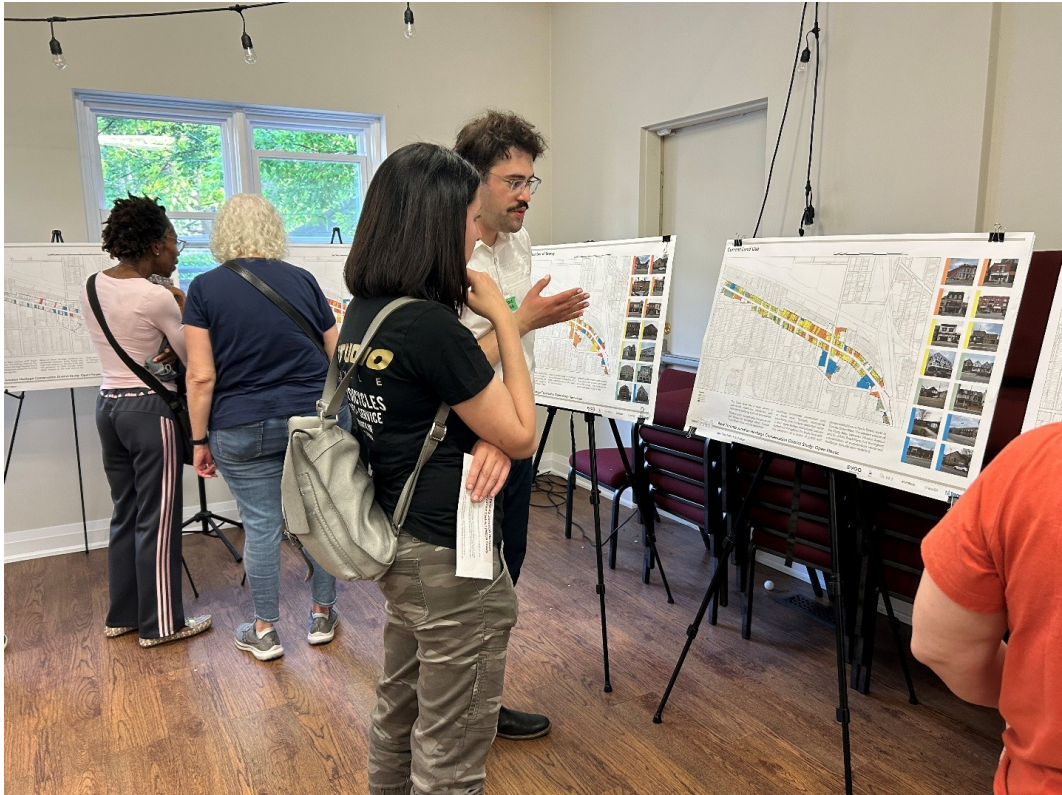


West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study

Community Consultation Meeting (CCM) #1 – Summary Report



Prepared by LURA Consulting for the City of Toronto



West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study
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1. Introduction

Study Purpose

The West Toronto Junction (“The Junction”) HCD Study was prioritized by Council in 2018 and approved to be an active study in February 2023. The Study’s aim is to provide an understanding of the area’s history and heritage character and to determine if designation as a heritage conservation district would be an appropriate heritage planning tool for the area. The Study is in its initial stages. The final staff recommendations will be presented to the Toronto Preservation Board upon completion, likely in April 2026.

The City Planning Division initiated the West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District Study in January 2025 and retained a project team led by EVOQ Architecture (heritage architects) with Re:public Urbamism (planning consultants), ASI (archaeology), Acosys Consulting (Urban Indigenous facilitators), and LURA Consulting (facilitators) to prepare the study report.

The study will include a comprehensive property inventory, historical research, character analysis, evaluation of the area’s heritage value, and review of the area’s existing planning framework. The study process includes two community meetings, as well as the convening of a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to provide specific and detailed feedback on research, analysis and recommendations.

Study Area

The West Toronto Junction Phase 1 HCD Study Area includes commercial, mixed-use, residential and institutional properties situated along a curving portion of Dundas Street West, bound by Gilmour Avenue to the west and Humberside Avenue to the southeast. Properties fronting onto a small section of Keele Street are also included in the Study Area from Vine Avenue to the north, and Annette Street to the south. The Study Area boundary may be refined through the Study process and does not necessarily reflect any future HCD boundary if an HCD is recommended.

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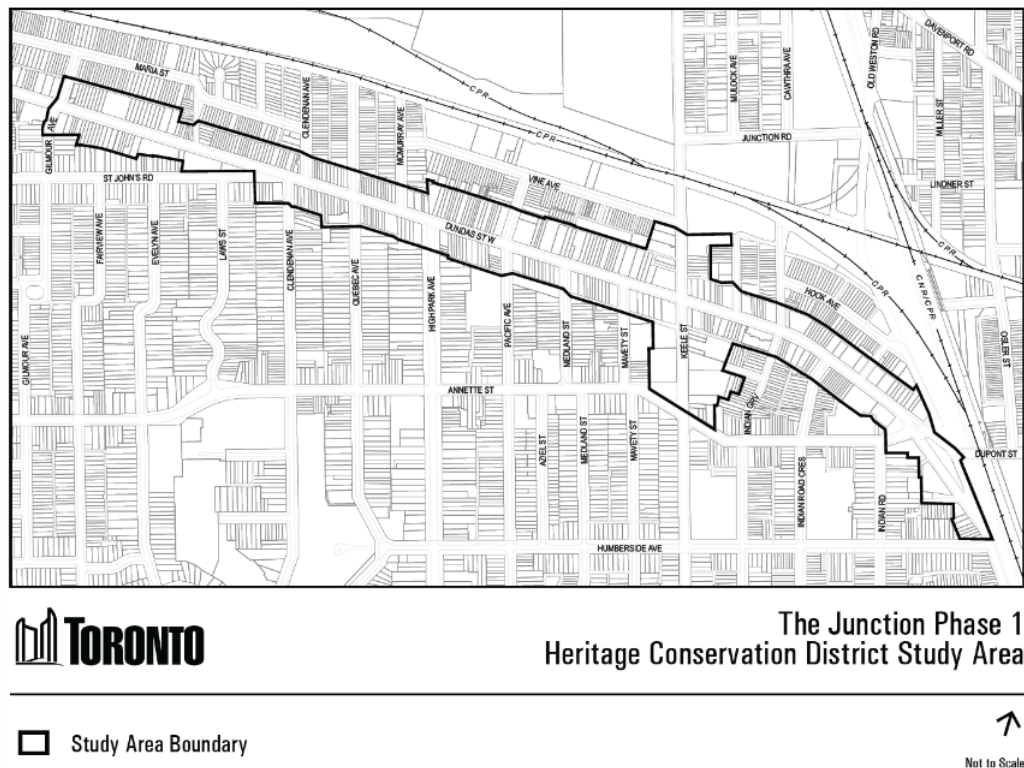


Figure 1: Junction Phase 1 HCD Study Area

More information about the Junction HCD Study can be found on the City of Toronto's [website](#).

2. Community Consultation Meeting #1

Meeting Objectives

Community engagement is an important component of the HCD Study. The City of Toronto held the first Community Consultation Meeting for the West Toronto Junction HCD Study on June 11, 2025, from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm at the West Toronto Baptist Church (3049 Dundas St W, Toronto, ON M6P 1Z5)

The purpose of the event was to:

- Introduce the West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study, including approach, timing, and activities
- Present background material and a preliminary understanding of the area
- Seek the participation of members for the Local Advisory Committee (LAC)
- Answer community member questions about the HCD Study Process
- Highlight next steps

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A copy of the meeting notice is included as Appendix A.

3. Summary of Feedback

The meeting format featured an open house with stations offering community members an opportunity to learn about the HCD Study, speak to City staff, the consultant team and share feedback.

The stations were:

1. Entrance and sign in
2. HCD process, grants, requirements, timeline
3. History and character
4. Input and stay connected

Feedback was obtained through the following methods:

- a) Verbal discussions documented through sticky notes at the input station.
- b) Feedback forms submitted during and after the meeting; and
- c) Direct e-mails to City of Toronto staff.

Approximately 44 community members participated. Some community members heard about the CCM from:

- Social media: 1
- West Toronto Junction Historical Society: 7
- Newsletter/email: 5
- Mail: 11
- Word of mouth/saw a flyer in the community: 9

Participants were invited to submit comment forms at the event, visit the project website after the event, and submit comments and/or feedback via mail or email. The comment forms were collected until June 25th, 2025, to be included in this report.

In addition to public meetings, a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) will be formed to obtain feedback from a diverse range of residents and voices within the study area throughout the HCD Study process. Copies of the draft Terms of Reference and an application form to participate on the LAC were also made available at the community meeting.

What We Heard

A summary of the feedback received through the community meeting is presented below and organized by the discussion questions featured at each station. The summary provides a high-level synopsis of recurring comments, concerns or suggestions from community members and is based on (30) sticky notes, and (6) comment forms submitted at and following the meeting.

The discussion questions presented are:

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1. What are the most important features (buildings/streetscapes/landscapes/views) in your neighbourhood?
2. What are the most important people or events in your neighbourhood's past that we should know about?
3. What are the stories of your neighbourhood that we need to know and understand?
4. What (positive/negative) changes have you seen in the neighbourhood?
5. What are the most essential and character-defining heritage features of the West Toronto Junction neighbourhood? Are they captured within the Study Area boundaries?
6. Do you have any other comments, questions, concerns, or input on the West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District Study you would like to share?

3.1. Important Features in the Neighbourhood

Discussion Question: What are the most important features (buildings/streetscapes/landscapes/views) in your neighbourhood? Participants noted the following character-defining features of the West Toronto Junction neighbourhood:

- The streetscape, which includes the landscape and the houses. Dundas Street streetscape specifically is a defining feature.
- The strip's cohesive whole is important. It feels like a unique and defined part of the junction.
- Street character should be preserved as housing types evolve.
- The low-rise historic buildings on Dundas define the unique Junction character.
- The retail at grade that supports the walkable neighbourhood. Small businesses with maintained storefronts support community life.
- The consistent building height contributes to the cohesive look and feel.
- The unique shape of triangular/oblong/pie-shaped parcels adds to the charm.
- Sunlight on the sidewalks enhances the pedestrian experience.
- The low-rise buildings between Keele and Pacific Avenue, such as the 3-storey ones with minimal setbacks. These create a pedestrian-scale environment.
- "Missing Middle" housing is essential and unique to the neighbourhood.
- Support mature trees.
- Support brick materials with "Ontario-sized" bricks, contributing to the heritage aesthetic.
- Parks and green spaces are an essential asset.
- Big old houses on North and South streets are valued for character.
- The eclectic architectural style contributes to a cohesive street wall and public realm.
- The pink neon "Junction" sign.
- The consistent flat rooflines and "sunny" and open walking areas.
- Laneways in the area.

3.2. Events and People

Discussion Question: What are the most important people or events in your neighbourhood's past that we should know about? Participants noted the following events that happen in the West Toronto Junction neighbourhood:

- Heintzman Piano Company's legacy should be preserved.

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- The Dundas train platform was a historic public gathering space.
- The concentration of churches and other religious institutions on Anette Street. This includes the Masonic Temple and public libraries, which reflect the cultural and institutional history of the Junction.
- The Junction has a history as a separate town. Its 1909 character remains visible, a vital identity to mention.
- The Junction has Junction Fest, a Farmers market, concerts, and a hangout area that is a beautiful blend of history and community spaces.
- The History of the railroads and the Junction working class roots shape its sense of place.
- The old streetcar on Dundas is fondly remembered.
- The prohibition is a funny, memorable part of the local history.
- The Former Mayors of West Toronto (such as Daniel Webster Clendenan) shows the history of grassroots leadership.
- The commercial and mixed-use 2-3 storey building between Law Street and Indian Road Crescent.
- Malta Park.
- People who lived there, such as Daniel Webster Clendenan, Theodor Heintzman, John, Taylor Gilmour, Charles Keel, George Washington Clendenan, George Johnson Sr Leger
- The origin of little Malta.

3.3. Neighbourhood Stories

Discussion Question: What are the stories of your neighbourhood that we need to know to understand? Participants noted the following stories of the West Toronto Junction neighbourhood:

- The area is connected to Indigenous history and trading routes that should be recognized and celebrated.
- The Junction ethos, a friendly area and quiet near High Park.
- The relationship to railway lands and the Heintzman Piano Company is vital. Many workers lived locally and shaped the community.
- The railway community along Anette Street and High Park.
- The Junction was once voted Toronto's happiest neighbourhood.
- Small businesses and daily life are part of the community's intangible character. The intangible stories are more important than the buildings.
- Local institutions like libraries, churches and co-ops reflect the historical cooperation.
- The stories of the different settlements and communities in the neighbourhood.
- The stories of people working and going to church in the past, compared to now.
- The Junction's appearance in an episode of Murdoch Mysteries.

3.4. Changes in the neighbourhood

Discussion Question: What (positive/negative) changes have you seen in the neighbourhood? Participants noted seeing the following changes, both negative and positive, in the neighbourhood:

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- Concern about the overdevelopment of the neighbourhood and the threats it poses to the low-rise form of the community.
- Condo and apartment developments (e.g., on Pacific Avenue and Dundas) disrupt the area's gentle scale and character.
- Changing storefronts, vacant storefronts and unaffordable rents threaten small business survival.
- Traffic and parking pressures have increased.
- New neighbours and denser housing have been seen as a sign of community growth.
- More residential developments are positive as this supports the main street vibrancy and small businesses.
- Support is needed to continue building larger, livable, missing middle housing.
- Resistance to story infill development. While some supporting infill developments are more systematic in the surrounding space.
- The junction had more “grit” 30 years ago. Bloor West was seen as family-friendly.
- BWV establishment, which attracted independent, unique stores and restaurants to show visitors.

3.5. Study Area

Discussion Question: What are the most critical character-defining heritage features of the West Toronto Junction neighbourhood? Are they captured within the Study Area boundaries?

- Generally, yes, but the significance of High Park should be recognised. This was the grand street back in the day.
- The study area could be extended to Runnymede, which includes properties that support the Dundas historic character. Dundas' public realm and walkability are major defining features.
- Commercial street character is more significant than that of single-family homes.
- The industrial areas are underrecognized, especially the two rail lines, the Junction Station and the meat-packing industry. Protein was often shipped in this area, with 90% of the workers in the neighbourhood being employed in one or the other sector.
- Extend the boundary south on Dundas to Edna.
- Heritage features between Law Street and Indian Road Crescent, as well as 2-3 storey facades.
- Kneset Synagogue on Maria Street.
- Public buildings on Anette Street.

3.6. Additional comments

Discussion Question: Do you have any other comments, questions, concerns or input on the West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District Study you would like to share?

- Community consultation is essential. Criteria booklets for the property owners would be helpful.
- It's about time this part of the city gets recognized as heritage. The Junction is frozen in time.

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- The community is eager to see the project move forward. There is a significant interest and enthusiasm in preserving the stories of the Junction.
- To promote the history of the Junction, add outdoor public exhibitions near Dundas with graffiti-resistant plaques and historic photos.
- The city should buy the Tim Hortons site to expand Malta Park and create a vibrant place, making a gateway. There is excellent art, a fountain, and urban design features. It's time to celebrate the wedge shape lots.
- Support building more missing middle housing development.
- The documentation of the neighbourhood maps, photos, building age and style is beneficial and should continue.
- To support the increase in density while respecting the existing urban context.
- Conserving important physical features while allowing sympathetic or complementary new development is a priority. Alterations and new buildings should have the same character. There should be a mix of small businesses and heritage sites.

3.7. Areas of Clarification

Participants posed additional feedback and questions about the junction's unique history that must be preserved, as well as future questions about what it means for property owners regarding being designated as heritage. Specifically, participants asked the following questions:

- How will community input be used?
- What does it mean for property owners/community at large?
- What type of engagement has taken place already with property owners?
- What is the impact of having HCD? Does it stop development?
- What constraints do property owners have? What is all this for, and why this effort?
- Why has it taken so long to make the Junction an HCD?
- How can we make the shared part of history in the Junction more broadly known?
- What is the address information used for from the sign-in sheet?

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Figure 2: Interaction with City staff with comments and feedback from CCM participants

4. Next Steps

Feedback obtained at the first Community Consultation Meeting will be considered part of the HCD Study. The LAC will also be established, with the first meeting anticipated in late July 2025. Project updates will be posted on the City's [website](#).

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Appendix A – Community Meeting Notice



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE (“drop-in” style format)
Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
West Toronto Baptist Church, 3049 Dundas St. West, Toronto

West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study

Heritage Planning invites you to a Community Consultation Open House to introduce the West Toronto Junction HCD Study.

The purpose of the HCD Study is to determine whether the area, or a portion of the area, merits further study for designation as a Heritage Conservation District Plan area under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The study recommendations will be presented to the Toronto Preservation Board in Spring 2026.

At the meeting, the project team will share information about the HCD Study process, and the study’s initial findings and to seek community feedback on the HCD Study Area authorized by City Council.

**For more information about
the HCD Study visit:**

[www.toronto.ca/city-government/
planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/
junction-phase-i-hcd-study/](http://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/junction-phase-i-hcd-study/)



SCAN FOR HCD WEBSITE

Contact: Clint Robertson, Heritage Planner - Clint.Robertson@toronto.ca or 416-396-4946



HERITAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT STUDY

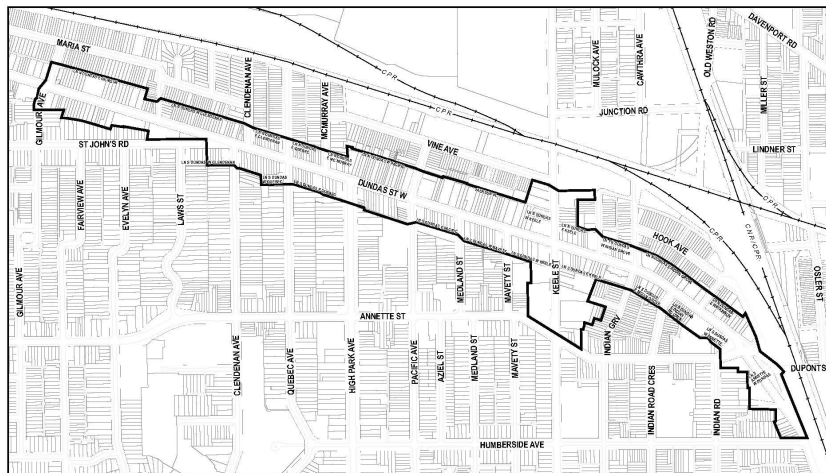
What is a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study?

The purpose of a HCD Study is to identify and assess the cultural heritage value and heritage attributes of the HCD Study Area. A HCD Study determines if the HCD Study Area, or areas within the Study Area, merit designation as a Heritage Conservation District Plan Area under Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

If the Study Area, or portions therein, is determined to merit designation as an HCD Plan area, a separate process for the development of an HCD Plan may be initiated. A HCD study develops recommendations for any future HCD Plan boundaries and objectives for any proposed HCD Plan.

If the Study Area, or portions therein, do not warrant HCD designation, the Study is to include recommendations for other heritage conservation measures.

A HCD Study assists in the development of a strategic approach to area heritage conservation.



The Junction Phase 1
Heritage Conservation District Study Area

□ Study Area Boundary

↑
Not to Scale

The HCD Study Area generally comprises Dundas Street West properties, between Gilmour Avenue (west) and Humberside Avenue (east), in addition to properties fronting onto and adjacent to Keele Street between Vine Avenue and Annette Street; also a small section of Annette Street between Keele Street and Indian Grove.



What will be included in the Study?

- Analysis of the cultural heritage value, character, and attributes of the area, including the identification of properties with and without heritage value (contributing and non-contributing properties)
- Review of the Archaeological resources in the area
- Analysis of Official Plan and current zoning provisions
- Community consultation including public meetings/ events, the formation of a Local Advisory Committee (LAC), and other consultation and feedback opportunities
- Indigenous engagement
- Recommendations of whether to pursue a future HCD Plan for the area, and if so, the boundaries and objectives of a Plan.
- Proposed conservation measures if a future HCD Plan is not recommended

HCD Plan (Phase 2)

If it is determined that the Study area merits an HCD Plan, the following will be included in the Plan phase (rather than this Study phase):

- Policies and guidelines more appropriate for any potential future HCD Plan including:
 - policies that specify what can or cannot be altered or demolished
 - policies that address the conservation of features of identified contributing properties
 - policies relating to the design of any new building or addition or landscaping

Note: Policies affecting the heights or densities of the area are not part of the HCD Study, nor a potential HCD Plan and are outside the scope of the HCD process.

HCD Study Background and Process

A HCD Study for West Toronto Junction was made active in 2023 as part of the City Planning Work Plan based on prior City Council direction to pursue a HCD Study.

EVOQ Architecture Inc. is leading the HCD Study. The consulting team comprises sub-consultants with expertise in urban planning, archaeology, Indigenous engagement, and facilitation and communication.

The HCD Study will be presented to the Toronto Preservation Board upon completion, likely in April 2026, but with that date subject to change.

There are currently 28 HCDs throughout the City of Toronto with another two HCD approved by City Council but under appeal.