TORONTO Urban Development Services

June 2004

BLOOR-YORKVILLE/NORTH MIDTOWN URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Aerial photo of Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the context of the rest of the Downtown, many of the areas in Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown are unique in terms of use, scale and built form. The uniqueness and diversity of these areas attract tourists and they play an important role in the economic and cultural vitality of the City. Bloor Street evokes names such as "5th Avenue North", while "Yorkville" is known internationally.

For Toronto residents and tourists alike, the area provides a year round destination for shopping, dining and cultural attractions in a highly urbane, pedestrian-oriented setting. These amenities and location also make Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown a desirable place to live, whether in the high-rise towers along its broad streets and avenues or in the low-density, low-rise neighbourhoods of Ramsden Park, Yorkville Triangle or Asquith-Collier.

1.1 THE BLOOR-YORKVILLE/NORTH MIDTOWN URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

This document forms a set of guidelines, endorsed by City Council, which build on approved policies of the Official Plan and applicable zoning by-laws that set out land use, density and height.

The goal of these guidelines is to improve the quality of the environment in Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown and ensure that those elements, which contribute to the special character of the diverse parts of the area, are retained and enhanced. The main planning objectives in achieving this goal include:

(a) enhancement of Areas of Special Identity noted in the Official Plan and the Precincts and Corridors identified in this document;

(b) protection of low-rise, pedestrian-oriented mixed use areas from the adverse impact of high-rise development;

(c) protection of residential areas from adverse impacts of commercial and/or higher density development;

(d) enhancement and protection of historic buildings;

(e) improvement of publicly accessible areas (streets and open spaces); and

(f) excellence in urban design, architecture, and landscape in private developments.

These Guidelines incorporate and supercede older design guidelines for the North Midtown, Hayden Street, and Sultan-St. Thomas areas. Further, these Guidelines reflect and are supported by the contents of the Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines drafted by Brook McILroy Incorporated and amended by Office for Urbanism. This work was initiated by the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area in collaboration with:

- Yonge Bloor Bay Association
- Greater Yorkville Residents Association
- ABC Residents Association
- The Community History Project
- Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area

The Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines provide additional context and guidance specific to the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area. For development applications made within or adjacent to this district, the Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines should be considered in concert with the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines.

2.0 CONTEXT

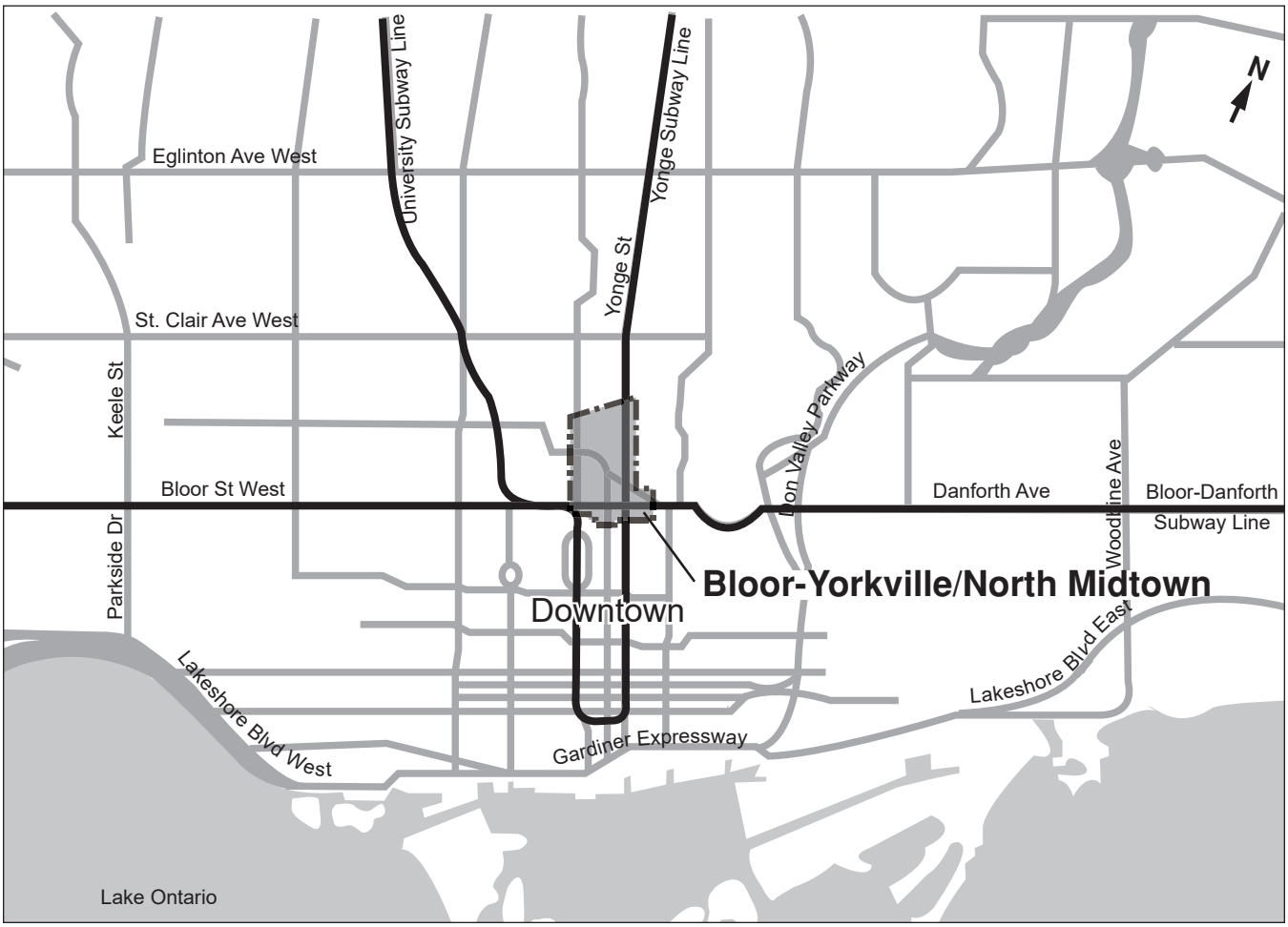
2.1 THE BLOOR-YORKVILLE/NORTH MIDTOWN AREA

For the purpose of these Guidelines the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area extends to (and just beyond) Avenue Road to the west, Church Street and the Rosedale Ravine to the east, the CPR tracks to the north, and Charles Street to the south. (Figures 1 and 2).

2.2 PLANNING CONTEXT

The City of Toronto's new Official Plan identifies Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown within the "Downtown" area, excepting those lands east of Yonge Street and north of Rosedale Valley Road. Much of the area is designated "Mixed Use" while the low-density, low-scale residential areas of Ramsden Park, Yorkville Triangle and Asquith-Collier are designated "Neighbourhoods". Relatively smaller geographic areas are designated "Apartment Neighbourhoods", "Parks and Open Space Areas" and "Institutional Areas".

Figure 1: Context Map



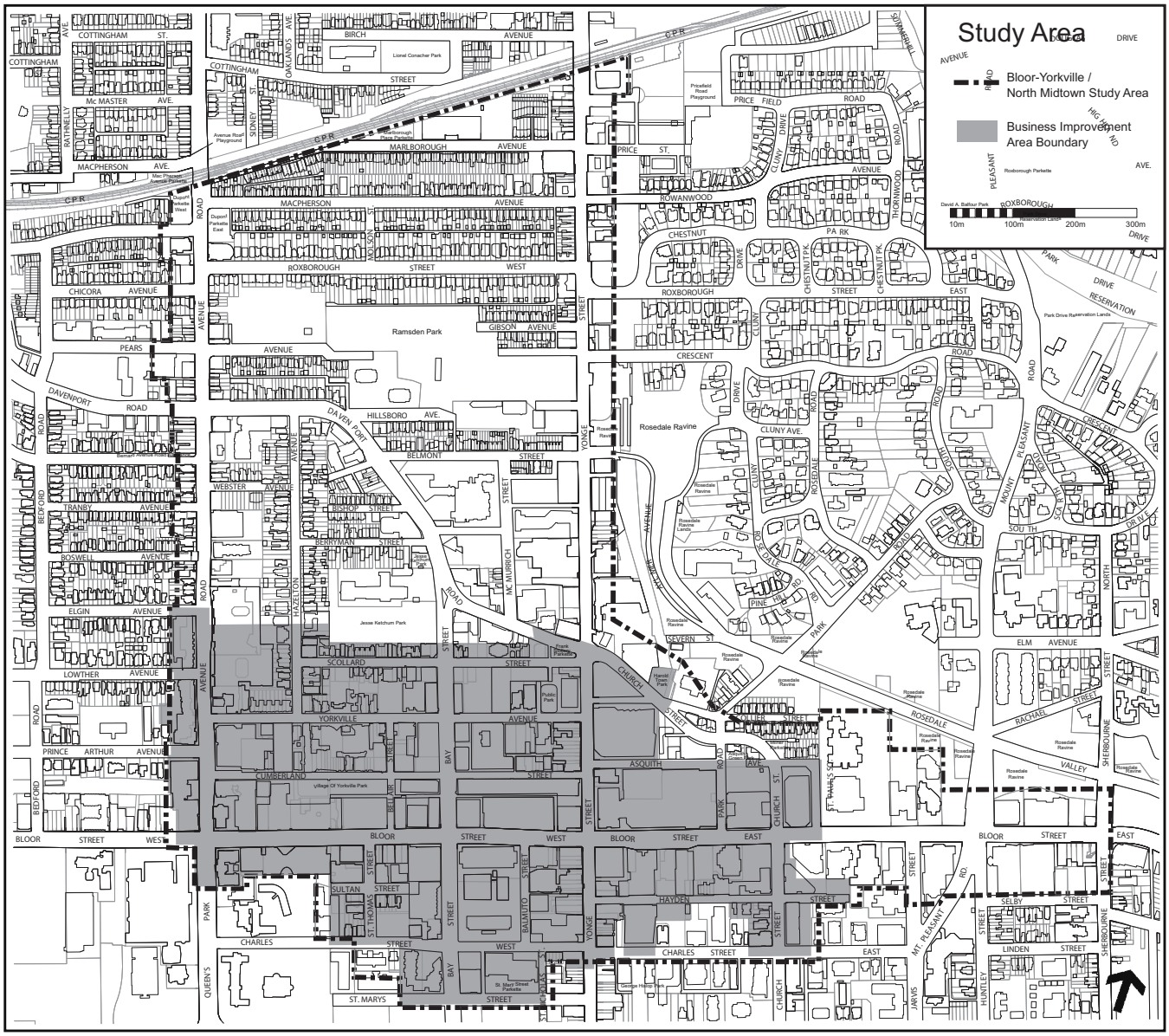
While Downtown and Mixed Use areas are specifically identified for intensification, new development is subject to a number of policies and criteria regarding appropriate building location, massing, compatibility with surroundings, protection of adjacent Neighbourhoods and treatment of the public realm.

Neighbourhoods are considered physically stable areas made up of residential uses in lower scale buildings. Physical changes are to be sensitive, gradual, and generally "fit" the existing physical character.

Area specific policies identify the special identity areas within Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown as well as opportunities for pedestrian walkways, below grade connections and new parks.

The Zoning By-law permits mixed-use developments throughout Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown, except in the low-density residential neighbourhoods of Ramsden Park, Yorkville Triangle, Asquith-Collier and portions of the Davenport-Bay Precinct. There are area specific use prohibitions in the vicinity of Avenue and Davenport Roads and along Scollard Street, for example, designed to protect adjacent residential areas.

Figure 2: Study Area



Permitted building heights and densities are highest at the intersection of Yonge and Bloor Streets. Otherwise, higher heights and densities area generally restricted to the corridors along arterial roads including Bloor Street, Yonge Street, Bay Street and Avenue Road. Between these corridors permitted heights and density limits are low to moderate. Height and density permissions generally diminish the farther from Bloor Street one gets. Angular planes and other similar restrictions to control building location and massing exist at various locations throughout the area.

Land use, height, massing and other zoning restrictions will be identified through the Preliminary Project Review process or through pre-application consultation with City staff.

2.3 DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN DIRECTIONS

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines define an urban structure for the area and create a template for responsible and sensitive development.

Generally these guidelines describe the distinct precincts that comprise Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown and provide direction for development and for improvements to the public realm. Specifically, they:

(a) Provide a vision of the desired urban structure for the area and a framework for development;

(b) Define appropriate relationships between buildings and the public realm, being the public spaces between buildings;

(c) Provide appropriate built form guidance addressing matters such as setbacks and massing;

(d) Identify opportunities to improve the public realm; and

(e) Provide a tool, which can be used in evaluating applications for site plan approval and rezoning, as well as for co-ordinating public improvements to be undertaken in connection with a project. Designs differing from the guidelines presented here may be considered, however, a detailed analysis should be submitted to support the alternative design, which demonstrates the general intent and objectives of the guidelines are met.

Other planning and design initiatives that provide context and guidance for development and which should be considered include:

(a) Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area Publications:

- Bloor-Yorkville Urban Design Guidelines
- Bloor-Yorkville Development Framework Manual

(b) City of Toronto Publications:

- Accessibility Design Guidelines
- Urban Design Handbook
- Streetscape Manual
- Preserving Neighbourhood Streetscapes
- Boulevard Cafes Guidelines
- Building Toronto Together: A Development Guide
- Yorkville-Hazelton Heritage Conservation District
- East Annex Heritage Conservation District

Photo 1 – Village of Yorkville

3.0 STRUCTURE PLAN

The primary components that make up the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area, including streets, parks and open spaces, help to establish a framework for future development in the area (Figures 3 and 4). This section provides a description of the key organizing elements.

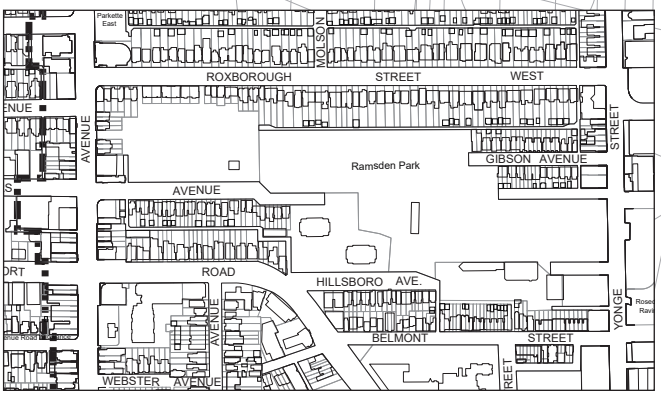
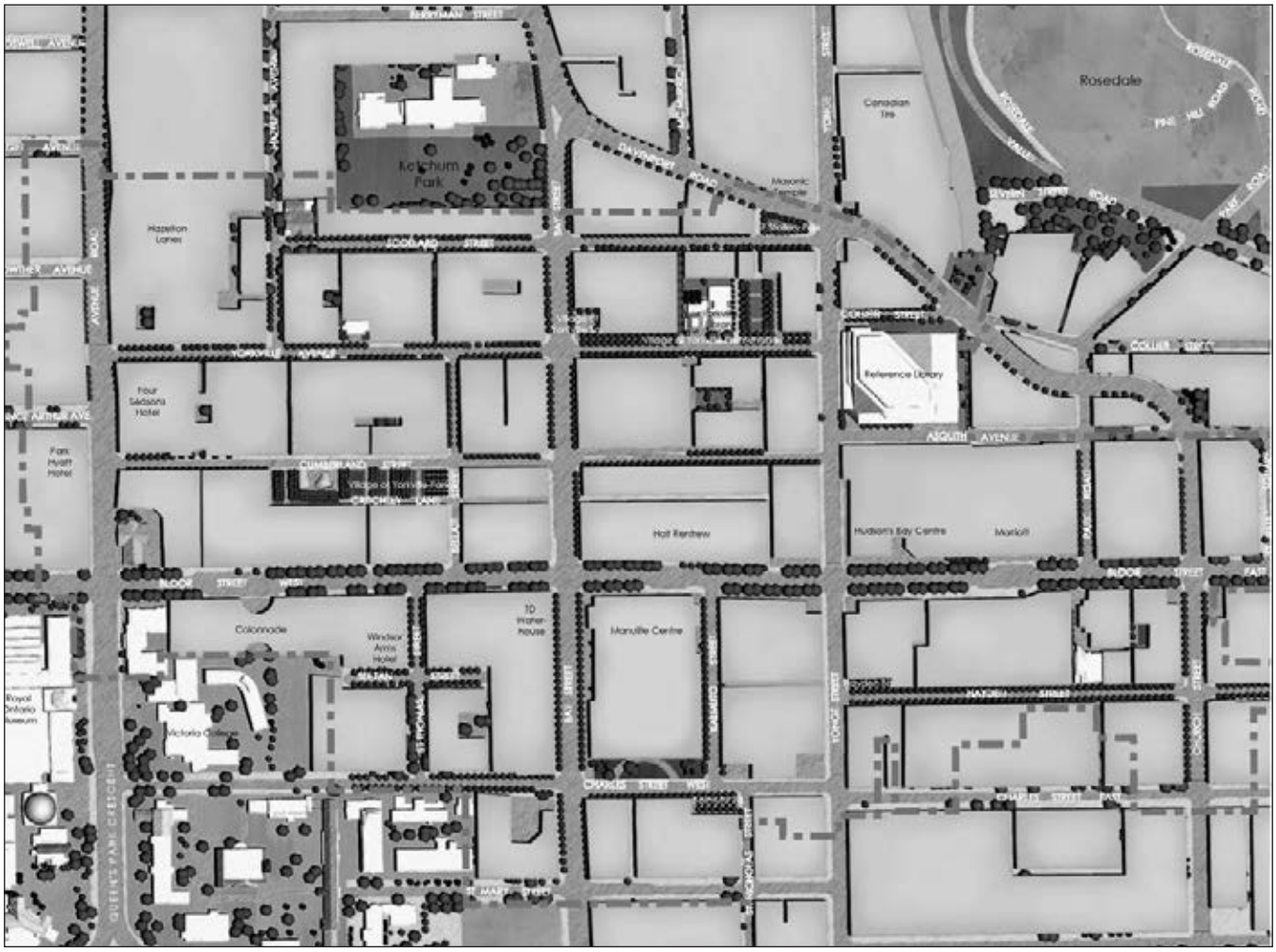


Figure 4: Ramsden Park Map

Figure 3: Bloor-Yorkville Structure Plan



3.1 PRECINCTS AND CORRIDORS

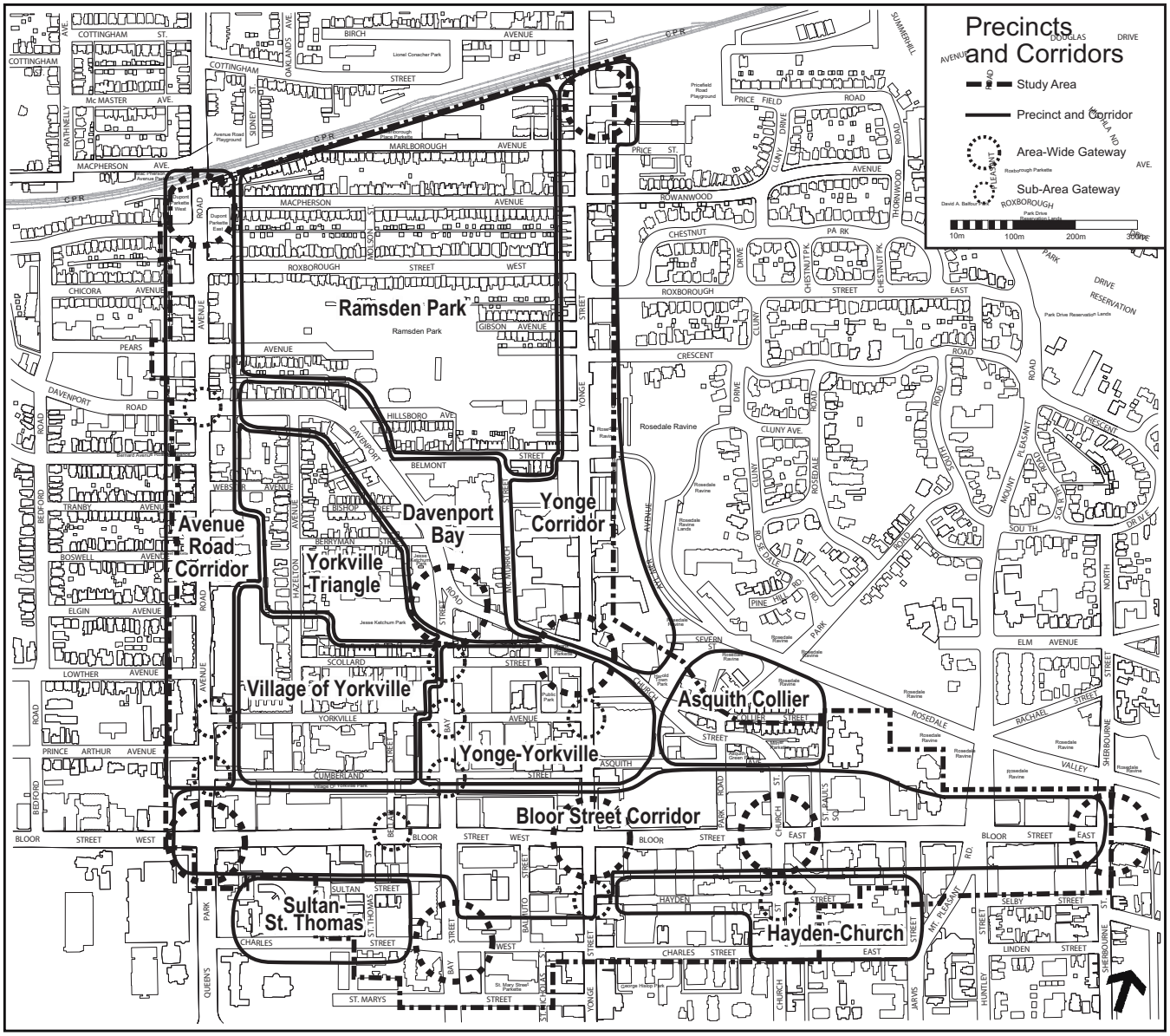
The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area is comprised of a number of precincts and corridors, each defined by its attributes in terms of function, built form and character.

The organization of Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown into these distinct areas allows consideration of the specifics of each setting and ensures that new development is appropriate to its location. Figure 5 depicts these precincts and corridors.

Areas such as the “Bloor Street Corridor” and the “Village of Yorkville” have a strong identity that should be maintained and reinforced through compatible development. Other areas, such as “Hayden-Church” have a less defined identity, which require a strong vision to direct future development and public improvements.

Precincts such as “Ramsden Park”, “Yorkville Triangle” and “Asquith-Collier” have an established low-rise, residential character, which should be protected.

Figure 5: Precincts and Corridors



3.1.1 VILLAGE OF YORKVILLE PRECINCT

The Village of Yorkville Precinct is the heart of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area, and is internationally known for its charming retail shops, trendy cafes and pedestrian mews (Photo 1). It is active during the day and evening and it acts as both a regional commercial area, and significant tourist attraction.

This precinct is located immediately north of Bloor Street between Bay Street and Avenue Road. It is comprised mainly of low-rise buildings fronting onto Cumberland Street, Yorkville Avenue and Scollard Street. The buildings in this precinct, combined with the Village of Yorkville Park, create a low-rise mixed-use district of finely scaled buildings, which allow access to adequate light and sky views. Projects approved by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) for Nos. 116 and 100 Yorkville Avenue are, by virtue of their bulk and/or height, inconsistent with the area's built form character.

Buildings in the vicinity of Cumberland Street and Yorkville Avenue are predominantly brick-fronted house-forms or other low-rise building types generally set back from the street line (Photos 2 and 3). Retail uses in the form of small shops are continuous along the street frontage and are often located at a half level below or above the street level. Dominant uses are specialty boutiques, particularly for clothing, antique stores, restaurants, and outdoor cafes. While development along Cumberland and Yorkville Streets are similar the lot frontages on Cumberland tend to be narrower and the number of remaining houseform buildings greater.

Structures in the vicinity of Scollard and Hazelton consist mainly of two and three storey Victorian house-form buildings on small lots built close to the street line with many entrances at street level. These are used for a mixture of shops (particularly art galleries) and offices with some residential units above (Photo 5).

Where the Cumberland and Yorkville area is active the Scollard and Hazelton area is much more passive in character. Restaurants and tavern-type uses are prohibited. As well, this sub-area has a strong residential character and buffers the Yorkville Triangle residential area. Much of this area is included in the Yorkville-Hazelton Heritage Conservation District (Section 3.3.2).

Photo 2 – Vibrant street life on Cumberland Street

Photo 3 – South side of Yorkville Avenue with 2-3 storey street facade allowing ample sunlight onto the sidewalk

Photo 4 – Successful mid-block pedestrian connection with retail frontages between Yorkville Avenue and Cumberland Street

Photo 5 – Scollard Street: Two to three-storey Victorian houses with a mixture of shops, galleries and offices at the bottom and residential units above

Photo 6 – Incorporation of landscape with built form design on Yorkville Avenue

Photo 7 – View terminus between low-rise Village of Yorkville and Avenue Road corridor

New developments that are compatible with the existing form and use in this area are encouraged. The retention of existing clusters of house-form buildings are also encouraged.

Because of the high level of pedestrian activity in the area, particular consideration should be given to minimizing the number and impact of vehicular access points across sidewalks to parking and loading areas.

In order to provide a more convenient pedestrian environment, projects proposed along the north side of Yorkville Avenue and south side of Scollard Street should incorporate mid-block pedestrian connections from Yorkville Avenue to Scollard Street (Photo 4).

In considering development applications for this area, the form of the proposed building on the lot should be within the building envelope, as shown in Section 4.3.3. This is in order to provide an acceptable relationship of buildings in terms of light, view or privacy, and to maintain the streetscape character. The project approved by the OMB at 100 Yorkville significantly breaches this envelope by virtue of its 18 storey height. This would not be appropriate elsewhere in the block particularly given the significantly smaller lot sizes.

New buildings on the south side of Yorkville Avenue or Scollard Street should be located and designed to minimize overshadowing of the public sidewalk on the north side. New buildings on the north side of Scollard Street should be located and designed to minimize overshadowing on Jesse Ketchum Park.

3.1.2 YONGE-YORKVILLE PRECINCT

The library and fire hall on Yorkville Avenue (Photo 9) should be considered the focal point of this precinct, and new development along Yorkville Avenue should complement and enhance these structures.

Redevelopment of the lands west of the fire hall should be set back from the street line to the extent of the No. 18 Yorkville development in order to give more prominence to, and expose the historic clock tower. Likewise, the development should setback from the fire hall to provide an open space with a minimum width of 20 metres. This is intended to mirror the open space on the east side of the library. These building setbacks and open spaces would facilitate a pedestrian promenade along the north

side of Yorkville Avenue, between Yonge Street and Bay Street. A conveyance of a strip of land to the City for the purpose of sidewalk widening may be required (Photo 8).

To ensure that the height, massing and appearance of new buildings to be built adjacent to the historic fire hall and library on Yorkville Avenue complement and enhance these buildings, special attention should be given to the design of the new building to reflect existing cornice lines, roof lines, fenestration, floor levels and materials used (Figure 6 and Photo 9).

There exist opportunities to create pedestrian connections linking Cumberland Street, Yorkville Avenue, Scollard Street and Davenport Road as exists in the Village of Yorkville (Photo 4).

Photo 8 – View looking west from Yonge Street along Yorkville Avenue

Figure 6: Widened Yorkville Avenue sidewalk at firehall creating a promenade

Other historic buildings in the area include the Masonic Temple at the corner of Davenport Road and Yonge Street. The Masonic Temple building also forms the northern edge of Frank Stollery Park. Buildings around the park should be designed to frame the open space with a 5-6 storey street wall. Any new buildings should reflect the character of the existing area and form a consistent edge to the park in order to create an "urban room".

New buildings, should be located and designed to minimize overshadowing of Stollery Park by ensuring that a majority of the park is in sunlight at 9 a.m., noon and 3 p.m. on March 21/September 23.

Structures on Yonge Street, south of Yorkville Avenue, primarily reflect historic three-storey brick fronted buildings built to the street line with frequent entrances to shops at the street level with some apartments above (Photo 10). Buildings with historic and/or architectural merit, as listed by Council, should be preserved. The street wall height along Yonge Street, north of Yorkville Avenue should match that of the new development at No. 18 Yorkville, which introduces a step back at the fifth floor.

Photo 9 – Historic Yorkville firehall and library

Photo 10 – Historic 3 to 4 storey brick buildings on Yonge Street

In order to minimize overshadowing of public sidewalks, enhance the streetscape and reinforce the scale of listed buildings along the street, buildings on the north side of Scollard Street, north and south sides of Yorkville Avenue and north side of Cumberland Street should be developed within the building envelope as shown in Section 4.3.3 – Built Form Angular Planes.

3.1.3 DAVENPORT BAY PRECINCT

This precinct generally includes both sides of Davenport Road from Avenue Road to McMurrich Street (Figure 5).

The Davenport area contains a mix of building styles and uses. The house-form buildings generally contain specialty boutiques and some residences while the remainder of the buildings are primarily 2 to 5-storey office buildings. Restaurants and tavern-type uses (Photos 12 and 13) are prohibited in much of this area.

With the exception of the house-form buildings on the north side of Davenport Road, between Avenue Road and Hillsboro Avenue (Photo 12), being the Davenport Terrace sub-area, these buildings do not have a consistency of setbacks, cornice lines or rooflines. This is due mainly to the mix of building styles and uses developed incrementally over time. While this is not currently an area of distinct character, it has opportunities, with redevelopment, for improvements. The unique "sweep" of Davenport Road, between Avenue Road and the Bay Street intersection, provides opportunities for streetscape improvements and enhancement of interesting views. The most significant opportunity for improvement exists at the intersection of Davenport Road and Bay Street, which is identified as a gateway area into Bloor-Yorkville.

New development along Davenport Road, excluding Davenport Terrace, should maintain a 3-5 storey street wall built parallel to the street. Taller portions of proposed buildings, between Bay and McMurrich Streets, should step back from the street wall. New

Photo 11 – Existing random street character along Davenport Road

Photo 12 – Davenport Terrace facades

Photo 13 – Existing random street character along Davenport Road

development at the intersection of Davenport Road and Bay Street should also (i) be setback 2 metres to allow for a wider sidewalk and streetscaping and (ii) be massed to preserve the view terminus on the north side of McAlpine Street.

New development in the Davenport Terrace area should be within the building envelope, as shown in Section 4.3.3 – Built Form Angular Planes, in order to ensure that houses and rear yards along Pears Avenue are not overshadowed. In order to maintain visual privacy between the mixed use buildings along Davenport Terrace and the houses, at lower elevation along Pears Avenue, existing trees and vegetation should be retained and new planting material added as necessary. To reinforce the well defined character of the existing buildings along Davenport Terrace, the height, massing and appearance of new buildings should have regard for consistent cornice lines, roof lines, fenestration design, floor levels and materials used in those buildings.

3.1.4 RAMSDEN PARK PRECINCT

This precinct generally applies to the area bounded on the north by the Canadian Pacific Railway, on the east by the backs of the buildings fronting Yonge Street, on the west by the backs of the buildings fronting Avenue Road, and on the south by Davenport Road and Belmont Street (Figure 5).

This is a designated Neighbourhood in the Official Plan and should be considered a physically stable area. New development should respect the special character of the area, which contains tree-lined streets and 2 and 3-storey attached and detached houses, generally built of brick (Photo 17).

The location, height and setback of new buildings are appropriately controlled by existing zoning regulations. Applications to the Committee of Adjustment should be evaluated with respect to the following guidelines:

(1) Sideyard setbacks - Sideyard setbacks should be enforced for semi-detached houses and end units of townhouses to ensure access to the rear of the houses where there is no alternate rear laneway access.

(2) Depth and rear yard setbacks - Rear yard setbacks should be enforced, especially on the north side of the street. Variation in house

Photo 14 – Maintain and improve pedestrian connections to Ramsden Park

depth should be permitted only when it does not negatively impact the light, view or privacy of an adjacent dwelling.

(3) Front yard setbacks and landscaped open space in front yard - The front yard setback should be permitted to be reduced to the average of the adjacent houses to reflect the existing street and area character (Photo 17).

(4) Location of integral garages - Garages must be located at grade.

(5) Landscaping - A maximum amount of front yard should be landscaped with suitable planting, and attractive paving should be used (Photo 17).

Photo 15 – Pedestrian connection from Avenue Road to Ramsden Park

Photo 17 – Ramsden Park neighbourhood character

Photo 16 – Maintain pedestrian connections throughout Ramsden Park

Photo 18 – Pedestrian connection from residential street to Ramsden Park

(6) Height - Only very minimal variances should be permitted.

(7) Character - Consideration should be given to the street design with respect to scale, roof line treatment, garage door treatment, stairs, etc., so that the building is compatible with the existing residential character (Photos 17 and 18).

(8) Severances - Support should be given if the variances maintain the lot frontage and area generally found on the street.

(9) Applications with multiple requests for variances – Careful consideration should be given to the combined impact of the effects of the variances requested.

(10) Timing - Applications for variances and severances should be considered concurrently so that the matters of siting and landscaping can be reviewed and appropriate elements secured on plans.

Pedestrian connections to Ramsden Park should be maintained from all surrounding streets and, where possible, be improved by upgraded landscape, lighting, terracing and paving (Photos 14 and 15).

3.1.5 YORKVILLE TRIANGLE AND ASQUITH-COLLIER PRECINCTS

Like the Ramsden Park Precinct, the Yorkville Triangle and Asquith-Collier Precincts are stable, low-density residence areas where physical change is expected to be sensitive and gradual. New development should respect those characteristics described for the Ramsden Park Precinct and additionally should be compatible with or built in the Victorian style (Photos 19 and 20).

Buildings within the Yorkville Triangle area will have to be accommodated within the building envelope prescribed by the Zoning By-law and comply with the design directions of the Yorkville-Hazelton Heritage Conservation District.

Those guidelines for applications to the Committee of Adjustment specified in Section 3.1.4 – Ramsden Park Precinct also apply here.

Photo 19 – Existing residential character of Davenport Terrace

Photo 20 – Maintain residential character of Hazelton Avenue

Photo 21 – New buildings along the Avenue Road height ridge should step down towards Hazelton Avenue

Photo 22 – The incorporation of landscape and tree planting creates a positive pedestrian experience

Photo 25 – View from Hazelton Avenue looking east on Scollard Street showing the retention of historic structures

Photo 23 – Existing condition with parking off Hazelton Avenue should be avoided

Photo 24 – Two- and three-storey Victorian houses with retail at grade and residential units above

3.1.6 YONGE STREET CORRIDOR

North of Ramsden Park

This corridor located along Yonge Street, immediately north of Ramsden Park is similar to commercial strips in surrounding areas such as the Annex with its local shopping areas situated adjacent to low-rise residential areas (Figure 5).

The area is anchored at its northern end by the Summerhill Station with its landmark clock tower (Photo 26). Buildings in this area consist mainly of three-storey brick rows built to the street line with frequent entrances. These structures accommodate primarily small shops at street level, serving local markets, with dwelling units above (Photo 27).

Developments that are compatible with the existing form and use of this area are encouraged. Due to its proximity to low-rise residential areas to the west, careful consideration shall be given to the impact of commercial uses, the form of development, and parking and servicing arrangements. Specifically, in Mixed Use Areas development will:

(1) locate and mass new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale, particularly providing setbacks from and stepping down of heights towards lower scale Neighbourhoods;

(2) locate and mass new buildings to minimize shadow impacts on adjacent Neighbourhoods during the spring and fall equinoxes;

Photo 26 – Yonge/Summerhill railway station at the southeast corner of Yonge Steet and the CPR tracks

Photo 27 – Diverse mixture of small shops at street level and relatively new residential developments

Photo 28 – Yonge Street looking north from Davenport Road

(3) locate and screen service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and

(4) provide good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors.

Ramsden Park and Rosedale Ravine

Located at the halfway point of the Yonge Corridor are significant green spaces on either side of Yonge Street (Figure 10). Ramsden Park on the west side and Rosedale Ravine on the east both have poorly defined street edges. Further, the Rosedale Ravine property accommodates the Rosedale Subway Station and bus turning loop. Every effort should be made to ensure that these open spaces remain undeveloped and enhanced through streetscape improvements and the possible realignment of the bus turning loop. One possible realignment would connect Crescent Road and Alymer Avenue, thereby improving the configuration of the open space abutting the east side of Yonge Street.

South of Ramsden Park

Structures along the west side of Yonge Street include two historical buildings built to the street line, the Masonic Temple and Ridpaths Furniture, and a number of low and high-rise structures (Photo 49). These buildings are used for various purposes including mixed-use (commercial-residential), office, and service uses.

The effect of the mix of building forms and inconsistent building lines on the west side of Yonge Street creates an unattractive and uninteresting streetscape. With this in mind, the mixed-use building at No. 900 Yonge was designed to respect the building lines of its historic neighbours, the Masonic Temple and Ridpaths Furniture.

On the east side of Yonge Street, the existing buildings are used primarily for office and other commercial purposes. A high-rise senior citizen's residence, with retail at grade and set back from the streetline, has been built north of the Canadian Tire store (Photo 28). A number of three-storey brick fronted historic buildings built to the streetline and used for retail purposes are located immediately north of the building. Low and medium-rise office buildings set back from the street line and newly constructed townhouses are located to the north of

these buildings. To the south and east of the store are the Canadian Tire gas bar and parking lot, a large portion of which was the subject of a 2003 approval of two residential condominium towers. The 25 and 18 storey towers will be constructed between the corner gas bar and Harold Town Park.

Consideration should be given to the form of buildings along Yonge and Church Streets to ensure that the pedestrian environment is improved and that the ravine lands are not unduly overshadowed. Also, consideration should be had for the protection of the designated views of the Rosedale Ravine.

3.1.7 BLOOR STREET CORRIDOR

The Bloor Street Corridor is generally located on both the north and south sides of Bloor Street from Avenue Road to Sherbourne Street (Figure 5). The centre of this corridor, at the Yonge and Bloor intersection, has been referred to by these guidelines as a height 'peak', where the tallest buildings in the area are concentrated (Photo 31), whereas the remainder of the corridor is referred to as a height 'ridge' where buildings step down in height from the peak (Figure 22).

West of Church Street

Structures on Bloor Street are predominantly a mixture of high-rise office and commercial-residential buildings with exclusive boutiques, fashion stores and restaurants located generally within the first two levels of the street (Photos 29 and 30). The double storey retail frontages characterize Bloor Street between Yonge Street and Avenue Road. Some establishments, related to the major TTC subway interchange, are located one level below the street. This area has become known as one of the most prestigious shopping streets in Toronto. It is active during the day and in the evening and combined with the Village of Yorkville, acts as a regional commercial area.

Vehicular access to most development should not be from Bloor Street, but generally located along north-south streets or from laneways running parallel to Bloor Street.

New projects and renovations of existing buildings along Bloor Street should use good quality materials with rich architectural detail, particularly at the pedestrian scale. [1:50 scale drawings of a portion of the podium elevations is a sufficient scale to

Photo 29 – Dynamic retail activity along Bloor Street


Photo 30 – Bloor Street corridor with high quality retail at grade


Photo 31 – Bloor Street east of Yonge Street

Photo 32 – View looking east from Church Street along Bloor Street

Photo 33 – View looking west from Sherbourne Street along Bloor Street

Photo 34 – Rosedale Valley Ravine

show the level of architectural detail expected at the pedestrian scale.] The bleak frontages between Yonge and Church are encouraged to be altered, as the opportunity arises, to enhance and animate the street, i.e., Hudson Bay Co. store.

In order to provide weather protection and a unifying element along the street, canopies and other weather protection devices should be provided within new developments fronting along Bloor Street, particularly along the north side of the street.

Projects proposed along Bloor Street should incorporate mid-block connections from Bloor to Cumberland Streets and Hayden Street (Figure 10), and where possible, should connect with the underground concourse/subway connections.

The height limit along Bloor Street, west of Bay Street, is considerably higher than the low-rise buildings in the Village of Yorkville. Therefore, consideration should be given to the form of buildings along this portion of Bloor Street to ensure that the low-rise buildings in the Village of Yorkville and the Village of Yorkville Park are not adversely overshadowed. In addition, the area is known to be affected by extreme wind conditions due to the heights and massing of existing buildings. The form of buildings and its impact on pedestrians within the immediate area should be carefully reviewed.

The Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area initiated an exciting streetscape improvement program to revitalize the corridor – Bloor Street Transformation Project. Designed by Brown and Storey Architects, the project involves the reconstruction and reimaging of Bloor Street, between Avenue Road and Church Street. An underground irrigation system, widened sidewalks and lay-bys are the starting point. The ambitious program includes elegantly detailed and widened granite sidewalks, raised landscapes, parallel tree lines and custom street furniture including lighting. The major intersections of Yonge, Bay and Avenue Road will be individually marked in a manner commensurate with their respective civic importance. For example, the Yonge-Bloor intersection is not only an area-wide, but a city-wide gateway and the streetscape and architecture should reflect its prominance.

Owners of significant open spaces along the street will be encouraged to extend the streetscape into

Photo 35 – Ravine lands and open space should be protected from high-rise development on Bloor Street

their property. Area developments requiring Official Plan or Zoning By-law amendments for increased height and/or density may be required to contribute to the funding of this project, pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act.

East of Church Street

East of Church Street the corridor is dominated by office buildings with limited or no retail space at grade (Photo 32). The buildings have an inconsistent set back from the streetline, particularly on the north side of Bloor Street where some of the large financial and insurance uses have extensive landscaped grounds. Bloor at Sherbourne is identified as a gateway area and provides an opportunity to mark one's arrival into Bloor-Yorkville.

East of Church Street, the impact of development on the Rosedale Ravine lands should be minimized (Photos 33 and 34). Developers of sites in or adjacent to the ravine should provide information as to the impact of a project on the ravine and how this impact is to be limited. Vehicular access for projects on Bloor Street, east of Church Street should not be from Rosedale Valley Road.

3.1.8 AVENUE ROAD CORRIDOR

This area generally refers to the east and west sides of Avenue Road beginning at Bloor Street, to north of the CPR Tracks. Avenue Road is one of the City's most important streets as it links numerous prestigious and notable governmental and cultural institutions. Furthermore, this part of the corridor sits between two of Toronto's most important visual termini – the Ontario Legislature and Upper Canada College – and provides a potentially compelling approach into the Downtown (Figure 5).

Developments that are compatible with the existing form and use of this area are encouraged.

Buildings on the east side of Avenue Road, south of Webster Avenue, are a mix of high and mid-rise structures comprising a variety of commercial and residential uses. North of Webster Avenue, the buildings are predominantly low-rise and commercial in use. These structures accommodate primarily small shops at street level serving local markets, with dwelling units above. (Photos 36 and 38).

Buildings on the west side of Avenue Road, south of Elgin Avenue are predominately mid to high-rise and generally built along the street line (Photo 36). These structures accommodate retail uses at grade and hotel or residential units above. North of Elgin Avenue buildings are low-rise, mixed use and also built along the street line (Figure 8).

Due to its proximity to low-scale residential neighbourhoods on either side of Avenue Road above Elgin Avenue, special consideration should be given to the impact of commercial uses, the form of development and parking and servicing arrangements. Specifically, in Mixed Use Areas development will:

(1) locate and mass new buildings to provide a transition between areas of different development intensity and scale, particularly providing setbacks from and stepping down of heights towards lower scale Neighbourhoods;

(2) locate and mass new buildings to minimize shadow impacts on adjacent Neighbourhoods during the spring and fall equinoxes;

(3) locate and screen service areas, ramps and garbage storage to minimize the impact on adjacent streets and residences; and

(4) provide good site access and circulation and an adequate supply of parking for residents and visitors.

New development along the Avenue Road Corridor should consider the importance of this street and reinforce its prominence through excellence in design and a unified streetscape vocabulary. In order to provide for widened sidewalks, new buildings and additions should be set back at grade from the street line (Photo 37). In order to provide weather protection, as well as an improved pedestrian environment and a unifying element along Avenue Road, canopies and other weather protection should be provided with new developments.

Photo 38 – Existing retail character along Avenue Road should be maintained

Photo 36 - Mid- to high-rise buildings on Avenue Road south of Elgin Avenue

Photo 39 – Avenue Road looking south from Davenport Road

Photo 37 - Narrow sidewalks along Avenue Road

3.1.9 SULTAN-ST. THOMAS PRECINCT

This precinct is located generally southwest of the intersection of Bay and Bloor Streets, including lands fronting on Sultan Street, St. Thomas Street and Charles Street West.

Approved development in the Sultan-St. Thomas precinct has introduced higher building heights while striving to retain and enhance the residential scale and character of the neighbourhood as shaped by its historic residential quality and the adjacent university (Photo 41).

To maintain the Sultan-St. Thomas precinct as a distinct sub-area within the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area, new developments should pay particular attention to building height and built form. Massing should respond to the street proportions by providing building setbacks at grade and stepbacks above podiums. The goal is to be compatible with the existing character of development in this precinct and avoid a canyon effect on the narrow streets (Photo 40).

New developments should enhance the role of Charles Street West as an entrance to the University of Toronto campus and help realize the opportunity for a view terminus from Bloor Street West at the intersection of St. Thomas and Charles Street West.

Buildings in the precinct identified as having heritage value will be protected, and their scale and character respected in the scale and character of new development.

Photo 41 – New higher buildings compatible with existing residential scale buildings

Photo 42 – Heritage buildings should be respected in new developments

Photo 40 – View looking north along St. Thomas Street

Photo 43 – View terminus architectural treatment desired at the south end of St. Thomas Street

Buildings along Bloor Street and Bay Street form part of the height ridge. A tall building has been permitted on the southeast block of Sultan Street and St. Thomas Street after careful consideration of how the development fits the context and provides adequate amounts of space between it and the existing buildings in the area.

Further, new development in the Sultan-St. Thomas precinct should form part of a height and massing transition that steps down to the prevailing low-rise character of the University of Toronto campus to the west and south.

Street wall cladding in this area should exhibit high quality and distinct materials and detail, particularly along the street wall and adjacent to the pedestrian realm. Examples in this area include stone materials at 23 St. Thomas Street, the McKinsey Building and 1 St. Thomas Street. Buildings should recognize the different street wall cladding that exists along St. Thomas Street and Charles Street West respectively.

3.1.10 HAYDEN-CHURCH PRECINCT

The Hayden-Church precinct is located along Hayden Street between Yonge and Church Streets. This precinct is primarily recognized as a retail/pedestrian precinct with Hayden Street also operating a "service function" for development fronting onto Bloor Street (Photos 44 and 45). While street-related retail and service uses will mainly be concentrated along the south side of the Hayden Street frontage, every opportunity to animate the north side of the street with retail uses should be taken.

All new development in this precinct will provide for streetscape improvements and an attractive front facade on Hayden Street in accordance with these guidelines. In particular, mid-block pedestrian connections to Bloor and Charles Streets are encouraged in new developments as well as underground pedestrian connections to developments that provide access to the subway. Pedestrian connection to Jarvis Street from the terminus of Hayden Street should be secured. Any noise generating systems associated with development proposals (i.e., exhaust fans, garbage storage areas) will be concentrated away from the Hayden Street frontage. Massing should respond to narrow street proportions by providing building setbacks above podiums (Figure 7).

Development fronting onto both Hayden and Charles Streets will have their loading and vehicular access functions integrated into the street wall. New development subject to an Official Plan or Zoning By-law amendment will be required to convey a 1.5 metre strip of land to the City for the purpose of sidewalk widening.

The intersection of Hayden Street and Yonge Street provides for an opportunity to incorporate an appropriate and appropriately-scaled terminus treatment.

Photo 44 – Service access along Hayden Street should be built into the street wall

Photo 45 – Hayden Street character, identity and streetscape will be improved with new development

Figure 7: Hayden Street sketch looking east along Hayden Street showing buildings with mid-block connections, consistent setbacks, and step backs above a podium

3.2 GATEWAY AREAS

The Urban Design Guidelines identify potential and existing Gateway Areas that are of city-wide importance or related to each of the precincts (Figure 5).

Gateway Areas represent significant opportunities to mark entry into the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area, as well as specific precincts such as the Village of Yorkville. Gateways areas can be expressed through a combination of landmarks, building mass, landscaping, signage (excluding advertising), upgraded sidewalk treatments, special lighting, gathering areas (where possible), seating, and public art. The scale and character of the "gateway treatment" should be in keeping with the context of the area which it is introducing.

Specific sites encouraged for gateway treatment are identified in Figure 19.

Photo 46 – Strong identity: Village of Yorkville

Photo 48 – St. Andrew's Church as seen from Bloor Street

Photo 47 – Bloor Street East Mixed-Use Corridor

Photo 49 – Frank Stollery Park looking west along Davenport Road

3.3 HERITAGE

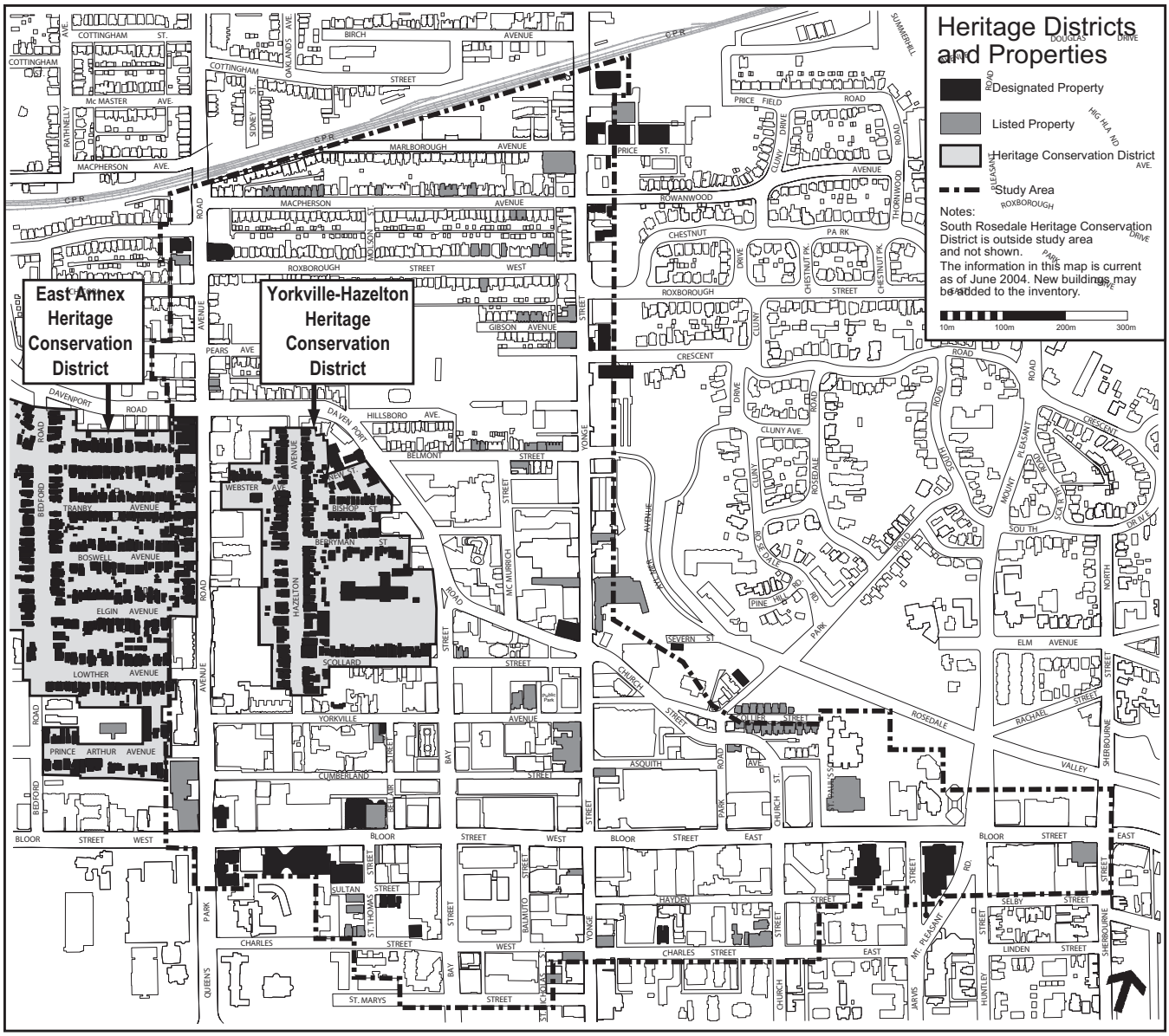
Preservation and enhancement of built and natural heritage is vital to the identity of Bloor-Yorkville/ North Midtown.

Figure 8 depicts listed and designated heritage buildings in Bloor Yorkville/North Midtown. These buildings are to be protected and enhanced and adjacent developments should complement and feature these historic structures. While heritage buildings can be incorporated and integrated within new developments, where possible, the integrity of the entire original structure should be maintained and restored.

3.3.1 HISTORY OF YORKVILLE

The built origins of Yorkville date to 1808 when the Red Lion Hotel was established near Yonge and Bloor Streets. In 1836 Sheriff William Jarvis and brewer Joseph Bloor laid out village lots on five adjoining farm lots northeast and northwest of the Yonge-Bloor intersection. The area evolved into a residential, working class and commuter suburb and The Village of Yorkville was incorporated in 1853. One of the first acts of the new council was to

Figure 8: Heritage Districts and Properties



commission the building of a town hall and fire hall. The town hall was destroyed by fire in 1941, however, the Village's coat of arms was rescued and relocated to the fire hall tower at 34 Yorkville Avenue. Built in 1876, the tower still stands today, however, the main hall was replaced in 1889 (Photo 50). Beside the fire hall at 22 Yorkville Avenue, is the original Yorkville Public Library, constructed in 1906-07 (Photo 9).

In a surge of urban growth, the portion of Yorkville west of Yonge Street was annexed to the City of Toronto, in 1883. New services such as sidewalks and paved streets appeared, as did electric street railway service, and Bay Street was extended north from Bloor to meet Davenport. Vacant lots quickly filled, and new subdivisions appeared.

Yorkville remained a predominantly residential neighbourhood until the 1960s, when it evolved into an upscale shopping district. Much of the nineteenth century architectural character was retained during this process, and the neighbourhood's Victorian feel is still evident. There are many surviving examples of single, semi-detached and row housing with Victorian decorative features throughout the area, providing a coherent sense of scale, material and rhythm of housefronts and bays (Photos 3, 19, 20 and 22). The result is a harmonious mix of heritage housing and commercial properties located throughout the Bloor-Yorkville/ North Midtown community. With the support of local residents, City Council designated the Yorkville-Hazelton Avenue area a Heritage Conservation District.

3.3.2 YORKVILLE-HAZELTON HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

In August 2002, City Council passed a by-law designating the area generally bounded by Hazelton Avenue, Scollard Street, Bay Street and Davenport Road as the Yorkville-Hazelton Avenue Heritage Conservation District.

The character of this district reflects a stable built form character of 2 to 3-storey "house-form" buildings with similar architectural style and overall proportions that balance and complement one another. New buildings should be compatible with the existing heritage properties and character of the District.

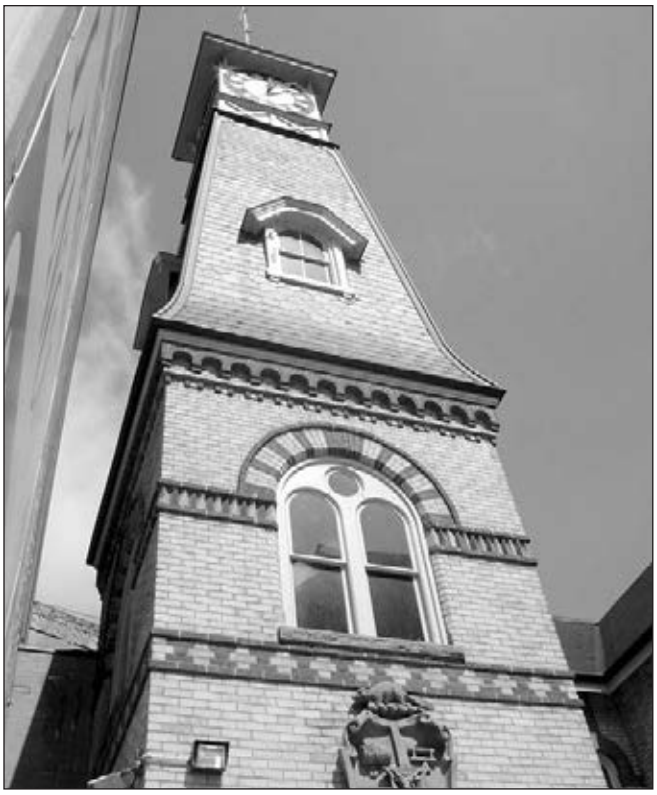


Photo 50 – Fire hall tower built in 1876

Photo 51 – Natural Heritage in Jesse Ketchum Park

Photo 52 – Example of development incorporating heritage buildings

3.4 VIEWS AND KEY SITES

An increased sense of orientation and greater legibility of the different precincts and corridors of the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area can be achieved by reinforcing key view corridors and by providing landmark features at highly visible locations. Views through and to significant sites can also assist in encouraging and directing greater pedestrian movement in all areas.

Figure 9 identifies significant views that should be protected and reinforced, as well as locations where visual terminus treatments (building entries, structural elements, banners, public art) should be located.

A distinction is made between "visual terminus building treatment" where existing or new buildings should incorporate design features that respond to their view axis, and "visual terminus landscape" which afford opportunities for public art and landscaping installations.

Figure 9: Views and Key Sites

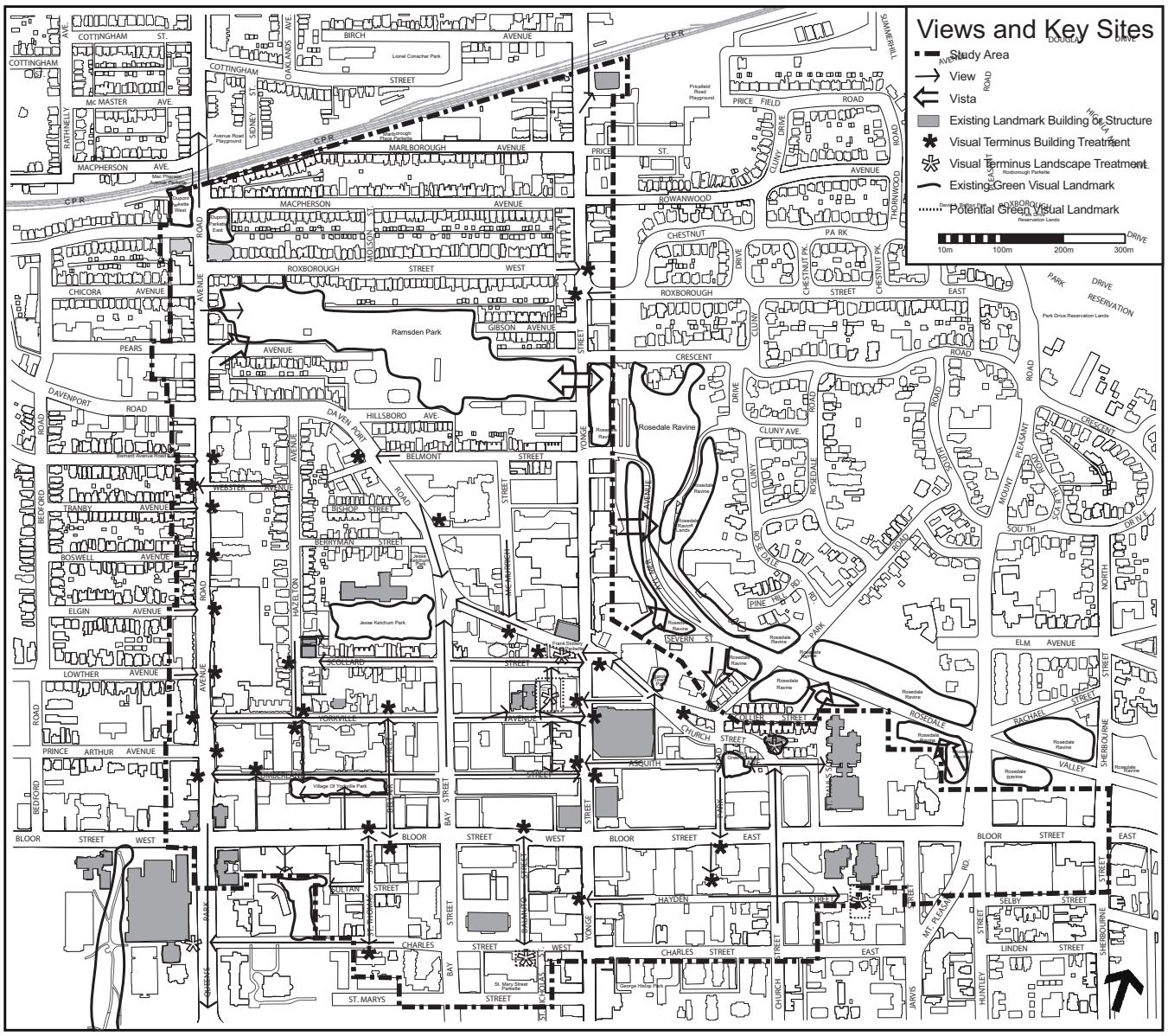


Photo 53 – Bay Street Terminus Treatment at Davenport and Bay

Photo 54 – Visual Terminus Building Treatment: Yorkville Avenue at Avenue Road

Photo 55 – Visual Terminus site should be celebrated with aesthetically compelling built forms

Photo 56 – Yonge/Summerhill railway station: a highly visible historic landmark for the area

3.5 OPEN SPACE NETWORK

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown Urban Design Guidelines identify a range of opportunities to improve and expand the public network of parks, open spaces, pedestrian links, forecourts, courtyards, and the quality of the pedestrian environment along the existing road network (Figure 10).

Key initiatives include:

- Enhancing existing open spaces.
- Creating or improving existing pedestrian connections to Ramsden Park from the adjacent streets (Photos 14, 15 and 16).
- Providing additional mid-block pedestrian connections to assist in the revitalization of streets such as Scollard and Hayden.
- Expanding the unique courtyard theme throughout Yorkville, particularly in the Yonge-Yorkville precinct (Figure 5).

Figure 10: Open Space Network Plan

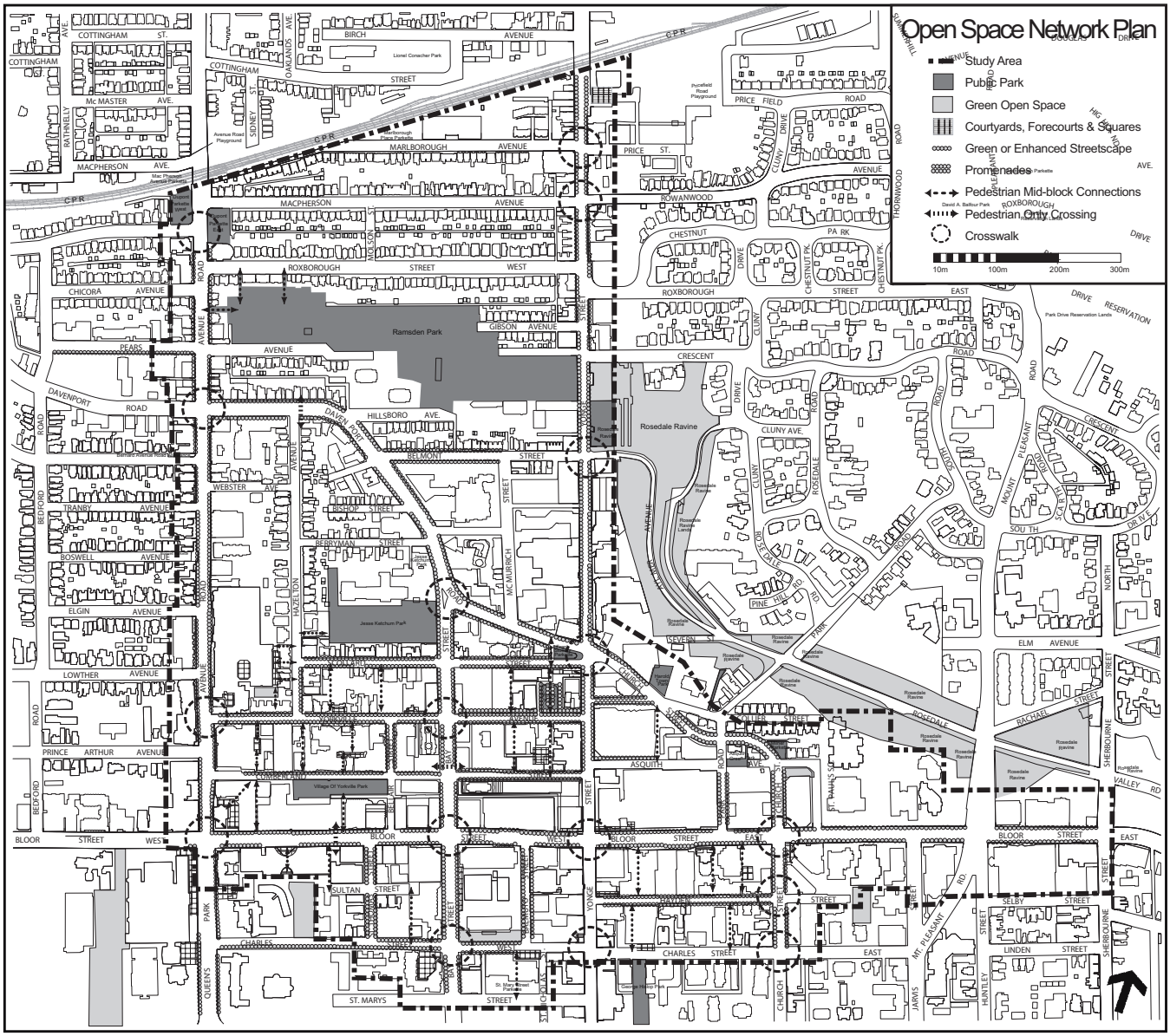


Photo 57 – Village of Yorkville Park, the area's most prominent public open space

Photo 58 – Village of Yorkville Park well framed by high-rise buildings along Bloor Street West

Photo 60 – Green open space

Photo 59 – Example of a typical courtyard in the Village of Yorkville

Photo 61 – Pedestrian mid-block connection between Bloor and Cumberland Streets

- Enhancing streetscapes through tree planting, paving material, street furniture, landscape planters, lighting standards and public art.
- Incorporating forecourts and sidewalk widening for sidewalk/street activities, such as cafes and spill-out retail.
- Creating a promenade along the north side of Yorkville Avenue between Yonge Street and Bay Street so as to reinforce the historic prominence of the library and fire hall tower.
- Encouraging new developments to incorporate public squares and green spaces as part of their design, such as the creation of the Yonge-Yorkville Park at 18 Yorkville Avenue.
- Creating well designed open spaces which compliment adjacent spaces, i.e., the design of Frank Stollery Parkette uses materials and colours which are compatible with those used in the design of the Yonge-Yorkville Park.
- Preserving the existing character of the residential areas by encouraging tree lined streets and landscaped front yards.

courtesy Great Gulf Homes

Figure 11 – 18 Yorkville Park

3.6 PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

Public art will play a significant role in reinforcing the urban design guidelines for the public realm in the Bloor Yorkville/North Midtown area.

Opportunities for public art can range from the integration of ideas into streetscape, open space and built form designs to the creation of independent sculptures. Gateways and visual corridor terminations could become prominent public art sites. It is anticipated that the City's Private Developer Percent for Public Art Program will be a major contributor to the improvement of publicly accessible areas, both on private and public lands. Public art policies and guidelines are referenced in the City's Urban Design Handbook.

Photo 63 – Art installation at the Prince Arthur

Photo 62 – Art installation at Bay and Charles Streets

Photo 64 – Art installation at 10 Bellair Street

3.7 STREET CHARACTER TYPES

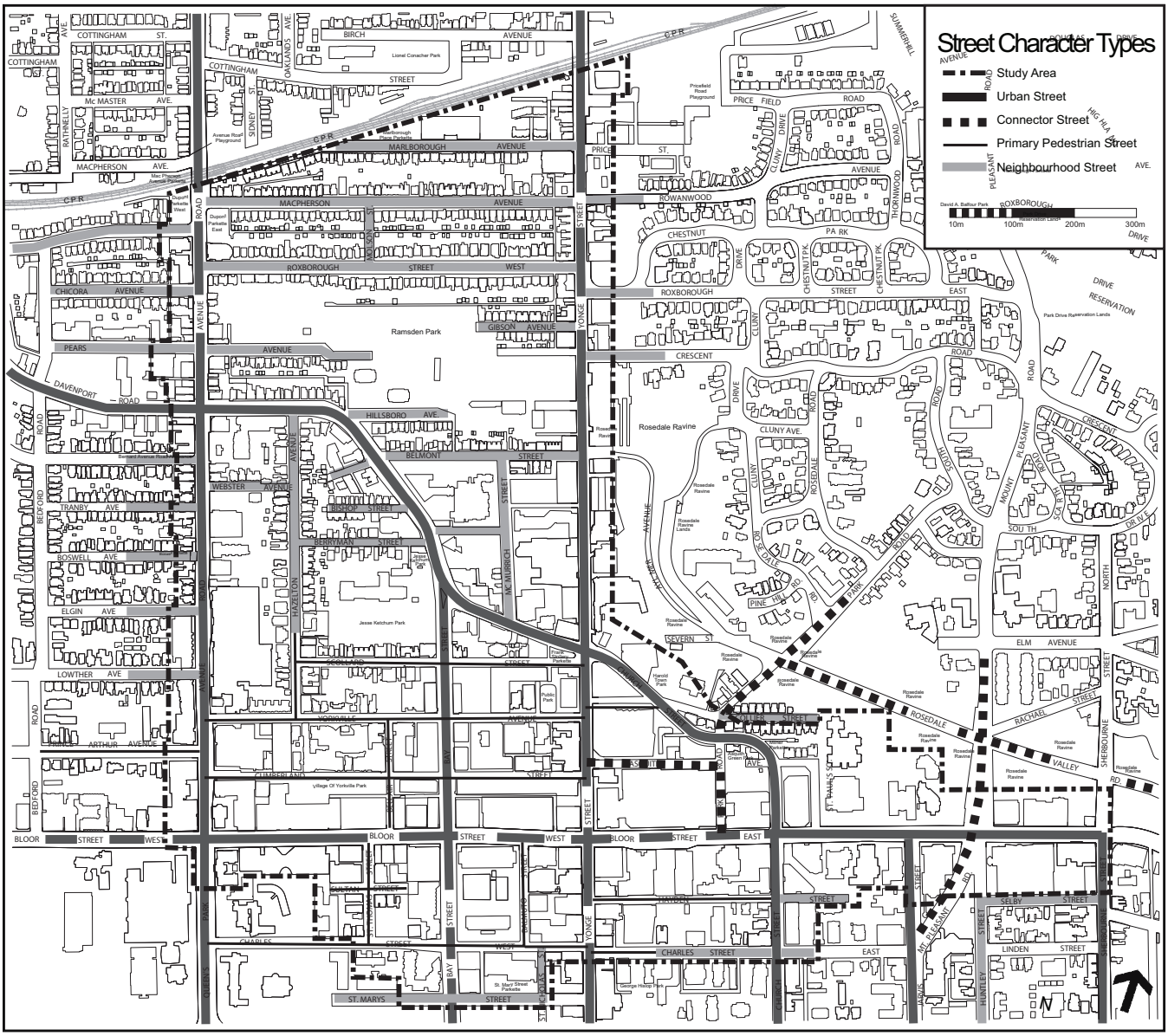
Existing or anticipated patterns of pedestrian and vehicular traffic define the Street Character Types depicted in Figure 12.

Streets that have equally high levels of pedestrian and vehicular traffic are considered to be Urban Streets. Streets that have mostly vehicular traffic are considered to be Connector Streets. Streets dominated by pedestrian traffic are considered Primary Pedestrian Streets.

Neighbourhood Streets are streets which support stable residential neighbourhoods. This classification is intended to define appropriate approaches for built form, depending on the function of the street.

- **Urban Streets**, generally have larger buildings that reflect the broad functional importance of the street. However, the manner in which the buildings interface with the street should be sensitive to the comfort and visual interests of the pedestrian. Architectural treatments should be appropriately scaled to make an impression on people moving in cars as well as walking.

Figure 12: Street Character Types



Entrances should be defined and storefronts should promote visibility to the interior spaces (Photo 65).

- **Connector Streets** have a wide-reaching function for vehicular traffic but are less traveled by pedestrians. Most often, vehicular traffic will be moving at higher speeds than on the other streets (Photo 66). There is a greater onus on the streetscape design and treatment to maintain comfort levels for the pedestrian.
- **Primary Pedestrian Streets** are like Urban Streets in their need to ensure the comfort and visual interest of the pedestrian. However, reinforcement of the human scale, a vibrant street life including sidewalk cafes and 'spill-out' retail activities, and pedestrian priority are pre-eminent considerations (Photo 67).
- **Neighbourhood Streets** support stable residential neighbourhoods and should reinforce the residential scale of the street. Where appropriate, traffic calming measures may be implemented to control the speed of vehicles and discourage through-traffic (Photo 68).

Streetscape improvements in Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown should follow the City of Toronto Streetscape Manual. The Streetscape Manual has identified paving, lighting and street furniture for the area identified as the Bloor-Yorkville Business Improvement Area, as well as other "major" and "special" streets.

Photo 66 – Urban Street: Davenport Road with high speed vehicular traffic and lower pedestrian circulation

Photo 67 – Primary Pedestrian Street: Cumberland Street

Photo 65 – Urban Street: Bloor Street corridor showing "ridge" of high-rise buildings with heavy pedestrian and vehicular circulations

Photo 68 – Neighbourhood Street: Hazelton Avenue

4.0 BUILT FORM GUIDELINES

The identity of this part of the city, and specifically the Yorkville area, is closely linked to its human scale and pleasant walking environment in all seasons.

Urban design for the area should consider the comfort and convenience of the pedestrian as shaped by the streetscape and its interface with the built form. In this regard, built form elements such as height, mass, setbacks, parking and servicing, access, sun penetration, and visual condition at the street are crucial to the pedestrian experience.

The following guidelines propose a hierarchy of built form standards that correspond to three scales: the scale of the Pedestrian, the scale of the Street Wall and the Urban Scale. (Figure 13).

The **Built Form Framework** depicted in Figure 14 is tailored specifically to outline the key broad considerations for the design of built form in the Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area as it relates to each of the public realm scales.

This framework is derived from the following primary concerns:

- Maintaining and enhancing the vitality of the pedestrian environment.

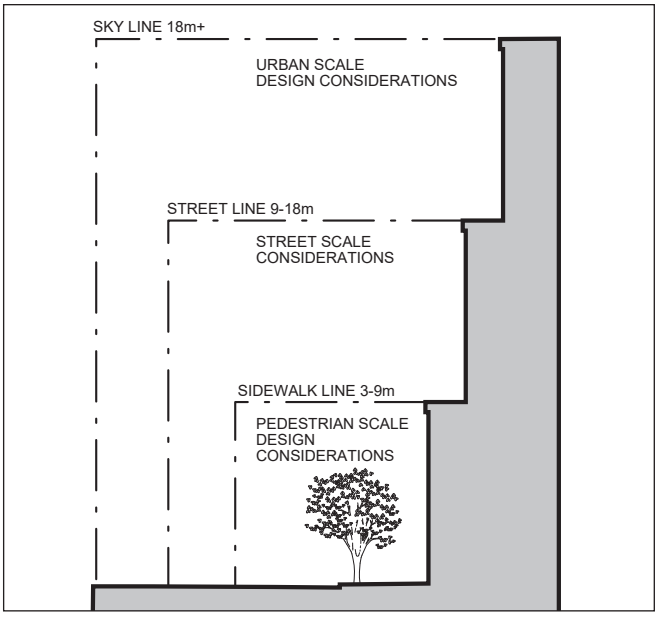


Figure 13: Public Realm Scales (step backs shown are diagramatic to illustrate the different scales)

- Maintaining the pedestrian scaled street wall where it exists.
- Protecting low-rise residential and mixed-use areas from neighbouring higher-rise development.

Animated Street Frontages require the built form to respond to pedestrian traffic in how it interfaces with the sidewalk, provides weather protection, and visual interest. A distinction is made for **Highly Animated Streets** where pedestrian traffic is greatest and the primary use at street level is retail/commercial. Street Character Types (Figure 12) will determine the appropriate built form response on a given street.

Low-Rise at Street Edge requires that the built form be constrained in its height at the street wall to reinforce the pedestrian scale of the existing street wall heights of the surrounding buildings – generally no more than 3 storeys. Where higher storeys are considered, they should be set back a minimum of 3 metres or in accordance with the guidelines provided in Section 4.3.3, whichever is greater.

Character Areas (Figure 12) identify existing unique places in Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown that are comprised of a distinct and identifiable built character that should be protected and enhanced. Where development is considered, the building typology, massing, configuration, scale and proportions, and material pallet of new structures should harmonize with and reinforce the existing built character of these areas, which are described in Section 4.4.

Although the building stock in these Character Areas are not necessarily of historic significance, they correspond to a traditional approach to building massing and proportions, and are highly oriented to the pedestrian scale. High-rise buildings would be inappropriate forms in these areas as they would be detrimental to the spirit and sense of place fundamentally derived from the low-rise and small scale characteristics of the existing buildings.

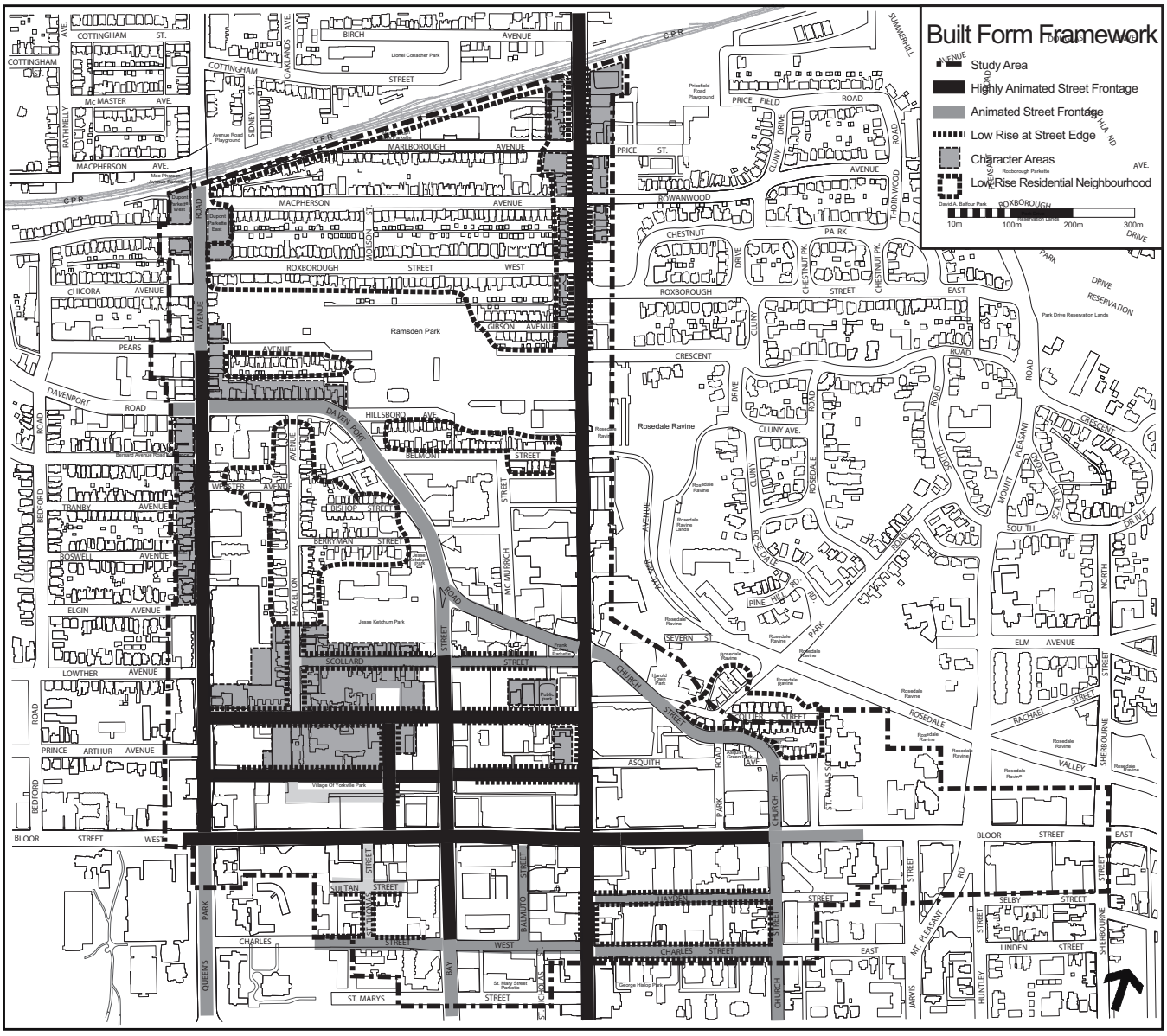
The most significant Character Area is the Village of Yorkville precinct. This precinct consists of a significant number of house-form buildings, as well as a wide variety of other unique building typologies and architectural expressions.

The common traits, which define the built character is low-rise structures, generally 2-3 storeys (6-12 metres) at the street wall (the line of the buildings at

the edge of the sidewalk). In some instances, higher structures up to 6 storeys towards the middle of the block would be permitted away from the street. The massing of the buildings also express a strong and fine grained vertical order and rhythm that generally mimics the original lot lines. The combination of narrow streets, pedestrian lanes and courtyards, narrow retail frontages, irregular setbacks and roof lines, and variety in building materials give this area its unique and cherished "village-like" charm. Properties adjacent to Character Areas on Figure 14 shall have regard for and enhance the area.

Low-Rise Residential Neighbourhoods – These are stable and established low-rise residential areas, particularly sensitive to dramatic change. Development in adjacent areas must ensure no adverse impacts on these residential areas.

Figure 14: Built Form Framework



4.1 PEDESTRIAN SCALE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The pedestrian scale is primarily concerned with a building's interface with the sidewalk, protection from the elements and creating visual interest. These elements affect how the built form supports the comfort of the pedestrian and how it animates the public realm.

4.1.1 INTERFACE WITH THE SIDEWALK

How built form interfaces with the sidewalk will depend primarily on the Street Character Type (Figure 12).

On **Urban Streets**, the built form should engage both the vehicular and the pedestrian traffic. The extension of display windows, transparency to the second floor level, and appropriately scaled signage, all respond well to the significant vehicular function of the street, and support the pedestrian experience. If outdoor cafes are provided, they should be set back, or bounded by landscaping treatment to mitigate noise and reduced air quality from the high levels of vehicular traffic (Photo 69).

Photo 69 – Urban Street – Bloor Street West

Photo 71 – Active Frontages on Primary Pedestrian Street

Photo 70 – Maintain residential character of Hazelton Avenue

Photo 72 – Primary Pedestrian Street with retail

On **Connector Streets**, pedestrian traffic is relatively light, and continuous commercial frontage is plausible. A positive pedestrian experience will rely on the effectiveness of the streetscaping treatment. The built form should incorporate landscaping treatment to enliven otherwise neutral building edges (Photo 66).

On **Primary Pedestrian Streets** that are predominantly commercial, transparency at the sidewalk, as well as awnings and canopies, provide comfort and interest for the pedestrian. Narrower retail frontages are desirable on these streets and signage should be appropriately scaled to the pedestrian (Photos 71, 72).

On **Primary Pedestrian Streets** that are predominantly residential, the animation of the sidewalk is accomplished through the provision for street access housing and landscaping. Street access housing refers to a pattern of buildings which place entrances to individual units on the street level as opposed to one common entrance shared by multiple units. Grade shifts and landscaping will assist to buffer and screen the interior spaces (Figure 15).

On **Neighbourhood Streets**, animation of the street is accomplished through the provision for street access housing with entrances and windows facing the street. Common front yard setbacks and landscaping can be used to separate the public and private realms. Driveways should be minimized, properly landscaped and restricted to one curb-cut per residence (Photo 70).

courtesy Great Gulf Homes

Figure 15: Primary Pedestrian Street with grade-related residential units for Scollard Street

4.1.2 WEATHER PROTECTION

Urban Streets, Primary Pedestrian Streets and exterior mid-block connections carry high volumes of pedestrian traffic through Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown.

In a city with four seasons, protecting pedestrians from the elements should be an important consideration in all new developments. Canopies can offer shade in the summer months and shelter pedestrians from rain, snow and even the wind (Figure 16).

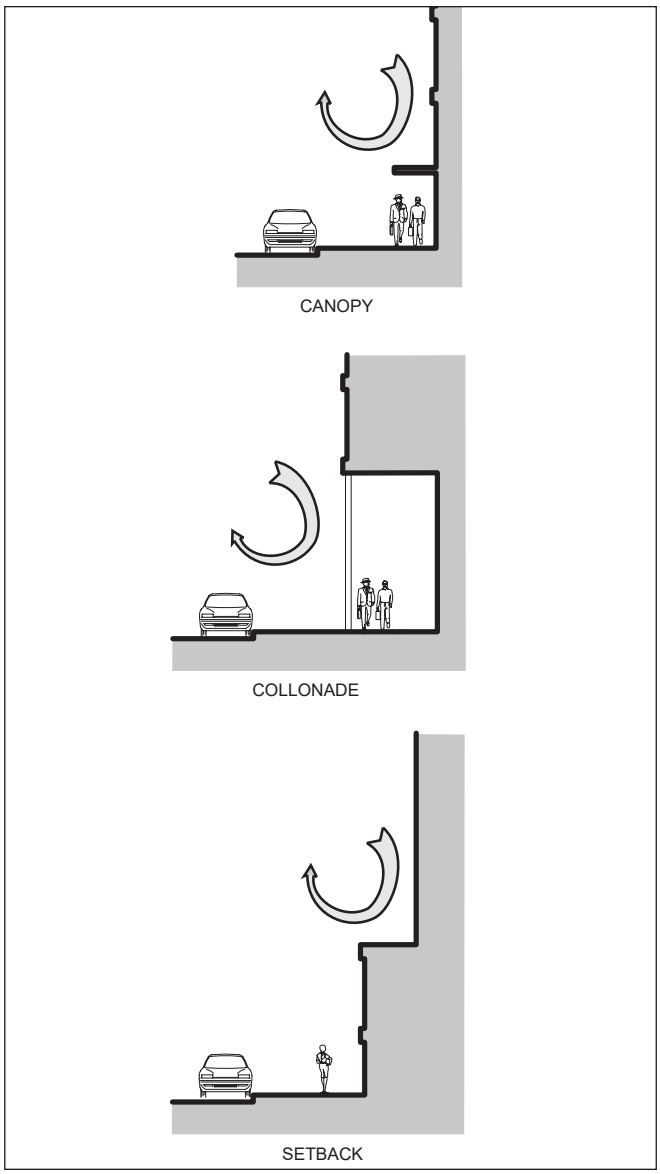


Figure 16: Wind protection for pedestrians

4.1.3 PARKING AND LOADING

Parking and loading areas should be placed below grade where possible. In general, loading and parking areas should be hidden from view, and located on roads with the least amount of pedestrian traffic. Access to parking and loading areas should not be located at gateway sites, or at the terminus of a view corridor unless they are incorporated into the design treatment as demonstrated by the Prince Arthur residence at the west terminus of Yorkville Avenue (Photo 73).

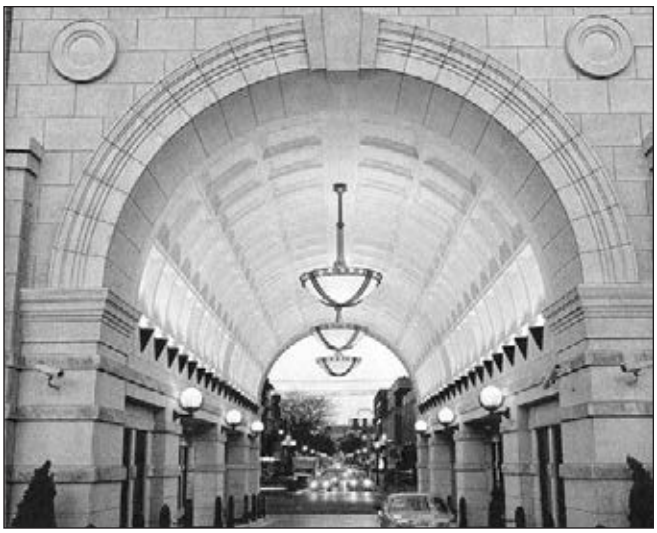


Photo 73 – A highly designed service and parking access at the terminus of Yorkville Avenue

4.1.4 MID-BLOCK CONNECTIONS AND COURTYARDS

Mid-block pedestrian connections and courtyards are one of the urban design factors which contribute to Bloor-Yorkville's success (Photo 74).

This unique quality and network of pedestrian paths and courtyards should be continued as new developments are proposed in the area.

These Urban Design Guidelines have identified a number of potential extensions to the pedestrian network, without precluding additional or alternative locations for this to occur. The provision of publicly accessible, privately developed and owned open spaces is highly encouraged on individual sites throughout the Bloor-Yorkville area.

Photo 74 - York Lane, one of Bloor-Yorkville's most successful mid-block pedestrian connections

4.2 STREET WALL SCALE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The street wall scale is the portion of the public realm that defines and forms the edges to the street. The scale and character of the street wall impacts the pedestrian experience in a fundamental way.

4.2.1 STREET WALL

The street wall is the portion of the building that fronts the street and which has the greatest impact on the image of the street (Photo 75). In general, a street wall of a new building should align with those of the neighbouring buildings or have the same setback as the predominant buildings on the block.

In some instances, the street wall alignment may be compromised in order to achieve a wider, landscaped sidewalk, as would be preferred along Avenue Road, for example.

It is critical that the street wall has the highest quality of architectural design and materials, especially at the ground and second floors, as this portion of the building is the most visible and accessible to pedestrians. It is at the street wall that the quality of the public realm can be most enhanced. The street wall should be designed to ensure pedestrian comfort and adequate light penetration.

Unless subject to height restrictions, angular planes, or other urban design considerations in these guidelines, street wall heights should, in general, not exceed a 1:1 relation of height to street width (building wall to building wall). Therefore, on a typical 20-metre right-of-way street, the maximum street wall height would be 20 metres (Figure 17).

Photo 75 – Masonic Temple Building serves as a visual terminus for westbound vehicles on Davenport Road

While materials and architecture can vary greatly between buildings, it is generally desirable that the street wall height be a consistent line. Above grade setbacks are generally recommended to strengthen the quality of the pedestrian experience (Figure 17).

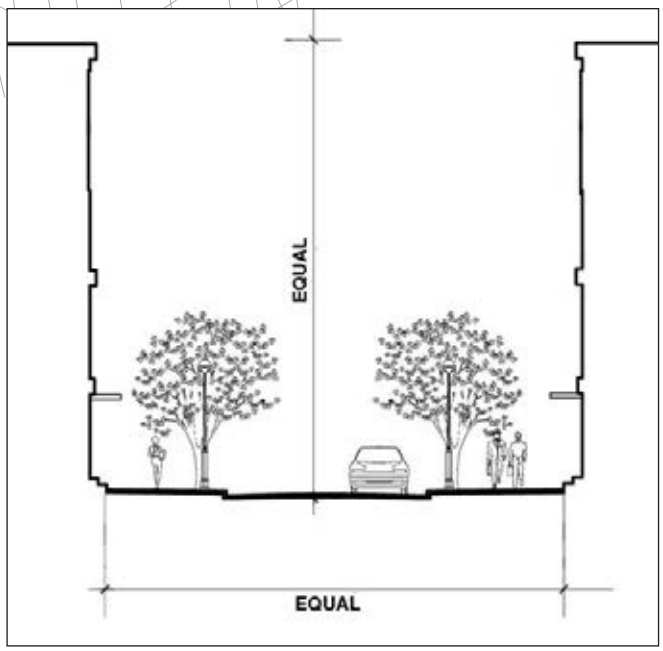


Figure 17: Typical street cross-section showing a 1:1 relationship between street wall height and right-of-way (ROW) width

4.2.2 STRATEGIC SITES

Figures 18, 19, 20 and 21 illustrate diagramatic examples of sites that warrant special design treatment because of their location and visibility. These sites have a tremendous potential to strengthen an area's identity and improve the quality of the public realm.

The treatment of a strategic site does not correspond to building height. The programming of the building, the treatment of the architecture, materials, and built form should reinforce their location as either a gateway, visual terminus, major intersection, or combination.

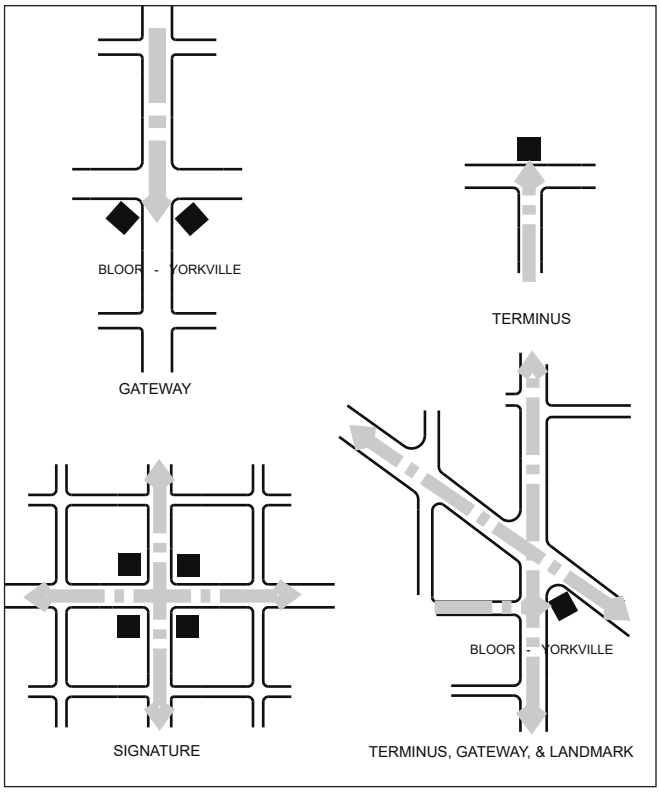
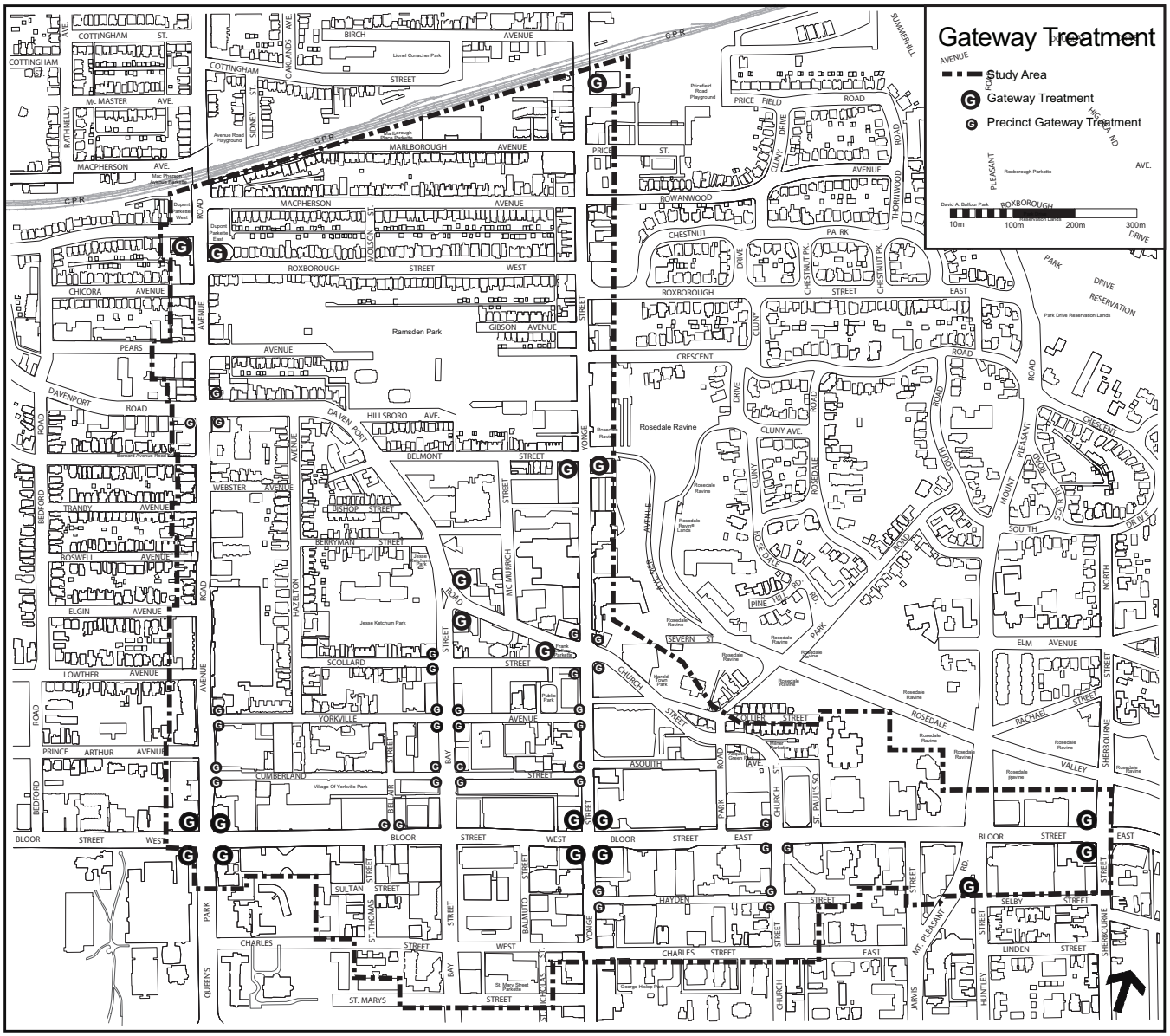


Figure 18: Types of Strategic Sites

Gateway Treatment: Figure 19 identifies sites that offer an opportunity to provide a sense of entry into the Bloor-Yorkville precincts and which can be expressed architecturally, or through lighting, signage (excluding advertising) or art installations.

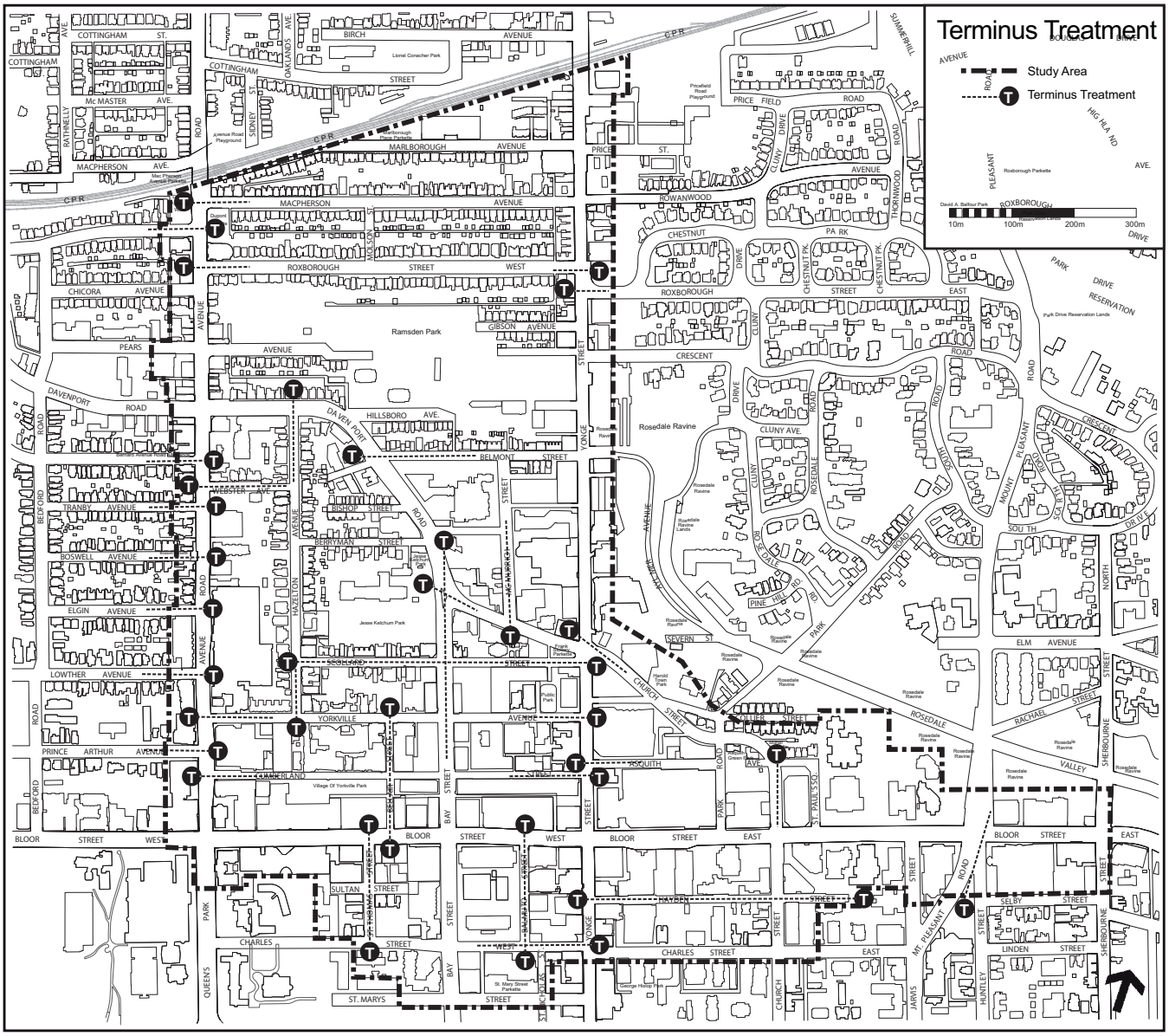
Figure 19: Gateway Treatment Sites



Terminus Treatment: Figure 20 identifies sites that terminate a view corridor and have strategic locations for public or commercial uses. They also offer an opportunity to create visual interest from greater distances and if designed with distinction, can act as effective orienting devices where prople can gauge their relative location in the district or city. Treatments can include architectural elements, monuments, and art installations. Hence, terminus sites are especially appropriate for highly animated commercial uses and public buildings.

Photo 76 – Terminus Treatment at west end of Yorkville Avenue: Prince Arthur Residence

Figure 20: Terminus Treatment Sites



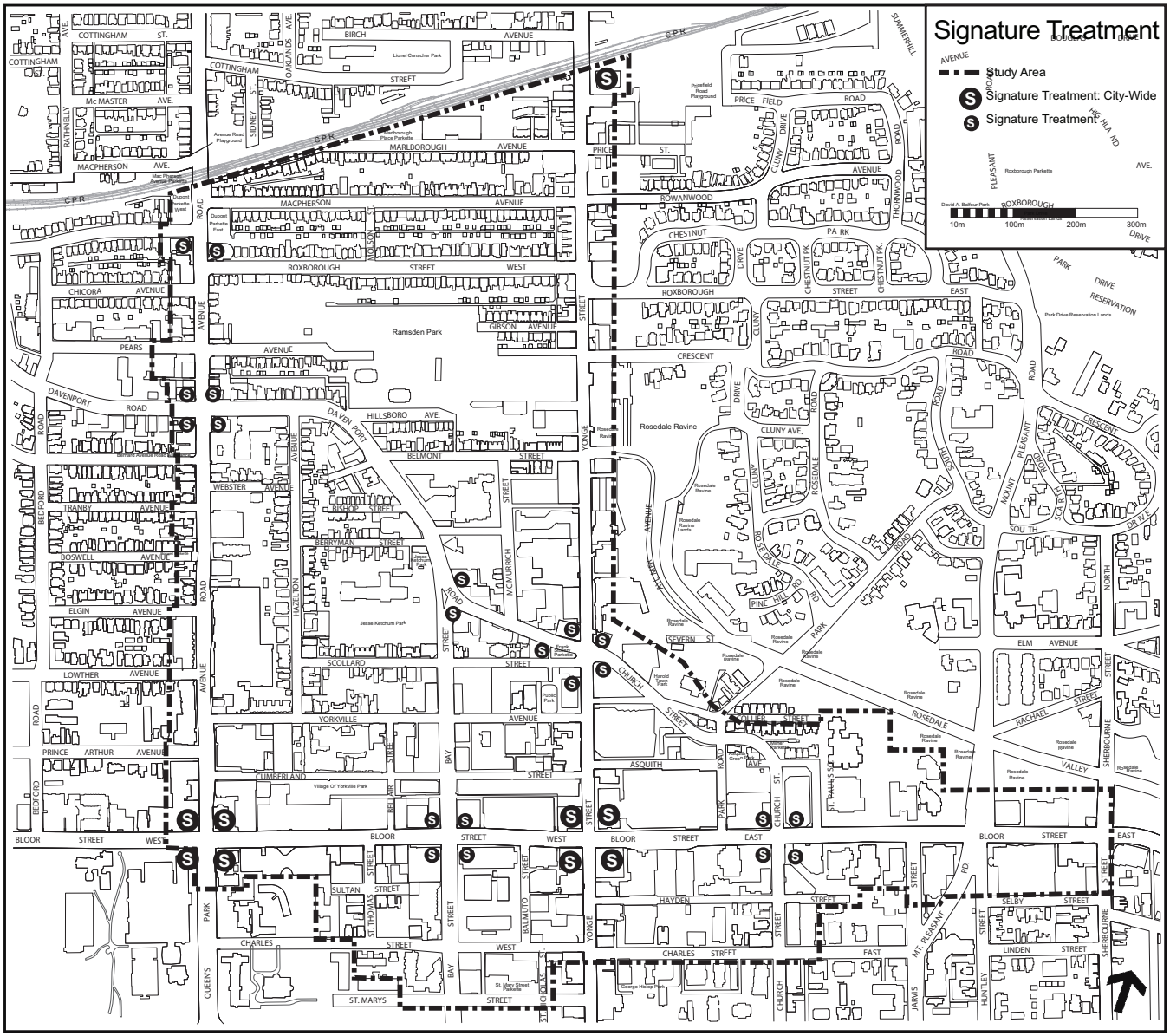
Terminus treatment sites should not be considered the singular justification for additional height.

Signature Treatment: Figure 21 identifies sites that are at highly visible intersections and/or occupy sites of significance to the city (Yonge and Bloor intersection).

These sites offer an opportunity for landmark buildings that should be unique and immediately identifiable.

Photo 77 – Signature Treatment at Avenue Road and Bloor Street

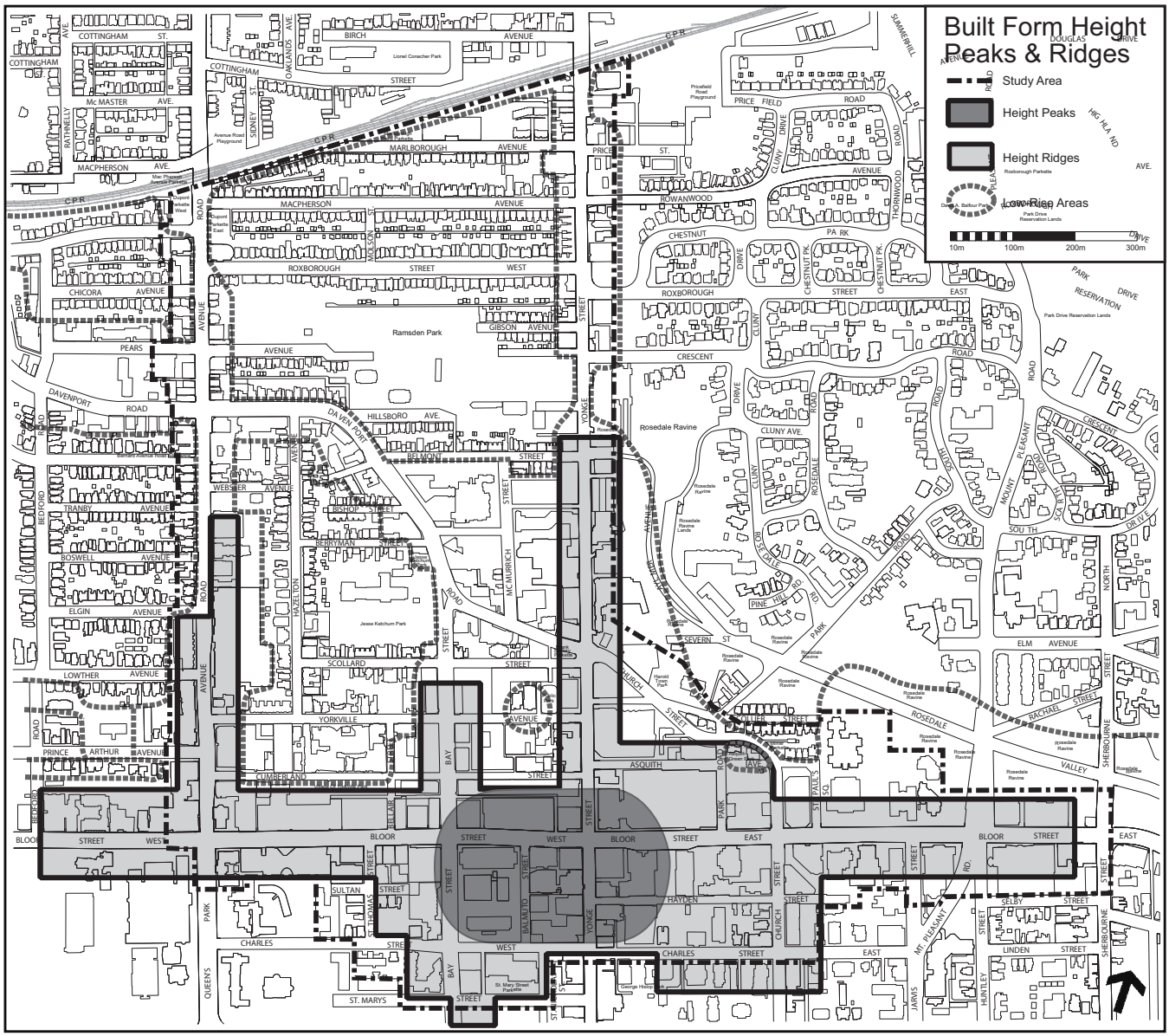
Figure 21: Signature Treatment Sites



4.3 URBAN SCALE DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

The urban scale defines the segments of buildings perceived from greater distances. Urban design considerations are primarily concerned with issues of massing and height. These issues affect how a building fits into its surroundings, how it is perceived from the street or on the skyline. The massing, profile and height of the upper portions of the building should satisfy the following design criteria.

Figure 22: General Pattern of Building Heights



4.3.1 BUILDING HEIGHTS

As Figures 23 and 24 depict, existing or approved building heights in the Bloor-Yorkville area generally follow a logical pattern that has a "peak" around the Yonge/Bloor intersection and descending "ridges" along the main corridors of Yonge Street, Bloor Street and portions north of Bloor, portions of Bay Street, Church Street and Avenue Road.

Figure 23 – 3-D view of built form looking northeast which shows height peaks and ridges

Figure 24 – 3-D view of built form looking southeast which shows height peaks and ridges

This pattern parallels the existing and desired urban structure for the wider city where greater heights and intensities are directed to areas where they already exist or along major road and transit corridors. The remaining areas generally have buildings that are of a lesser height and density. Established low-rise pockets are equally important built form patterns within the Downtown areas that should be protected from the encroachment of high-rises that may have adverse impacts such as shadowing and wind.

This existing pattern of building heights is desirable and effective in that there is a transition in the height of buildings down to low-rise areas (Figure 22). This lessens the impact of height on these areas both physically and perceptively. To maintain and reinforce this pattern, the heights of new buildings are subject to the following principles:

Height Peak: This area is where buildings reach a pinnacle height providing a landmark at the intersection of the City's two principal streets and contributes to its skyline. This is the appropriate location for the tallest buildings in Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown.

Height Ridges: In these areas buildings should step down in height from the Peak area (Photo 79).

Low-Rise Area: These areas are significant, established, contiguous low-rise areas. High-rise towers are inappropriate in these locations as they may have significant adverse impacts and would pose a threat to the viability of the area remaining as low-rise.

4.3.2 SHADOWS AND PEDESTRIAN COMFORT

Residential areas and the public realm must be protected from undue overshadowing by proposed buildings.

In order to minimize the adverse impact of proposed buildings on the neighbouring areas, applicants of projects which have a height above the existing context should provide drawings showing shadows cast by the proposed development on publicly accessible areas and on buildings surrounding it. Shadows should be shown for December 21, June 21, March and September 21 for the hours of 10 am, 11am, noon, 2pm and 4pm. Shadow drawings are to be provided early in the development review process. Shadow studies for additional times may be required when warranted.

Photo 78 – Taller buildings along the Bloor Street corridor should have step backs to minimize their negative impact on the Village of Yorkville

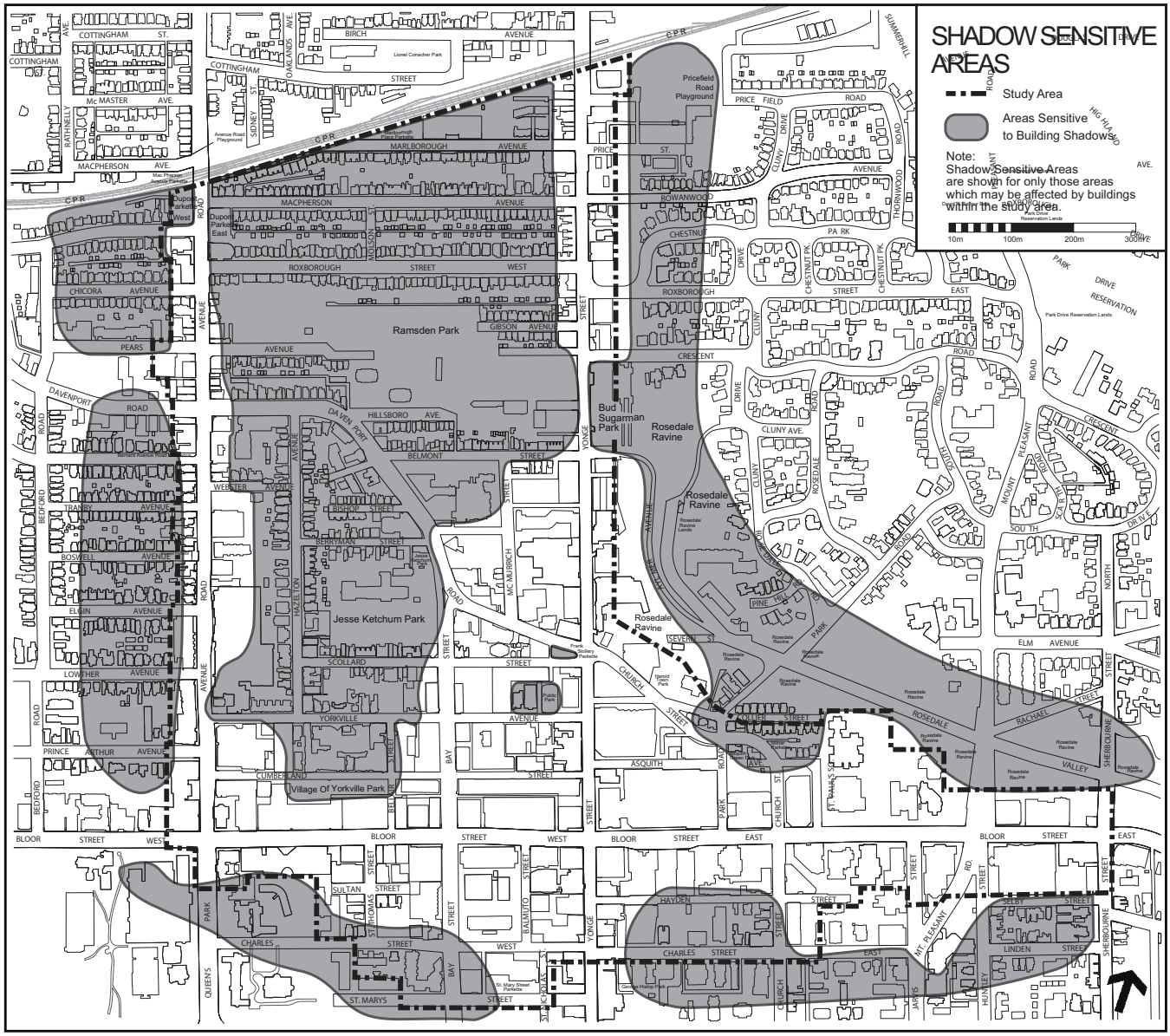
Photo 79 – Avenue Road 'height ridge'

Shadow sensitive areas, and neighbourhoods in Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown are shown in Figure 25.

In order to minimize the adverse impact of a proposed building on the pedestrian level surrounding the building and in the neighbouring areas, applicants of projects in excess of 20 metres (6 storeys) in height should provide a pedestrian level wind study of the proposed development early in the review process.

The study is to be conducted by a qualified micro-climate specialist in accordance with the City of Toronto Development Guide.

Figure 25: Areas Sensitive to Building Shadows

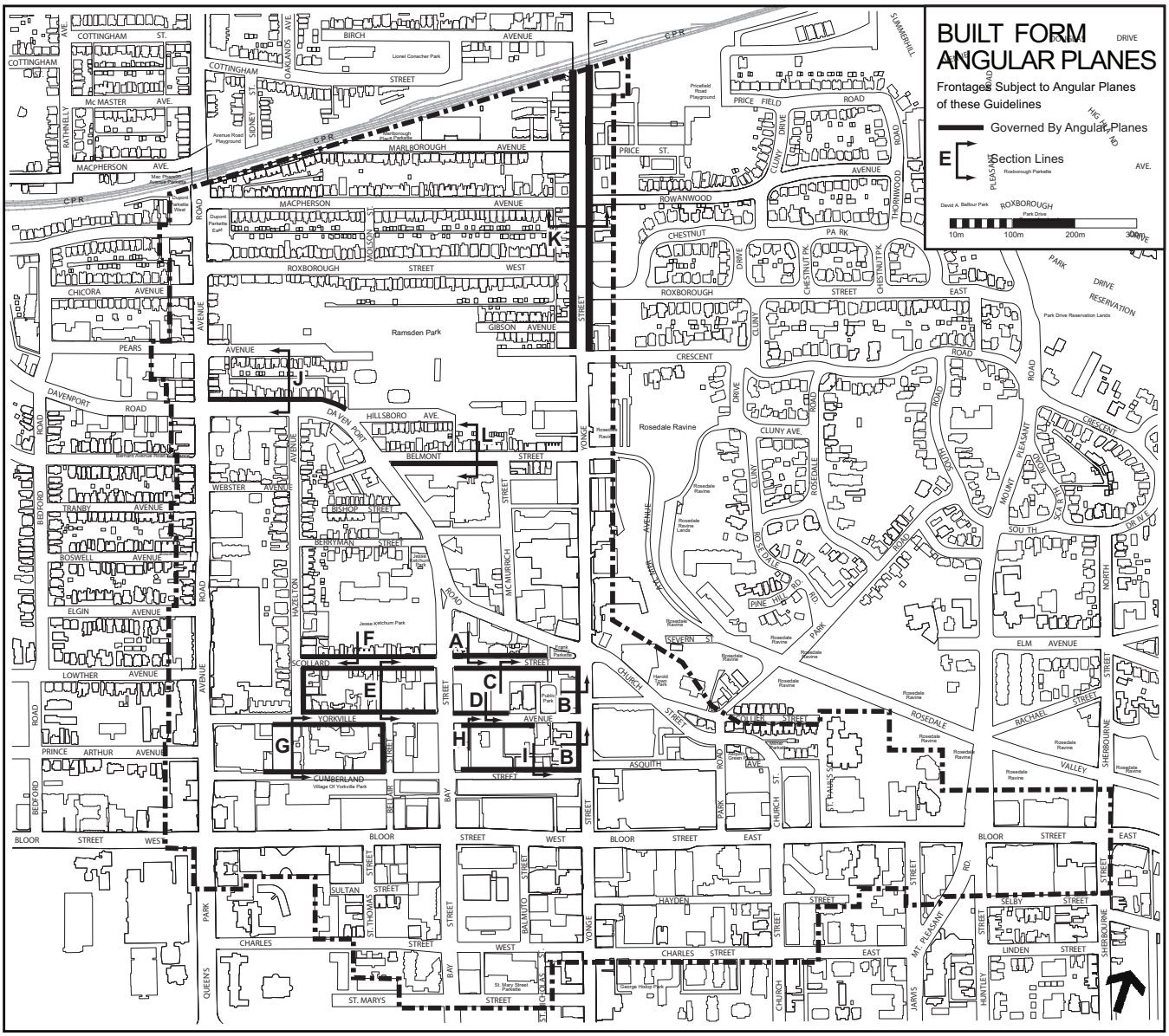


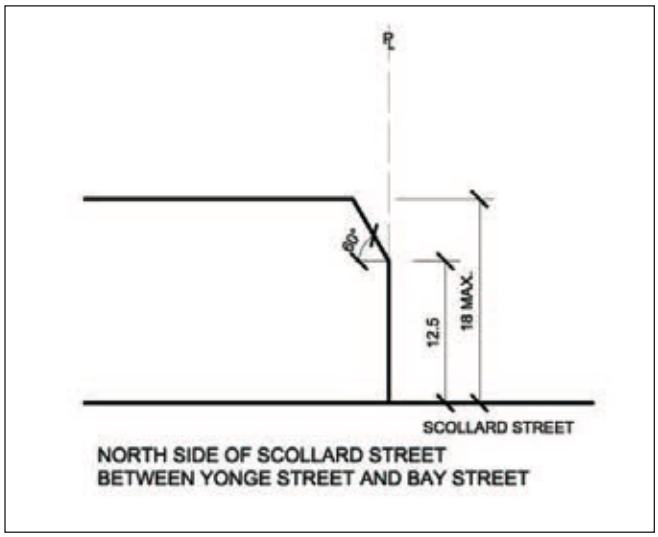
4.3.3 BUILT FORM ANGULAR PLANES

The built form angular plane criteria applies to frontages identified in Figure 26.

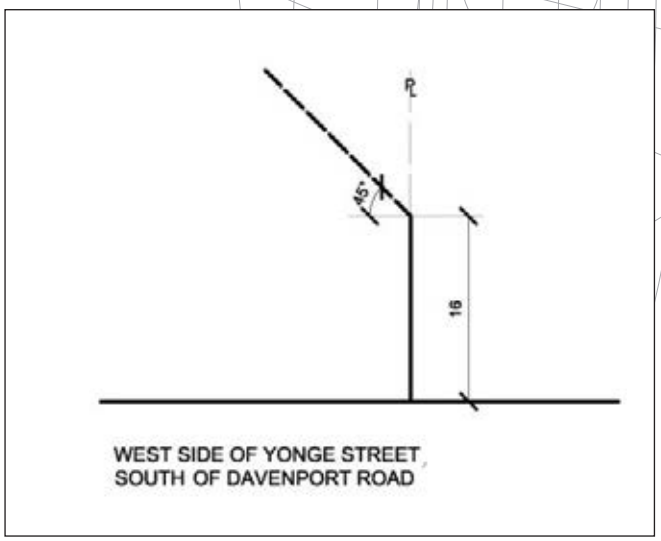
Angular planes provide build-to envelopes to maintain and define the character of the street; ensure adequate access to sun and sky view; and to govern relationships between adjacent differing built forms. Frontages currently subject to angular planes generally reflect Areas of Special Identity and some character areas indentified in these guidelines. This is of particular importance in the Village of Yorkville where part of the European charm comes from the pedestrian experience through a series of finely scaled streets and public spaces. Additional angular planes may be identified and recommended following a proposed review of the Zoning By-law.

Figure 26: Built Form Angular Planes

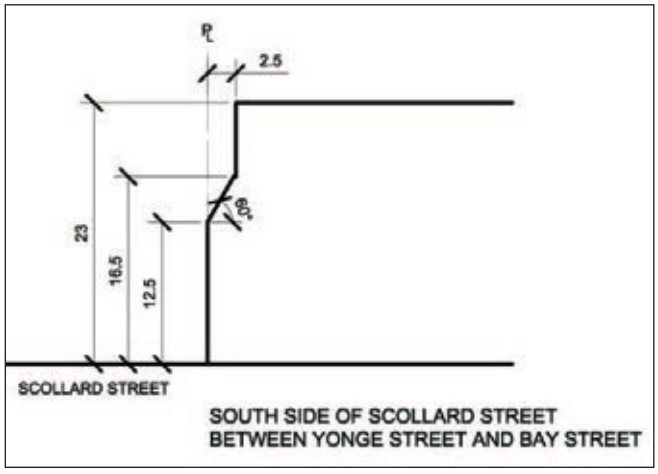




Section A:



Section B:



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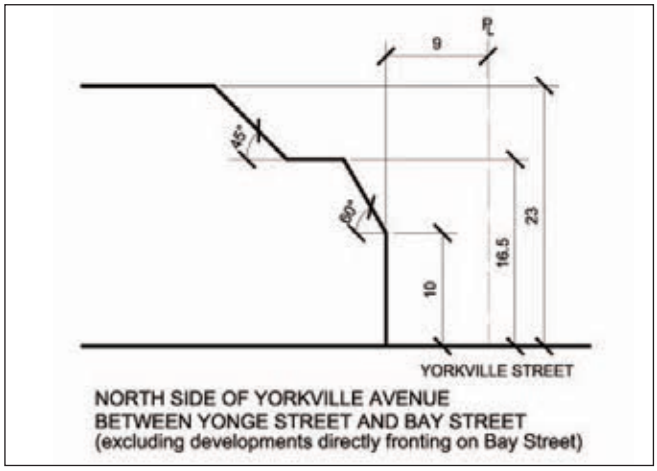

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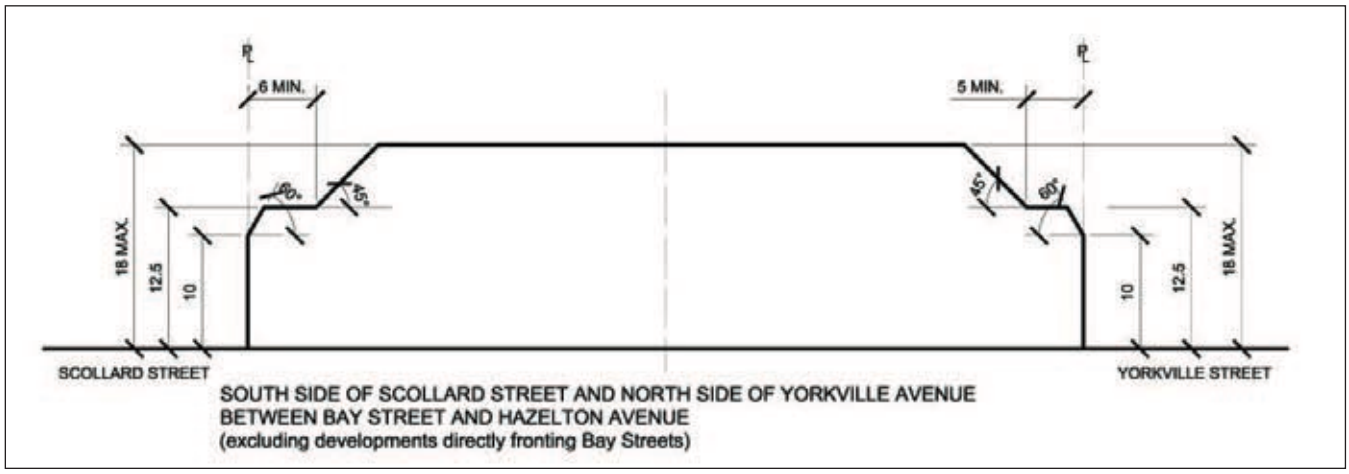

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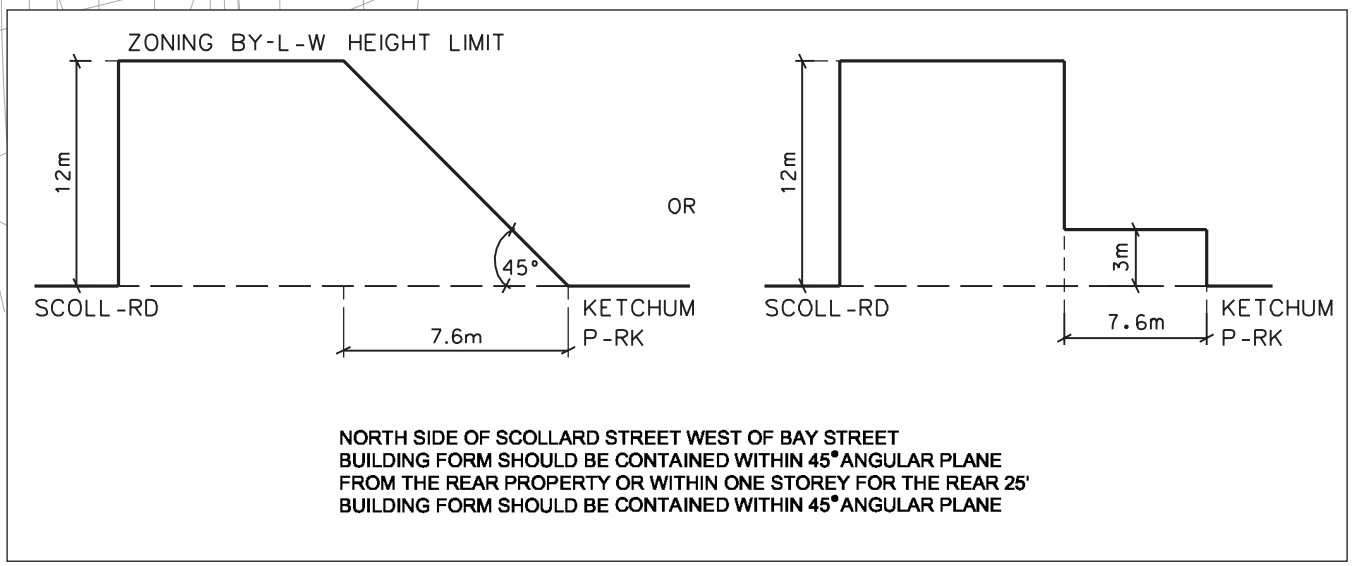

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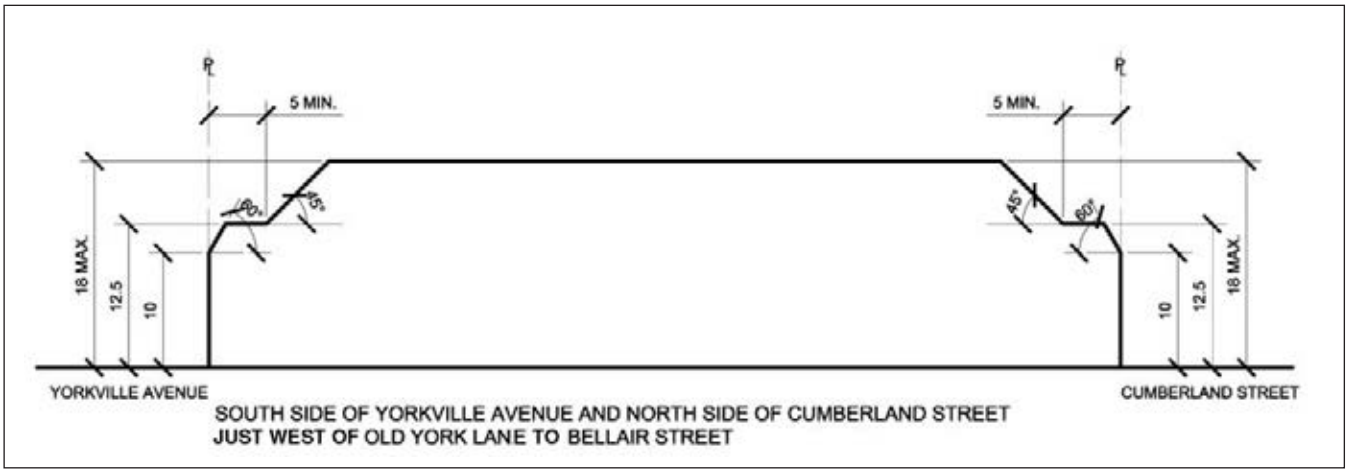
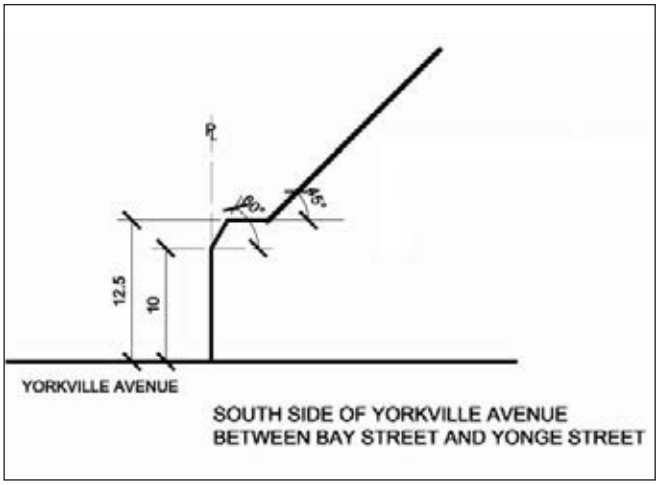
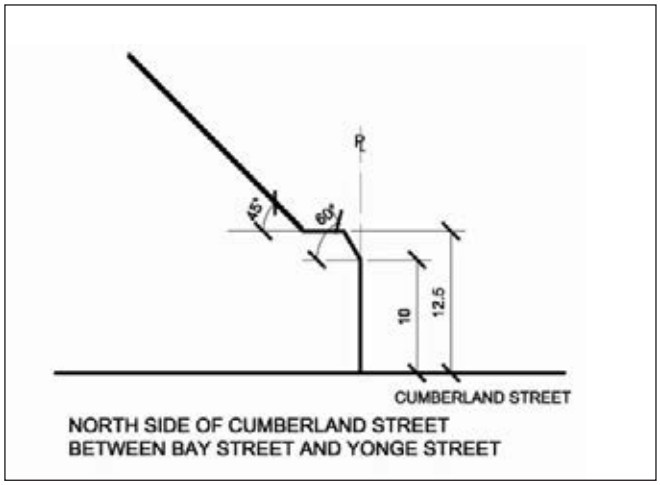


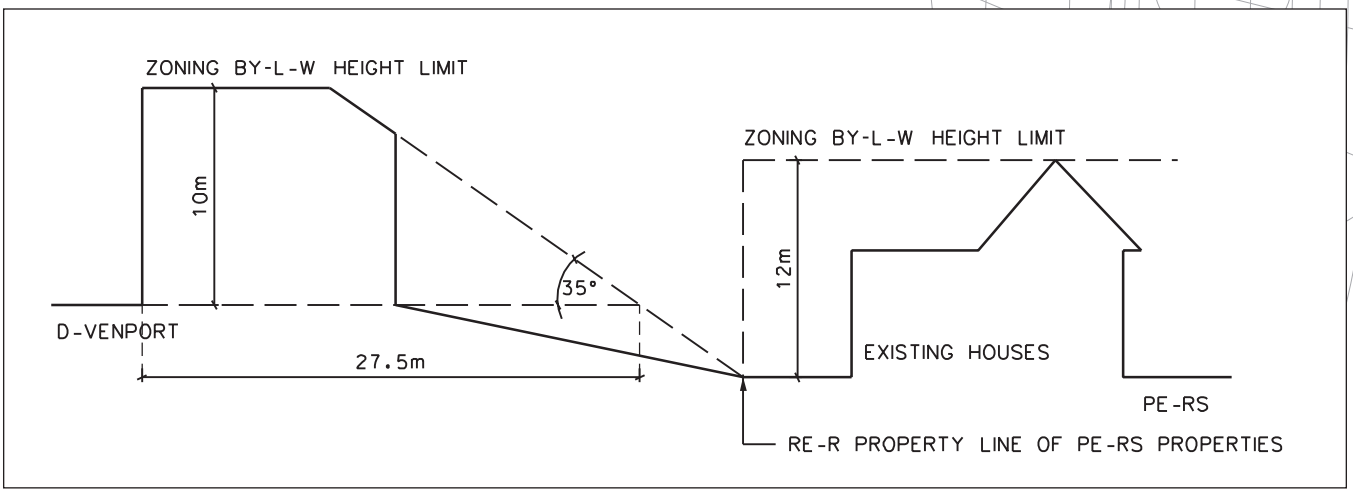
Section G:



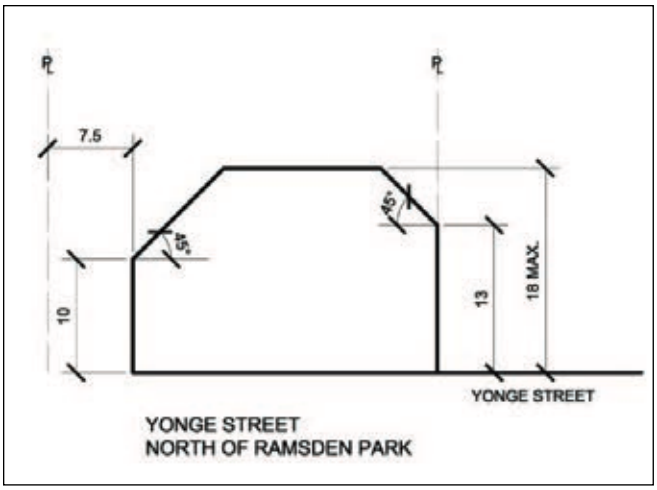
Section H: South side of Yorkville Avenue



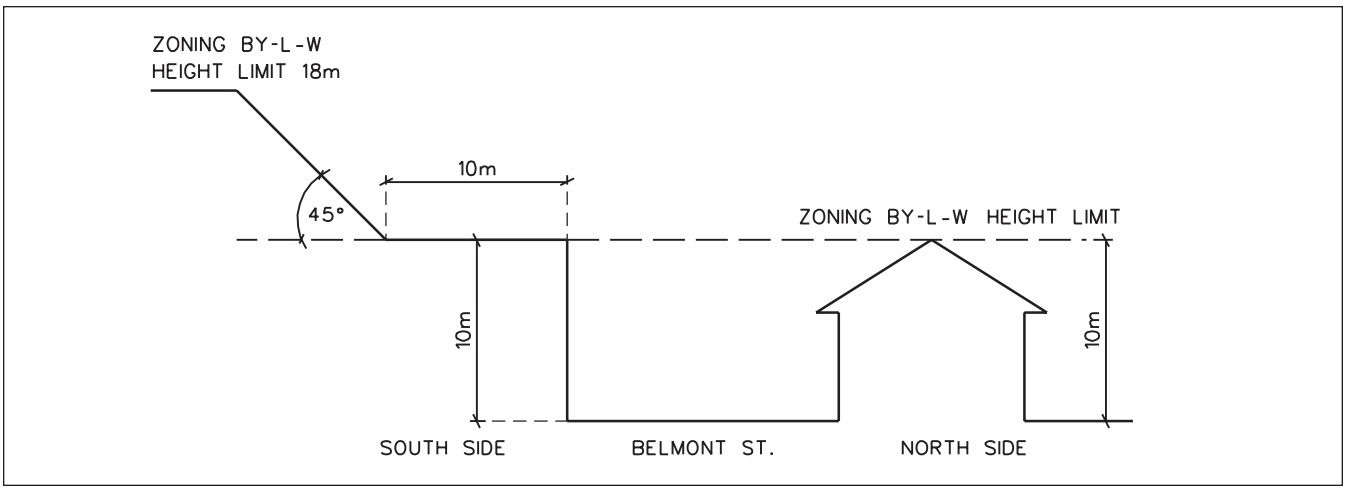
Section I: North side of Cumberland Street



Section J: Davenport Terrace—Pears Avenue



Section K: Yonge Street, north of Ramsden Park



Section L: Belmont Street

4.3.4 HIGH-RISE BUILT FORM DESIGN CRITERIA

Point towers are generally the preferred form for high-rise building, in areas which can accommodate them, because they have a reduced negative impact on the streetscape. The shadow and visual impact is relatively less of an issue and in some cases point towers may be a preferred form to larger massed slab buildings. The following design criteria should be applied to point tower proposals:

Podium
Point towers should be placed on a podium building which represents the scale of the street wall, generally 3-6 storeys.

Massing
The tower (the portions of the building above the podium structure) should maintain an average gross floor plate size that is slender to permit adequate sky view and minimize shadow impacts.

Tower Widths and Setbacks
The width of the point tower that fronts on a street should also be slender to permit adequate sun penetration onto the public realm.

Placement and Orientation
Where possible and appropriate, the placement of the point tower should be staggered from adjacent towers. The minimum separation between point towers should have a 1:1:1 relationship between floor plate size and distance between buildings. On dense urban sites, such as can be found in the Yonge/Bloor height peak, a minimum separation distance of 15 metres above the street wall must be achieved.

Slab Buildings
Slab buildings may be permitted within the height ridges of Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown. Where permitted, these buildings should also be set back from a consistent street wall/podium. Slab widths should also be limited to permit adequate sun penetration onto the public realm.

Figure 27: Demonstration sketch showing point tower placement with six-storey street wall along Bay Street and three-storey street wall along Yorkville Avenue.

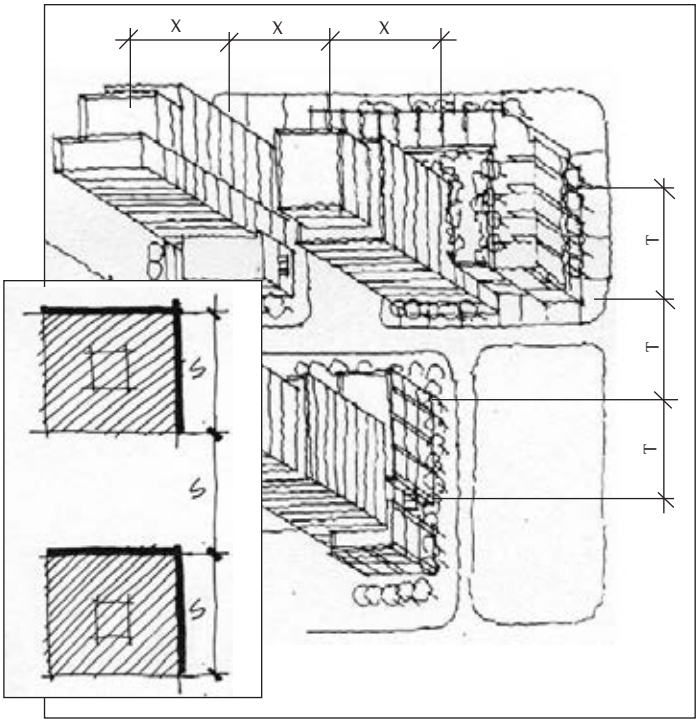


Figure 28: Minimum tower spacing should follow a 1:1:1 relationship between floor plate size and distance between buildings

4.4 DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURAL QUALITY

The Bloor-Yorkville/North Midtown area has a history of well-designed buildings representing almost every architectural era in Canadian history. New developments should be mindful of ensuring excellence in design and in the use of high-grade materials, particularly at the street level.

The design and architectural quality of a new development may be measured according to some of the following principles:

Composition
New developments should clearly express a base at the street level, the main body of the building, and a roof form. This may be achieved through various means including setbacks, extrusions, textures and materials (Photo 80). The composition of the building must be respective of its context.

Building Entrances
The sense of arrival to a building should be celebrated through the design and detailing of its entrance. Canopies extending towards the street providing weather protection may be provided to pronounce building entrances (Photo 81).

Mechanical Penthouses
Vents, mechanical equipment rooms and elevator penthouses should be integrated with the architectural treatment of roofs and screened from view. To create greater interest in the skyline, higher buildings should introduce articulation in the upper floors and this can be achieved through the use of terracing and/or architectural elements like projecting roof lines, trellises or vertical elements (Photo 82).

Photo 80 – Clear architectural language to distinguish the base from the building body through articulation and change in colours and materials

Photo 81 – Example of improved building entrance to provide a sense of arrival

Photo 82 – Roof top mechanical is concealed by architectural features

Safety and Security
Residential developments and unit designs should be safe and secure from on-street access. Public and semi-private outdoor spaces should have some degree of overlook from the residential units and good visibility from the street. Landscaping should be illuminated to enhance security (Photo 87).

Roof Top Gardens
Roofs and terraces should be usable for private and communal outdoor patios, decks, and gardens. Green roofs are encouraged as a means of retaining storm water, improving air quality and to add visual interest (Photo 88).

Signage
For residential buildings, signage should be closely related to the principal building entrance and generally placed in a low wall element. Commercial signage should add diversity and interest to retail streets, but not be overwhelming. Signage guidelines should be developed tailored to specific precincts and their character. In general, the following signage types are discouraged: backlit sign boxes, billboards, revolving signs, video screens, and roof signs. Illuminated signs and lighting from commercial or public spaces should not shine directly into windows of residential homes or units.

Compatibility with Historical Contexts of Village of Yorkville and Yonge-Yorkville
Fitting contemporary architectural styles within more historical contexts should be achieved through compatible building proportions, replicating rhythms of vertical and horizontal lines and through the use of similar materials and colourings (Photo 83).

(i) Scale
Street facades should reflect the traditional height of earlier buildings (2-3 storeys in height) (Photo 84). Each part of the facade should express a unit of frontage similar to that established by the original survey for lots in the area. The setback of the facade from the front property line and additional setbacks in the upper storeys of new buildings will reflect the appearance achieved in the scale of original house-form buildings where this effect was traditionally accomplished by the use of pitched roof lines and gable details at the street facade.

Photo 83 – Compatability with historical contexts achieved through building proportions and replicating rhythms of vertical and horizontal lines

Photo 84 – Street facades should reflect the traditional height of earlier buildings

Photo 85 – Expressive forms

Photo 86 – Rich architectural detailing and good quality materials enrich the pedestrian experience

Photo 87 – Privacy for street accessed units

Photo 88 – Roof top garden

(ii) Proportion

The characteristics and expression of scale in a building are most evident in the proportions of window and door openings. Generally in the Yorkville area, such openings are proportionally vertical and have a rough ratio of being twice as high as they are wide. Furthermore, the ratio of area of such openings to the solid wall area of a building facade should also address the traditional pattern found in earlier Yorkville buildings where the openings are generally the less dominant feature (Photo 85).

(iii) Materials

The use of a variety of traditional materials historically used in the area will identify the building fabric with its location providing a "sense of place" within the area (Photo 86). Brick masonry with stonework features, have been traditionally used in the Yorkville Avenue context. Other materials such a limestone, granite and glass have also been used successfully in Yorkville. The use of concrete as a cladding material should be discouraged as it is out of character with the area.

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Urban Development Services Communications Section