

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

**Date:** February 13, 2023

**To:** Toronto Preservation Board

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

**Wards:** 13 - Toronto Centre

### **SUMMARY**

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This report recommends that City Council state its intention to designate the property at 51 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value.

The property at 51 Yonge Street comprises a four-storey commercial building located on the east side of Yonge Street, north of Wellington Street East. The building is believed to date to c.1878-1879, although the underlying structure may date to 1847. Designed in the Second Empire style, the building has historical and architectural links to the Bank of British North America building at 49 Yonge Street. Through the years, the property housed a series of commercial tenants, notably including the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada from 1891 to 1956.

City Council included the subject property on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 1981. The property is adjacent to 49 Yonge Street, which was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in 1979.

Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 51 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, on the basis of its design/physical, historical/associative, and contextual values. As such, the property is a significant built heritage resource.

In September 2022, the City received a Site Plan Approval application related to proposed redevelopment of the subject property. The proposal would include a 60-storey mixed-use building having a non-residential gross floor area of 1757 square metres and a residential gross floor area of 19970 square metres, comprising 256 dwelling units. This development would involve the addition of a high-rise structure above the existing buildings at 49 and 51 Yonge Street, the removal of a portion of the stone wall along Wellington Street East, and alterations to the buildings' interiors.

A Heritage Impact Assessment (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. GBCA Architects prepared an HIA that was submitted in November 2021 and resubmitted in August 2022.

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 March 4, 2022. The property owner provided a waiver to extend indefinitely the 90-day timeline established under Bill 108.

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 which amended the Ontario Heritage Act 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.

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 51 Yonge Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 51 Yonge Street (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3, to the report, February 13, 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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City Council included the subject property at 51 Yonge Street on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in September 1981.

On February 2021, Toronto and East York Community Council adopted the report from the Director, Community Planning, Toronto and East York District that provides information and identifies a preliminary set of issues regarding the application located at 49-51 Yonge Street. Staff continue to work with the applicant to resolve the outstanding issues.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2022/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-198863.pdf>

## **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 Amendments is forthcoming.

[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. A 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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In September 2022, the City received a Site Plan Approval application related to proposed redevelopment of the subject property. The proposal would include a 60-storey mixed-use building having a non-residential gross floor area of 1757 square metres and a residential gross floor area of 19970 square metres, comprising 256 dwelling units. This development would involve the addition of a high-rise structure above the existing buildings at 49 and 51 Yonge Street, the removal of a portion of the stone wall along Wellington Street East, and alterations to the buildings' interiors.

On January 1, 2023, the Province's proposed amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act (the Act) through the More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022 (Bill 23) came into effect.

On July 1, 2021, O. Reg 385/21 under the Ontario Heritage Act came into effect which defines what constitutes a prescribed event under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The date the City Clerk provides notice to the public of the complete application is the Prescribed Event. The Prescribed Event is not the date a development application is deemed complete or when an application is made to the City.

If a new or subsequent Official Plan Amendment, Zoning By-law Amendment and/or Draft Plan of Subdivision Application is submitted on the same property, the Prescribed Event date is reset to the new date the City Clerk issues notice to the public of the new or subsequent complete application. From the date of Prescribed Event occurring, the

City has 90 days to issue a Notice of Intention to Designate for that property or otherwise be prohibited from designating that property under Section 29 of the Act, subject to limited exceptions."

As of January 1, 2023, listing is a prerequisite to designation should a property be subject to a development application for a Prescribed Event.

City Council included the property located at 51 Yonge Street on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in 1981.

The subject property is adjacent to the designated property at 49 Yonge Street.

## 51 Yonge Street

### 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 51 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: The subject property at 51 Yonge Street, at centre, 2023 (Heritage Planning).

## 1. DESCRIPTION

51 Yonge Street	
ADDRESS	51 Yonge Street
WARD	13 - Toronto Centre
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	TOWN OF YORK PT LOT 1 RP 63R 2765 PARTS 1 & 2
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Financial District
HISTORICAL NAME	Commercial Travellers Building
CONSTRUCTION DATE	c.1878-1879; underlying structure may date to 1847
ORIGINAL OWNER	1847 warehouse built for Brown & Lynes
ORIGINAL USE	Commercial
CURRENT USE*	Commercial
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Unconfirmed
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Limestone, cast iron, and wood
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	Second Empire
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	Original 1847 structure was either replaced or substantially altered in c.1878-1879; further alterations took place in 1890
CRITERIA	Design/Physical, Historical/Associative, Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Listed (1981)
RECORDER	Tatum Taylor Chaubal
REPORT DATE	January 25, 2023

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation section of the report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 51 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.

1844-1846	The Bank of British North America commissioned a purpose-built headquarters for their Toronto branch at Yonge and Wellington streets.
1847	The Bank of British North America commissioned the construction of two warehouses adjoining their new building, 51 and 53 Yonge Street.
1871-1872	The Bank of British North America replaced their 1840s building with a new Second Empire-style building.
1879-1880	Municipal directories (reflecting conditions in 1878 and 1879, respectively) identified both warehouses at 51 and 53 Yonge Street as unoccupied. It is likely that the subject property was either constructed or substantially rebuilt during this period.
1890	Alterations took place in advance of the building's use as headquarters for the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada.
1956	The Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada remained at the subject property until 1956.
1981	The City of Toronto included the subject property on the Heritage Register.

## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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

During Toronto's early emergence as a commercial capital in the 1840s, the area around Yonge and Wellington streets became a centre for financial institutions. In 1844, the Bank of British North America, founded in 1836, hired architect John George Howard to design a purpose-built headquarters for their Toronto branch. Completed in 1846, the fine limestone building addressed the northeast corner of Yonge and Wellington streets, occupying the site currently known as 49 Yonge Street, immediately south of the subject property.

In 1847, the Bank commissioned the construction of two warehouses adjoining their new building, also by John George Howard. The Bank had purchased these lots from Charles Berczy, a director of the Bank and Toronto's postmaster at the time. Designed as an architectural extension of the Bank building, the warehouses at the location of 51 and 53 Yonge Street were occupied by Brown & Lynes, a grocery and provisions company operated by A.V. Brown. A call for tenders published in the *Globe* described the pair as "two cut stone front warehouses" (see Figure 6).

Municipal directories indicate that later occupants of 51 Yonge Street from the 1850s through the 1870s included C.J. Houghton, an auctioneer; the Provincial Telegraph Company; Livingston, Johnston & Co., wholesale clothiers; and Childs & Co., boots and shoes. Meanwhile, from the mid-1860s through mid-1870s, 53 Yonge Street was occupied by A. Dredge & Co., a stationer and book binder. In the 1879 and 1880 directories (reflecting conditions in 1878 and 1879, respectively), both buildings were identified as unoccupied. Though secondary sources differ in their interpretations of the

building's evolution,<sup>1</sup> it is likely that the subject property was either constructed or substantially rebuilt during the period when it was listed as unoccupied, c.1878-1879. During the 1880s, the building housed commercial tenants including D. McCall & Co, a milliner, and Foster & McCabe, a fancy goods company.

In the meantime, the original Bank of British North America building had also been replaced in 1871-1872. The new bank building, designed by prominent architect Henry Langley, was faced in Ohio sandstone and exhibited the popular Second Empire style. While distinct from the adjacent bank, the subject property shares Second Empire design vocabulary, such as a mansard roof, arched windows, keystones, and brackets, and its limestone façade is similar in colour and quality to the adjacent sandstone.

The 1891 municipal directory (reflecting conditions in 1890) identified 49-51 Yonge Street as an "unfinished building," and *The Globe* announced at the end of 1890 that the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada was completing a renovation of the property at 51 Yonge Street (see Figure 10). Previously headquartered at Church Street and Adelaide Street East, the Association was a benevolent society that supported and advocated on behalf of salesmen who regularly travelled for business. Their new headquarters at 51 Yonge Street had offices for rent at the basement and ground floors, and spaces for the Association on the upper floors, including offices, a board room, a reading room, a smoking room, and a recreational room. It is unclear the degree to which the renovation for the Association's use altered the building's exterior. The location was considered ideal for its proximity to the new Board of Trade building (under construction at the time at Yonge Street and Front Street East, now demolished), warehouses, the harbour, and the train station. At the time of their relocation, *The Globe* called the organization "a flourishing association," with a total of 3,150 members and a large surplus fund. The Association remained here until relocating to a new building at 17 Dundonald Street in 1956, though the subject property continued to be identified as the Commercial Travellers Building in municipal directories through at least the late 1960s. Various commercial tenants have continued to occupy the building to the present day.

### 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.

Located on the east side of Yonge Street, north of Wellington Street East, the property at 51 Yonge Street comprises a four-storey commercial building. The building is believed to date to c.1878-1879, although the underlying structure may date to 1847. Documentation from the early 1890s (see Figures 9 and 10), when additional modifications were made for the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada, confirms that the building has retained a high degree of integrity since that period.

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<sup>1</sup> "The City of Toronto listing on the Heritage Register for the building at 51 Yonge Street concludes that the Howard-designed façade was altered "sometime between 1872 and 1881 for Casimir Gzowski." Meanwhile, historian William Dendy deduced that the double warehouse by Howard (that is 51 and 53 Yonge Street) was demolished and rebuilt in c1872-73." (GBCA, P. 14)

Organized into three bays, the building's primary façade features design elements that represent the Second Empire style, which was popular among commercial and civic buildings in Ontario between the 1860s and 1880s. Typical of this style, the building has a mansard roof, which features a round-arched dormer window with a pediment, and two smaller flanking windows with limestone surrounds and flat roofs. Beneath a stone cornice with brackets, the second and third storeys are faced in limestone and defined by limestone banding and pilasters with fluted capitals. The central window on the third storey is highlighted by a segmental arch with a keystone. On the ground storey, a cast iron storefront defines the entry and two glazed bays with fluted pilasters. The entry includes double doors recessed beneath a wooden frieze and a round-arched transom window.

#### **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 subject property originated in 1847 as one of two warehouses constructed in conjunction with the immediately adjacent Bank of British North America building at 49 Yonge Street. By the late 1870s, the pair at 51 and 53 Yonge Street appear to have been either demolished and replaced, or substantially rebuilt; the bank was also replaced in the early 1870s with its extant iteration. The building at 51 Yonge Street was modified again in 1890, while the building at 53 Yonge Street was replaced again in the early 1900s. The subject property at 51 Yonge Street remains as an important reflection of the 19th-century commercial streetscape that evolved along Yonge Street, the roots of the current Financial District. The intersections with Wellington Street, south of the subject property, and particularly with King Street to the north, developed as hubs of commercial activity and retain prominent corner bank buildings, as well as the Canadian Pacific Railway building. The property at 51 Yonge Street has historic and visual links to the adjacent Bank of British North America at 49 Yonge Street, a designated heritage property, with which it shares a material palette and Second Empire-style architectural vocabulary. Together, the two buildings form a strong historic streetwall that anchors this side of the block.

### **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

*The property is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method*

The property is a fine representative example of a Second Empire-style commercial building. With a high degree of integrity confirmed by documentation from the 1890s, the building is faced in limestone on the upper storeys, with a cast iron storefront at ground level. Typical of the Second Empire style, the building has a mansard roof, which has a round-arched dormer window with a pediment, and two smaller flanking windows with limestone surrounds and flat roofs. Additional noteworthy features include limestone banding and pilasters with fluted capitals, keystone details, and a wooden frieze above the entry.

## 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

*The property has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community*

Originally developed in conjunction with the adjacent Bank of British North America in 1847, the property has direct associations with the theme of Toronto's early emergence as a commercial capital in the 1840s, at which time the area around Yonge and Wellington streets became a centre for financial institutions. The extant building is associated with the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada, for which it served as headquarters from 1890 to 1956.

## CONTEXTUAL VALUE

Contextual Value	
i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	✓
ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	✓
iii. is a landmark	N/A

*The property is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area*

As a late-19th-century commercial building with intact Second Empire-style detailing, the property is important in maintaining and supporting the character of the surrounding area.

*The property is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings*

The property at 51 Yonge Street remains as an important reflection of the 19th-century commercial streetscape that evolved around Yonge and Wellington streets. In particular, it has historic and visual links to the adjacent designated heritage property at 49 Yonge Street, the former Bank of British North America, with which it shares a general material palette and Second Empire-style architectural vocabulary. Together, the two buildings form a strong historic streetwall that anchors this side of the block.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Staff have completed the Research and Evaluation Report for the property at 51 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: 51 Yonge Street (Attachment 3) comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate.

## **CONTACT**

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## **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)



Figure 2. Location 51 Yonge Street indicated by the arrow. Note: This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the property are not shown. North is located at the top of the map. (City of Toronto mapping.)

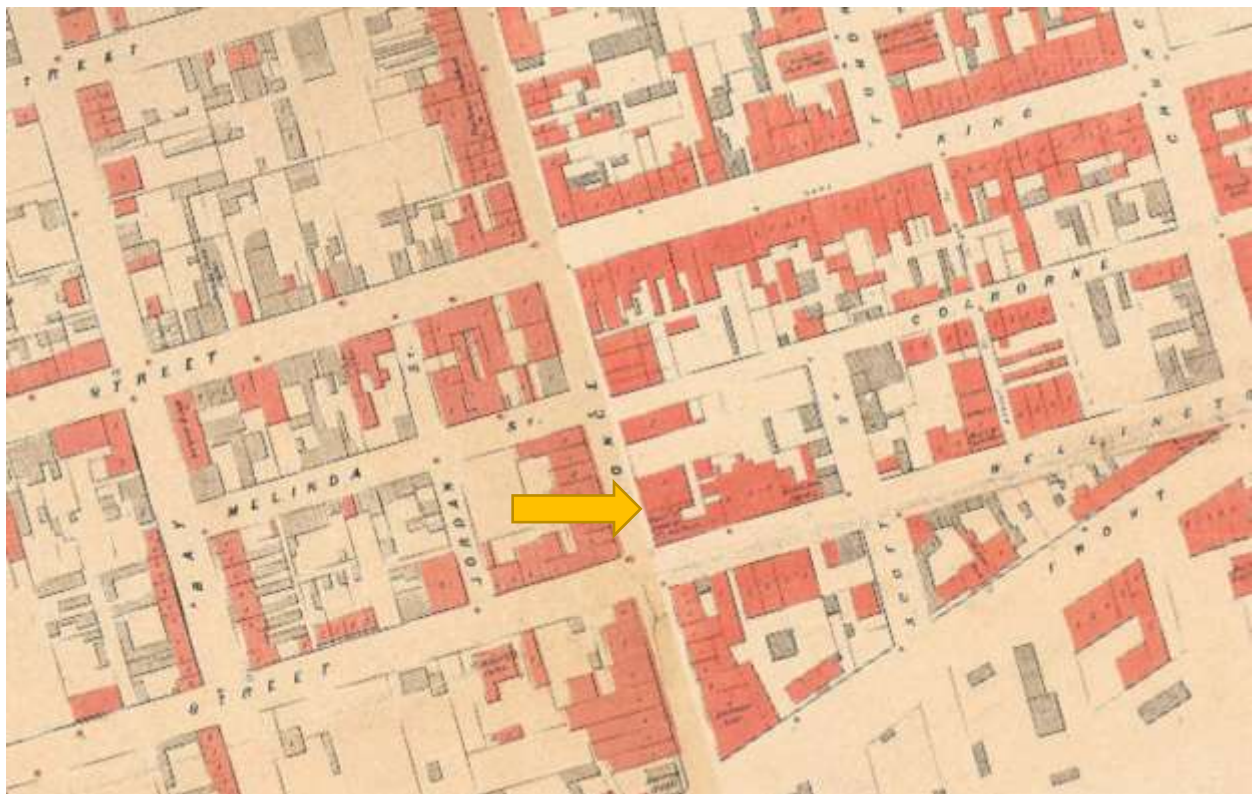


Figure 3: 1858 Boulton Atlas of the City of Toronto; location of 51 Yonge Street indicated by the arrow.



Figure 4: 1880 Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto; location of 51 Yonge Street indicated by the arrow.



Figure 5: 1903 Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto; location of 51 Yonge Street indicated by the arrow.

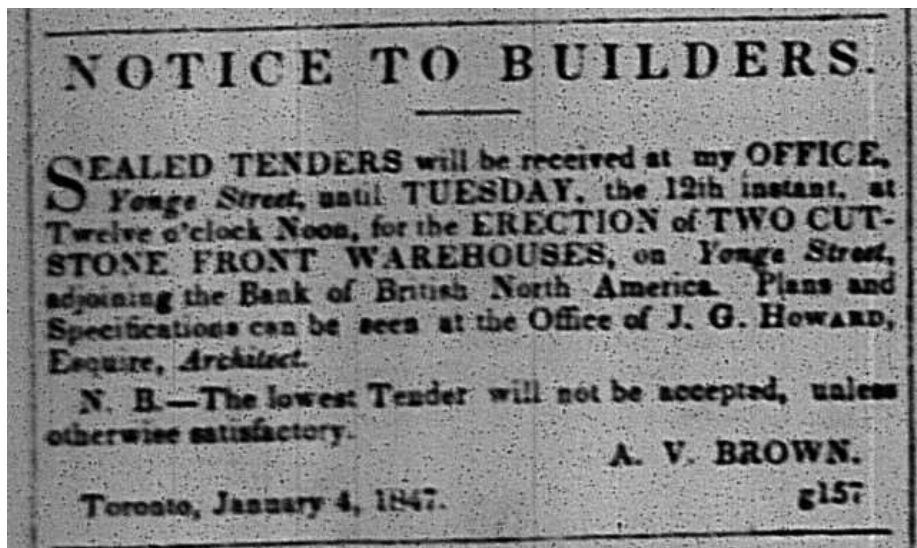


Figure 6: Published Notice to Builders regarding tenders for two warehouses adjacent to the Bank of British North America. (*The Globe*, January 6, 1847)

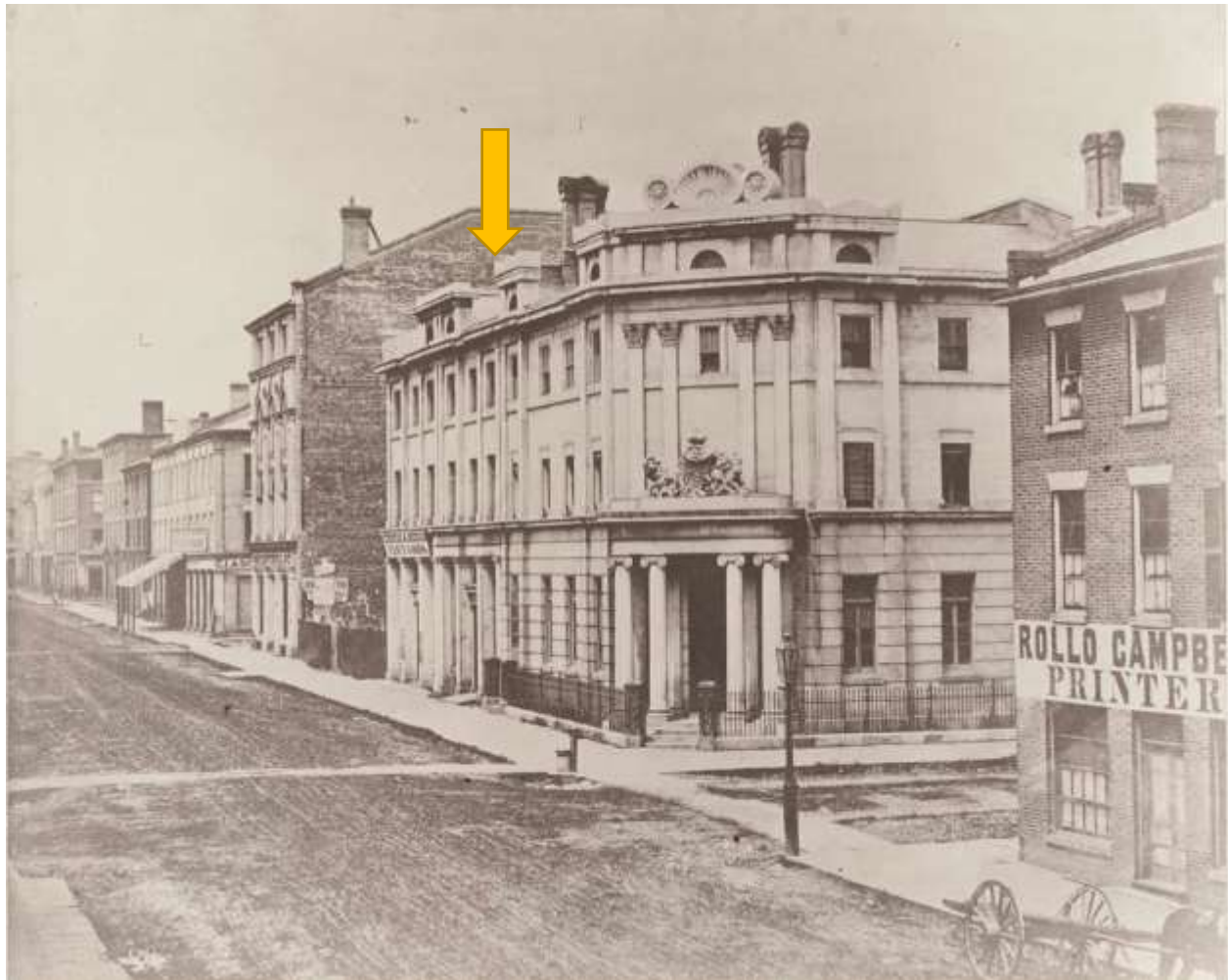


Figure 7. Bank of British North America: north-east corner of Wellington and Yonge streets, 1856; arrow indicates previous appearance of subject property. (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1498, Item 3)



Figure 8: Bank of British North America, 1867; arrow indicates previous appearance of subject property (TPL, T 10463)



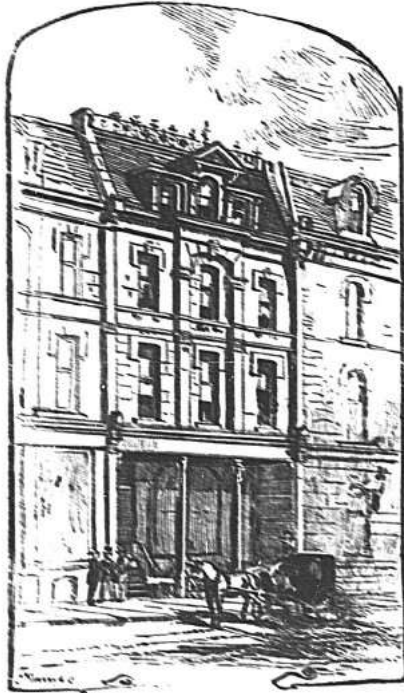
Figure 9: Yonge Street, south of King Street, looking north from south of Wellington Street, 1890; arrow indicates subject property. (TPL, PICTURES-R-1626)

**ANOTHER NEW BUILDING.**

**The Handsome Quarters Being Erected by the Commercial Travellers.**

The Commercial Travellers' Association, which for the past six years has had its office and clubroom in the Public Library building at Church and Adelaide streets, will soon be comfortably housed in its new quarters on Yonge street. It was long felt that with its big reserve fund of about \$180,000, and

busy class of men. A thorough reconstruction of the building has been going on for some time past at a cost of about \$7,000, and the work will be completed before the old year passes away. The basement and ground floor will be rented for offices, the association reserving the upstairs portions, which will be reached by a well-equipped elevator. There will be the association's offices and board room, a reading room, smoking room, lavatories, recreation room, etc., and, in fact, all that commercial

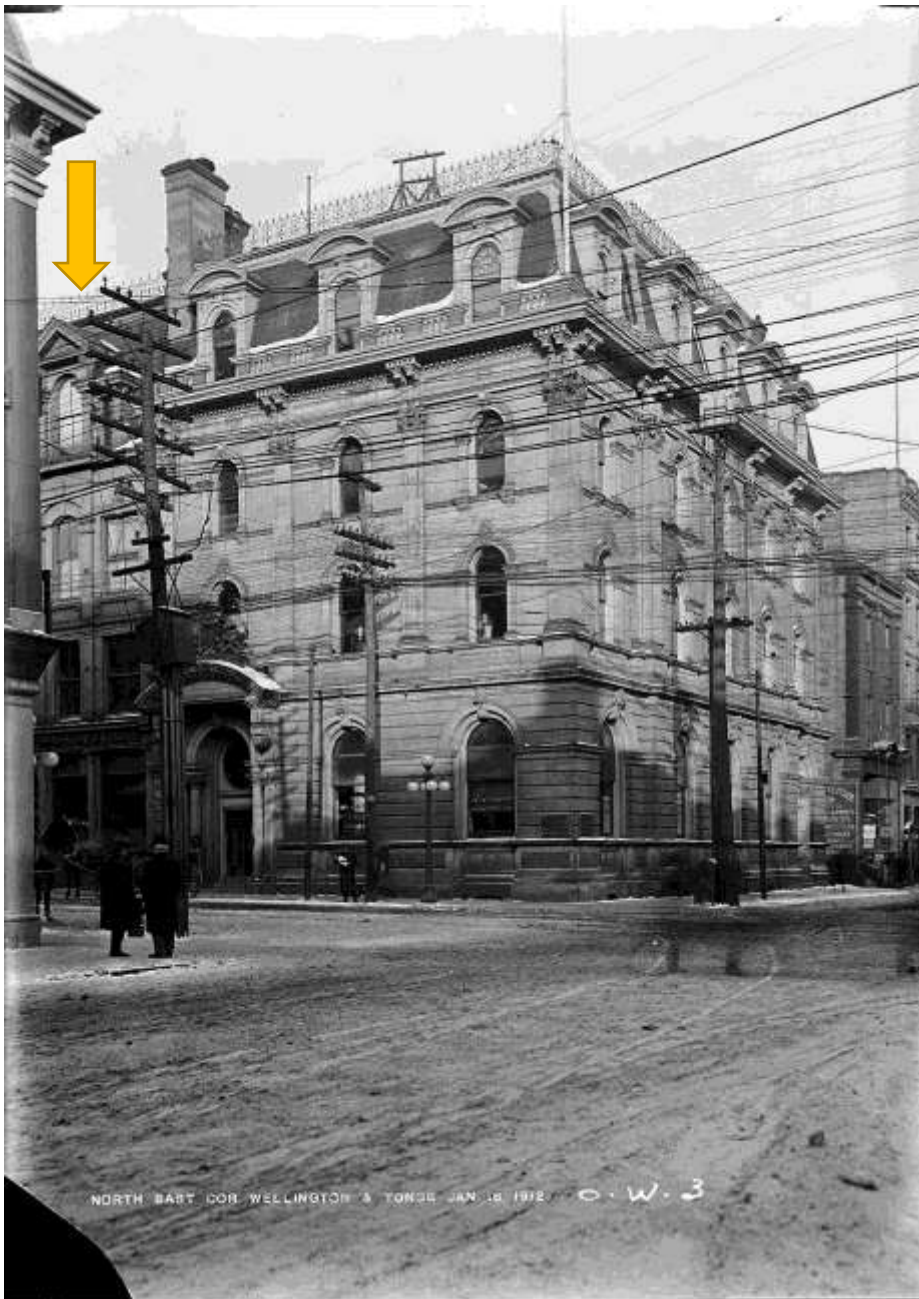


THE COMMERCIAL TRAVELLERS' NEW QUARTERS.

its membership of 3,150, the association could afford a larger, more central and more comfortable building, and the premises at 55 Yonge street, formerly occupied by the Central Bank, were secured. The location is all that could be desired. The new Board of Trade building, the warehouses, the boats and the station are within easy distances, which is a great consideration with this

men require. A great advantage will be that the members will be able to leave their gripsack or parcels here, and visiting men will be able to change their clothes, etc., for which they have at present to go to an hotel. The association is in splendid standing just now, numerically, financially and in every other way, and the future promises to be a continuation of past prosperity.

Figure 10: Announcement for new headquarters of the Commercial Travellers Association (*The Globe*, 13 Dec. 1890, P. 3)



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, f1231\_61698

Figure 11: Northeast Corner of Yonge and Wellington Streets (Bank of British North America), 1912; arrow indicates subject property. (City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, Item 1698)



Figure 12: 51 Yonge Street at centre (53 Yonge Street to left, 49 Yonge Street to right) 2023 (Heritage Planning).



Figure 13: Ground storey storefront of 51 Yonge Street, 2023 (Heritage Planning).



Figure 14: Limestone-clad upper storeys of 51 Yonge Street, 2023 (Heritage Planning).



Figure 15: East side of Yonge Street north of intersection with Wellington Street; 51 Yonge Street indicated by arrow, 2023 (Heritage Planning).



Figure 16: Northward view up Yonge Street from intersection with Wellington Street; 51 Yonge Street indicated by arrow, 2023 (Heritage Planning).

### Archival Sources

- Aerial photographs, City of Toronto mapping, 1939, 1954, 1965, 1978, 2005, 2015, 2020.
- Archival Photographs, City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Public Library (individual citations in Images).
- Boulton Atlas of the City of Toronto and Vicinity, 1858.
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- Toronto City Directories, 1850-1969 (<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/history-genealogy/lh-digital-city-directories.jsp>).

### Secondary Sources

- "A Flourishing Association: Commercial Travellers Elect Officers - The Quarterly Meeting." *The Globe*, 8 Dec. 1890, P. 3.
- "Another New Building: The Handsome Quarters Being Erected by the Commercial Travellers." *The Globe*, 13 Dec. 1890, P. 3.
- City of Toronto. "17 Dundonald Street - Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act." 1 April 2010. <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/te/bqrd/backgroundfile-30191.pdf>
- City of Toronto. "The Textures of a Lost Toronto: Commercial and Industrial Toronto." <https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/history-art-culture/museums/virtual-exhibits/textures-of-a-lost-toronto/commercial-and-industrial-toronto/>
- GBCA Architects. "Heritage Impact Assessment for 49-51 Yonge Street." 29 August 2022.

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
(REASONS FOR DESIGNATION)**

The property at 51 Yonge Street is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

**Description**

Located on the east side of Yonge Street, north of Wellington Street East, the property at 51 Yonge Street comprises a four-storey commercial building. The building is believed to date to c.1878-1879, although the underlying structure may date to 1847. Faced in limestone with a mansard roof and a cast iron storefront, the building demonstrates the Second Empire style.

**Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**

The property is a fine representative example of a Second Empire-style commercial building. With a high degree of integrity confirmed by documentation from the 1890s, the building is faced in limestone on the upper storeys, with a cast iron storefront at ground level. Typical of the Second Empire style, the building has a mansard roof, which has a round-arched dormer window with a pediment, and two smaller flanking windows with limestone surrounds and flat roofs. Additional noteworthy features include limestone banding and pilasters with fluted capitals, keystone details, and a wooden frieze above the entry.

Originally developed in conjunction with the adjacent Bank of British North America in 1847, the property has direct associations with the theme of Toronto's early emergence as a commercial capital in the 1840s, at which time the area around Yonge and Wellington streets became a centre for financial institutions. The extant building is associated with the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada, for which it served as headquarters from 1890 to 1956.

As a late-19th-century commercial building with intact architectural detailing, the property at 51 Yonge Street is important in maintaining and supporting the character of the surrounding area. The property remains as an important reflection of the 19th-century commercial streetscape that evolved around Yonge and Wellington streets. In particular, it has historic and visual links to the adjacent designated heritage property at 49 Yonge Street, the former Bank of British North America, with which it shares a general material palette and Second Empire-style architectural vocabulary. Together, the two buildings form a strong historic streetwall that anchors this side of the block.

## **Heritage Attributes**

### **Design and Physical Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 51 Yonge Street as a representative example of a Second Empire-style commercial building:

- The scale, form, and massing of the property as a four-storey commercial building
- The building's underlying structure, which may date to 1847
- The building's material palette of limestone, cast iron, and wood
- The primary (west) elevation, with its symmetrical, three-bay composition
- The mansard roof, which features a round-arched dormer window with a pediment, and two smaller flanking windows with limestone surrounds and flat roofs
- Additional architectural details consistent with the Second Empire style, including a stone cornice with brackets, limestone banding and pilasters with fluted capitals, arched window openings, and keystones
- The ground-level cast iron storefront, which defines the entry and two glazed bays with fluted pilasters
- The entry with double doors recessed beneath a wooden frieze and a round-arched transom window

### **Historic and Associative Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 51 Yonge Street as being associated with Toronto's early emergence as a commercial capital, and with the Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada:

- The property's siting and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street, north of Wellington Street
- The scale, form, and massing of the property as a four-storey commercial building
- The building's underlying structure, which may date to 1847

### **Contextual Value**

The following heritage attributes contribute to the cultural heritage value of the property at 51 Yonge Street as an important remnant of the 19th-century commercial streetscape around Yonge and Wellington streets:

- The property's siting and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street, north of Wellington Street
- The scale, form, and massing of the property as a four-storey commercial building
- The building's material palette of limestone, cast iron, and wood
- Second Empire design vocabulary, such as a mansard roof, arched windows, keystones, and brackets