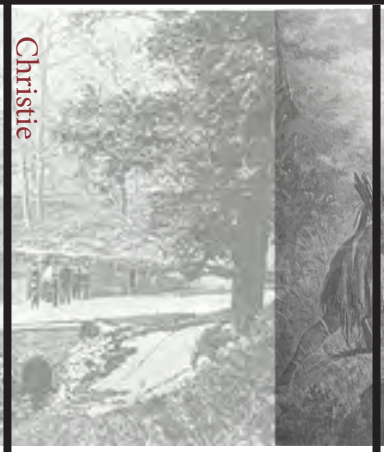
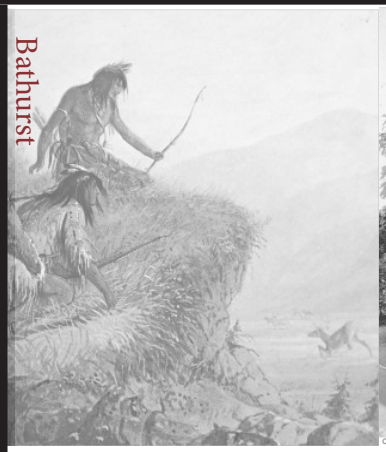
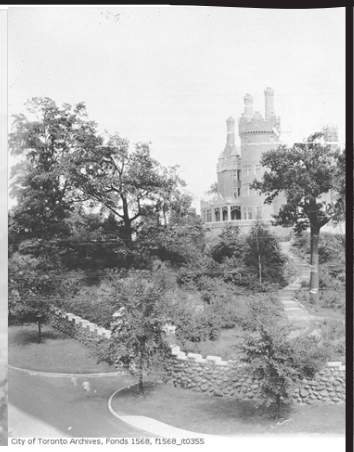
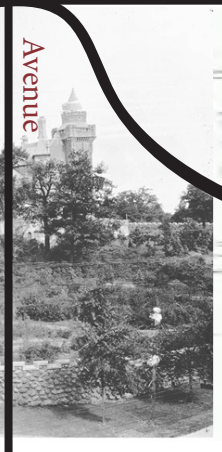
Dupont Corridor

Visioning Study









Prepared by: Dania Ansari
Master in Environmental Studies (Planning),
York University

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SECTION 1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Objectives

1.1.1 Purpose

The Dupont Corridor Visioning Study covers the area outlined in Section 1.2. The purpose of this study is to create a vision for the corridor which lies on the boundary between the neighbourhoods of Casa Loma and The Annex in downtown Toronto. This study aims to connect the different issues in the Corridor to create a coherent plan in which individual issues can be applied. It will also look for ways to responsibly intensify certain areas.

Bloor Street, which runs parallel to Dupont Street to the south, has had a similar Visioning Study completed in May 2008 by the City of Toronto. Dupont Corridor is currently an underutilized portion of the city but has the potential to become a productive, active part of the city, contributing to job creation and interactive pedestrian life. It is currently devoid of a strong public realm, and relatively dull in appearance. It is also facing development pressures for high rise condominium towers. The City's Official Plan, currently under review, directs intensification towards the city centre. This is an opportunity to direct growth to this part of Toronto. It falls in the downtown designation under the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It is well served by transit, and has a rich history. This report will create a vision for responsible intensification in which the area's historical assets are unmasked, sites for further intensification are identified, and guidelines for urban design are determined.

1.1.2 Objectives

This study aims to identify general urban design strategies and site-specific elements to create a better environment for all. Specifically, the objectives of this study are:

- To develop a vision for the nature and use of Dupont Corridor and to establish principles for future development
- To develop an urban design concept for the Dupont Corridor
- To identify sites in the Corridor which exemplify certain architectural and social trends occurring at a certain period in time
- To re-integrate historic sites, industrial heritage and abandoned buildings into an active, functioning part of the corridor
- To introduce relevant historical elements into the urban landscape
- To respect and preserve the "feel" of the old neighbourhood by using restoration, rehabilitation and preservation of the buildings where appropriate.
- To improve pedestrian circulation by providing walking trails and by encouraging continuous commercial street-fronts that engage the side walks.
- To identify opportunities for urban realm improvements and create a strong pedestrian environment and to construct continuity between fragmented urban spaces
- To preserve the general localized live/work environment of the neighbourhood by preserving and/or improving land use where appropriate
- To identify areas for new development and intensification
- To preserve views and vistas to important landmarks

1.2 Study Area

The Dupont Corridor study area (Fig. 1-2) is part of downtown Toronto. It is 1.43 kilometers in length. The study area is bounded by Avenue Road to the east and Bathurst Street to the west, Cottingham Street and Davenport Road to the north and Bernard Avenue to the south. The area has been shaped by years of natural, Aboriginal and urban history, which has largely been ignored. The Corridor is now mainly a route for through-traffic travelling to and from the core employment area from communities to the north and west of the city. Its location allows it to potentially stitch together the neighbourhoods of Casa Loma, Annex, Wychwood, and Yonge-St Clair, Seaton Village and several distinct residential neighbourhoods.

The study area includes several underused and abandoned buildings, large plots of vacant land, and some buildings from as early as 1900. It is served by bus routes and the Dupont subway station is centrally located at Dupont and Spadina. There is not any particular civic or institutional landmark at this section of the corridor, nor is there any public open space that acts as a focal point for the communities surrounding it.

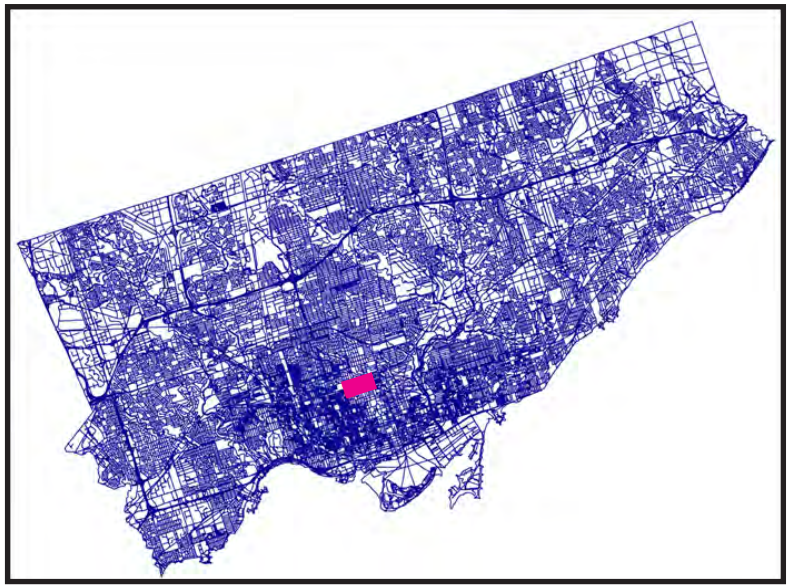


Figure 1. Outline of the Study Area in the context of the City of Toronto
Source: Ansari, 2012

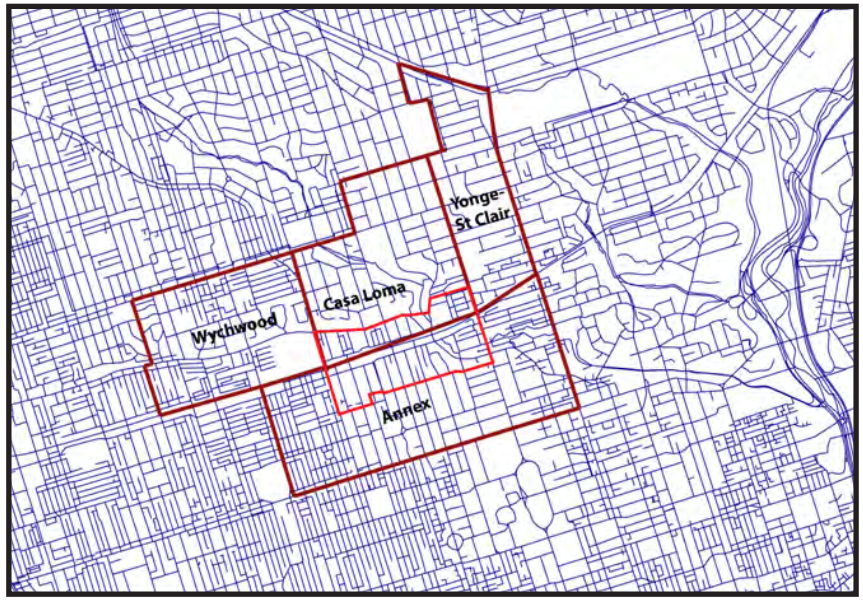


Figure 2. Study area in the context of surrounding neighbourhoods
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 3. Study area with identified arterial roads
Source: Ansari, 2012

1.3 Planning and Policy Context

1.3.1 Places to Grow Act, 2006

In Ontario, redeveloping brownfields meets provincial and municipal objectives such as intensification and the protection of green space outside the cities. The Places to Grow Act, through the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, promotes healthy communities to keep the economy strong and protect the environment by making better use of existing infrastructure and creating compact communities. This Plan has been established to ensure that the development of the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Ontario's fastest growing area, ensures the greatest benefits to its residents, while minimizing impact on the surrounding environment. The Plan identifies 25 existing and emerging downtowns as urban growth centres. The identified downtown Toronto includes the Dupont Corridor area. The Growth Plan clearly supports the revitalization of downtowns by establishing policies which encourages existing communities to become more attractive, vibrant places where people can live, walk, shop and access services with greater convenience. The Plan also supports the development of complete and livable communities with a better mix of housing, jobs, parks, shops and services in close proximity to one another. The location of many of the underused buildings in the Corridor offer an opportunity to create residential, institutional and recreational areas with such amenities and the possibility of create live-work places. This is a shift from the way many North American cities have developed post-World War II, with different zones for each activity (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, 2006).

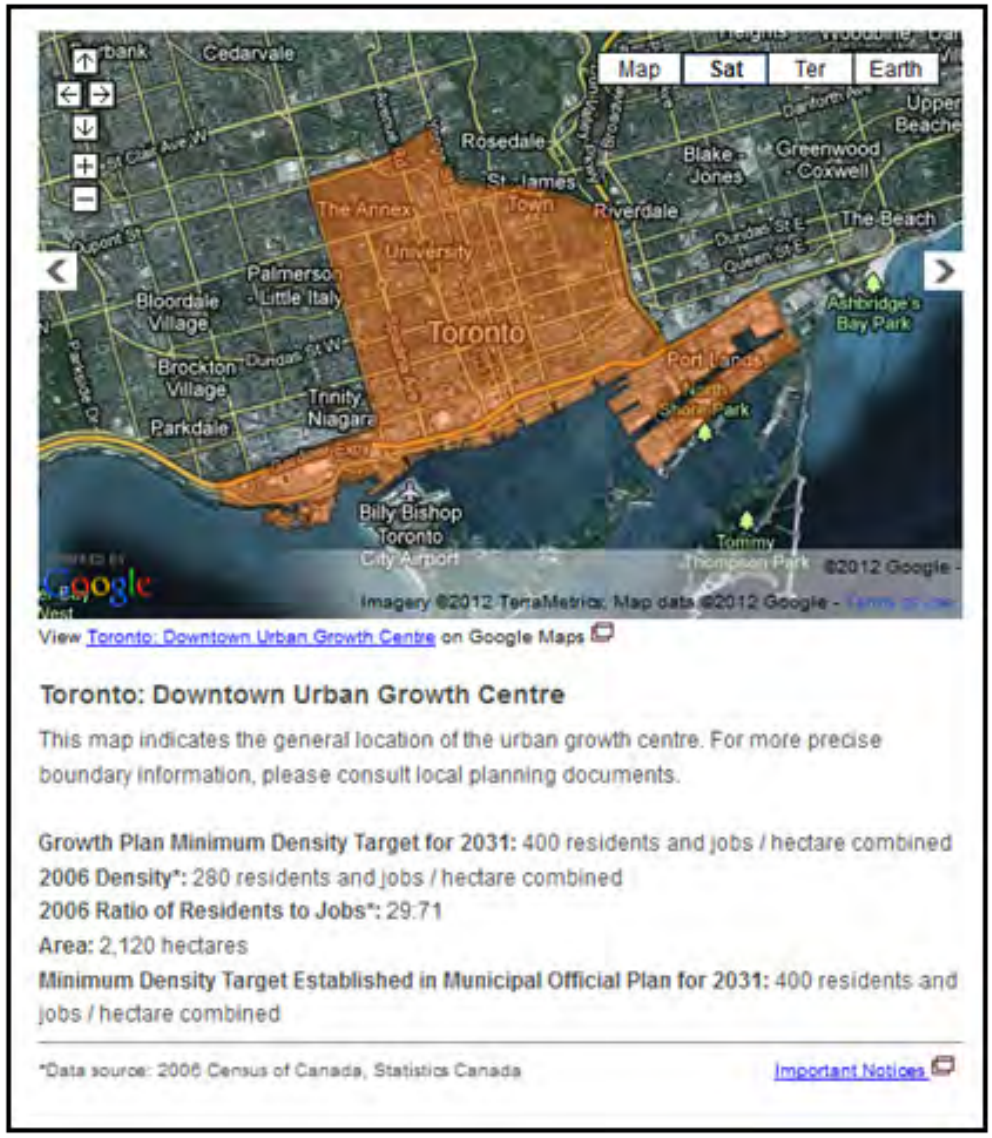


Figure 4. Identified downtown Toronto area
Source: Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal, 2006

1.3.2 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2005

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), issued under Section 3 of the Planning Act, provides direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development, and promotes the provincial planning system. The PPS states that healthy, liveable communities are sustained by accommodating an appropriate range and mix of residential, employment (including industrial, commercial and institutional uses), recreational and open space uses to meet long-term needs for everyone. Augmenting healthy communities is the provision for publicly accessible recreation "including facilities, parklands, open space areas, trails and, where practical, water-based resources (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005)". The idea of introducing the concept of water features in open spaces will reinforce this aspect of the Province's goal to create healthy communities.

The PPS also manages efficient land development by promoting cost-effective development to minimize land consumption and servicing costs, which endorses the adaptive reuse of brownfields. It also promotes economic development by planning for and preserving employment areas, which are mostly along the north side of Dupont Street (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). The PPS also promotes the conservation of built heritage and cultural heritage landscapes, such as sightlines to Casa Loma, in addition to protecting the heritage integrity of a site by controlling the development on adjacent lands to respect and protect the heritage attributes of the heritage site. Promoting these in the guidelines for future development in the area will help create a strong community feel.

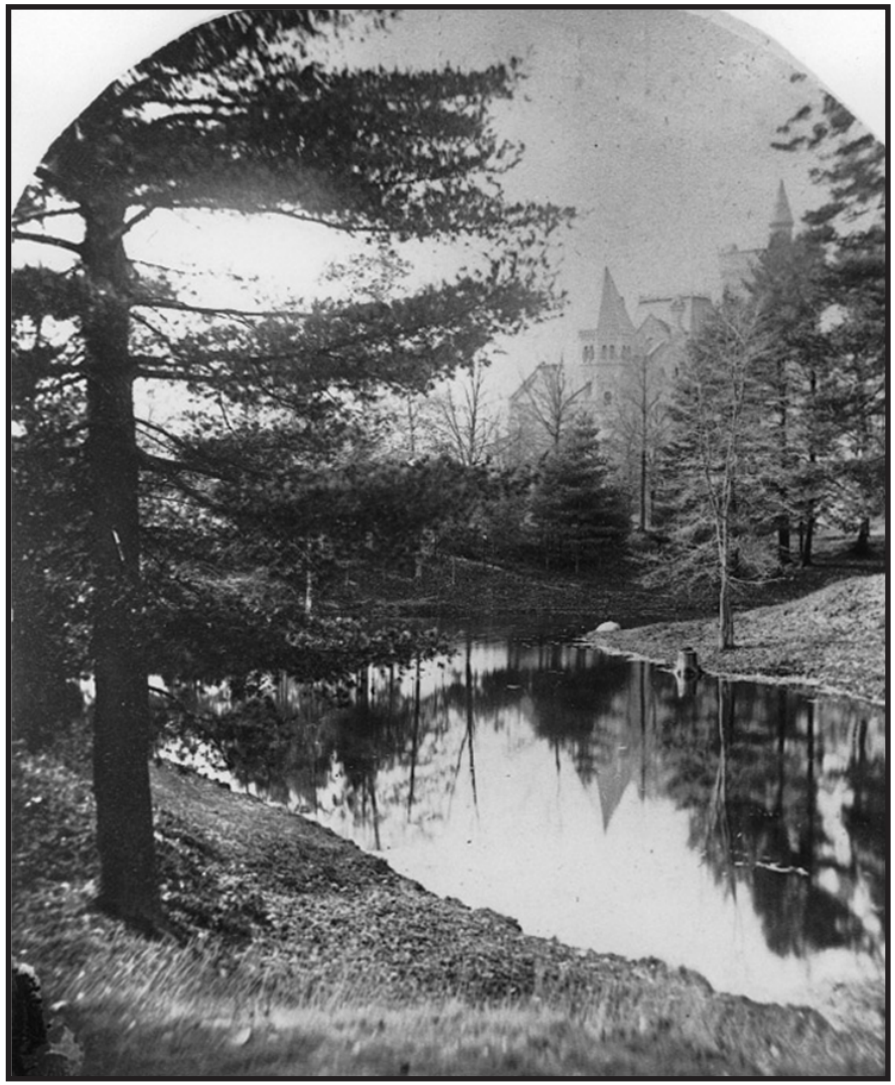


Figure 5. Part of the University of Toronto campus on Taddle Creek
Source: Flack, 2011

1.3.3 Ontario Heritage Act, 2009

The Ontario Heritage Act first came into force in 1975. Its primary purpose is to protect the heritage properties and archaeological sites of Ontario, and gives municipalities and the provincial government the authority to designate individual properties and districts in the Province of Ontario as being of cultural heritage value or interest. Heritage importance is evaluated by the heritage attributes of the structure.
Criteria for identification are determined by:

- design value or physical value
- historical value or associative value
- contextual value

Different buildings in the Dupont Corridor can be attributed as heritage buildings for any one of the three criterions. The Yorkville Waterworks structures have both historical and design value. The Bridgeman Transformer Station, part of the Yorkville Waterworks, was designed in beautiful Edwardian Industrial style by James Lennox (Batten, 2004), and was the first power station to bring electricity to Toronto from the Electric Development Company in Niagara Falls (Lost Rivers). Whereas Tarragon Theatre and the toll-keeper's cottage have more of a historical value which has nothing to do with their appearance and design. The Creeds Storage Vaults on the other hand, have both a design value and contextual value. It was built in an art-deco style, not seen anywhere else on the street, and its existence represents the return of development on Davenport Road after the road widening in 1931. Mono Lino Typesetting also has contextual value as it represents a time in the corridor's history when several publishing related activities and other industries took up space next to the railway tracks (City of Toronto Archives).

Subsection 37(1) of OHA allows municipalities to "pass by-laws providing for the entering into of easements or covenants with owners of real property for the conservation of property of cultural heritage value or interest". If heritage easement agreements are made between the City and the property owners, continuous maintenance of the heritage property is guaranteed, thereby assuring the maintenance of the character of certain sections of the Corridor. There is no positive obligation on the municipality to preserve heritage structures, other than to maintain a register of heritage properties under Section 27 of the Act.

Figure 6. Bridgman Transformer Station
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 7. Tarragon Theatre
Source: Occasional Toronto, 2011

1.3.4 Toronto Official Plan, 2006

Toronto's Official Plan contains design policies to guide the physical form of development and public realm improvements in the city. It promotes growth that is less reliant on the private automobile, and calls for transit-based growth by directing development to areas that are well-served by transit, such as the Dupont Corridor. The Plan clearly protects the city's employment districts and heritage buildings and resources, while also preserving and restoring natural features and watercourses. In addition to that, the Official Plan calls for connected green spaces to link our parks and open spaces, which is also a goal for connecting the patches of open It also calls for all residents to have equitable access to a range of leisure and recreational opportunities. Reusing underutilized buildings to create more spaces for these uses would be one way to achieve the goal set by the Official Plan. To encourage a diverse social, cultural and economic life, it encourages the idea that the elderly need to have safe, secure and comfortable living spaces as well. On the street level, Toronto aims to become a 'City of Beauty' by promoting arts and culture and keeping nature within easy reach of the city. Public art and interactive open spaces should grace the streets, while heritage buildings and features need to be protected. To maintain activities along streets, sidewalks need to be animated with significant public views and focal points.

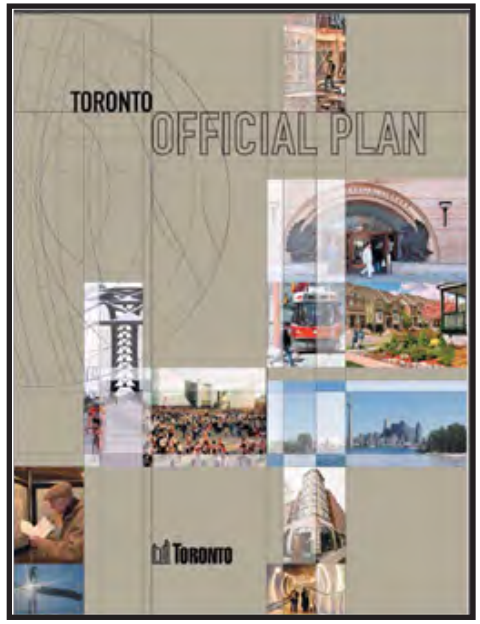


Figure 8. Toronto Official Plan
Source: City of Toronto, 2006

Concurrent with the Provincial Policy Statement, the Official Plan asks for the preservation and increased use of employment areas. It wants employment areas to adapt to changing economic trends and attract new business opportunities to fulfill employment prospects. By locating offices in clusters, it offers suitable locations for a variety of employment uses, creating conveniences of services for new and expanding businesses.

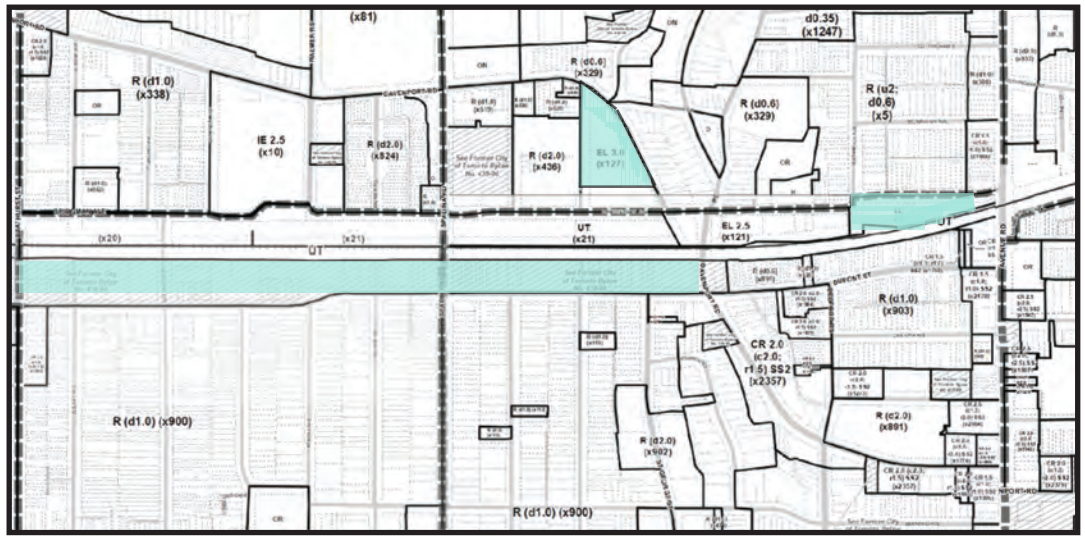


Figure 9. Zoning Map for Study Area with Employment Areas highlighted
Source: Ansari, 2012

1.3.5 Zoning

Dupont Street is primarily zoned Residential on the south, and Employment Light Industrial on the north, between Davenport and Bathurst. East of Davenport, it is a Mixed-Use Corridor, until Avenue Rd. Along Davenport, south of Dupont Street, it is also mixed-use, all the way till Avenue Rd again, with one large Residential usage where the 15 storey- residential tower currently stands. All throughout Avenue Rd, it is zoned as Mixed Use, from the CPR tracks down to Davenport. The zonings allow for different densities in different segments of the streets, creating inconsistent densities of development.

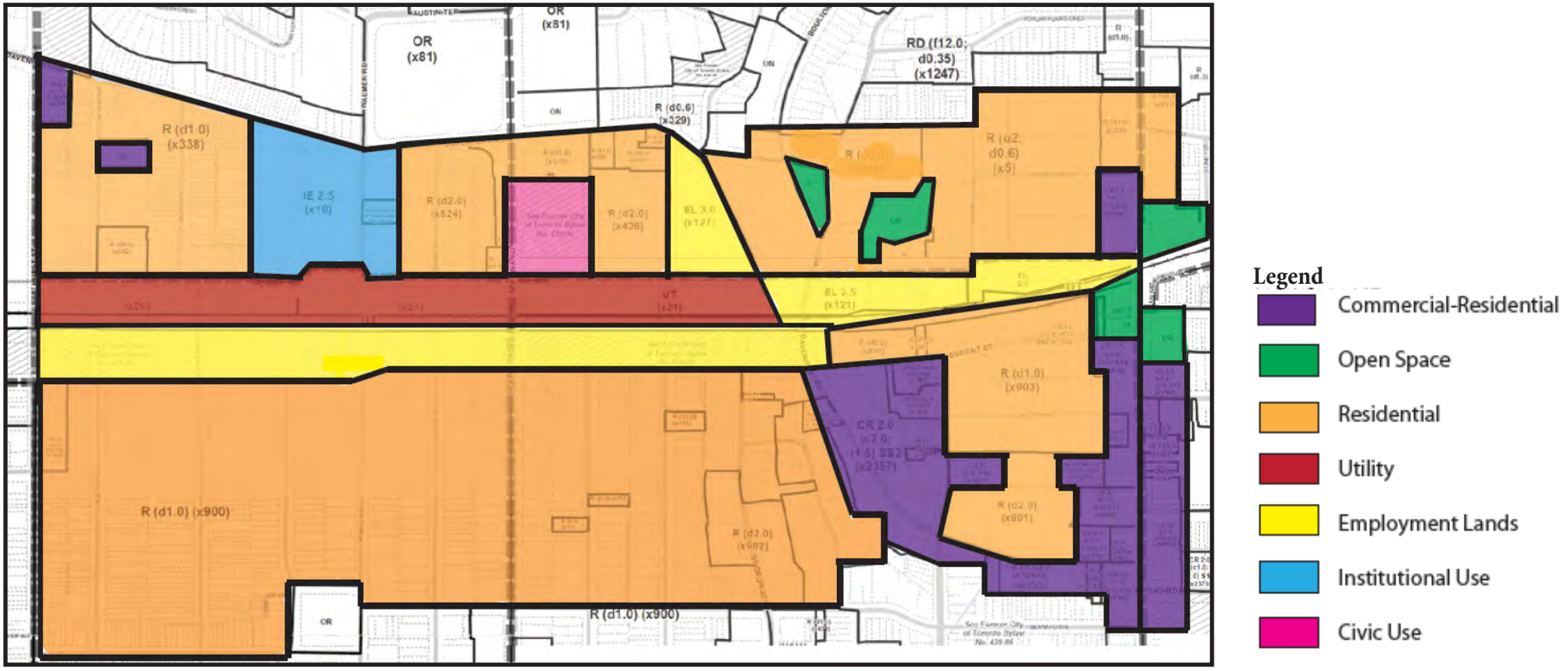


Figure 10. Zoning Map
Source: Ansari, 2012

1.4 Existing Conditions, Opportunities, and Constraints

Identifying the conditions, opportunities and constraints will help spot areas for improvement and sites for future development. This analysis has been categorized as Urban Fabric (general feel and look of the study area) and Land Use (general land use trends and functions)

1.4.1 Urban Fabric

Fragmented urban fabric

Different sections of the corridor have different atmospheres, which is not coherent, nor friendly for cars and pedestrians. Parking lots along the major streets create inconsistencies along the street frontage creating discontinuation in street form. This lack of continuation along arterial roads creates a disconnect between the north and south sections of the corridor. Several underused and unused buildings dot the landscape of the corridor, allowing room for unwanted activities to occur. These corners form eyesores in the landscape with hidden potential, whereas the southern boundary of the Annex neighbourhood, Bloor Street, is teeming with activities.

The disconnect between the north and south is further exacerbated by the presence of the CPR tracks running right through the area. The connections between these two sections of the corridor need to be made seamless in order to create a greater sense of community and connectivity in the area. The presence of the tracks is also responsible for cutting off views to Casa Loma, a national landmark. The City of Toronto is currently including the importance of preserving views and vistas into the Heritage Resources section of the revised Official Plan, due to the importance of conserving cultural heritage landscapes (City of Toronto, 2011).

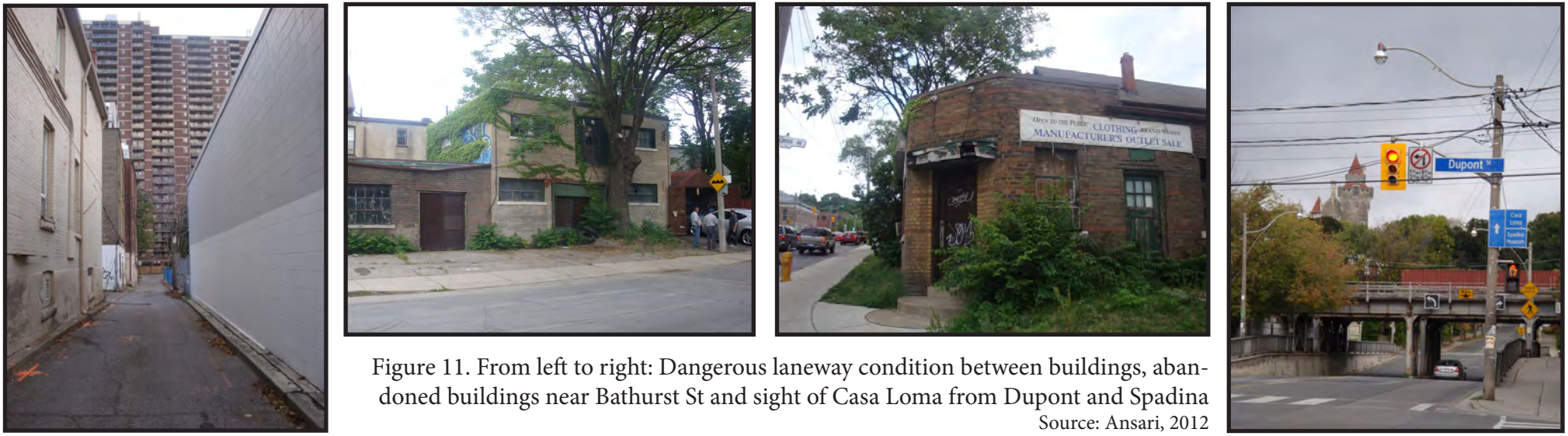


Figure 11. From left to right: Dangerous laneway condition between buildings, abandoned buildings near Bathurst St and sight of Casa Loma from Dupont and Spadina
Source: Ansari, 2012

Individual street characters

Bathurst Street

Unlike Spadina Road, Bathurst Street has more commercial development south of Dupont Street, on the west side. Several grocery stores, boutique stores and offices have taken up spots in the mixed-use areas. Many of the buildings are also more than 2 storeys high. Past the CPR tracks to the north, is the TTC's Hillcrest complex on the west side of Bathurst. On the east side, are several abandoned warehouses and more 2 to 3 storey residential units.

Spadina Road

Spadina Road is central to this section of the Dupont Corridor. The road was named after the original Spadina House, built east of Casa Loma by Dr William Baldwin in 1818. The current Spadina House, used as a museum was built by businessman James Austin in 1866. Dupont subway station is located at the intersection of Spadina and Dupont. South of Dupont Street, Spadina is all residential, with all the 2 to 3 storey houses facing the front property lines. The entrances to Dupont station are located right at the Dupont-Spadina intersections. Further north past the CPR tracks, on the east side is the City of Toronto Archives, and residential development on the west, till it hits Davenport Road. The residential buildings are mostly representative of the 'Annex look' based on Edward Lennox's Richardsonian Romanesque architectural style.

Davenport Road

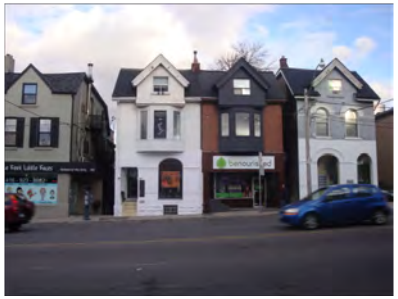
Davenport's native history is not acknowledged through any of the development along the road. Between Spadina and Bathurst, most of the development along Davenport is residential, with one institutional use by George Brown College. East of Spadina is residential uses again, along with part of Yorkville Waterwork's Bridgeman Transformer Station. The residences opposite the transformer station is at a very awkward part of the corridor with roads on all four sides of the island of development. South of the CPR tracks, all the way to Avenue Road, is primarily 3-storey mixed-use development and one 22-storey apartment building.

Dupont Street

The main arterial road running east-west along the study area has a mix of uses along it. Light industrial and commercial activities dominate the north side, while the south side is predominantly residential with the occasional commercial activity. It runs parallel to the CPR rail tracks and forms the main east-west connection in the area. Several parking lots front the street, creating gaps in the street wall and hostile environments for pedestrians.

Avenue Road

Starting from the eastern boundary, Avenue Road has been mostly designated as commercial residential, but most of the development seems to be residential. Few stores and shops are part of the road. For an arterial road, it is of very low density, the average height of the buildings being 2 storeys. Most of the buildings along Avenue are built to the front property lines.



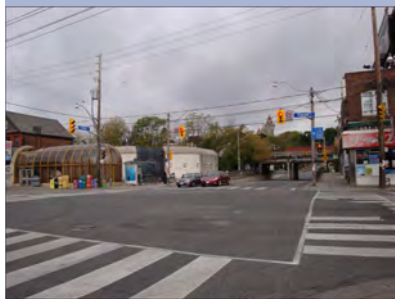


Figure 12. From left to right: Abandoned hosiery warehouse, mixed-use buildings along Avenue Rd, view of the Dupont subway entrance, and Avenue Diner which has been on this location since 1944

Source: Ansari, 2012

Sites for intensification and opportunities

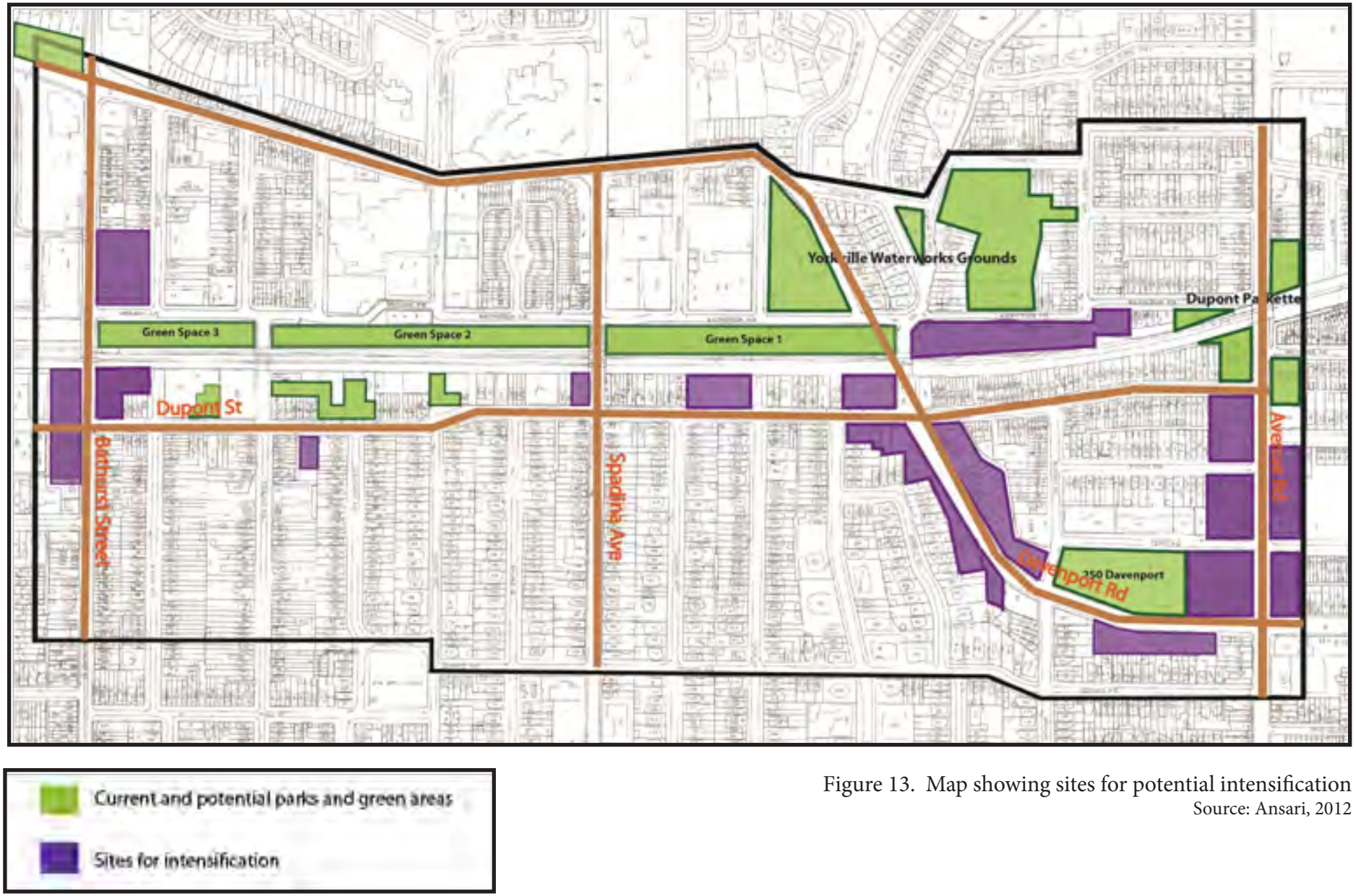


Figure 13. Map showing sites for potential intensification
Source: Ansari, 2012

Pedestrian conditions

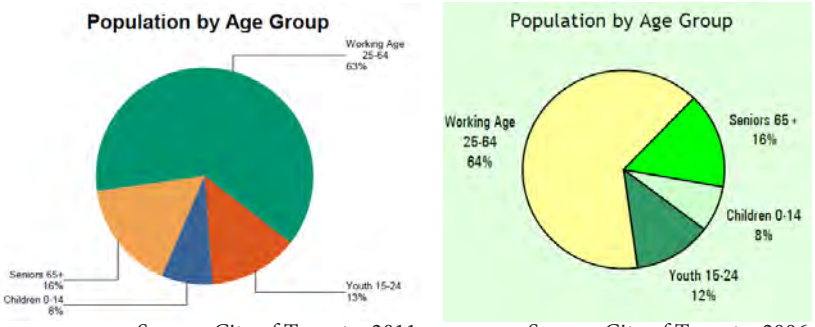
Dupont St and some parts of the other arterial roads have such fragmented street conditions that it creates a very hostile condition for pedestrians. Lack of street frontage and street-level activities do not encourage pedestrians to enjoy the urban environment. The sidewalk widths vary at certain places, more often they are quite narrow in width, in some places as narrow as 2m, with very poor paving quality. There is little tree cover or any sort of shelter from the elements of the weather along arterial roads, and dangerous laneway conditions between some buildings.

Figure 14. From left to right: Street with no tree cover, narrow sidewalk , unsafe. unlit walkway
Source: Ansari, 2012

1.4.2 Statistical Analysis

Demographics & Population Distribution

Until the date of this report, the only data from the 2011 census available was the population distribution by age and gender. Hence the bar charts and pie charts here represent the 2011 census data. The GIS maps on the other hand are based on the 2006 census. Since the difference in the population composition did not change much over the 5 years as shown by the 2006-2011 comparison of the pie charts, we can assume that the GIS maps very closely represent the population distribution as of present.



Source: City of Toronto, 2011 Source: City of Toronto, 2006

Figure 15. 2011 Annex census (left) compared with 2006 data (right)

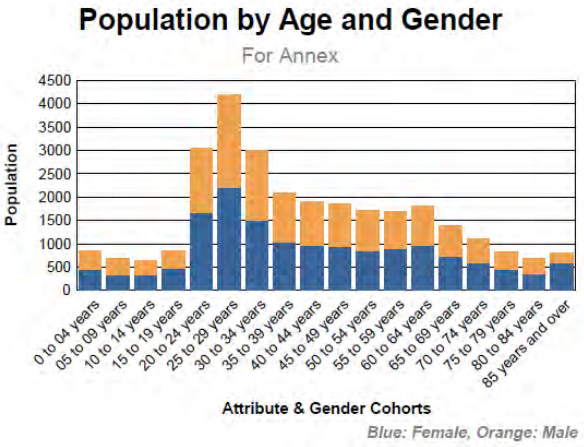


Figure 17. 2011 population distribution in the Annex

Annex

How does Annex differ from the equivalent City of Toronto Age Groups?

Children 0-14	-50.9%
Youth 15-24	4.8%
Working Age 25-64	9.0%
Seniors 65+	14.2%

Source: City of Toronto, 2011

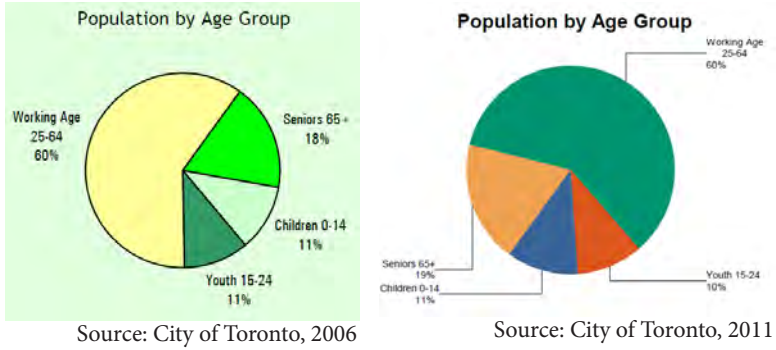
Casa Loma

How does Casa Loma differ from the equivalent City of Toronto Age Groups?

Children 0-14	-27.9%
Youth 15-24	-20.4%
Working Age 25-64	4.0%
Seniors 65+	31.8%

Source: City of Toronto, 2011

From the data below, it can be observed that both the neighbourhoods of Casa Loma and the Annex have a similar age distribution. The largest portion of the population are 25-34 yr olds, followed by seniors. The portion of children is quite small. Infact, compared to the rest of Toronto, the Annex and Casa Loma have 51% and 28% less children respectively. And the number of senior citizens is much higher than the rest of the city, as shown by the statement from the City of Toronto's analysis.



Source: City of Toronto, 2006 Source: City of Toronto, 2011

Figure 16. 2011 Casa Loma census (left) compared with 2006 data (right)

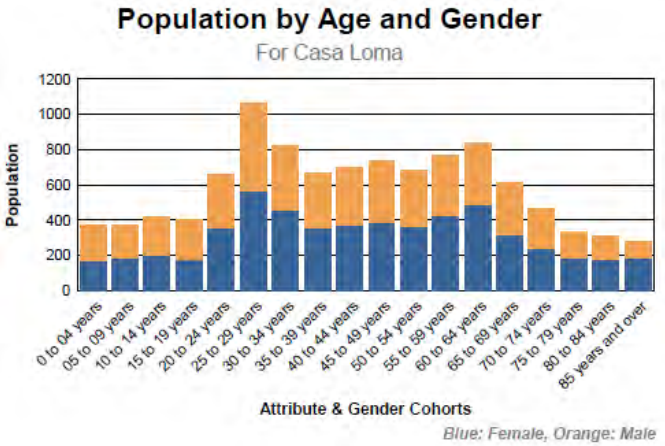


Figure 18. 2011 population distribution in Casa Loma

GIS maps here show the spatial distribution of the population. These images give a better idea of how the population is spread out over the Corridor, according to the Dissemination Areas (DAs)

Figure 19. This map shows the distribution of seniors. Dark areas signify the highest concentration of senior citizens

Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 20. This map shows the distribution of children aged 0-14 yrs. The darkest areas signify the highest concentration of children

Source: Ansari, 2012

1.4.3 Land Use

General Land Use

Uses along the Corridor include street-level retail, residential, light industrial, and offices. Only one major institutional use (George Brown College) and one major civic use (City of Toronto Archives) is present in the study area.

Since most of the street-level retail are located in 2-3 storey houses, they have no associated public spaces. The only form of public spaces are the small pockets of parks scattered throughout the southern section of the Annex. The most common form of open space facing Dupont Street is parking lots adjacent to retail spaces.

There are very few multi-storey structures, higher than 3 storeys along the major roads. There are no major landmarks along Dupont Street.

Figure 21. Map showing network of exisitng green spaces
Source: Ansari, 2012

Development pressures

High-rise development has never been common in the Corridor. The only high-rise tower currently standing is a 22-storey residential tower at 250 Davenport, which was only introduced in 1969. A 20-storey tower is being built adjacent to 250 Davenport. The average height of the other structures in the rest of the area is 3-storeys high. 250 Davenport in particular, creates an isolated monoculture due to its large area of private green space in a section of the corridor lacking in public open spaces. Repeating this pattern along the corridor will strain the sense of community that has moulded the neighbourhoods for generations. The development of high-rises will block sightlines to and from Casa Loma.

Figure 22. 20-storey tower currently under development
Source: Menkes Developments Ltd, 2012

Figure 23. 250 Davenport looming over the Annex,
Source: Ansari, 2012

SECTION 2. Urban Design Strategy

2.1 Urban Design Strategy

The Urban Design Strategy will explain the framework for different components of the Dupont Corridor. These outlined framework will be used to guide overall future development, and improve current situations in the Corridor. The strategies address the following four aspects of the corridor:

- Pedestrians first (includes open spaces)
- Re-use of unused sites and responsible intensification
- Introduction of lost historical elements and recognition leftover pieces of history
- Protection of stable neighbourhoods and employment lands

Some of the guidelines are site specific provide concrete ideas on what these sites of interest would be best used for. The Urban Design Strategy consists of four parts:

1. Urban Design Framework
2. Public Realm Framework
3. Built Form Framework
4. Site-specific Design Guidelines

Figure 24. Images showing different street conditions along the corridor
Source: Ansari, 2012

2.1.1 Urban Design Principles

Diversity

Dupont Street will support multiple forms of usages, including retail, residential, employment, institutional and open space land uses. It will also encourage the use of different forms of architecture and housing types to add character to the street. The preservation of heritage buildings will also add to this attribute of Dupont. Different uses will also be encouraged to ensure an active, safe street environment. Mixed retail at grade, including institutional buildings, should co-exist with existing office and residential uses.

Figure 25. 162 Bedford Rd
Source: Ansari, 2012

Public Realm

Dupont Street will be transformed to the "main street" on which most shops, services and office spaces will be located. It will be an inviting and aesthetically appealing street for all users, providing a cohesive public environment. Open public spaces and parkettes will be encouraged to locate themselves close to Dupont. Street furniture, such as benches, and bike racks will be provided to make the street accessible to all. A large public open space will be created along Davenport Road to create a focal point of congregation in the area. The street should provide active at-grade uses that are safe, accessible, and interconnected. Networks of sheltered walkways will be created along the arterial roads to encourage walkability throughout the year by providing shelter from elements of the weather.

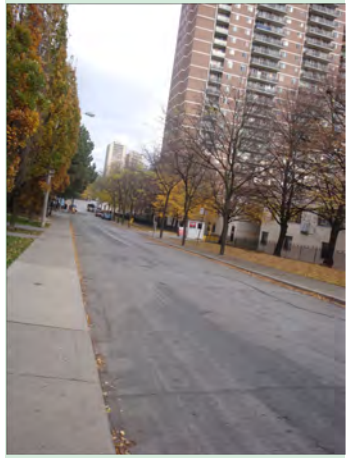


Figure 26. Bedford Road
Source: Ansari, 2012

Built Form

Buildings should contribute to the coherence of the streetscape through high quality design, and through appropriate transitions between buildings and their surrounding context. New buildings should be designed to limit impacts on neighbourhoods by ensuring adequate light, views, privacy, and sky views. Density will be directed to the five different nodes indicated.

Movement

Dupont Street will accommodate all modes of travel, but giving preference to pedestrians and cyclists so that an active lifestyle is encouraged amongst the residents. Dupont Street will balance its vehicular capacity with a high quality, continuous pedestrian realm.

Figure 27. Creeds Building
Source: Ansari, 2012

Heritage & Culture

Exisitng urban and natural heritage would be preserved, while some lost Aboriginal and natural heritage will be revived in new developments proposed in the corridor. Tangible (built form) and intangible (values, spirit of place, character) heritage elements should be maintained and enhanced to add to the character of the corridor.

2.1.1 Urban Design Guidelines

• The existing network of streets and lanes will be used and enhanced to accommodating new mid-rise development.

• The main north-south streets will improve connections to the residential areas in the south, and important landmarks to the north through common design features.

• Landscapes and built form will preserve views and vistas of historical landmarks, local landmarks and green spaces as shown on Figure xyz.

• New buildings will locate along front property lines to define and form street edges along public squares, parks and sidewalks, and reduce edge conditions.

• Encourage the location of important public buildings, or service stops at the nodes to create local landmarks and points of orientation.

• Encourage the development of street parks through the provision of trees, parks, street furniture, planters.

• Maintenance and enhancement of the area's built form character, through protection of heritage buildings, reinforcement of existing heights, building scale, and architectural design.

• Concentrate commercial activity at Major Intersections and Arterial Roads.

• Develop the lands adjacent to the rail corridor as green spaces (berms) which block the view of the rail tracks from nearby residential areas and provides open spaces to use for recreational activities.

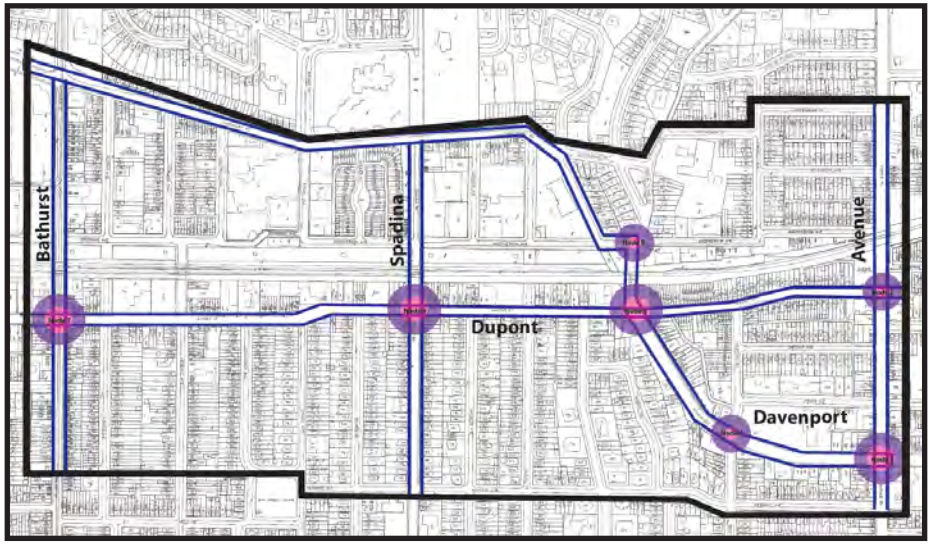


Figure 28. Map showing the major nodes in the Corridor
Source: Ansari, 2012

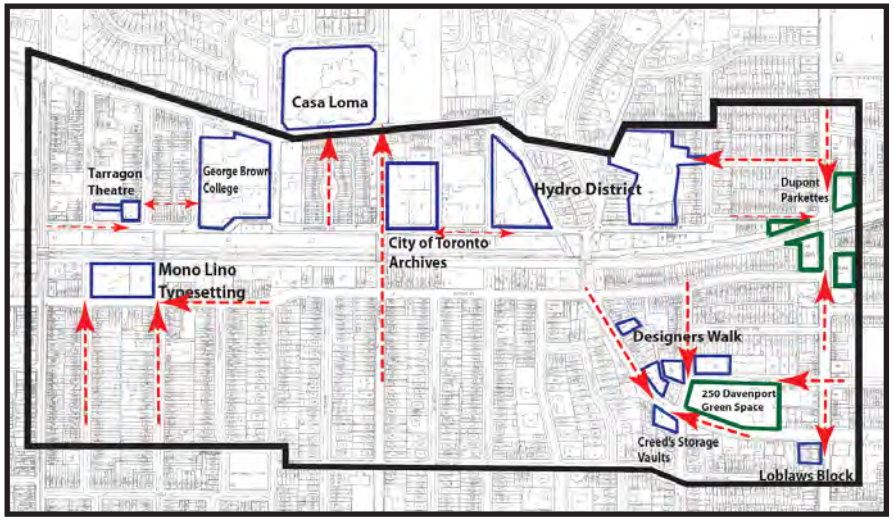


Figure 29. Map showing sightlines to landmarks in the Corridor
Source: Ansari, 2012

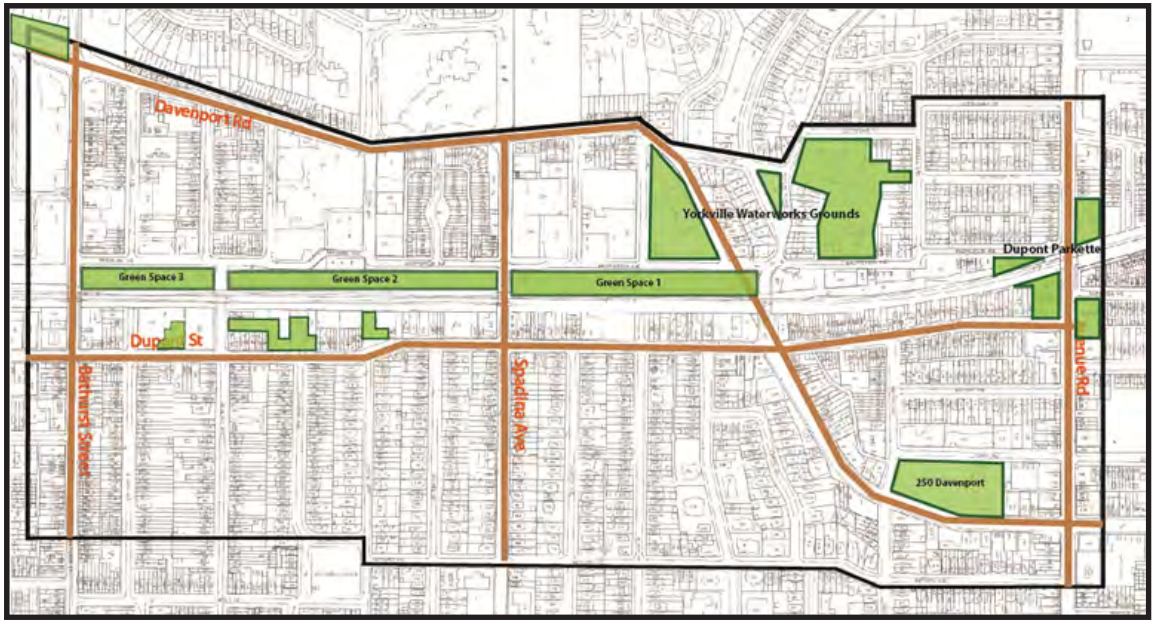


Figure 30. Map identifying current and potential green spaces
Source: Ansari, 2012

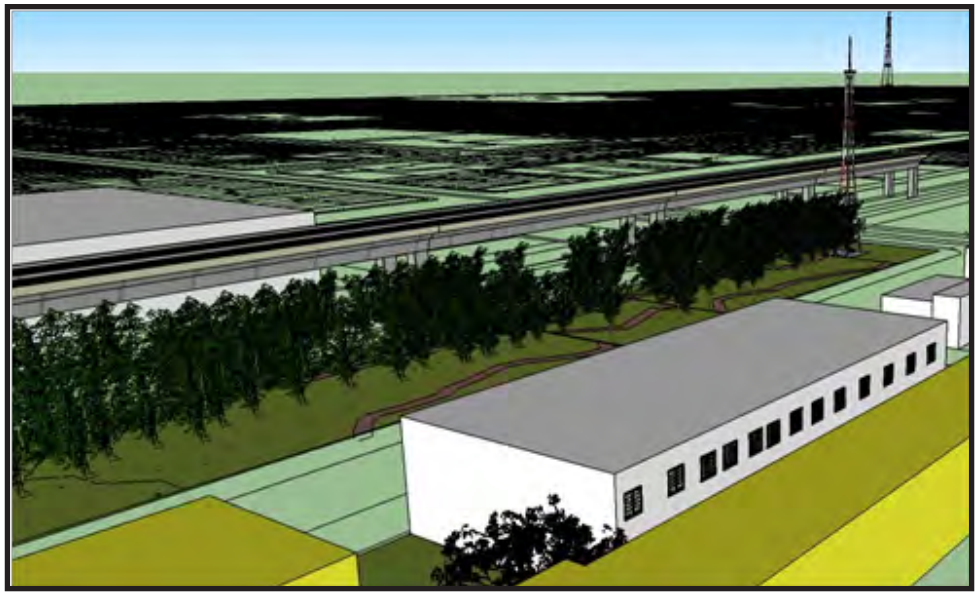


Figure 31. Model showing land adjacent to the rail lines developed as a berm
Source: Ansari, 2012

2.2 Public Realm Framework

Streetscapes

Sidewalks should be widened along the identified arterial roads to improve the pedestrian experience and create better walkways. Pears Avenue can eventually be designated as a pedestrian-only zone when 250 Davenport is converterd to a public open space. The buildings will clearly define and outline street edges, parks and open spaces and ensure good access to sunlight and protection from winds to guarantee pleasant pedestrian conditions. Buildings along the arterial roads will either be built upto the front property line or have public features such as food stalls, or green spaces which are upto the front property lines. Encouraging density along the major north-south streets as identified on Figure 1-C will reinforce visual continuity and spatial definition of streets and other publicly accessible open spaces. Buildings fronting main roads willl be of a public nature with entrances facing those roads. Ensure a coordinated system of weather protection (through arcades, canopies and awnings) for pedestrians will provided along the building edges of Arterial Roads. Murals and other forms of art will be incorporated under the tunnels below the rail corridor to create animated spaces.

Nodes, Views & Vistas

Views to the identified landmarks will be preserved. Care will be taken to not block sightlines to and from these landmarks, to ensure a visual connection to these local and national treasures. Civic buildings, public art, important local landmarks and buildings with distinctive architecture will be located at nodes (main intersections) to create points of orientation for pedestrians and to localize activities to these strategic points. A co-ordinated streetscape design should be created that requires common architectural features along the arterial roads which can also connect these nodes together.

Figure 32. An example of inexpensive sheltered walkway created by a network of awnings.
Source: Pressman, 1995

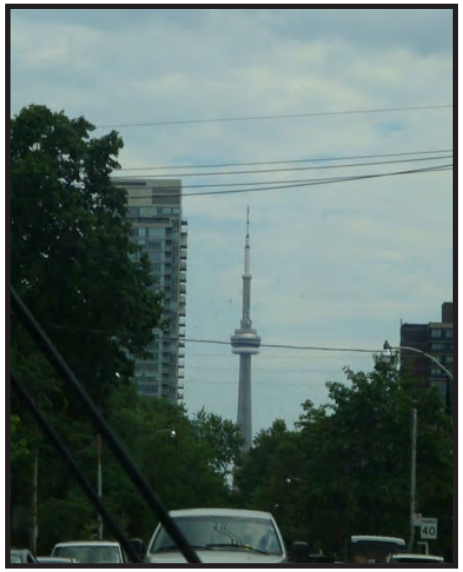


Figure 33. View of the CN tower from Bedford Rd.
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 34. Partial view of Casa Loma from Walmer Rd.
Source: Ansari, 2012

Pedestrian Safety

Safety in parks and pedestrian paths should be increased with appropriate paving treatments, lighting systems, and landscaping. Crosswalks should be clearly defined through pavement treatments, markings, and clear signage. In certain areas, special paving materials (such as brick) will be used to signify unified pedestrian paths. For example, the pedestrian connections to Dupont Parkette's as shown on this rendering, will be made with brick to revive a part of Avenue Road's heritage, as well as visually signify which public space is accessible. Where the pedestrian paths go under the rail corridor as tunnels, lighting will be provided to create a safe environment at night.

Parks & Public Spaces

The network of parks will be improved by incorporating a large open space in the gap identified in Figure 34, to connect the greenbelt that is part of the greater region. Other mini-open spaces will be created to provide spatial relief in dense areas, in the form of frontyards and forecourts. For example, on Employment Lands, the buildings should have some form of public space around it to provide space for employees and other pedestrians some place to rest and relax. Parks and public spaces will incorporate aspects of the area's natural and Aboriginal history to form a deeper connection between the residents and their neighbourhood.

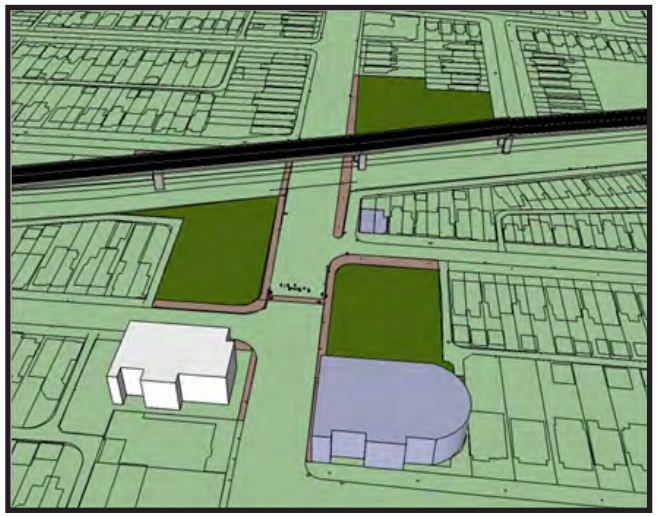


Figure 35. Brick paving will be used on the pathways indicated by brown in this model of Dupont Parkettes
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 36. A gap in the network of green space indicated in orange
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 37. Brick paving was used along Avenue Road as shown in this photo from the 1930s
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1930

Figure 38. Brick paving was used along Davenport Road to signify different uses along the same road
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1948

2.3 Built Form Guidelines

2.3.1. General Guidelines

• All new developments will achieve harmonious relationship with adjacent buildings in terms of massing, scale and architectural style.

• Buildings adjacent to streets, parks or open spaces will be massed to provide proportional relationships to its surroundings, and designed to minimize the effects of wind and shadows on the streets, parks or open spaces

• All new buildings will be built up to the front property lines so as to clearly define and outline the street edges.

• Buildings fronting the identified arterial roads will have public entrances facing those roads.

• No significant blank at-grade street wall conditions should be permitted on any frontage.

• To enhance the prominence of nodes and major intersections, larger developments fronting both the streets, will be encouraged. These buildings also need to be of architectural significance.

• All buildings fronting arterial roads have to provide a coordinated system of shelter for pedestrians through the design of awnings, canopies and porticos.

• Street walls should be designed with the highest possible material quality and detail.

2.3.2. Employment Lands, Civic & Institutional Uses

• Buildings on Employment Lands can be allowed greater Floor Space Index (FSI) than the rest of the corridor, as they are crucial for sustaining the city's employment sector. Hence, they will be allowed maximum heights of 8-storeys.

• Those office, civic and institutional buildings which want to set back some distance from the front property line, will incorporate public space features near the entrance.

• New civic buildings will be encouraged to locate themselves at a major intersection so that it can serve a larger number of people.

Figure 39. Most of the buildings were built to a human scale
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1948

Figure 40. Looking north towards the CPR bridge, on Avenue Rd. This section of Avenue was very animated with a lot of street frontage
Source: Pearson, 1931

2.3.3. Commercial-Residential Areas

• At-grade level commercial spaces should have a prominent presence on the street with floor to-ceiling heights no less than 4 metres, identified as the ideal height for storefronts by the Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study.

• Commercial signage should add diversity and interest to retail streets, as it will revive a form of street decoration popular along Avenue and Davenport Streets in the 1940s and 1950s.

• A maximum height of 4 storeys will be allowed along Dupont Street as the existing buildings have an average height of 3 storeys.

• More residential areas on Spadina, Bathurst, and Avenue Road are encouraged to incorporate commercial activities at-grade to ensure continuous activity and usasge along the north-south corridors.

2.3.4. Residential Areas

• Residential uses should include individual at-grade access with appropriate privacy measures such as setbacks, landscaping, grade shifts, and porches

• New residential development will conform with surrounding built and architectural forms.

• Residences on corner sites should animate the street with several windows on both street frontages

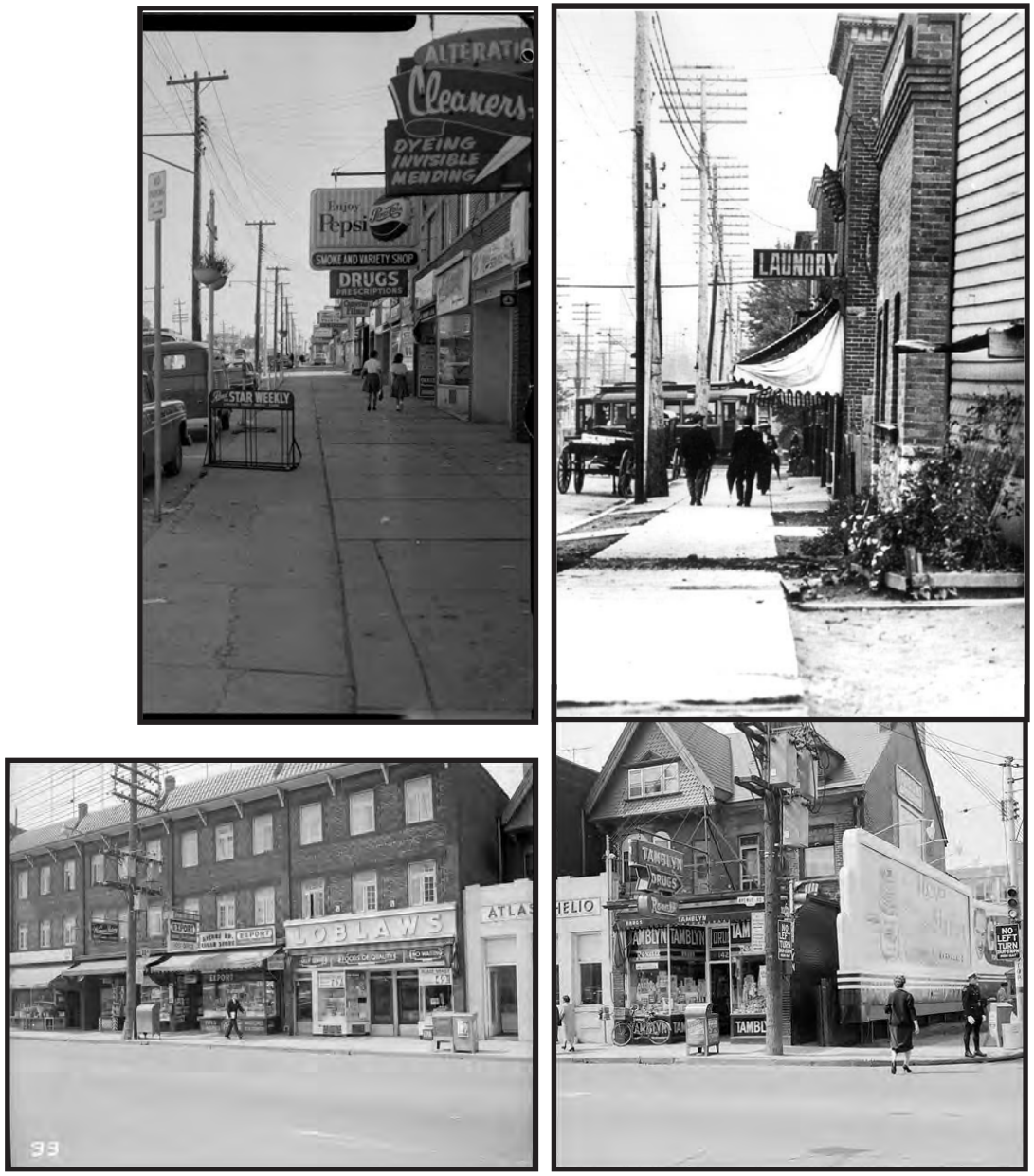


Figure 41. These images show the level of street animation and signage that was present which made Davenport and Avenue a lively place
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1931

2.4 Site-Specific Design Guidelines

Davenport Road

Davenport Road represents thousands of years of Aboriginal history in Toronto. It was used as a hunting and trading route by the Natives, and then as a transport route by European settlers. Any development along the road should frame the street edge and take advantage of the unique shape of the street to preserve views of landmarks along its routes, which adds to the character of the neighbourhood. The shape of the street should be maintained and development at the Nodes, identified in pink, will be of distinctive architectural design to create points of interest along the street. Non-residential buildings fronting Davenport Road will be of a public nature, along with the other identified industrial, and heritage buildings. At-grade retail development will be encouraged along the street edges, as identified in grey, to promote street-level pedestrian activity and increase the importance of the street. Green space improvement areas, identified in green, that are adjacent to Davenport Road will include public art and conceptual ideas that are related to Aboriginal history to form a connection with the Native history of the trail.

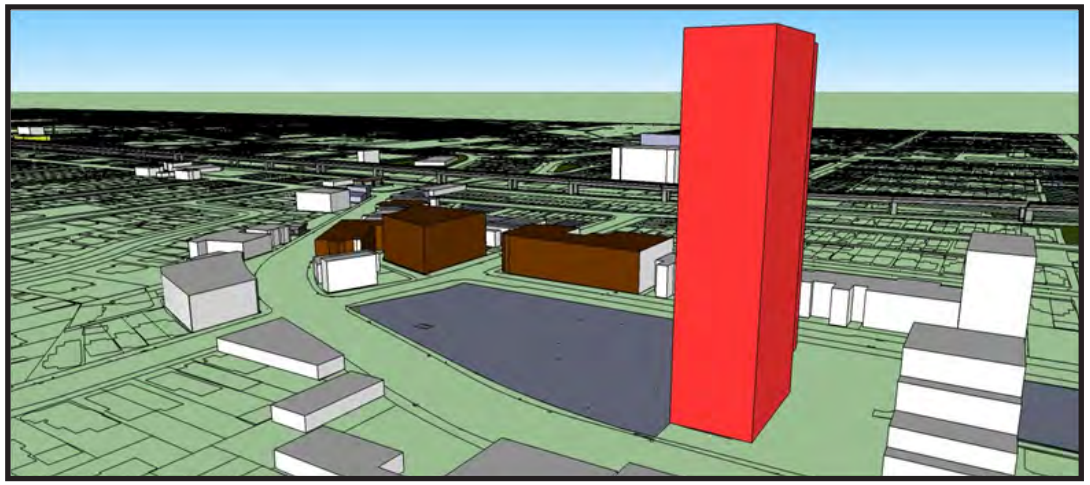


Figure 42. A view of Davenport Rd, looking west from Avenue
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 43. A plan view of Davenport Road
Source: Ansari, 2012

Designer's Walk

These set of buildings are interior design showrooms from 1980. They form a coherent set of buildings, defining the street edges with 2- to 3-storey structures. Any development or redevelopment adjacent to these buildings, on Mixed Use Areas 1 and 2 will complement the existing built form context in terms of height and mass of the Designer's Walk buildings. Since part of Mixed Use Areas 1 and 2 are identified as sites of intensification, growth is expected to take place in those areas. Its proximity to the path of the lost river Castle Frank Brook, requires pedestrian development in the area to retrace the path of the river as indicated on the map. All plans must be congruent with plans for redevelopment on the 250 Davenport lands. The laneway that currently runs behind Designer's Walk and the other residential buildings need to be made into a safer walkway, through the addiiton of street lights since it is frequented by pedestrians.

Figure 44. A view of Designer's Walk and 250 Davenport
Source: Ansari, 2012

250 Davenport

The 250 Davenport land is an area of possible major redevelopment. It is located directly on the site of the lost river Castle Frank Brook, in an area devoid of a public open space. The current dilapidated condition of the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) high-rise building and its parking lot requires it to be removed. Part of the area can introduce mid-rise housing, including low-income housing to replace the removed TCHC units. Part of the accompanying private open space can be repurposed into a public space with landscaping features which retraces the path of Castle Frank Brook, concurrent with plans for any redevelopment on the Designer's Walk sites. Part of Mixed Use Areas 1 and 2 are identified as sites for intensification. Any development on these areas will be a maximum of 5-storeys high so as to maintain a comfortable pedestrian atmosphere and not block views to the open public space.

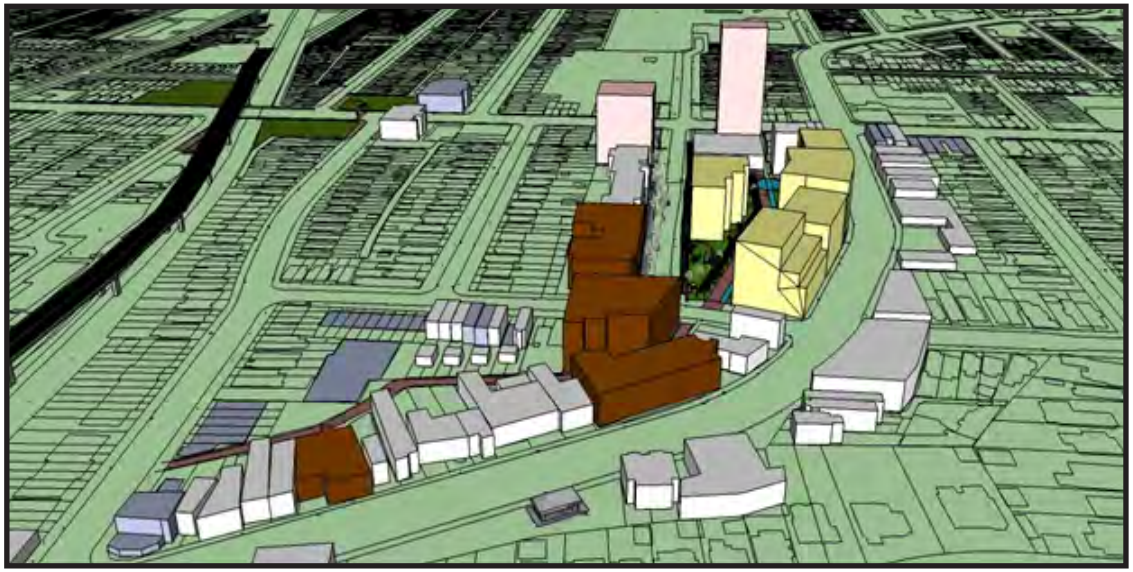


Figure 45. A view of the area after the introduction of mid-rise housing, and construction of the new towers
Source: Ansari, 2012

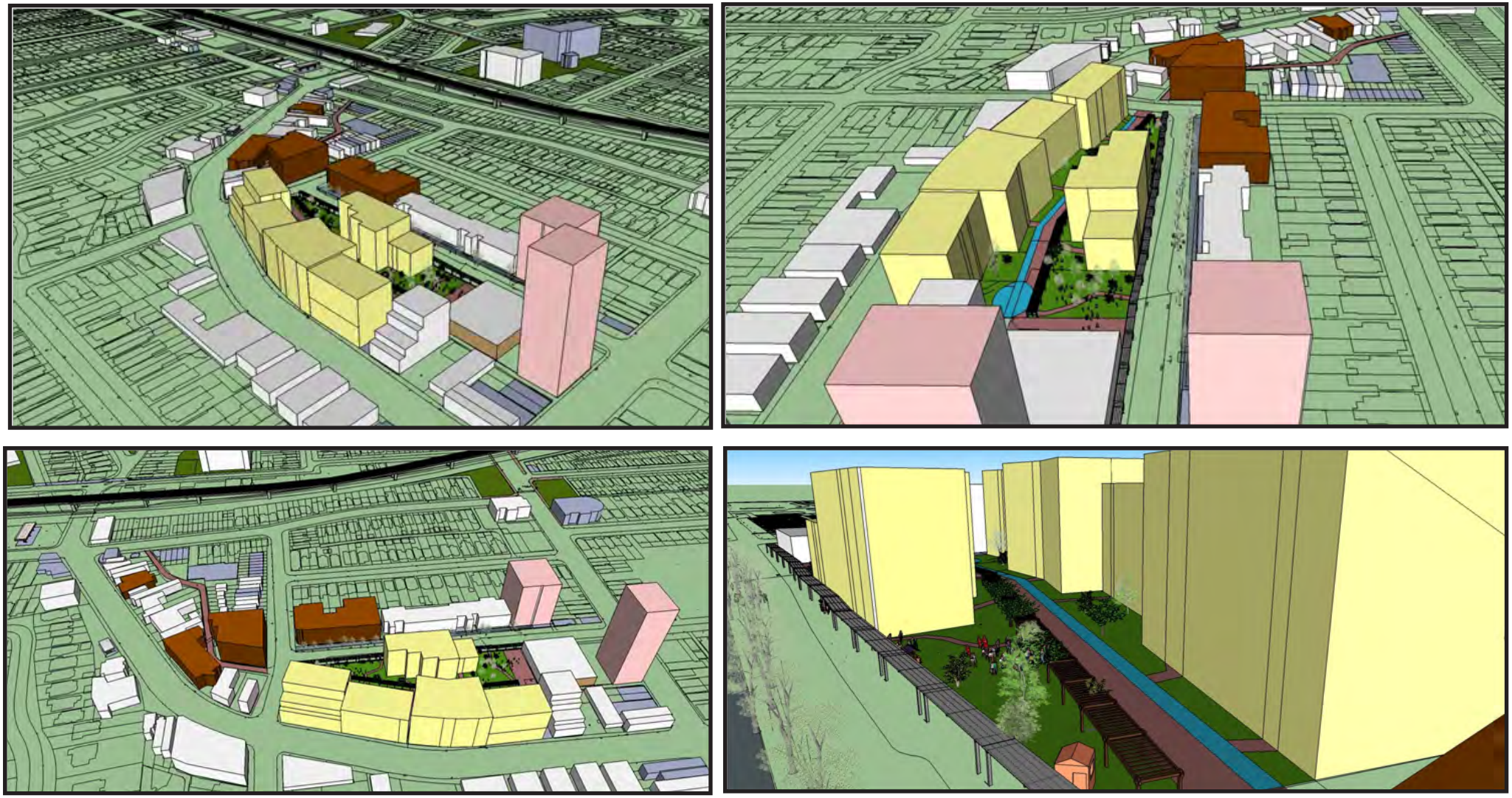


Figure 46. More views of the 250 Davenport area
Source: Ansari, 2012

Bridgman & Dartnell Institutional block

This block of the corridor houses George Brown College. The area is accessed by those associated with the institution and is predominantly private. Since it is surrounded by residential neighbourhoods, including a seniors housing (Residential Area 2), office and retail spaces (Mixed Use Areas 1 and 2), a public pedestrian network should be created through the block to improve connectivity between the different sides, particularly the east and west. Green Space 3 is currently just open land which is used as parking lots. If it is developed into a public green space, pedestrian access to that section of the block will also need to be improved by introducing signage directing to the space and planting trees for a better pedestrian atmosphere. The current height and massing of the buildings are of a human-scale, which already creates a comfortable pedestrian environment.

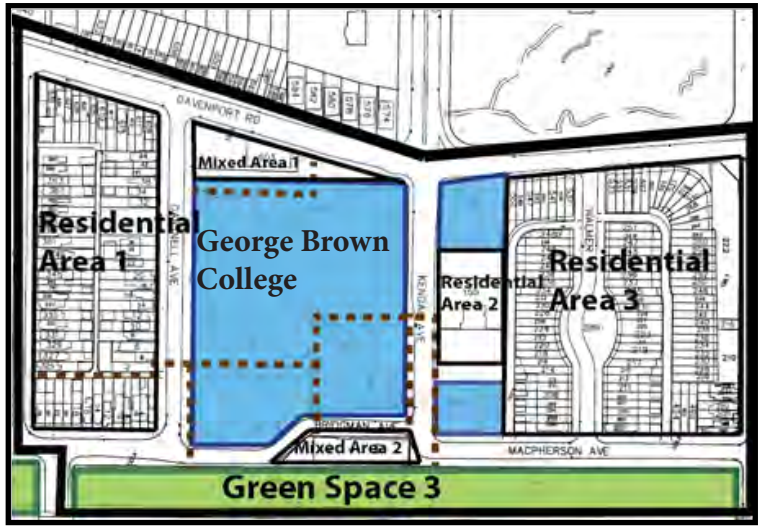
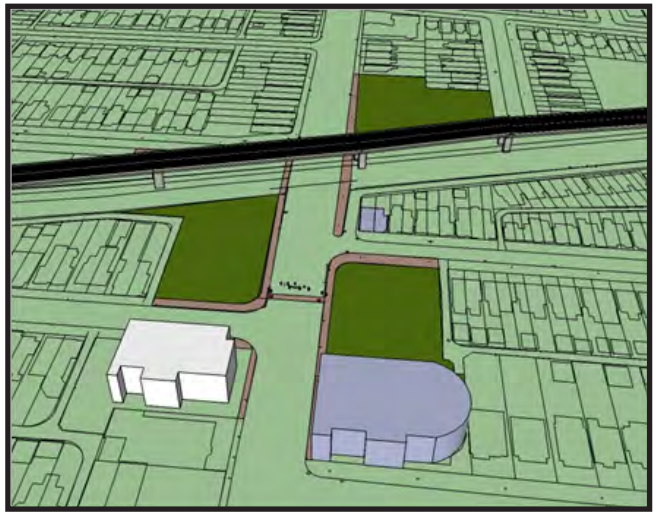


Figure 47. Plan view of the Bridgman & Dartnell Institutional Block
Source: Ansari, 2012

Dupont Parkettes

The location of the four parkettes in combination with the rail corridor creates a unique setting for park-goers in the neighbourhood. To improve access and create a more pleasant experience, the underpass connecting the north and south parks should be animated with public art, lighting, and special paving. The same paving material could be used at the pedestrian crossing at Avenue and Dupont and along the other identified paths, connecting the parkettes to signify a united open space. To keep the maintenance of the parks consistent, the designation of the two parkettes to the west of Avenue Rd and north of the CPR tracks needs to be changed from Light Employment Lands (EL) to Open Recreation spaces (OR).



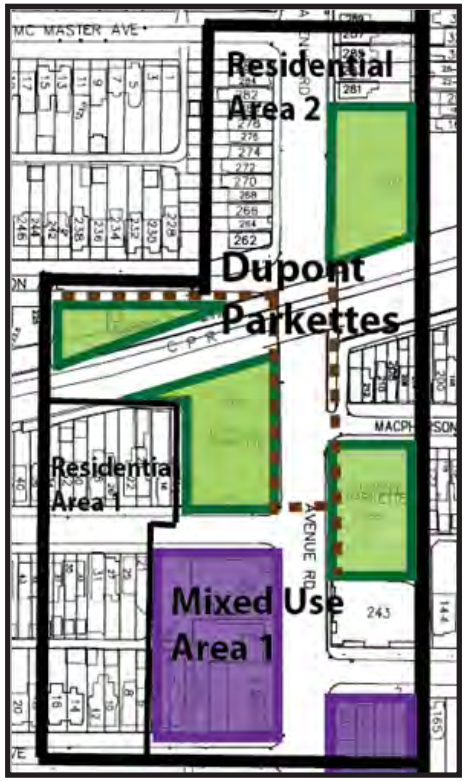


Figure 48. Plan view and model of the Dupont Parkettes
Source: Ansari, 2012

SECTION 3. Other Plans

3.1 Heritage Conservation Plan

3.1.1.Guiding Principles

• Planning, coordinating and organizing

Conservation is a tool to manage future growth, balancing the old development with the new. The right balance must be struck, to conduct preservation and/or rehabilitation intervention on the sites. The focus here is to restore heritage buildings to their original forms without compromising their current use which is servicing the neighbourhood.

Buildings are complex. They define our neighbourhoods and will influence the activities and events in the Dupont Corridor in future years. There will be coordinated efforts to create a cohesive plan taking into account existing structures, developments, and other activities, taking care not to create incoherent fragments in the neighbourhood.

Sufficient research will be undertaken, from all possible secondary and primary sources to proceed with conservation practices with full knowledge of the history and context of the building and structures.

• Designing

Every historical feature which is restored, revived, or rehabilitated will respect the trend and fashion of current design features in the neighbourhood while making its own statement through its unique identity.

Unique historical characteristics of the Annex neighbourhood, in terms of pre- and post-war building features, street ambience, Aboriginal and natural history will be encouraged in new developments.

• Record-keeping

Design plans and recommendations will be maintained for future reference. Any changes made to structures will be recorded should the need arise for further modification and/or repair. Relevant historical information analyses will also be recorded to justify any actions. All records will be accessible to anyone interested in the building history or conservation work in general.

Information will be circulated to the public to encourage good conservation practice, and to create more awareness amongst the community. This will also create a sense of pride and belonging amongst the Annex residents, enhancing connections to the area's historical roots.

3.1.2 Conservation Issues

• How to create a consistent plan? By focusing on just one or two sites, the surrounding context is ignored, creating incoherent design proposals. So when working on a heritage site, it is crucial that the uses and design of adjacent and opposite sites are taken into consideration.

• How to reflect universal values in a multicultural neighbourhood? The Annex has been a very vibrant and diverse neighbourhood in terms of residents, built form and businesses since the beginning, and trying to address everyone's concern is a very big challenge. Hence, when working on any conservation projects, involving the community is key not only to get their support, but also to obtain the best possible ideas that will reflect their community values.

• How much information is enough? The actual value of a building can be difficult to determine without enough historical data. The Annex has had a relatively long and interesting historical development. By making decisions without all the information, it could allow for many significant structures and places to slip through the cracks and go unrecognized.

• When do we strike the right balance? It is always a challenge to create a plan where enough of the old is maintained, while room for new development is kept. Balancing the old with the new at the building-scale is a difficult task since it involves making significant changes to a structure but being respectful to its original integrity. On the larger, neighbourhood-scale enough room for new development based on future projections need to balance conservation activities.

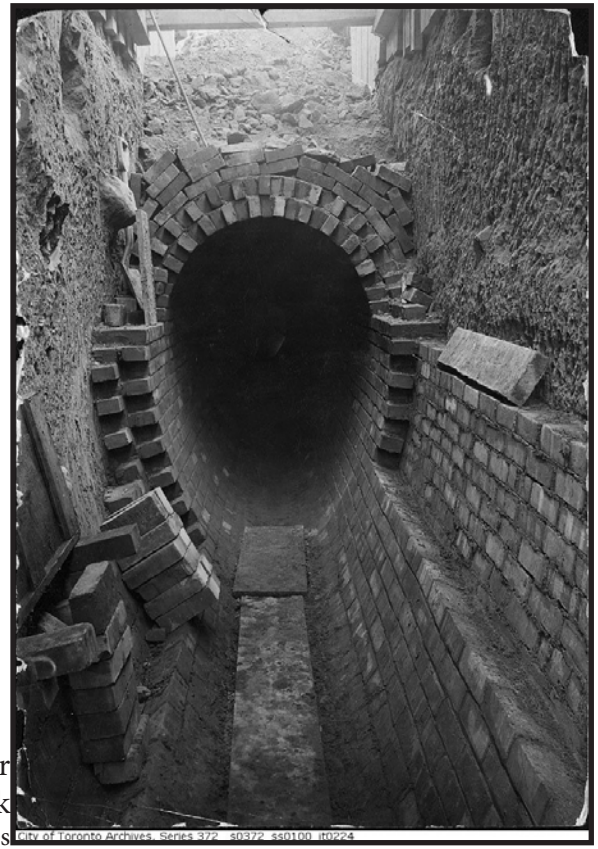


Figure 49. Davenport Rd sewer brickwork
Source: City of Toronto Archives

Figure 50. Taddle Creek at Lowther and Huron St, 1928
Source: City of Toronto Archives. 1928

3.1.3 Site Specific Design Guidelines

162 Bedford

•The building was built in 1910, and still has traces of a Buckingham Cigarettes advertisement on its brick wall. As before, it is still a mixed-use building, adding to the pedestrian realm at grade level through its food service.

• The proximity of the site to the Designer's Walk gives it a special purpose of servicing pedestrians that are in this path. It can link the revitalized area of 250 Davenport with Designer's Walk by adding more retail services to the ground floor, and improving the pedestrian area around the site.

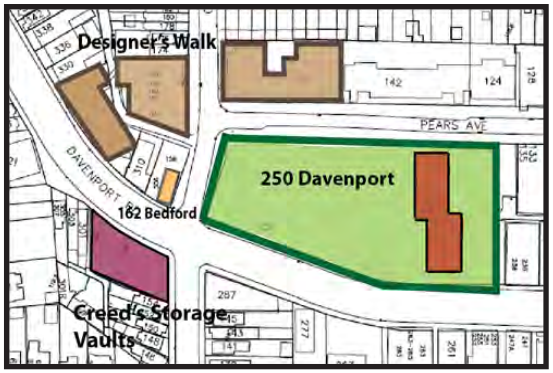


Figure 51. Plan of the Bedford-Davenport intersection
Source: Ansari, D. 2012

Figure 52. Archival photo of 162 Bedford
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1950

Creeds Storage Vaults

• Built soon after the Davenport Road widening in 1959, it signifies the return of development on the street after the demolition of several buildings during the widening. Other developments started on the street soon after this was established.

• It was built in an art deco style for fur storage, and is currently used as a residential building. Its architectural style, human-scaled size and colour adds character to an otherwise dull section of the road.

Figure 53. Archival photo of Creeds Storage Vaults
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1948

Figure 54. Creeds Storage Vaults currently
Source: Ansari, 2012

Hydro District/ Yorkville Waterworks

• The site is an important historic asset, containing four buildings, as identified on the map, which represent Toronto's history of hydro power.

• A mix of land uses is encouraged here including retail, cultural and recreational.

• Views to this historical landmark must be maintained.

• No new development should be allowed on this site, only additions to the existing buildings to create extra spaces for the allowed uses.

• Development on the Residential Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, adjacent to the Hydro District will not be more than 3 storeys high, to preserve views to the District. Since Residential Area 8 is already 4 storeys high, it shall remain so.

• Pedestrian networks, identified as brown on the map, need to be created to connect the buildings to each other and Boulton Drive Park to create a coherent pedestrian area that fully utilizes the spatial assets available.

Maple Leaf Flour Mills Company

• Built in 1936, it served as the headquarters for the company. It was located at 287 Macpherson for the convenience of accessing the CPR railway for transport of their goods.

• This building should be preserved due to its detailed stone-work and Georgian architectural style.

• Its current use as office space commemorates its previous use as headquarters for the company.

• Part of the ground floor of the building could be made public, for visitors to the Yorkville Waterworks to experience a different architectural style from the Waterworks buildings.

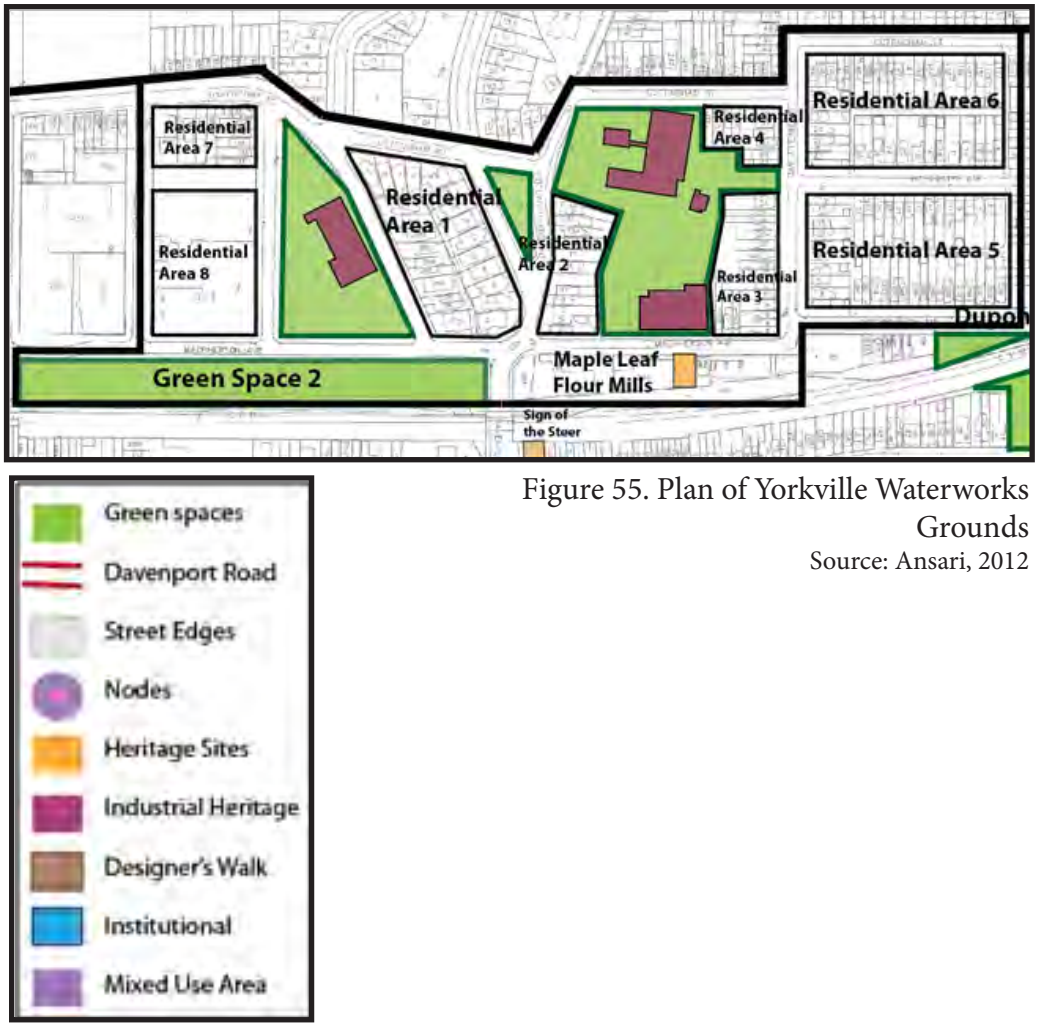


Figure 55. Plan of Yorkville Waterworks Grounds
Source: Ansari, 2012

Sign of the Steer Restaurant

• This building was home to Hans Fread, a German-born CBC celebrity chef's restaurant which hosted several important events from 1948-1960, when it was closed down by him due to changing liquor laws. The importance of the site has been overlooked, and its original structure altered greatly since its inception.

• It is also located right at an important section of the corridor which represents the crossroads of Native (Davenport Road) and European (Dupont Street) settlement. It is also the starting location of the Caste Frank Brook trail, represented in the form of the laneway in Designer's Walk.

• Combined with Designer's Walk, the Castle Frank Brook Trail and the possible development of 250 Davenport into a social node, Sign of the Steer can be developed as a gateway into the Castle Frank trail, creating a coherent, historical pedestrian trail walking visitors through different sections of history of the corridor.

Figure 56. Sign of the Steer Restaurant, 1955
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1955

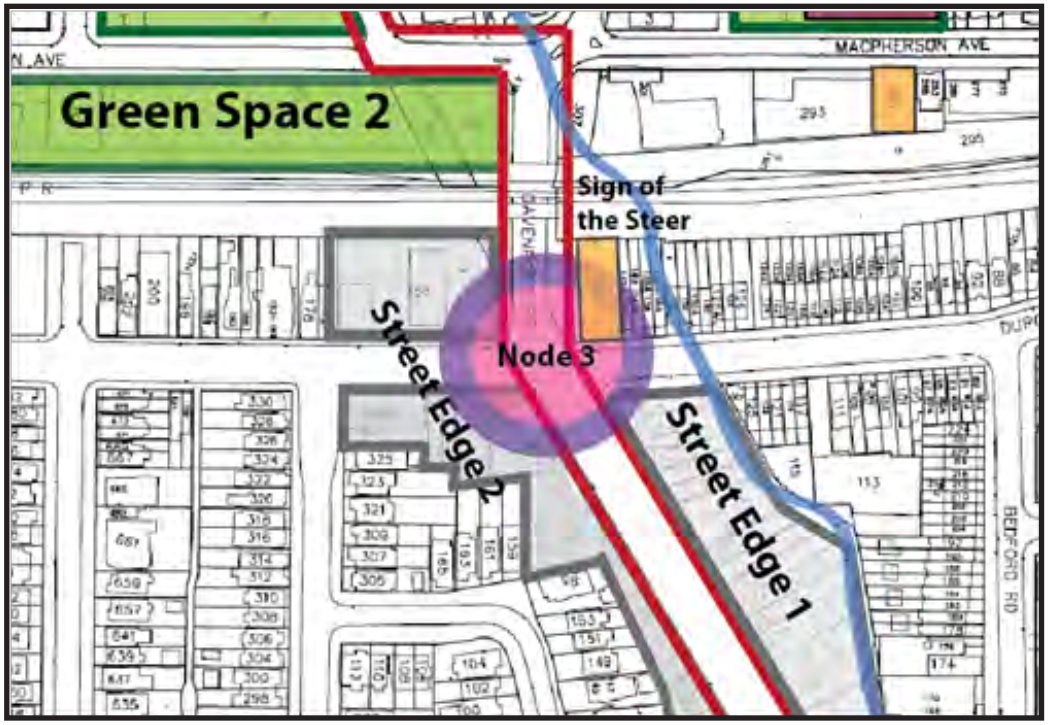


Figure 57. Plan of Davenport-Dupont intersection
Source: Ansari, D. 2012

Loblaws Block

• Some structures in this section of Avenue Road have been intact since 1884. Slight alterations and additions have been made, but a large part of it still represents Avenue Road of the early 1900s. A large Loblaws grocery store was located at the intersection here in the 1930s.

• No development or alterations on the buildings will be permitted, unless it is to restore it to its original state. Any redevelopments adjacent to this block, on Mixed Use Areas 1 and 2, will not exceed 4 storeys to stay within the same massing and density as this stretch of the street.

• As it is also located at a Node, it will act as a point of orientation for pedestrians and vehicles.

Figure 58. Loblaws Block, 1959
Source: City of Toronto Archives, 1959

Avenue Diner

• The Avenue Diner has been at this location since 1944 and has retained its original décor and overhanging sign outside the door. Overhanging signs were a prominent form of street furnishing along major streets in the Annex since the 1930s and 1940s, which gave the area a unique character. It is a symbol of survival of 68 years of business, where so much has changed in the area, but this has stayed true to its original purpose.

• This piece of modern history should be preserved, not because of its architectural style, but because it represents a time in the history of the city which has vanished.

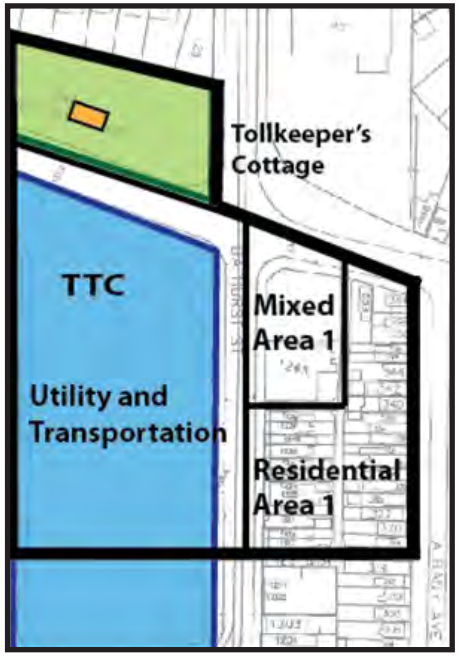
Figure 59. Plan of the Loblaws Block
Source: Ansari, 2012

Figure 60. Avenue Diner signage
Source: Ansari, 2012

Tollkeeper's Cottage Park/Davenport Square

• This park houses the third tollgate built in Toronto, an important historical landmark, dating from 1835. It is the only surviving structure of its kind, and represents the development and urbanization of Davenport Trail into Davenport Road. When the road was first being built, private companies set up five toll booths along the road to finance its development and maintenance.

• The Tollkeeper's cottage is currently designated as a heritage site, and any development is prohibited to take place within (200m) of this site. Views to the park should not be blocked, and any pedestrian network which will make access to the park easier is permitted.



Source: Ansari, 2012

Source: Souch, 2011

Figure 61. Map and photograph of Tollkeeper's Park

3.2 Brownfield Reuse Plan

3.2.1. Guidelines

Brownfield sites include abandoned buildings and contaminated sites (e.g. gas stations, dry cleaners, industries) along the corridor which could be repurposed. The design and reuse of these sites will take into consideration the following:

• Any contaminated sites will be remediated according to the Practical Guide to Brownfield Redevelopment outlined by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH)

• Abandoned sites with no known history of industrial or chemical use will still be tested for any form of contamination from adjacent sites.

• The new use of the site will be determined through an assessment of the current needs of the surrounding community, which includes resident groups, businesses and institutions.

• The assessment of the site will be done through community consultation, a study of the demographics, and population projections.

• Any alterations to the buildings will preserve any heritage features that may be a part of the structure.

• Intensification of the buildings are encouraged, guided by the mass and density of the adjacent areas.

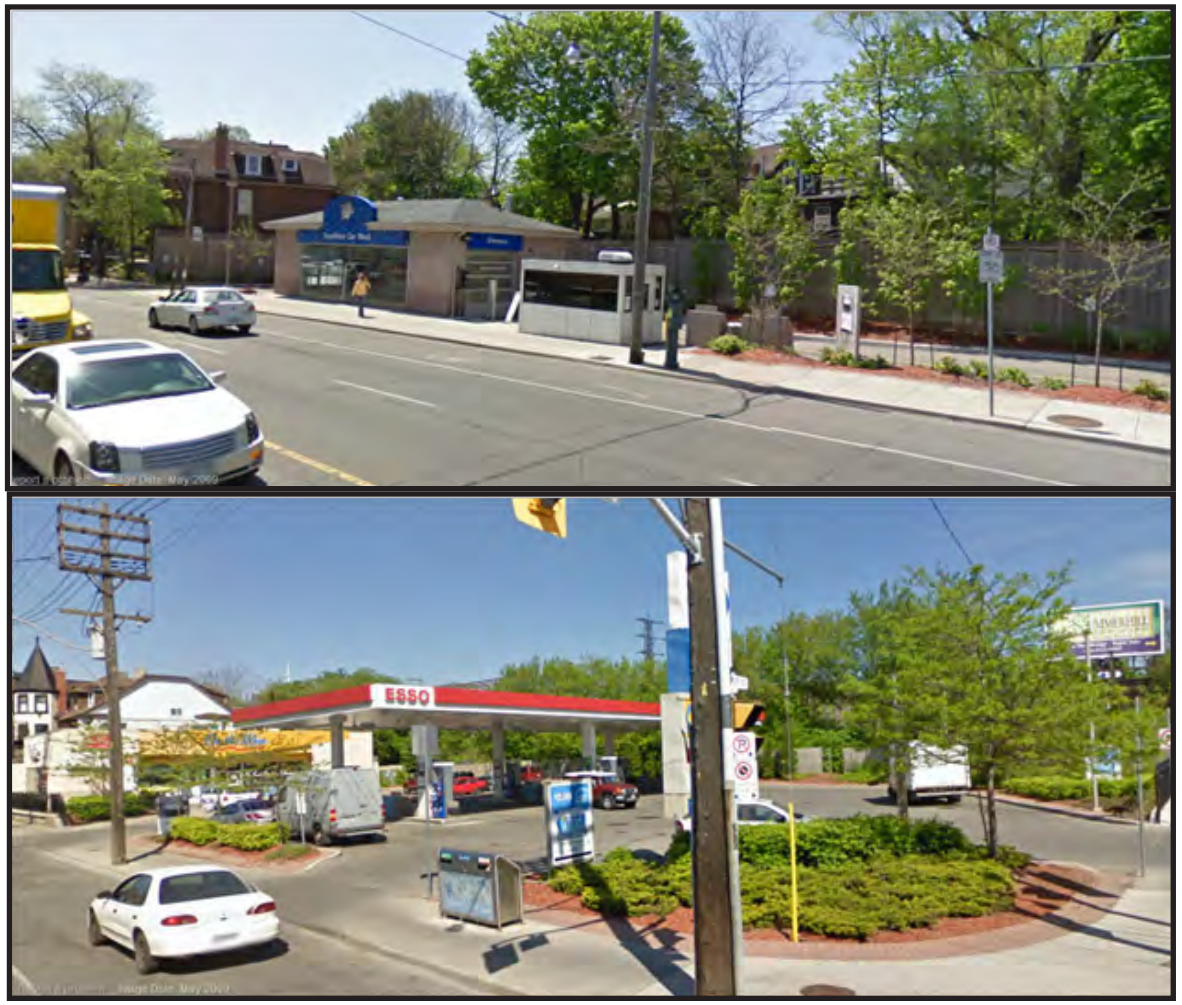


Figure 62. Potential brownfield sites
Source: Google Maps, 2012

3.2.2 Site Specific Design Guidelines

Mono Lino Typesetting

• The two buildings that make up this complex must be remediated of past contaminations from printing activities

• Given the high concentration of seniors in the highlighted areas on Figure GHJ, reusing the site as an indoor art gallery, event space or recreation area seems very appropriate. Especially since there are no indoor gathering space for residents in the region.

• In the space between the buildings, a water feature, public art or green space could be added to animate the street

• Any alteration to the outer structure of the building is prohibited.

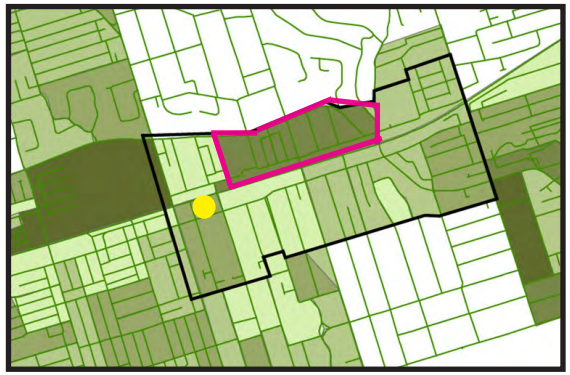


Figure 63. GIS map of distribution of senior citizens
Source: Ansari, 2012

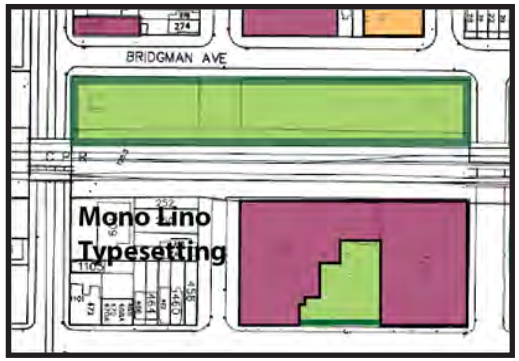


Figure 64. Plan of Mono Lino
Source: Ansari, 2012

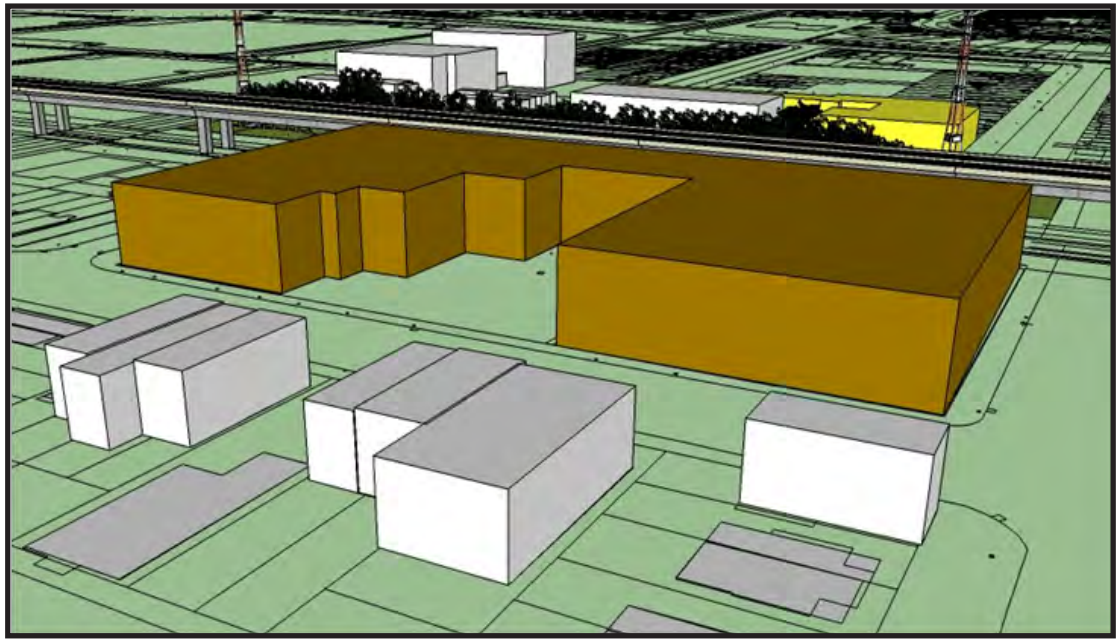


Figure 65. Mono Lino currently
Source: Ansari, 2012

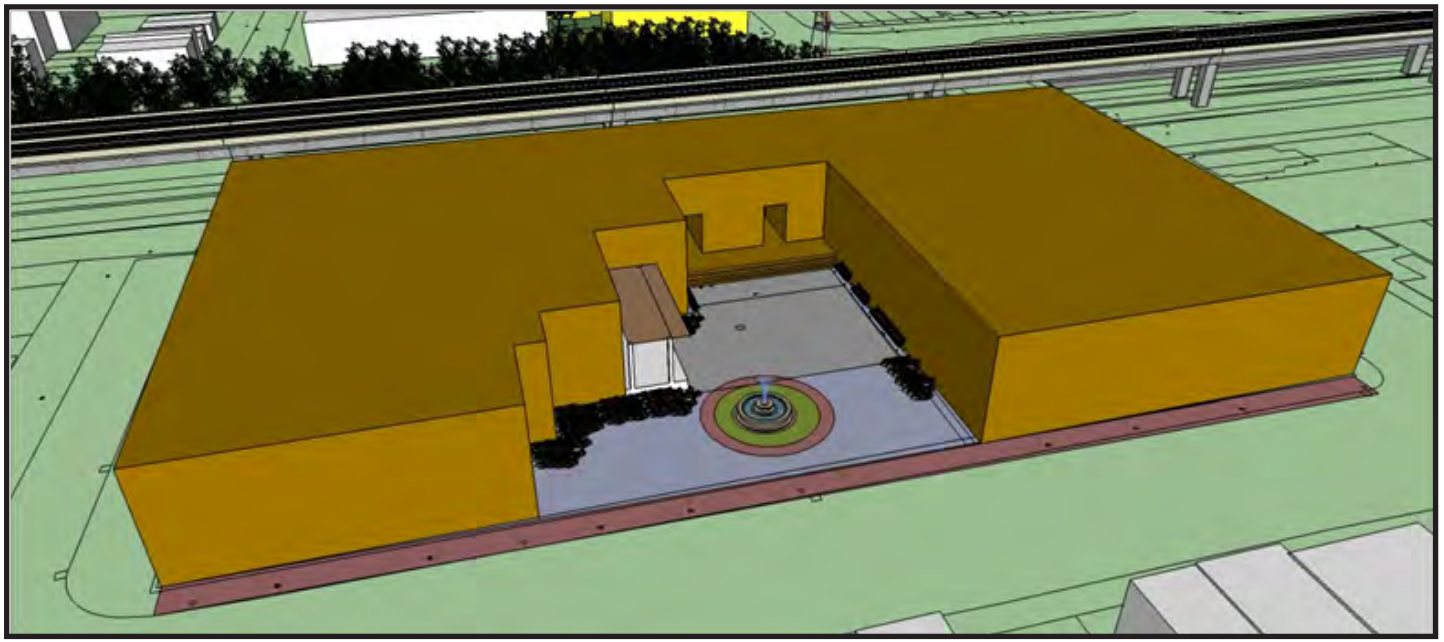


Figure 66. Mono Lino plans
Source: Ansari, 2012

Tarragon Theatre Block

• The building was being built during World War II, as a casting factory, but the site was used by several different factories between 1950 and 1970, including a cribbage board factory and an audio tape factory. It was then bought by an artist and renovated to take advantage of the large windows and brick façade of the industrial building.

• It is a site with significant historical importance, including industrial heritage, and is home to one of the oldest theatre organizations in the city.

• It is in the vicinity of several vacant warehouses, which can all be developed coherently to create an arts and culture hub for the Annex and Casa Loma neighbourhoods and nearby George Brown College.

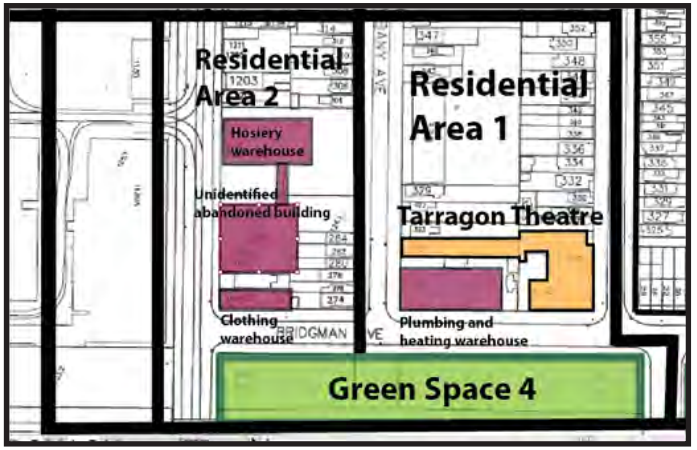


Figure 67. Plan view of the Tarragon Theatre Block
Source: Ansari, 2012

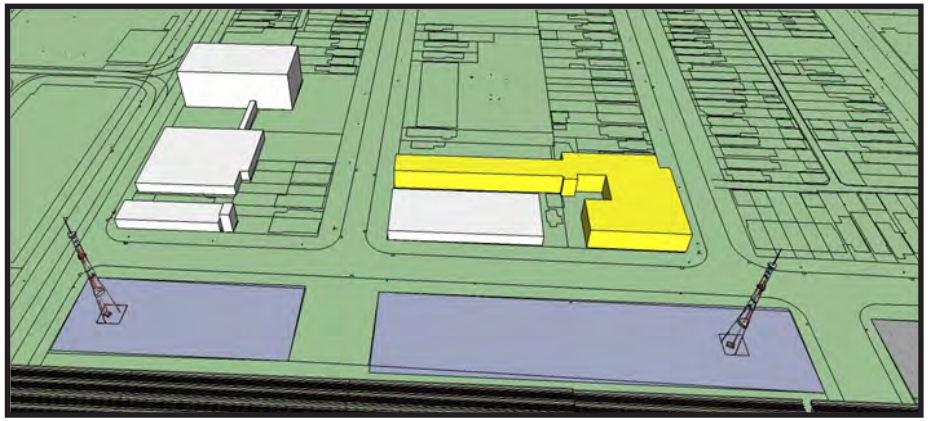
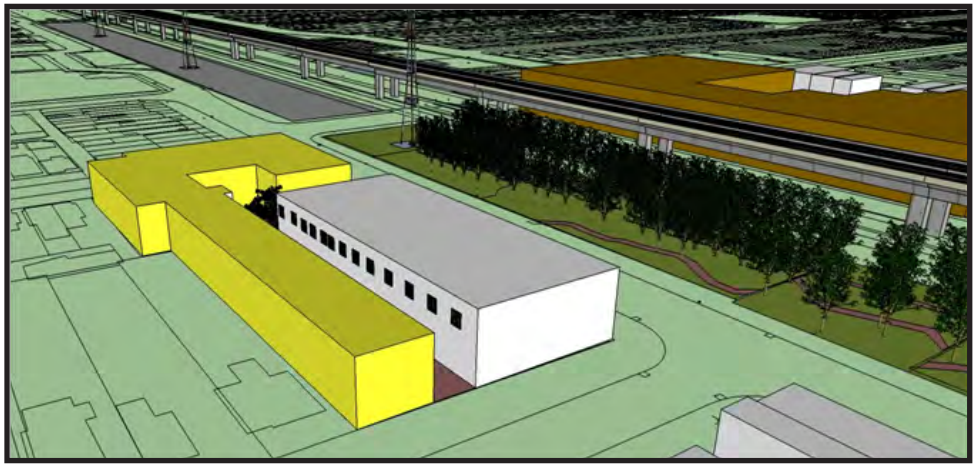


Figure 68. Tarragon Theatre currently
Source: Ansari, 2012



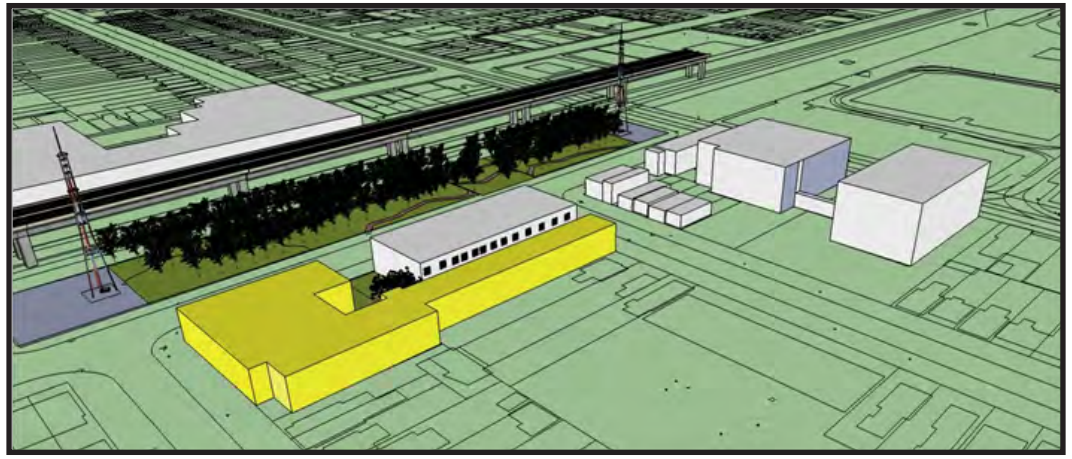


Figure 69. Tarragon Theatre plans
Source: Ansari, 2012

SECTION 4: Conclusion

My vision for the Dupont Corridor is to improve the pedestrian environment, and reintroduce elements of the neighbourhoods' history while protecting stable neighbourhoods and employment lands in accordance with the Official Plan. The focus has been placed on maintaining the shape of Davenport Road, introducing intensification on major nodes, and creating smooth transitions between different sections of the Corridor.

The fundamental goal is to revitalize the corridor into a multi-use, human-scaled, liveable area. To ensure the implementation of this Vision, it is recommended that the City of Toronto, Annex residents, Casa Loma residents, businesses, institutions and other stakeholders work towards this goal and adopt these urban design guidelines for new development that will take place in the Dupont Corridor.

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