

King|Parliament

SECONDARY PLAN REVIEW

HERITAGE



 **Toronto**

TOcore

THE KING-PARLIAMENT CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

City Planning is conducting a Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (CHRA) as part of the King-Parliament Secondary Plan Review. City Planning undertakes a CHRA to document an area's development history and to ensure that properties of cultural heritage value or interest are appropriately identified, understood and conserved. This information helps City Planning respond to growth while accounting for the cultural heritage value that adds character to our neighbourhoods.

The King-Parliament CHRA is studying those areas of the King-Parliament area, as well as the north side of Queen Street East that have not yet been evaluated for their heritage resources. The CHRA therefore excludes the areas included in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District Plan, the Distillery District Heritage Conservation District Study, and the West Don Lands Precinct Plan.

HOW ARE PROPERTIES EVALUATED THROUGH A CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE ASSESSMENT?

A CHRA applies provincial criteria as required in the City of Toronto's Official Plan to evaluate properties within a defined area for their cultural heritage value or interest. The approach taken through CHRAs prioritizes an understanding of the historic context of an area, and how properties relate to and support that context. Where information is readily available, consideration of design or the unique history of a particular property may also be identified.

The King-Parliament CHRA, in particular, is piloting a more extensive use of Historic Context Statements in conjunction with the City-wide Heritage Survey Feasibility Study. It builds on an approach demonstrated by SurveyLA, a city-wide survey recently completed in Los Angeles, which divided properties into four main typologies (Industrial, Commercial, Residential, and Institutional) and which evaluated properties within those typologies based on their relation to particular

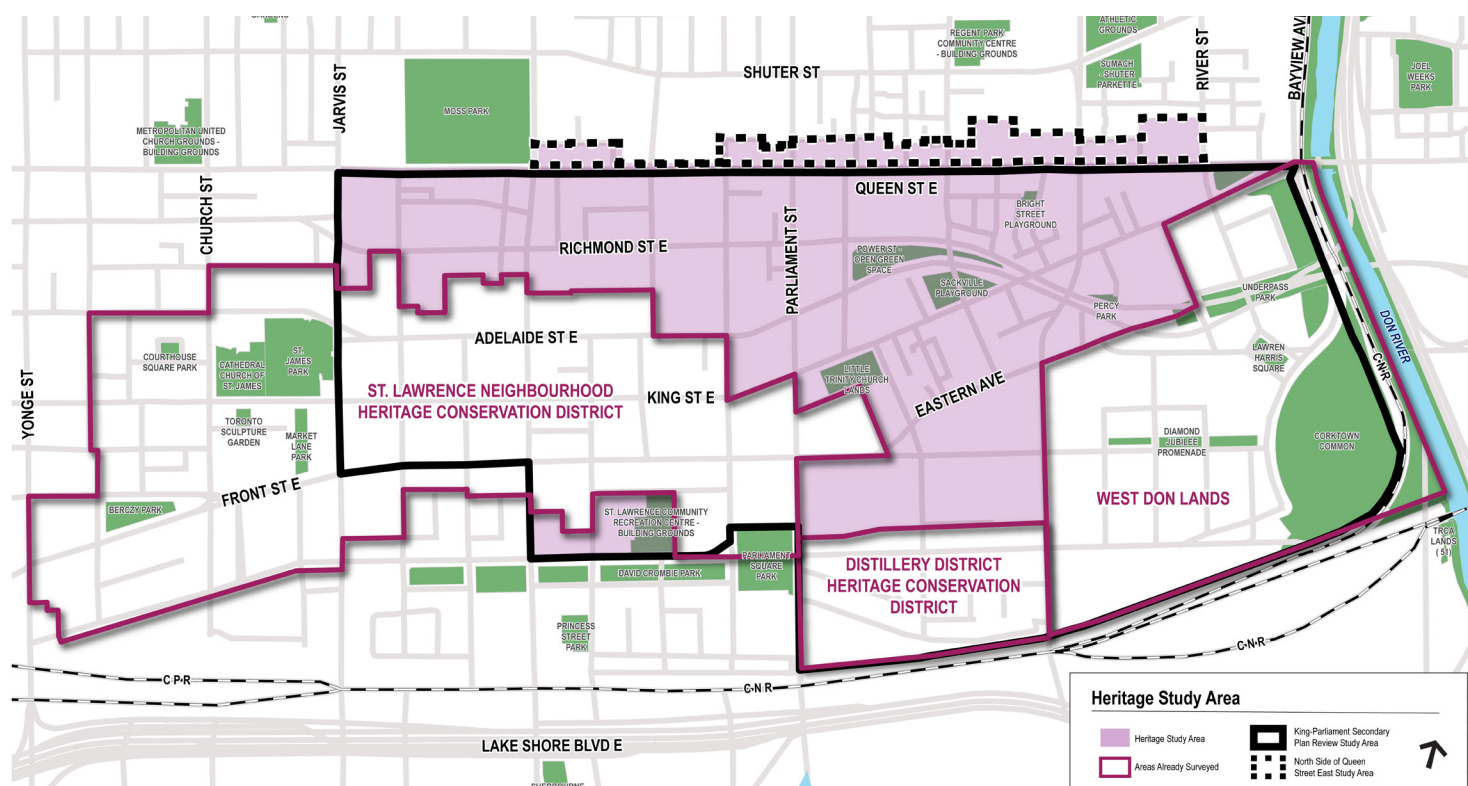


Figure 1. The King-Parliament CHRA will survey only those areas which have never before been comprehensively evaluated through a heritage survey.

historical themes and periods of development within a geographic area. Historic Context Statements differ from other types of historical overviews in that they are meant to help establish why a particular place looks the way it does today, and what buildings and places within it may be considered historically or architecturally significant in supporting its context.

A Historic Context Statement has been prepared for the King-Parliament area, and is included in full below. As an example of how it can be applied in property evaluation, it indicates that industrial structures built between 1850 and 1945 will have greater potential cultural heritage value than those built after 1945, when industry went into decline in this area, and when new industrial buildings were largely built elsewhere in the City. The Historic Context Statement also indicates that residential properties were constructed in this area in the period between 1850 and 1914, and that residential construction in this area was largely prevented by policy from the 1950s through the 1970s. Of the residential properties that remain, greater potential cultural heritage value will be assigned to working class row-housing dating from 1850 to 1914, given its predominance and the importance of this area as a historic working class neighbourhood.

The following chart summarizes potential contextual significance by historical period in the King-Parliament area. Note that properties within these typologies and periods may not have cultural heritage value if they have lost integrity, or if they are no longer supported by other nearby properties from the same historical period.

HISTORICAL PERIOD	RESIDENTIAL	INDUSTRIAL	INSTITUTIONAL	COMMERCIAL
Early Toronto (1793-1850)				
Urban and Industrial Expansion (1850-1915)				
Interwar Stability (1915-1945)				
Industrial Decline and Post-war Urban Renewal (1945-1970)				
Residential and Mixed-use Renewal (1970-Present)				

Public consultation is an important part of the CHRA process. In the fall of 2018, staff initiated a Heritage Focus Group, comprised of local history experts and representatives of resident associations and Business Improvement Areas within the King-Parliament area, to help shape an understanding of the historical context of the area and to inform the identification of properties with cultural heritage value. A resulting understanding of the development of the area by historical period was made available at an Open House on January 31, 2019, and further input from the public was received.

HOW WILL THE RESULTS OF THE CHRA BE USED?

The CHRA will result in a list of properties that are considered to have potential cultural heritage value. That list will be used to inform planning policies and guidelines which can help conserve those properties and their contribution to the character of an area. Properties identified as having potential cultural heritage value may also be further evaluated and recommended by City Planning to City Council for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register. The Heritage Register is a publicly accessible, Council adopted register of properties that have been evaluated and determined to have cultural heritage value. The Heritage Register includes properties that are listed (non-designated), and properties that have been designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE KING-PARLIAMENT SECONDARY PLAN AREA

Introduction

The King-Parliament area includes significant parts of Toronto's oldest neighbourhoods and commercial and industrial areas. Within its boundaries are built, landscape and potential archaeological resources that reflect the long evolution of the area, from ancient Indigenous habitation through the late 18th century founding of the Town of York, to the present day.

The contemporary road network and built form of the area reflects its evolution from a primarily residential and commercial area in the first half of the 19th century, to a commercial and industrial area with pockets of working class housing by the end of the 20th century. Potential built cultural heritage resources in the area can be related to five key periods:

1. Early Toronto (1793-1850)
2. Urban and Industrial Expansion (1850-1915)
3. Interwar Stability (1915-1945)
4. Industrial Decline and Post-war Urban Renewal (1945-1970)
5. Residential and Mixed-use Renewal (1970-Present)

Indigenous Toronto (Pre-1793)

The land within the boundaries of the City of Toronto, and the King-Parliament area within it, has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples for millennia. Small groups of Indigenous peoples once moved across this land, hunting and gathering the food they needed according to the seasons. Approximately 1,500 years ago, maize (corn) was introduced to what is now Southern Ontario. As it became an important food source, it shaped the way of life of those who farmed it. Small mobile groups gathered into larger villages, surrounded by fields of corn, beans and squash.

Creeks, rivers, and marshes were vital sources of fresh water and nourishment, and areas around rivers were important sites for camps. The Don



Figure 2. This 1792 survey of Toronto harbour by Joseph Bouchette shows an Indigenous camp on the lakeshore, near the mouth of the Don River. Plan of Toronto Harbour, With the Rocks, Shoals & Soundings Thereof, Surveyed & Drawn by Joseph Bouchette. 1792. City of Toronto Archives: MT101

River watershed, which includes a significant part of the King-Parliament area, was also a part of trail networks that linked Lake Ontario to Lake Huron to the north, and to communities to the east and west. The mouth of the Don River, which acts as the eastern King-Parliament area boundary, may have been a particularly important place for Indigenous peoples in the Toronto area. The sand spit which has been transformed into the Toronto Islands was traditionally known as a place of healing, and was easily reached from the mouth of the Don River. The former marsh at the mouth of the Don River was also a rich hunting ground.

In the 1780s, as the British government prepared to settle this area, it signed treaties with Mississauga and Chippewa First Nations to obtain title to the land. Indigenous peoples continued to be present in the Town of York and surrounding area, and played a particularly vital role in the defense of the town in the Battle of York (1813). Toronto remains part of the traditional homelands of First Nations, and is home to many Indigenous peoples today.

Early Toronto (1793-1850)

Following the signing of treaties, the British government surveyed the Toronto area in preparation for settlement. Alexander Aitken's Plan for the Town of York (1793) established a street grid composed of ten nearly square blocks running west of today's Berkeley Street to George Street, with one block extending north and south from King Street. The land between Berkeley Street and the Don River was reserved for government uses. Above the town, Lot Street (today's Queen Street) was surveyed as a baseline for large 100 acre "park lots" which were reserved for government officials.

The irregular road network that helps to define the King-Parliament area is the direct result of Aitken's plan, how subsequent surrounding surveys ignored it, and the location of former watercourses. To the west, jogs in Front, Adelaide and Richmond streets as they pass west of Jarvis indicate where a new street grid was laid down in 1797 that only aligned with King Street in the original town. To the north, the same 1797 plan extended new blocks between the original town and Queen Street that were much larger than the original town blocks, preventing the extension of some town streets.

To the east of today's Berkeley Street, land was reserved for government use until it was first surveyed for subdivision in 1819¹. In this area, today's Corktown and West Don Lands, the streets are defined by the angle of King Street, the oldest road through the area, which defied the street grid of the town as it cut in a northeast direction from the original town edge at Berkeley Street to cross the Don River at today's Queen Street East. Notably, nearly all contemporary streets in the King-Parliament area were laid out prior to 1850, though Queen Street East was completed later than most due to obstruction of the former Taddle Creek, which crossed it by Moss Park.

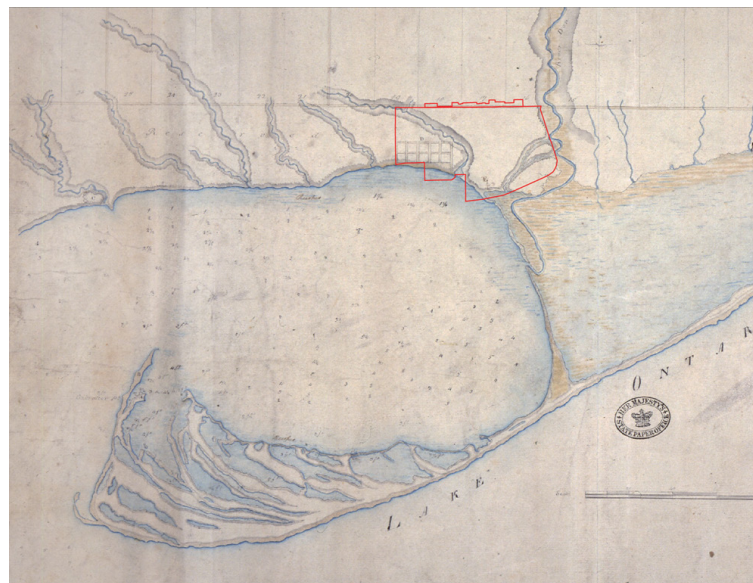


Figure 3. Plan of York Harbour Surveyed by order of Lt Govr Simcoe [Sgd] by A. Aitken. 1793. The National Archives of the UK: CO 700 Canada no.60.



Figure 4. House for James Vance, 115 Berkeley Street, 1845

¹ Lemos, 25.

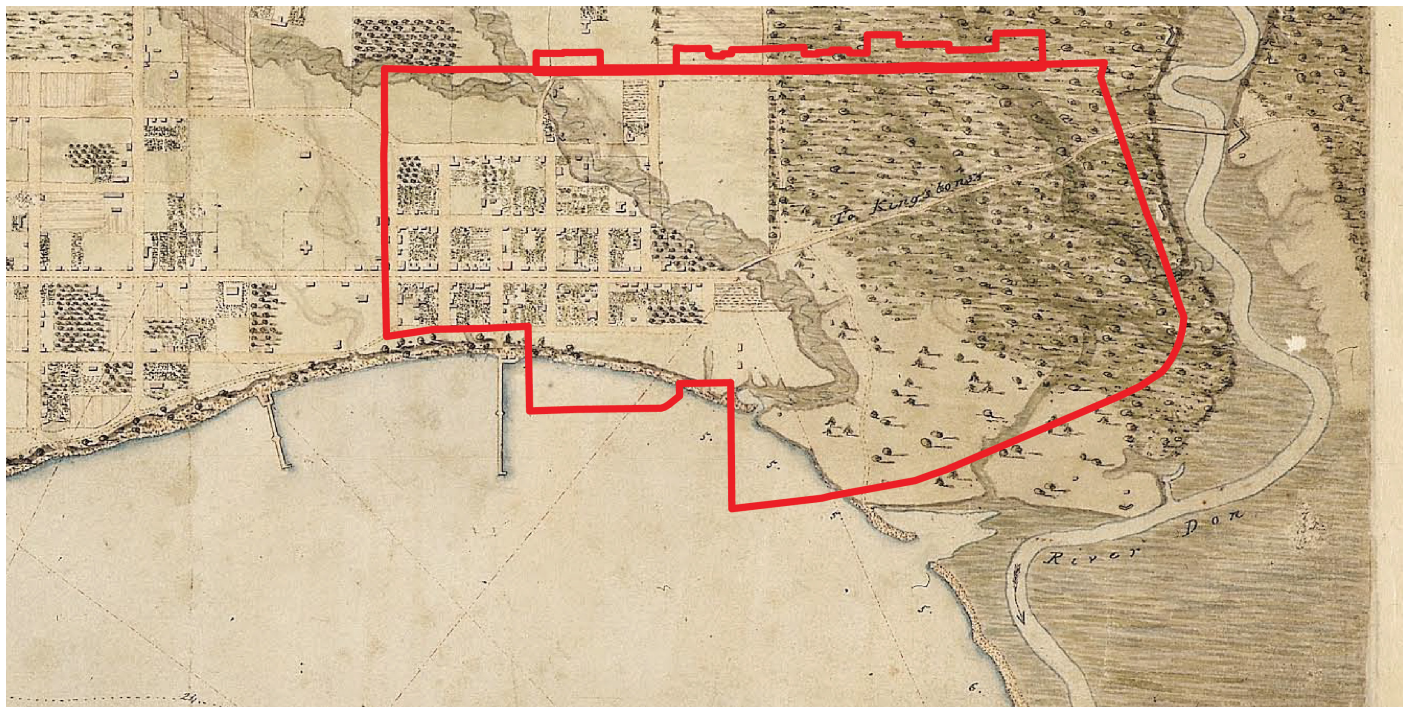


Figure 5. Plan of York Surveyed and Drawn by Lieut. Phillpotts, Royal Engineers. 1818. King Street runs east-west through the centre of the original square town blocks, and cuts up at an angle after Berkeley Street through undeveloped land to cross the Don River. Library and Archives Canada: NMC 17026.

The development of the former “Government Park” east of Berkeley Street was a major legacy of this period. Begun in the 1830s, that development included industry (notably with the founding of Gooderham and Worts distillery site in 1832) and housing related to industry. The first owners of industry, including the Gooderham family and brewer Enoch Turner, lived next to their factories, as did their workers². They also helped to fund the first institutions in the area to serve the growing number of residents: Little Trinity Church (425 King Street East, 1843) and Enoch Turner School House (106 Trinity Street, 1848). St. Paul’s Roman Catholic Church (83 Power Street, 1822) was established over 20 years prior to both.

Buildings from the pre-1850 period are rare and are largely contained within the boundaries of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District. They form an early and valuable collection of heritage resources, and can be identified primarily by their representation of the Georgian style. Most notable is Toronto’s longest row of 1830s-40s commercial buildings on the south side

of King Street East from Jarvis to George streets, the Bank of Upper Canada building (252 Adelaide Street East, 1825-37) and Toronto’s First Post Office (260 Adelaide Street East, 1833-34) on the north side of Adelaide, east of Jarvis, Little Trinity Church (1843) and Enoch Turner Schoolhouse (1848) and the Paul Bishop Buildings (363-365 Adelaide Street East, 1848) on the south side of Adelaide, east of Sherbourne Street.

Urban and Industrial Expansion (1850-1914)

The King-Parliament area was transformed into the urban cityscape that we recognize today primarily in the 1850-1914 period. Two developments in the 1840s and 1850s fueled a dramatic change in the area. First, famine in Ireland sent a massive wave of poor, largely Roman Catholic migrants to North America. A significant number of those who chose to remain in Toronto found homes, community and work in the working class neighbourhoods of the King-Parliament area, close to St. Paul’s Church (later Basilica). Their presence contributed to the founding of the House of Providence in 1857

² Gibson.

to provide care and support for Toronto's most disadvantaged residents. Expanded over time, the House of Providence was a dominant feature in the neighbourhood.

The main attraction to the King-Parliament area was the growth of industry which flourished over the next 100 years. While access to shipping would continue to draw industry to the area, the introduction of railways to Toronto in the 1850s had a far greater impact. The Grand Trunk railway was the first to cross the Don River, and was laid out along the Esplanade in 1855³. The railways dramatically changed the landscape of the area, filling the harbour for their tracks and yards over successive periods, and extending the shoreline south from Front Street. The railways also encouraged economies of scale through quick access to much larger markets than was previously imaginable in an era of poor roads and laborious travel. Toronto industries could now compete with smaller industries in towns connected to it by rail all over Ontario⁴. The result was a concentration of large scale industrial power in the King-Parliament area. By the end of the 19th century, two businesses – William Davies Pork Packing Plant (since demolished) and the Gooderham and Worts Distillery – claimed to be the largest of their kind in the British Empire.

Industrial growth directly contributed to the Don Improvement Plan of 1886, which led to the straightening of the Don River below Gerrard Street by 1892. The massive engineering project reclaimed significant lowlands along the banks of the river for industrial use, and made room for a new Canadian Pacific Rail line completed through the King-Parliament area on the west side of the Don River in 1892⁵.



Figure 6. Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, 106 Trinity Street, 1848

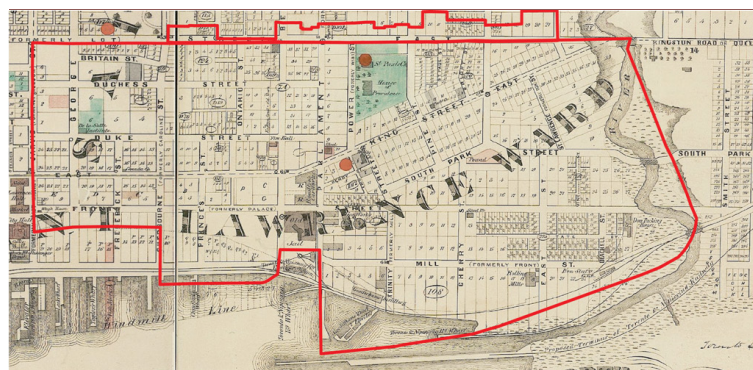


Figure 7. Wadsworth & Unwin's Map of the City of Toronto [showing real estate exemptions from taxation], compiled and drawn by Maurice Gaviller, C.E. & P.L.S., from plans filed in the Registry Office and the most recent surveys, 1872.1860S-70S MAP Library and Archives Canada: NMC25641.

³ Historica Research Limited, 9,22.

⁴ Careless, 83.

⁵ Careless, 118.

With the dramatic expansion of industry in the area first came an increase and change in housing. The wealthy left the area, their homes either demolished or converted for other purposes, and denser row housing predominated⁶. Demand for worker's housing was strong enough by the 1880s, in fact, that the Wilkins family developed a business redeveloping lots by inserting narrow lanes off of King Street with row houses that survive today, including Wilkins Avenue, Percy Street, and Ashby Place⁷. Residential occupation reached its peak in the entire area by about 1900, when dense streets of small homes also occupied today's West Don Lands.

In the same period, the commercial main streets of the area were also essentially built out. King Street's commercial character now extended from Jarvis Street to the Don River, occasionally broken by large format industrial or warehouse buildings, particularly in the area of Berkeley and Parliament streets. Queen Street also developed much of its present character in this period. Consistent street walls of significant three-storey commercial/residential buildings continue to line the north and south side of Queen Street from Jarvis to Berkeley Streets, broken now by Moss Park on the north. East of Berkeley, Queen Street's character shifts to two-storey commercial and residential buildings, significantly interrupted on the north side by the Dominion Brewery complex on Queen Street between Sackville and Sumach streets.



Figure 8. St. Paul's Basilica, 83-93 Power Street, 1887

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⁶ Archaeological Services Inc., "Stage 1..." 9.

⁷ Lemos, 10-12.

⁸ Lemos, 93-95.

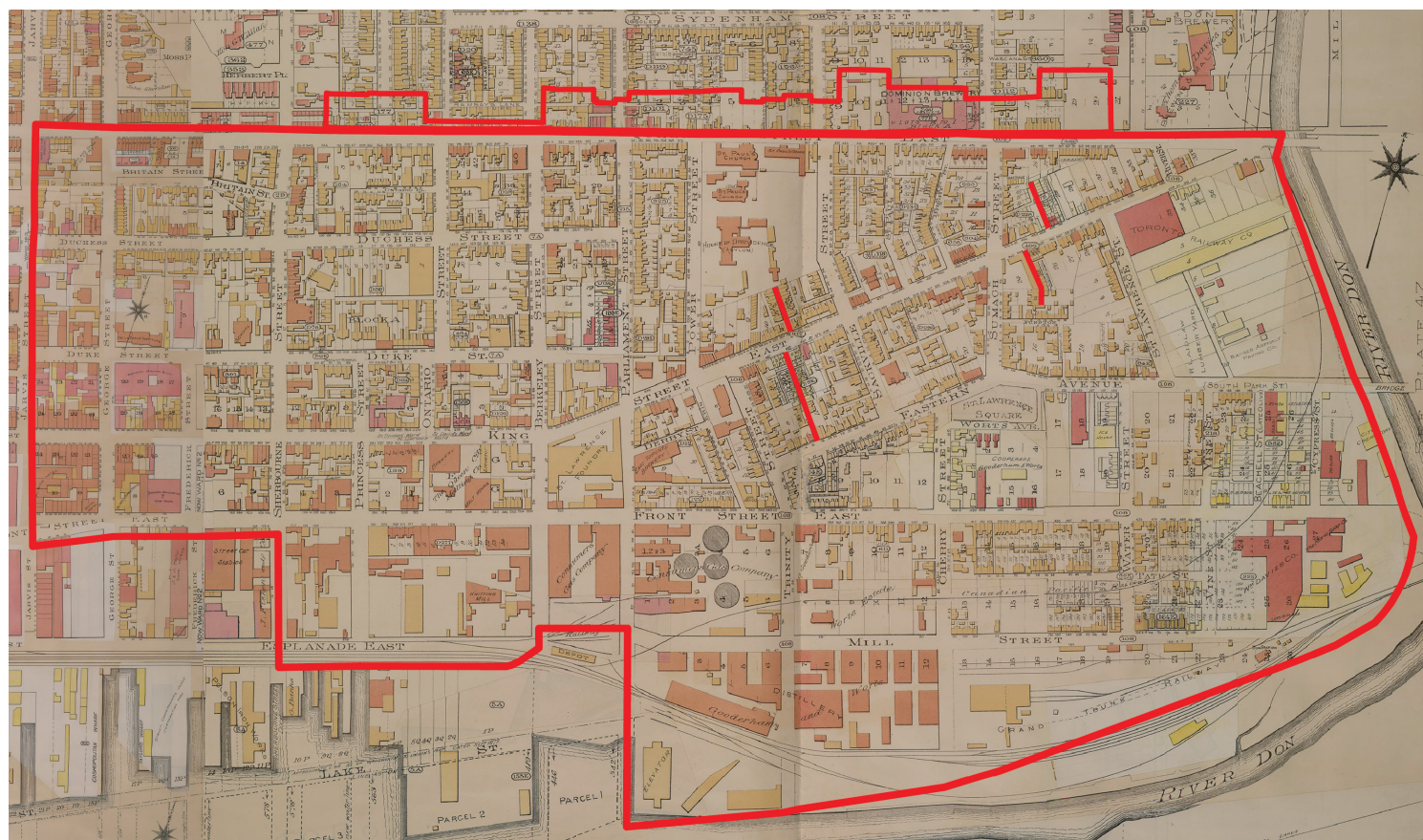


Figure 9. This fire insurance plan from 1903 shows the row housing in lanes that continues to define the King-Parliament area today. Red indicates brick structures, yellow indicates wood structures. Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto, Plate 29. 1903. Map and Data Library, University of Toronto.

In this period, the King-Parliament area was one of Toronto's poorest, along with The Ward (between Yonge Street and University Avenue, from Queen to College streets) and areas close to industry and railyards to the west of the downtown. Like The Ward, the poorly maintained row houses of the King-Parliament area offered less costly housing for new immigrants, and in the first decades of the 20th century, the area included a concentration of Macedonian and Bulgarian residents⁸. Institutions followed them, including churches and missions. Today's Dixon Hall at 52 Sumach Street was originally built in 1925 as a "Bulgarian Mission". Other organizations offering services to the poor became central to the working class neighbourhood, including the Fred Victor Centre at Queen and Jarvis, founded in 1894.

The expansion of industry fueled a growth in housing, then was responsible for shrinking it⁹. In the early 20th century, the continued growth of industry in the area resulted in the redevelopment of residential areas with factories and warehouses. After 1900, for example, the homes in the area of Britain Street nearly all suffered this fate. Only a few row houses along George Street survive today. Much of the Old Town, in fact, was slowly transformed by the consolidation of residential or commercial lots and redevelopment for industry. The resulting factories and warehouses, interspersed with a few surviving houses, continue to define the area west of Berkeley Street, and north of King Street.

⁹ City of Toronto Planning Board, "Housing in King-Parliament," 4.

¹⁰ Archaeological Services Inc., "Stage 1...", 13.



Figure 10. These fire insurance plans from 1889 and 1913 show how industrial buildings replaced houses in the area of Britain Street. Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto, Plate 29. 1890, 1913. Map and Data Library, University of Toronto.

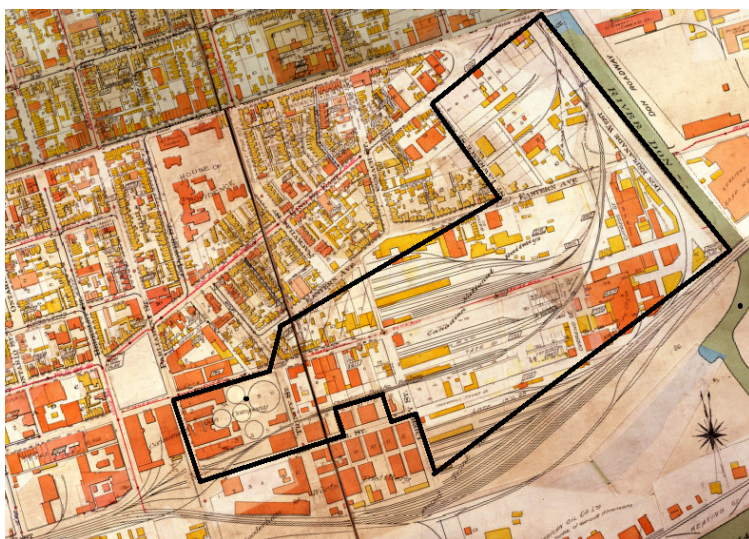


Figure 11. These fire insurance plans from 1903 and 1924 show how industrial buildings and railways replaced houses in the West Don Lands area. Goad's Atlas of the City of Toronto, Plate 29. 1903, 1924. Map and Data Library, University of Toronto.

East of Berkeley, residential use remains highly visible today, but here too housing was dramatically reduced prior to World War II. In the West Don Lands, the growth of the railway industry, in particular, led to the demolition of a whole neighbourhood south of Eastern Avenue and east of Cherry Street between 1900 and 1924¹⁰. While this area has again been transformed into today's

West Don Lands, the Palace Street School (1859) at Front and Cherry streets survives as a reminder of the early residential character of this area and, through its later additions, its transition to railway and industrial lands. Just to the north, the former Dominion Wheel and Foundry buildings (1917-1929) remain to tell the story of the West Don Land's industrial heritage.

Interwar Stability (1914-1945)

While World War I dominated the years between 1914 and 1918, industrial development continued in Toronto after World War I and through the 1920s, until the Great Depression of the 1930s dramatically curtailed growth¹¹. The development of the block bounded by Ontario and Berkeley streets, north of Richmond, by the Ontario Drug Company (25 Ontario Street), best illustrate this continued redevelopment of residential properties for industrial purposes¹². Few houses, if any, were constructed in the same period.

Industrial Decline and Post-war Urban Renewal (1945-1970)

In the period following World War II, new forces began to shape the King-Parliament area, including the rise in influence of professional city planning. The area entered the 1950s as a stable industrial and working-class residential area. With the King-Spadina area and the Junction – both also conveniently connected to rail – it dominated the City's industrial economy¹³. But change was afoot. For one, the Planning Board of the City of Toronto began applying the latest planning principles to the City, embedded in the City's first Official Plan of 1949¹⁴. One of the principles which was central to city planning in the period was the separation of land uses. While previously freely-mixed in a largely unplanned old City of Toronto, industrial, commercial and residential uses were now to be separated into distinct areas, as they were in the new suburban developments which defined this period. In the King-Parliament area, planners established new zoning by-laws which, after 1952, claimed the entire area for commercial and industrial development, and attempted to prevent any new housing to be built south of Queen Street East¹⁵.



Figure 12. 167-185 Queen Street East



Figure 13. 52 St. Lawrence Street, 1929

¹¹ Lemon, 38.

¹² ERA.

¹³ City of Toronto Planning Board, "Industry in King-Parliament," 2-3.

¹⁴ White, 49.

¹⁵ City of Toronto Planning Board, "Housing in King-Parliament," 8.

Virtually no new housing was constructed in the area until the 1970s. As the 1974 report “Housing in King-Parliament” noted, the number of residents in the area declined from 4,390 in 1941 to about 1,100 in 1974¹⁶.

The redevelopment of houses for industrial uses may have continued to play a role in that decline, particularly early in the period, but the commercial re-use of former homes was equally significant. Planners in the 1970s noted the impact of this trend, exemplified best, perhaps, by the conversion of row houses on Berkeley Street, between King and Adelaide streets, to offices. They also noted with concern the impact on the remaining residential areas, overwhelmingly in the Corktown area, of “white painting” – the rehabilitation of old housing in the central core by middle and upper income families in search of homes in walkable old neighbourhoods, near jobs in the downtown. Planners worried that such practices contributed to rising housing costs, and increasing pressure on low and moderate income families¹⁷.

North of Queen Street, though only partially inside the King-Parliament area boundary, another trend of post-war planning also made a clear and lasting impact: urban renewal tied to clearance and redevelopment. The demolition of existing residential and commercial properties to make way for the construction of the high-rise Moss Park Apartments, planned in 1957, was a clear application of this planning approach (also applied to Regent Park South)¹⁸. Plans for the renewal of Trefann Court, east of Moss Park, were completed in 1965, and called for demolition of 90% of residential buildings and street closures, but did not insist upon high-rise apartments to replace them¹⁹.

At the same time, planners struggled to find ways to encourage the growth of industry in the area as major trends in the post-war period began to work against them. First in the 1950s, then in the 1960s and 1970s, planners studied the area to determine why industry was in decline. In essence, they discovered that large, expanding industries in the King-Parliament area were limited by the old buildings and a lack of space, and were enticed away by areas well-served by new highways like Highway 401 and the growing trucking industry. As larger industries left the area, smaller industries moved in, attracted by the central location of the King-Parliament industrial area. Overall employment in the area, however, declined²⁰.

North of Queen Street, another trend of post-war planning also made a clear and lasting impact: urban renewal tied to clearance and redevelopment.

¹⁶ City of Toronto Planning Board, “Housing in King-Parliament,” 8, 10.

¹⁷ City of Toronto Planning Board, “Housing in King-Parliament,” 12.

¹⁸ White, 167-169.

¹⁹ White, 167-169.

²⁰ City of Toronto Planning Board, “Industry in King-Parliament,” 5-7.

Existing industrial buildings from this period reflect these trends. Very few large scale, mid-century industrial buildings were constructed here, as they were in North York's Don Mills, or Scarborough's Golden Mile. Industrial buildings that were built here in this period and which survive today are mostly small in scale, and generally undistinguished in design. They are also scattered about the area, which contributes to their low impact on its overall character.

Much the same can be said of some small-scale commercial buildings in the area. Given that the commercial streets of King and Queen were largely built out by World War I, commercial buildings built between 1945 and 1970 are largely characterized by small in-fill projects, as demonstrated by the building at 225 Queen Street East currently occupied by Anishnawbe Health Toronto. On former industrial lands, particularly the site of the former Consumer's Gas plant south of Front Street between Parliament and Berkeley streets, industrial buildings were demolished and replaced with parking lots and automobile related commercial buildings.

If the 1945-1970 period was marked by industrial stagnation and decline, it was also defined by the impact of the automobile, primarily through highway construction. Following the establishment of Metropolitan Toronto in 1953, Metro's new planning department began a rapid and transformative period of road and expressway expansion. The Gardiner Expressway cut through the bottom of the King-Parliament area in the late 1950s, further severing it from the waterfront. The Gardiner was followed by the construction of the Don Valley Expressway in the 1960s. Looking for a route connecting the Don Valley Parkway into the downtown, planners settled on ramps that would cut through Corktown, then considered a largely derelict residential area in an industrial/commercial zone, to connect with Duke and Duchess Streets.

The impact of that idea transformed the area unlike any other transportation development since the railways. Duke and Duchess were made extensions of and renamed Adelaide and Richmond streets (which, thanks to the 1797 survey which first laid them out, previously dead-ended at Jarvis), and were converted to one-way thoroughfares. Much more significantly, the Adelaide and Richmond Street ramps resulted in the demolition of the House of Providence, a defining institution in the area for over 100 years, the demolition of approximately 200 houses²¹, the severing of formerly continuous north-south streets, and the introduction of vacant spaces on the edges and beneath the ramps where housing and shops once stood. While vacant open spaces created by the ramps have since been converted into parks or public amenities, the negative impact of the ramps on the formerly cohesive nature of Corktown remains.

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²¹ City of Toronto Planning Board, "Housing in King-Parliament", 10.

Residential and Mixed-use Renewal (1970-present)

Beginning in the mid-1960s, a shift in the view to urban renewal led to new approaches which had a particularly large impact on the King-Parliament area. Plans for the redevelopment of Trefann Court from the mid-1960s ran aground on neighbourhood resistance, leading to a changed process that has become a landmark in the history of city planning in Toronto. Instead of implementing a plan designed without consulting local residents, the City set up the “Trefann Court Working Committee” which included local residents, and asked it to assist in the development of a new plan²². Unveiled in 1972, that plan sought to retain as many existing homes as possible, and to integrate new buildings into the scale of the neighbourhood. New housing was more compatible to the 19th century neighbourhood character in its use of red brick and gabled roofs. Two portions of row-housing related to Trefann Court are in the heritage survey area.

Far larger than Trefann Court is the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood, built on former industrial lands around the Esplanade, east of Jarvis, in the mid-1970s. Considered “one of the best known and most-admired initiatives of Toronto’s reform years” by planning historian Richard White, it adopted Trefann Court’s model of a working committee, and began planning in 1974 – just as City Planners were seriously considering revising the exclusive industrial/commercial zoning of the King-Parliament area. Residential use was allowed here due to the need for more housing downtown, the fact that the land was nearly all vacant and no jobs would be lost, and that most of the land was also city-owned. The new St. Lawrence Neighbourhood embodied the new principles of urban renewal including Low-Rise-High-Density housing - meaning stacked townhouses and mid-rise apartment buildings - a mix of uses, income levels, and ownership/rental/co-op models, and full integration into existing street



Figure 14. Part of Trefann Court, 440-450 Queen Street East, 1979

grids²³. The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood has been identified as worthy of study for a future Heritage Conservation District.

Beyond the housing constructed as part of urban renewal efforts, residential use in the King-Parliament area has grown since the 1970s, first through relatively small, low-scale infill projects, or more recent residential stretches of row and townhouses on King and Queen Streets, in the Corktown area²⁴. Since the mid-1990s, however, mid-rise, and now high-rise residential buildings have appeared in the area, largely as a result of another landmark moment in the history of City Planning in Toronto: an innovative slate of Secondary Plan policies for the “Two Kings”.

²² White, 281-286.

²³ White, 326-332.

²⁴ Notes from Resident at Open House, January 31.

The policies directed at the King-Parliament and King-Spadina areas were a response to the fact that the two areas continued to struggle through the 1980s as industry declined. The recession of the early 1990s made things even worse, resulting in alarm at the growing deterioration of properties in the area. In response, the King-Parliament area and King-Spadina area became the site of an innovative policy framework to remove laws that only allowed industrial uses on industrial lands, and to instead allow for mixed uses to reclaim vacant industrial buildings²⁵. Considered a novel, risky move at the time²⁶, the “Two Kings” plan sparked engaged citizens to build on the work of the Town of York Historical Society (founded 1983) to form the “Citizens for the Old Town”, among other groups, to support the retention and reuse of heritage buildings, to advocate for the preservation and integration of the area’s rich history into its renewal, and to insist that redevelopment support and enhance the historic character of the area²⁷. Notably, citizen activism further contributed to the discovery of archaeological remains of Ontario’s first purpose-built Parliament buildings at Front and Parliament, to the public acquisition of the site, and to a continuing effort to appropriately commemorate their location.

In this period, new commercial buildings continued to be inserted into the area, though now increasingly in larger scale formats. Redevelopment of the south side of Queen Street between Parliament and Power, for example, consolidated a former row of 19th century commercial properties and a used car lot (the result of previous demolitions in the 1960s) into two properties with larger single and two-storey retail buildings. In this period, as well, large format, car-oriented retail was constructed on the former industrial lands between King and Front, and between Berkeley and Parliament. Car dealerships

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and automobile repair centres also became prevalent in the area, perhaps in relationship to the DVP ramps completed in the mid-1960s.

Heritage conservation and commemoration of the former Gooderham and Worts distillery (closed in 1990) has contributed significantly to the success of the Distillery District, a mixed-use culture and heritage destination in the area since its redevelopment began in the early 2000s. With many of its properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, the Distillery District is being considered for a Heritage Conservation District. Next door, residential uses have also dominated the redevelopment of the West Don Lands, former industrial and railways lands that had been slated for various development plans since the 1990s. The West Don Lands Precinct Plan was endorsed by Toronto City Council in 2005, and a significant portion of the 80-acre site was completed for use as an Athletes Village for the 2015 Pan Am Games. Two heritage buildings, the former Palace Street School and the former CN Railway Offices, were conserved and form a gateway to the area. In 2015, City Council also designated a significant part of the Old Town as the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Heritage Conservation District (under appeal).

²⁵ City of Toronto, “The Two Kings: A Status Report – For Information.”

²⁶ Wickens, “Downtown Toronto went all in with a pair of Kings.” The Globe and Mail, February 16, 2016. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/property-report/going-all-in-with-a-pair-of-kings/article28745451/>

²⁷ Heritage Focus Group notes.

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