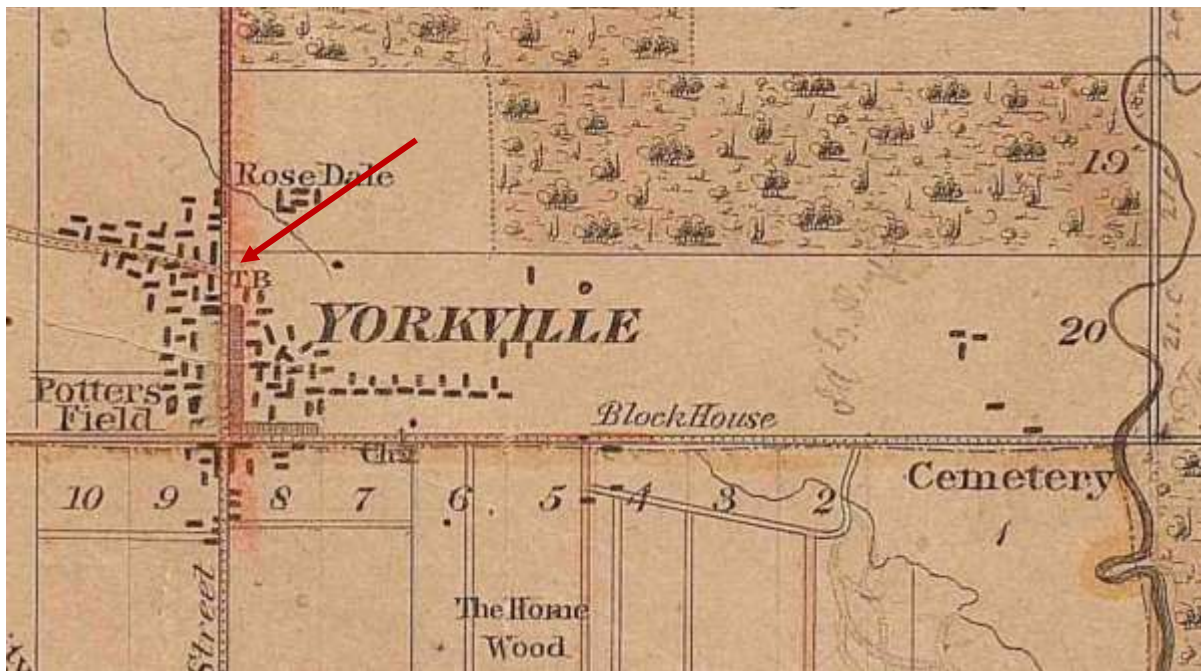
**MAPS AND PHOTOGRAPHS:**  
**835 and 839 YONGE STREET**

**ATTACHMENT 1**



1. This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown. The red outline and arrow mark the approximate location of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street. (City of Toronto iView Mapping)

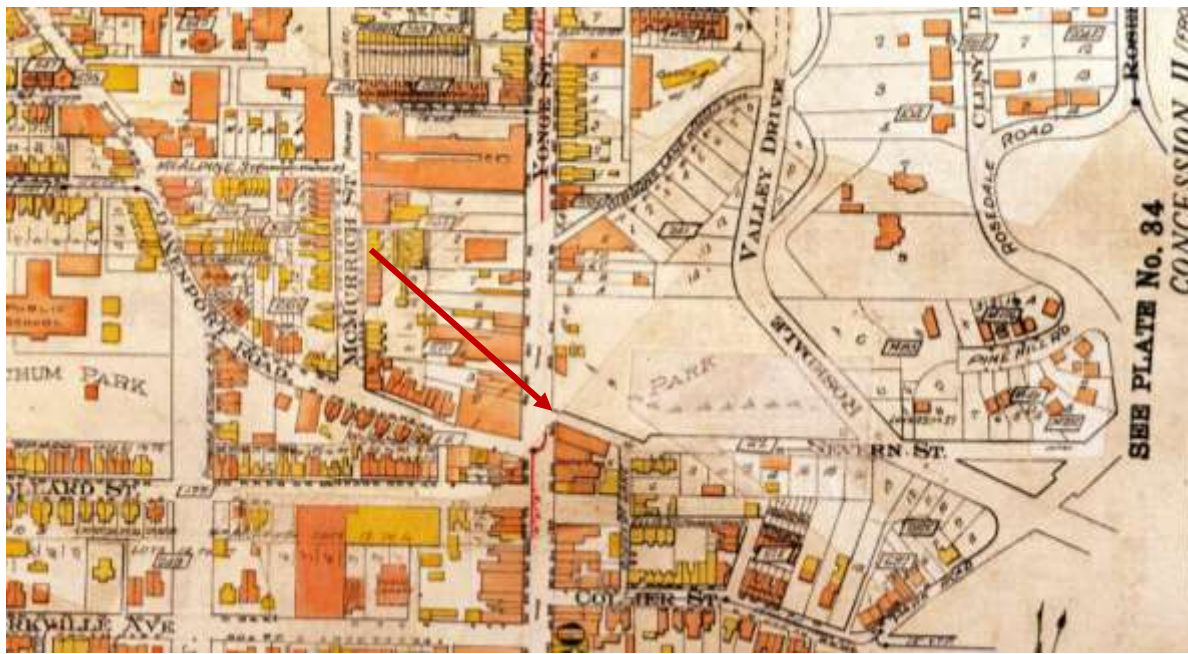




2. 1851 Browne's Map showing Town Lot 20 located within the historic Village of Yorkville. The settlement of Yorkville is concentrated at the intersection of Bloor Street and Yonge Street and west along Davenport Road. The approximate future location of the subject property is indicated by an arrow. (Ng, annotation by Heritage Planning)



3. 1884 Goad's Map showing the approximate location of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street. At the time of Yorkville's annexation (1883), Severn's Brewery occupied the site and was a significant industry and employer for Yorkville. (City of Toronto Archives, annotation by Heritage Planning)



4. 1924 Goad's Map showing the approximate location of the property. At this time, Severn's Brewery has been demolished, Severn Street remains while Church Street has not yet been constructed. There has been a building boom in the affluent residential neighbourhood of Rosedale to the east (City of Toronto Archives)

#### BEGIN WORK SHORTLY ON YONGE ST. MARKET

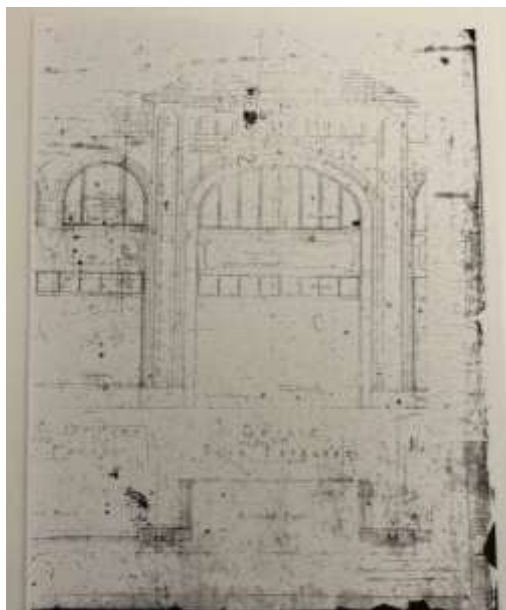
New Structure To Be Erected  
on Site 140 by 287  
Feet

Announcement is made to-day by the Associated Development Corporation, Limited, Central building, that, in 10 days' time, ground will be broken for the erection of a new market in Toronto to be known as the Grand Central Market. The location of this important new shopping centre for the city, is Yonge St. east side at Severn St., or immediately opposite the Masonic Temple on Yonge St.

The parcel of land secured for the new market has a frontage of 140 feet on Yonge St. by 287 feet depth which fronts on Severn St. The rear of the market overlooks the park. The owners of the land are W. Claude Fox of Toronto and James Norris of Chicago, who have leased, with an option to purchase, the land to the Associated Development Corporation Limited.

The design of the new market will closely follow the plan adopted by the "Stop and Shop" markets of Kansas City and Cleveland city, which have already proven a decided success. The plan is in no sense of the word an experiment. The Star was told, as there are already 152 community markets of this kind in operation in the United States. The Toronto market will have 104 stalls under the one roof and will enable the lady of the house to do all her shopping under cover in a limited area. Robins, Limited, have been appointed sole rental agents and managers of the new concern, and already stalls are being leased in the property. According to present plans completion of the Grand Central Market will be followed by the erection of three other markets in different parts of the city. The date of erection of these is not yet determined.

5. In August 1928, the Toronto Daily Star reports that the subject property is now owned by broker W. Claude Fox and Chicago industrialist James Norris. Associated Development Corporation Ltd has leased the land with plans to build "Grand Central Market", a new "stop and shop" community market similar to ones in the United States. (Toronto Daily Star Archives, TPL)

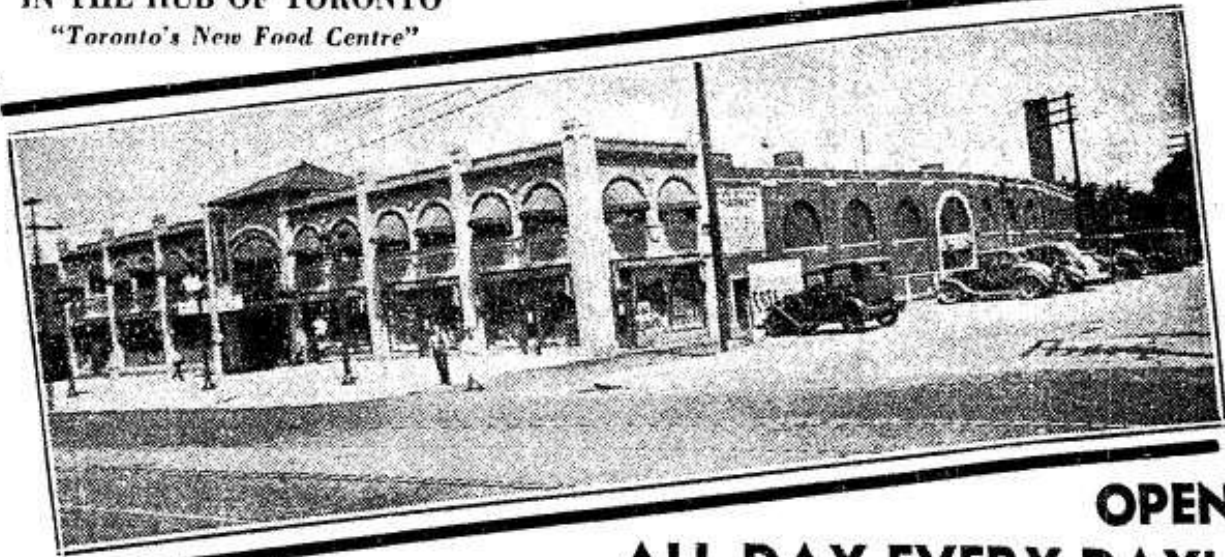


6. Architectural Plan for the Grand Central Market, designed by H. Wilkinson, for Associated Development Corporation Ltd, dated October 1929. (City of Toronto Building Records)





**IN THE HUB OF TORONTO**  
*"Toronto's New Food Centre"*

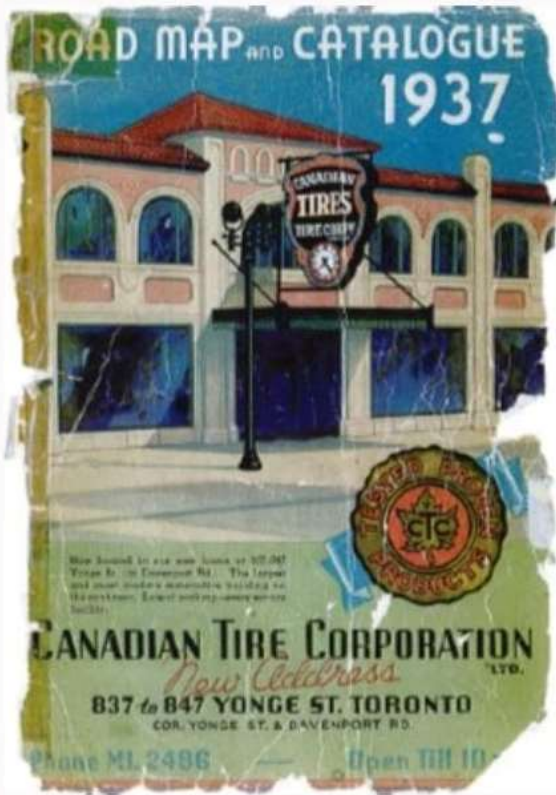


**OPEN  
 ALL DAY EVERY DAY!**

10. In August 1935, the Grand Central Market is open, with a Yonge Street frontage, extending eastward along Church Street. (Toronto Star Archives, TPL)



11. Archival image dating between 1930 and 1935 showing the south elevation of the Grand Central Market along Church Street with the Masonic Temple at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road. (City of Toronto Archives)



12. Canadian Tire Catalogue. By 1937, Canadian Tire was operating out of the former Grand Central Market at 837 Yonge Street. (Western University Archives, Canadian Tire Heritage Collection (online exhibit))



13. Canadian Tire flagship store in 1948 on the subject property with new signage and the west and south elevation visible. (City of Toronto Archives)





14. 1959 archival image showing the original gas bar located at the northeast corner of Yonge and Church Streets. The 1935 structure is visible in the background (City of Toronto Archives)



15. A 1959 image of the northeast corner of Yong and Church Streets with the new gas bar and the Masonic Temple directly across the street. (City of Toronto Archives)



16. The concept for Canadian Tire Money was launched with the introduction of the gas bar, redeemable on merchandise at Canadian Tire stores. (Western University Archives, Canadian Tire Heritage Collection (online exhibit))



17. A 1983 archival image of the Canadian Tire store showing the 1935 structure before the redevelopment of the property in the late 1980s. (TPL)



City of Toronto Archives, Series 1465, File 185, Item 5

18. 1994 archival image showing the west or principal façade retention of the 1935 structure and its reuse as the entrance to the new Canadian Tire store addition (1986) to the north. (City of Toronto Archives)



19. 1935 Archival image of the Grand Central Market with signage and individual storefronts along Yonge Street. (Getty Images, Toronto Star Archives)



20. Current view of the 1935 west façade (Heritage Planning, 2022)



21. Architectural details of the main entrance bay with pyramidal roof with terracotta tiling repurposed as the entrance to the parking lot at the rear. (Heritage Planning, 2022)





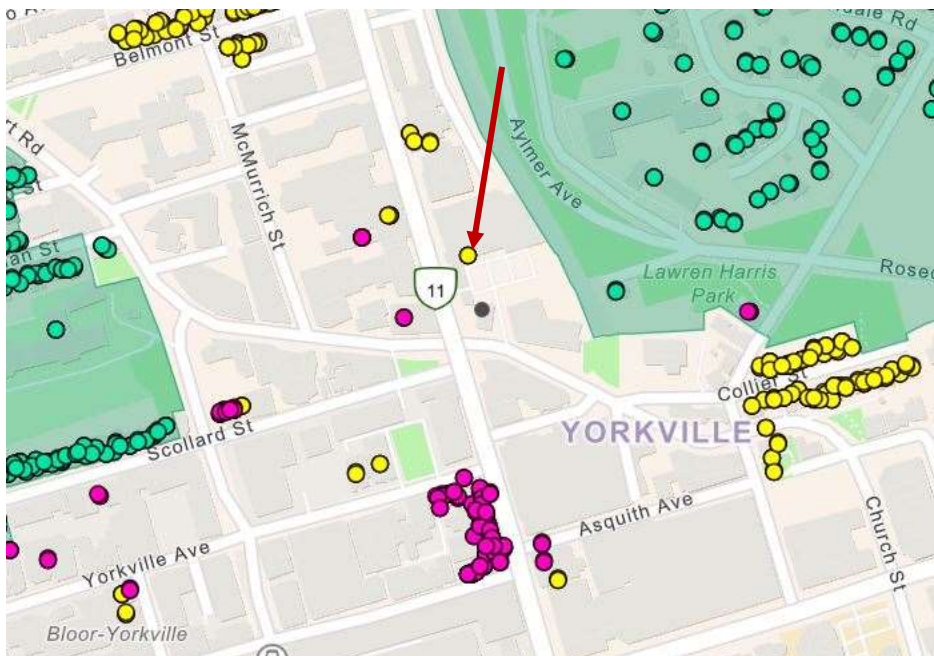
22. The Part IV designated Masonic Temple (1918) is located across from the property. Note the arched portal and floral medallions which are echoed in the west elevations of the subject property. (Heritage Planning, 2022)



23. Contextual image of the west side of Yonge Street looking north. The Part IV designated Ridpath showroom at 906 Yonge Street with its notable Tudor Revival style (1928) is across the street from the subject property. (Heritage Planning, 2022)



24. Contextual image of the east side of Yonge Street looking south with the grouping of (listed) late 19th century commercial buildings to the left of the image and just north of the subject property. (Heritage Planning, 2022)



25. Details of the City of Toronto's online Heritage Register map tool, showing the clusters of heritage properties in the immediate area including listed (yellow), designated (pink) and South Rosedale HCD to the right (green) and the Yorkville-Hazeltown HCD (green) on the left of the subject property (indicated by the red arrow).

**Archival Sources**

- Archival Photographs, City of Toronto Archives
- Building Records, Toronto and East York
- Western University Archives, "Canadian Tire Heritage Collection", online exhibit, [Home | Canadian Tire Heritage Collection \(canadiantireuwo.wixsite.com\)](http://canadiantireuwo.wixsite.com/)
- City of Toronto Assessment Roll, Ward No. 2, Division 4, 1928-1936
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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE****(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

The properties at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (including the entrance address at 837 Yonge Street) are worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meet Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under the criteria of design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual value.

**Description**

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Yonge/Church Streets and Davenport Road, across from the Masonic Temple and adjacent to the South Rosedale Heritage Conservation District, in the Rosedale neighbourhood. The property, commonly known as the Canadian Tire Store, comprises, amongst other structures, portions of the Grand Central Market, a two-storey commercial market building designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in 1929 by Henry Wilkinson, the in-house architect for Associated Development Corporation Ltd, the financial and real-estate firm that developed the property.

The design of the new market was conceived as a "stop and shop" modern market that would service the local community and offered an alternative to the more established St. Lawrence Market, where one would purchase directly from the producer. The concept for the Grand Central Market palatial building for over 100 of Toronto's better retail merchants was short lived. In 1936, the property was acquired by Canadian Tire Corporation to serve as the company's headquarters and flagship store along Toronto's famous Yonge Street. The Canadian Tire retail store has continuously operated for nearly 90 years at this location and this association with a national legacy business, established in Toronto in 1922, further contributes to the cultural heritage value of the property and the historic commercial character of Yonge Street at Davenport Road in the Bloor/Yorkville area.

In the 1980s, Canadian Tire redeveloped the property making significant changes by incorporating 6 of the symmetrical 7-bay designed principal elevation and portions of the south elevation of the Grand Central Market building into its new flagship store along Yonge Street. This 1980s project was an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto.

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (previously 837 Yonge Street) (today known as a Canadian Tire Store) has been recognized on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register since February 24, 1986.



## **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**

### **Design and Physical Value**

The property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street has design value as a representative example of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, which is evident in the design of the west and south elevations of the former Grand Central Market building façades. Elements of the style are expressed in the classically inspired metal cornice under the eaves, carved stone pilasters, arched window openings and floral themed medallions, stucco insets, red terracotta roof tile, and the distinct main entrance bay, which is higher than the overall roofline and wider than the typical bay width, topped with a pyramidal red terracotta tile roof. The main entrance bay is distinct from the rest, having a stone basket-handle arch, five blind stone arched decorative recesses, linked by a stone band, and the bay is flanked by full height carved stone pilasters.

The property is a remnant example of a rare early-20th century commercial market building typology as evident in the design of the two-storey flat roof massing with a distinct main entrance feature that is higher than the overall roofline, culminating in a pyramidal Spanish red tile roof. It is also evident in the façade composition of the west (primary) and south elevations. The west and south façades retain the multi-bay arrangement that accommodated storefronts at ground level, originally constructed with display windows and single door entrances. The storefront flanking the main entrance bay originally had offset entrances while the others were centrally located within the storefront composition. Additional features include a prominent main entrance bay flanked by carved stone pilasters and carved stone arched window openings to ancillary uses on the second level. The arched window openings were originally designed with tripartite steel sash windows composed of a fixed centre sash and two flanking casement windows. A 7th bay originally existed, giving the building a symmetrical composition to the west façade. The extant iron anchors that once held the main entrance canopy also support the typology.

### **Historical and Associative Value**

The property is valued for its association with Canadian Tire Corporation, a legacy business established in Toronto in 1922 by brothers J.W. and A. J. Billes. Incorporated in 1927, the company is one of Canada's most recognizable retail chains and it now operates a network of 1711 stores and gas bars across the country. Canadian Tire purchased the Grand Central Market building in 1936 as its flagship location owing to the company's expansion with the growth of the automotive market in Canada and its branding of "do-it-yourself" maintenance. The company has continuously operated a retail store at this location since 1936. Canadian Tire's commercial innovations such as the launch of Canada Canadian Tire Money, which was the first loyalty program in Canada, were inaugurated at this location. The alterations to the property undertaken in 1986 constitute an early example of façade retention in the City of Toronto.

The property also has value for its association with Grand Central Market, a business venture conceived as a "stop and shop" modern market that would service the local community, similar to ones in the United States. It offered a business model based for retail markets based on tenancies, a model which was considered to be the first of its kind in Canada.

## **Contextual Value**

Contextually, the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street has cultural heritage value as it maintains and supports the historic commercial character of this portion of Yonge Street. With the delineated bays along the extant 1935 façades, intended to function as individual storefronts, the property is an important contributor as it is consistent with the rhythm produced by fine-grained late 19th and early 20th storefronts along the streetscape.

Designed in 1929, the commercial property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street is visually, physically, and historically linked to its surroundings as a representative example of a commercial building with its form, massing, and stylistic details such as its series of store front window openings that are characteristic of late 19th and early 20th century development along the city's main commercial thoroughfares such as Yonge Street.

The property is also historically and visually linked to the neighbouring early 20th century properties that have been included on the City's Heritage Register. In particular, it complements the Masonic Temple (1918), located at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Davenport Road, with which it shares architectural details such as arched openings and floral themed medallions.

## **Heritage Attributes**

### **Design or Physical Value**

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (including the entrance address of 837 Yonge Street) being a fine representative example of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style:

- The principal (west) and south elevation design with their classically inspired metal cornice under the eaves, carved stone pilasters, two carved stone arched window openings on the second level in each bay, excluding the main bay and red terracotta roof tile; the two-arch design separated by a floral themed medallion above and a shared hyperbolic shaped stone base detail, visually resting on a recessed panelled stucco band with two side-by-side stucco insets; stone base of the store front bays and red terracotta roof tile
- The main entrance bay located on the west façade that is higher than the overall roofline and wider than the typical bay width, culminating in a pyramidal red terracotta tiled roof
- The single stone basket-handle arch, five blind stone arched decorative recesses linked by a stone band and flanked by full height carved stone pilasters of the main entrance bay and a stone base



- The rectangular openings at ground level located within each bay, which originally contained store fronts

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street (including the entrance address of 837 Yonge Street) being a fine remnant example of a rare early 20th century commercial market building typology:

- The two-storey flat roof massing with a main entrance feature that is higher than the overall roofline, culminating in a pyramidal Spanish red terracotta tile roof
- The façade composition of the west (primary) and south elevations, a prominent main entrance bay, flanked by carved stone pilasters and carved stone arched window openings on the second level
- Iron anchors

### **Historical and Associative Value**

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street are:

- The extant façades of the 1935 structure, which served as a long-standing retail location for Canadian Tire, was the site of a number commercial innovations associated with the business, and are early examples of façade retention in the City of Toronto
- The extant façades of the 1935 structure's siting, and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street north of Church Street, with a Yonge Street frontage

### **Contextual Value**

Attributes that contribute to the value of the property at 835 and 839 Yonge Street as defining, supporting and maintain the historic character of the area and being historically, visually, functionally and physically linked to their setting:

- The placement, setback, and orientation of the 1935 façades with respect to Yonge Street
- The scale, form, and massing of the 1935 façades as a two-storey commercial market building with delineated bays along the west or principal elevation, consistent with the rhythm produced by fine-grained building frontages along the historic portion of Yonge Street
- The architectural vocabulary including the arched portal and floral themed medallions found on the Masonic Temple at the northwest corner of Yonge and Davenport are echoed on the subject property