UNIVERSITY AVENUE CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE STUDY

VOLUME A: REPORT

FINAL
NOVEMBER 21, 2025

PREPARED FOR
CITY OF TORONTO

CONTACT
COMMON BOND COLLECTIVE
340 KING ST E #239
TORONTO ON
M5A 1K8

COMMON BOND COLLECTIVE dtah

UNIVERSITY AVENUE CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE STUDY

VOLUME A: REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cover Image: Vik Pawha, 2021.

TABLE OF CONTENTS CONTINUED

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Common Bond Collective gratefully acknowledges the support and assistance from a number of individuals and organizations in preparing this report.

Thank you to owners and users of buildings fronting University Avenue who took time to meet with us and share their experiences of University Avenue, and to provide background information about their respective organizations. Their feedback informed several aspects of this report and was important in helping understand the role that University Avenue plays in the identity of the city. Thank you to Campbell House, Great West Life, Osgoode Hall, Royal Canadian Military Institute, University Club, and the University Health Network.

The study team would also like to acknowledge the support of City Planning staff at the City of Toronto for their attentive review and thoughtful comments on draft versions of this report.

The study team is grateful to staff at the City of Toronto Archives and the University of Guelph Archives who facilitated access to original materials created by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study was procured by the City of Toronto's City Planning Division in order to understand its cultural heritage value using a cultural landscape approach. The consultant team for the study was composed of Common Bond Collective (project management, research, stakeholder consultations, cultural landscape analysis and assessment, conservation objectives and recommendations) and DTAH (landscape architecture, current conditions, cultural landscape and urban design assessment).

The study area for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study is the public realm on University Avenue between Adelaide Street West and Queen's Park Crescent, and is primarily the twelve landscaped central islands completed in 1964. There are five monuments located on the central islands and while an assessment of the individual monuments was not part of the scope of work, a cultural analysis of their historical value as public art was completed as part of the project.

The study follows the process set out in the National Capital Commission, *Working with Cultural Landscapes: A Guide for the National Capital Region* (2023). This begins with gathering information, both historic and current, to identify cultural aspects and physical features of the place. This feeds into the historic evolution and analysis which in turn informs the evaluation to determine if a cultural landscape has heritage value.

The study began in January 2024 with a joint city-consultant team site review. This was followed by primary and secondary research. A technical memo describing the study area, its immediate surrounding context and historic evolution was produced for city review in July 2024. Stakeholder consultations with building owners and users were undertaken in August and September 2024. A second technical memo was produced in May 2025 which summarized the consultations, analyzed associations, ideas and practices associated with the study area, assessed their integrity and evaluated the study area.

Through this process the study identified the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape as an evolved landscape, whose various configurations over time reflect over 190 years of transformation while remaining a landmark civic avenue in Toronto. The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape has:

- Historical value, for its role in the development of the city, the province, and the nation as well as being an important public work by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson.
- Scientific value, as a place where internationally significant discoveries have been made.
- Cultural value, for its cultural traditions of public assembly related to democracy and expression.
- Social value, for its contributions to the identity of Toronto (both as a city and as the provincial capital), Ontario, and Canada.

These values as well as the tangible heritage attributes that are significant to University Avenue as a cultural heritage landscape are articulated in the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value. Following the Parks Canada, *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* (2010), rehabilitation was identified as the primary conservation treatment. The *Standards and Guidelines* defines rehabilitation as "The action or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of a historic place, or an individual component, while protecting its heritage value." Recommendations including development of a Conservation Plan and a Public Art Strategy were developed.

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study will inform future studies and activities pertaining to the study area which will include city-wide Indigenous and stakeholder consultations.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study was procured by the City of Toronto's City Planning Division in order to understand its cultural heritage value using a cultural landscape approach. It will inform future studies and activities pertaining to University Avenue such as, state of good repair requirements, potential street reconfiguration based on the Downtown Parks Realm Plan (TOCore Study), and environmental assessment(s).

The study area for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study is primarily the 12 landscaped islands located in the central median of University Avenue from Queen's Park Crescent to Adelaide Street, including areas within the right-of-way. The islands were designed by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson in 1961-2 and completed in 1964. This study also addresses the immediate surrounding context of the study area which includes adjacent properties on either side of the University Avenue as well as the front lawn of the Ontario Legislative Building, Osgoode Hall, Superior Court of Justice (361 University Avenue), and Toronto City Hall (Map 1).

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study is presented in two volumes:

- University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study - Volume A Report
- University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study - Volume B Appendices

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study - Volume A Report contains the following sections:

2.0 Consultant Team and Methodology. This section contains a description of the study team as well as archival institutions where research was conducted, and dates of site review.

3.0 Description of the Study Area. This section contains a narrative overview of the study area and provides a general description of the 12 landscaped islands including the public art.

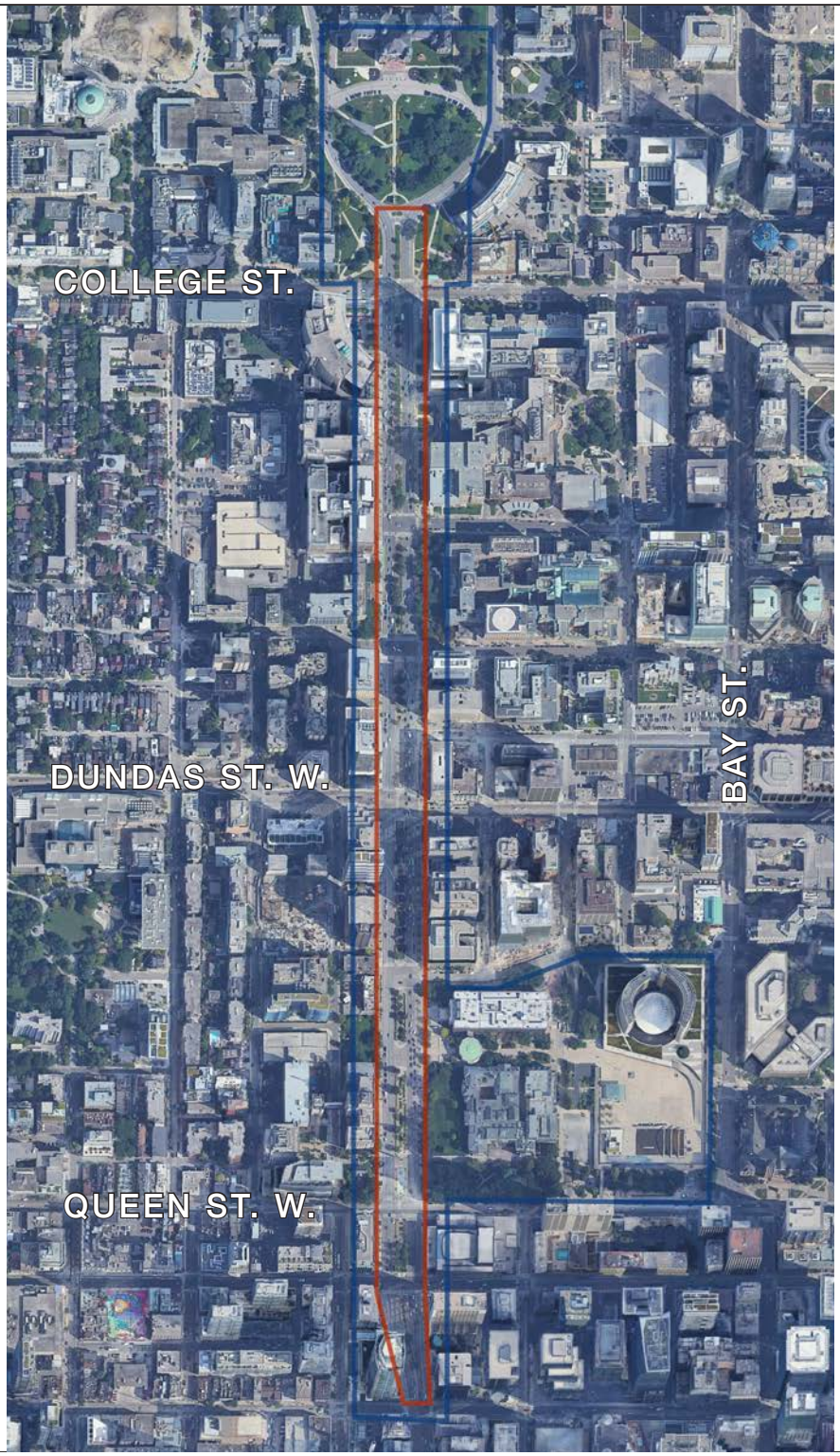
4.0 Description of Context. This section describes the evolution of the surrounding context including the dates of construction of the existing buildings.

5.0 Stakeholder Consultation Summary. This section describes the stakeholder consultation objectives, approach and provides a summary of pertinent comments.

6.0 Historic Overview. This section contains a narrative of the study area from pre-York period (pre-1793) to present. It includes in-text figure references.

7.0 Analysis. This section provides an analysis of the associations, ideas and practices that are critical to understanding the heritage value of University Avenue as a cultural heritage landscape. It is based on the information in the Historic Overview provided in Technical Memo #1, but examines specific topics in more depth.

MAP 1: LOCATION PLAN



Study Area Immediate Surrounding Context

Basemap: City of Toronto, CBCollective

0m 100m 200m

8.0 Integrity. This section provides an assessment of the integrity of the islands and identifies how well the ideas and practices that sustain the place are supported by its physical features and environment.

9.0 Assessment Against Criteria. This section evaluates the study area based on the analysis provided in Sections 7.0 and 8.0. In some instances, the assessment also includes the immediate context in order to incorporate feedback from stakeholders. The assessment follows the process set out in the National Capital Commission, *Working with Cultural Landscapes: A Guide for the National Capital Region* (January 2023) for identifying heritage value. It was completed jointly by Common Bond Collective and DTAH.

10.0 Statement of Cultural Heritage Value. The Statement of Cultural Heritage Value articulates the values, both tangible and intangible, that are significant to University Avenue as a cultural heritage landscape. It stems directly from the results of the evaluation and is informed by research, analysis and engagement conducted for the study.

11.0 Conservation Objectives, Guidelines and Recommendations. This section sets out the conservation objectives for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape and identifies the relevant Parks Canada standards and guidelines. This section also includes recommendations for further studies pertaining to the cultural heritage landscape.

12.0 Bibliography. This section includes citations for primary and secondary sources used in the development of the Historic Overview.

13.0 Figures. This section includes the captioned and credited images referenced in the Historic Overview.

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study - Volume B Appendices document contains:

Appendix A: 1948 Plans. Landscape plans of University Avenue created by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson for the City of Toronto.

Appendix B: 1961 Plan. Landscape plan showing the overall treatment of University Avenue by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson for Metropolitan Toronto.

Appendix C: 1962 Plans. Fifteen landscape plans of University Avenue created by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson for Metropolitan Toronto that include details for each island and a planting plan.

Appendix D: Archival Maps, Plans and Aerial Images of the Study Area. A series of maps, plans and aerials documenting the evolution of the study area from 1818 to 2022.

Appendix E: Island Description Sheets. A reference sheet for each island containing a description, its dimensions and conditions including alterations. Images of the 1962 landscape plans, the 1967 aerial and 2022 aerial are also included for each island.

Appendix F: Evolution of University Avenue. A series of diagrams showing the evolution of the Avenue from 1830 to 1963. Diagrams are primarily from Art of the Avenue and supplemented by plans from the City of Toronto Archives.

Appendix G: University Avenue Chronology. A referenced chronology of University Avenue from 1797 to 1984.

1.1 TERMINOLOGY

In describing current conditions, this report uses the term 'islands' to refer to the central medians. The Historic Overview uses the historic terms which were used to describe the configuration of University Avenue at different time periods such as 'boulevard' and 'medians'.

The 1961 Dunington-Grubb & Stensson plan referred to the central median as a series of islands and identified them alphabetically, beginning at Adelaide Street West (Island A) and moving north to Queen's Park (Island L). This report uses the same naming convention.

1.2 ACRONYMS

The following acronyms are used in this report:

CAA Canadian Architectural Archives

COTA City of Toronto Archives

LAC Library and Archives Canada

PFR Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, City of Toronto

TPL Toronto Public Library

TRL Toronto Reference Library

UOGA University of Guelph Archives

UTTF University of Toronto Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

UTMD University of Toronto Map & Data Library

UTA University of Toronto Archives

1.3 MAPS & FIGURES

This report uses two types of graphics to illustrate the text - maps and figures. Maps refer to mapping created specifically for this study, showing the entire study area with appropriate area boundaries and other information. Maps are embedded throughout the report body in appropriate locations. Figures comprise a variety of visual materials used to illustrate the text, such as archival images, archival maps and plans, or other found materials. Figures are contained in Section 13.0.

1.4 STREET NAMES

Many of the streets addressed in this memo have had multiple names over Toronto's history, as listed in the table below. In the Historic Overview section, University Avenue is referred to as College Avenue from its inception until 1887, after which its current name is used. More detail is provided in Section 6.5.

Current Street Name	Previous Names
University Avenue	College Avenue, Queen Street Avenue
College Street	Yonge Street Avenue
Queen Street West	Lot Street
n/a	Park Lane; University Street

Table 1: List of current and previous street names.

2.0 CONSULTANT TEAM & METHODOLOGY

The consultant team for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study was composed of Common Bond Collective (project management, research, stakeholder consultations, cultural landscape analysis and assessment, conservation objectives and recommendations) and DTAH (landscape architecture, current conditions, cultural landscape and urban design assessment).

The Common Bond Collective team was composed of David Deo (BA, Dipl. Heritage Conservation, CAHP) and Ellen Kowalchuk (MA, CAHP) both partners at Common Bond Collective. The DTAH team was composed of Brent Raymond (OALA, FCSLA, ASLA, MCIP, RPP) Urban Design Partner-in-Charge, Peter Fletcher Smith (OALS, FCSLA) Heritage Landscape Advisor, and Colin Berman (OALA, CSLA, MALA) Urban Design Project Manager.

The project began in February 2024 with a study team review of background documents provided by the City of Toronto. This was followed by a site review on March 21, 2024 with City Planning and the consultant team. Then, in-person research was conducted at the City of Toronto Archives, University of Guelph Archives and Toronto Reference Library where records pertaining to the design of the current landscape were reviewed and copied. This included drawings, plans, correspondence and photographs created by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson, the City of Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto. On-line research was conducted at the City of Toronto Archives and Toronto Public Library which included review of Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board annual publications (1953-1965), aerial photography (1939-1992) and still photography (1867-2001). See Section 12.0 for a full list of sources.

A visual inspection of the study area and immediate surrounding context was conducted by Common Bond Collective on June 11, 2024. Consultations with building owners and users were undertaken in August and September 2024 (see Section 5.0).

The research, fieldwork and consultants informed the historical overview (see Section 6.0) tracing the history of the study area's development. This was followed by an analysis of the islands' physical designs, as well as the intangible associations and practices associated with University Avenue throughout its history (see Section 7.0). This was followed by an integrity assessment, which in keeping with the NCC Guide considered the strengths of the site's significant cultural ideas, in addition to the integrity of the central median's design (see Section 8.0).

Following completion of these sections, the study area was assessed as a cultural landscape using the criteria provided by the NCC Guide (see Section 9.0), and a Statement of Cultural Heritage Value was prepared based on the results (see Section 10.0). Finally, based on the values identified, recommendations were made for conservation of the site within a cultural heritage landscape context (see Section 11.0).

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF STUDY AREA

3.1 OVERVIEW

The study area for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape Study is the public realm on University Avenue between Adelaide Street West and Queen's Park Crescent including the twelve landscaped central islands designed by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson in 1961-2 and completed in 1964.

University Avenue is a major north-south road running between Queen's Park Crescent and Front Street in downtown Toronto. It commences at the intersection of Front and York streets near Union Station and heads in a slight northwest direction to Adelaide Street West before heading straight north to College Street where it splits into Queen's Park Crescent East (northbound lanes) and Queen's Park Crescent West (southbound lanes). At Adelaide Street West, University Avenue divides slightly, creating space for a central median containing twelve islands of varying lengths.

University Avenue is classified by the City of Toronto as a major arterial meaning that traffic movement is its primary function. The Avenue intersects with several major cross streets: Front Street; Wellington Street; King Street; Adelaide Street West; Richmond Street West; Queen Street West, Dundas Street West and College Street. Of these, Adelaide Street West, Queen Street West, Dundas Street West and College Street are within the study area (Map 1).

The study area contains twelve islands located in the centre of University Avenue between Adelaide Street West and Queen's Park Crescent. The study area also contains six pieces of public art, five are located on the islands and one on the grounds of the Ontario Legislative Building. Islands B, C, E, G and K also contain TTC ventilation ducts.

Overall the treatment of the islands is a modernist, geometric and dichromatic approach that uses a common set of architectural elements and materials in a variety of combinations to create a unique design for each island.

Raised planting boxes (450-900mm height) and planting beds are common to all islands. Generally, planting boxes are located on the exterior of the islands, creating protected areas on the interiors for public use. Raised planters are clad in various combinations of slate and pre-cast concrete with exposed aggregate. The slate portions of raised planter walls typically have limestone coping and the precast sections have no coping. Where the raised planting boxes are located on the interiors of the islands, they are clad in precast exposed aggregate on all sides. Some sections of raised planters have been replaced by cast-in-place concrete. Where raised planters abut lawn, they typically include a precast concrete soldier course. Lower planting beds are also common elements in the islands, and are typically edged with unit paving or limestone.

The ground plane of the interiors of the islands are typically treated with a combination of sod panels and exposed aggregate unit pavers usually in dichromatic colours. Other paving materials include natural flagstone pavers (Island E) and sandstone pavers (Island K) but these are the only two instances of these materials used for surfaces. Many sections of original precast concrete paving remain but many sections have been replaced with new paving materials that do not match the original ones, such as commercially available precast concrete pavers or cast-in-place concrete with a broom finish.

The interiors often include benches, waste receptacles and lighting. All the islands have concrete curbs and gutters. Several of the islands contain one or more sets of stairs, in part to accommodate the change in grade (75 feet from Front to College streets). The stairs are monolithic limestone.

Several islands contain standalone planters used for trees and annuals. While many of the original planters used for trees remain, the only original planters for annuals are located on Island H which contains four triangular limestone planters. Island E contains a grouping of planters of varying size but these do not appear to be original to its design. Other islands contain commercially available contemporary black planters that are commonly found in other parts of the city, particularly on major city streets.

Some original limestone benches remain, positioned in niches in the raised planters. There are many niches that no longer have a bench, presumably because the bench was broken and never repaired or replaced. Most benches in the islands are contemporary City of Toronto standard park benches that have been mounted on original paving or new cast-in-place concrete pads.

Two of the islands have been substantially altered from their original Dunington-Grubb & Stensson designs. Island L was completely redesigned inside the exposed aggregate border c.1978, while the original north and south ends have been replaced by concrete sidewalks. Island F was rebuilt c.2018, with its original layout and design significantly modified by a new design only marginally reflecting the layout, design and materials of the original.

The condition of the islands are generally poor, due to age, damage from use, and lack of maintenance. Where repairs have been undertaken, they have been done as inexpensively as possible rather than to restore the original features. Many sections of raised planter walls are heaving, have failing joints and are out of plumb. Original paving is heaving, spalling, and chipping. Natural stone planter walls, coping, stairs and paving are cracked, flaking, and spalling. Of all the original materials, the vertical, green limestone slabs and exposed aggregate precast concrete features are in the best condition.

The following five islands contain public art:

Island B - The Sir Adam Beck statue (Emanuel Hahn, 1929-34) is located in the centre of the island at its mid-point and faces north.[1]

Island C - The South African War Memorial (Walter Allward, 1903-1910) is usually located at the south end of Island C facing south. However it has been temporarily removed due to construction of the Ontario Line.[2]

Island E - The Canadian Airmen's Memorial (Oscar Nemon, 1978-1984) is located at the north end of the island facing north.[3]

Island G - The Sons of England War Monument (Charles Adamson, 1921-1923) is located at the north end of the island facing north. It was originally located south of College Street and moved to its current location in 1949 when the central boulevard was realigned.[4]

Island K - The Robert Saunders monument (K.H. Candy/Emanual Hahn, 1955-1957) is located at the north end of the island and faces north.[5]

Additionally, the front lawn of the Ontario Legislative Building contains a statue of Sir John A. Macdonald (Hamilton MacCarthy, 1891-1894).[6]

3.2 EXISTING CULTURAL LANDSCAPE RECOGNITIONS

The Cultural Landscape Foundation has identified University Avenue as a cultural landscape with the following description:

> Framing views of the Romanesque Revival Ontario Legislative Building, this one-mile-long boulevard stretching between Union Station and the University of Toronto was originally designed as a toll-road adjacent to the Osgoode Hall Law School. Laid out on a rural tract in 1828 by surveyor J.G. Chewett, the fenced, 40-meter-wide avenue comprised a centralized carriageway flanked by boulevards and guarded by a gatehouse. A year later, landscape gardener André Parmentier lined the short avenue with shrubs and more than 500 pink chestnuts imported from his Brooklyn nursery. By the 1920s the roadway had been realigned, converted into a major traffic artery, and extended to connect Queen's Park on the north to Front Street on the south.
>
> Construction of the rapid transit system in the 1950s and the growth of

1 *Art of the Avenue*, p. 150.
2 Ibid., p. 144.
3 Ibid., p. 163.
4 Ibid., p. 146.
5 Ibid., p. 154.
6 Ibid., p. 138.

> neighboring academic and governmental institutions spurred the redevelopment of University Avenue. In 1961 Howard Dunington-Grubb & J.V. Stensson submitted a design that included civic squares, lawns, raised garden beds, and fountains. The City rejected the plan but accepted a scaled-back, more unified version a year later. Stretching the length of the avenue, eleven diversely designed, sculpted islands were laid out in the median flanked on either side by two lanes of traffic. Punctuated by five fountains, two pools, and numerous monuments, the central median is united by intricate paving, globe elms, and raised planting beds. Seating elements disguise the ventilation system from the subway below and concrete planters protect plants from winter road salt. The fountains, capped in 2009 to curb leakage, were restored in 2013.[7]

Additionally, the landscape in front of the Toronto Courthouse at 361 University Avenue is included on the Cultural Landscape Foundation website with the following description:

> Extending the length of one city block and serving as the ceremonial pedestrian access from University Avenue to Nathan Phillips Square, this pedestrian mall comprises a fountain court and sculpture garden between Osgoode Hall and the Toronto Courthouse. Named for R. Roy Mc Murtry, a former chief justice and an attorney general of Ontario, the mall was designed by Michael Hough and opened in 1966, coincident with the completion of the courthouse.
>
> The west extent of the mall is anchored by a wide, multi-level paved plaza, whose elevated sections serve as a forecourt to the courthouse. Bordered by raised planting beds, the northern section—paved with brick and enclosed by limestone benches —is interspersed with a grid of honey locust in cobblestone-lined planting beds; the southern section serves as a podium for The Pillars of Justice, a steel sculpture by Edwina Sandys that comprises eleven anthropomorphic figures representing members of a jury. Flanking the plaza and connecting to Nathan Phillips Square, the mall extends through a passageway formed by a dodecagonal wing of the courthouse added in 1985. The western extent is framed by two square, raised pools, each with four fountain jets. The axis of the mall is reinforced intermittently by planting beds and sculptures, three of which were added in 2012: Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Expression (both by Marlene Hilton Moore) frame the eastern entrance to the passageway, while Equal Before the Law, by Eldon Garnet, is at the end, facing Nathan Phillips Square. The mall and Gardens of Justice were refurbished in 2007 by Taylor Hazell Architects.[8]

7 Cultural Landscape Foundation, "University Avenue - Toronto," Accessed at https://www.tclf.org/landscapes/university-avenue-toronto, June 4, 2024.

8 Cultural Landscape Foundation, "McMurtry Gardens of Justice," https://www.tclf.org/landscapes/mcmurtry-gardens-justice Accessed June 28, 2024.

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

There are no areas of archaeological potential within the study area, however there are areas of potential in the immediate surrounding context (Map 2). These are at the southern end of the surrounding context, between Armoury and Front streets along both sides of University Avenue.

3.4 VIEWS IDENTIFIED UNDER THE OFFICIAL PLAN

The study area also corresponds to a view of the Ontario Legislature Building from the public realm as identified in the Toronto Official Plan. The view is identified as A1 Queens Park Legislature on the description of views provided in Schedule 4 (under Prominent and Heritage Buildings, Structures and Landscapes).[9] Per Map 7B, the identified view is numbered A1, and extends north from the study area to the Ontario Legislature Building.[10]

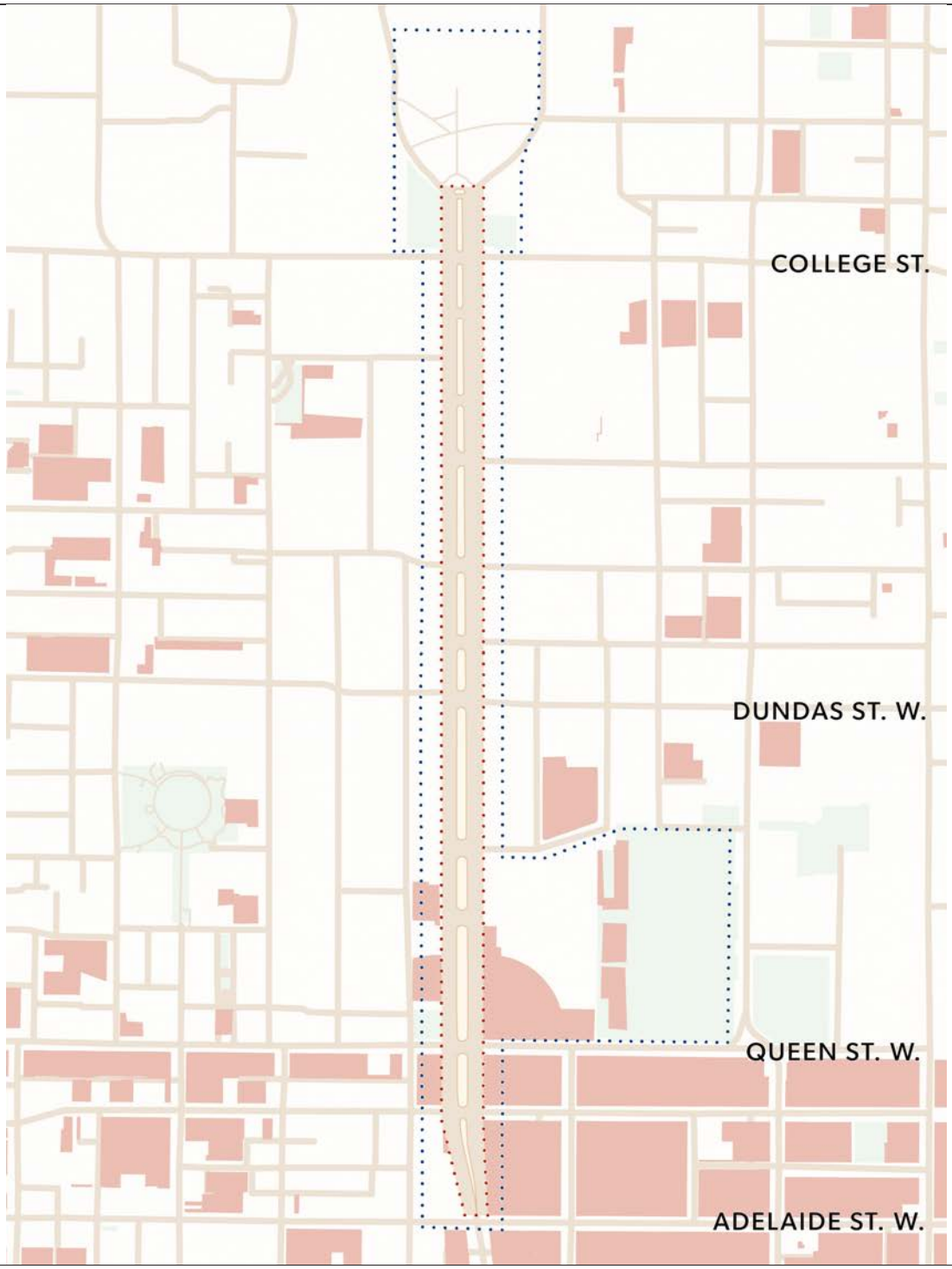
As a view to a significant heritage property, it is subject to the policies set out in Section 3.1.1 and 3.1.5 of the Official Plan. Site and Area Specific Policy 398 describes protections to the various silhouettes of the Ontario Legislature Building as observed from University Avenue, from vantage points at College Street and Queen Street West.[11]

9 "Toronto Official Plan Schedule 4: Description of Views," p. S4-1.

10 "Toronto Official Plan Map 7B Identified Views from the Public Realm."

11 "Toronto Official Plan Chapter 7: Site and Area Specific Policies December 2024 Office Consolidation," p. 168.

MAP 2: ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL



Archaeological Potential

Study Area

Immediate Surrounding Context

Basemap: City of Toronto, CBCollective

0m 100m 200m

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF CONTEXT

University Avenue is situated in downtown Toronto, running between Queen's Park and the financial district. The study area is limited to the portion of University Avenue running between the south end of Queen's Park, and the northern limit of Adelaide Street West. University Avenue continues south of the study area to connect with Front Street West adjacent to Union Station. North of the study area, University Avenue splits into Queen's Park Crescent East and West, which converge again north of the park to become Queen's Park, before turning into Avenue Road north of Bloor Street West.

The study area spans two City wards (University Rosedale and Spadina Fort-York), and is located within three City neighbourhoods (Kensington-Chinatown, Yonge-Bay Corridor, and University). Immediately north of the study area is Queen's Park and the Ontario Legislative Building, with provincial office complexes to the northeast. The University of Toronto's St. George campus is located to the northwest. The areas east, west and south of the study area are dense and typically comprised of large developments with office, financial, institutional, healthcare, or residential uses.

4.1 IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The buildings lining University Avenue form an important part of the University Avenue streetscape. These buildings are located within the 'immediate surrounding context' area, as defined by the City and shown on Map 1.

4.1.1 EVOLUTION OF IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The study area's context has changed dramatically over its history, evolving from an undeveloped colonial hinterland to a thriving and dense downtown area. Over time, the changes to the immediate surrounding context have been interrelated with the evolution of University Avenue's function and identity. Various archival plans showing the evolution of the immediate surrounding context area are included in Appendix D. Dates of construction for extant buildings touching the immediate surrounding context area are given in tables below.

1833 - 1857

The study area's origins date to 1833, when College Avenue[12] was completed as a formal *allée* landscape providing a processional route between the Town of York and the future university lands. The full length of College Avenue was fenced off from its surroundings, which were initially rural in character. As Toronto grew north in the 1830s, 40s and 50s, the study area was gradually surrounded by the fabric of the expanding city, characterized by residential neighbourhoods of modest frame dwellings east of College Avenue. In the 1850s the University of Toronto vacated its original site at the head of the Avenue, weakening the study area's relationship with the institution that created it.

12 University Avenue was historically known as College Avenue. See Section 1.4 for a summary of historic street names used in this report.

The following existing buildings were constructed during this period:

Address	Current Name	Earliest Date of Construction
160 Queen Street West	Sir William Campbell House Museum	1822[13]
130 Queen Street West	Osgoode Hall	1829
188 University Avenue	Pretzel Bell Tavern / Bishop's Block / Bishop's Buildings	1829

Table 2: Buildings constructed between 1833 and 1857.

1858 - 1887

By 1858 College Avenue had become an important urban amenity as parkspace for Torontotonians, and was related as parkland to Queen's Park and Yonge Street Avenue[14] through a lease by the City. College Avenue remained fenced-off from its surroundings, which by the 1880s had matured into residential neighbourhoods of varying economic status. To the east,churches and modest frame dwellings continued to be built. To the west were dwellings, churches and a school, with larger lots and a higher proportion of brick structures than the east side.

None of the existing buildings were constructed during this period.

1888 - 1927

Toronto's continued growth over this period meant that the study area was now centrally located within an emerging metropolis. At the same time, a number of significant government and institutional developments adjacent to the study area imparted a strong civic dimension to University Avenue and its surrounding context. These included the Toronto Armories (built 1893; not extant), Toronto General Hospital, and most importantly, the Ontario Legislative Building. The latter provided a monumental civic building at the Avenue's north end, symbolizing the new civic identity and its role as the ceremonial boulevard to the legislature. High architectural styles became common in the design of buildings during this period, such as Richardson Romanesque and Edwardian revivals. Development generally started tending toward brick rather than frame construction, as civic / institutional buildings replaced dwellings on smaller properties as well. A significant redesign of University Avenue in 1913 integrated the parkway with the surrounding urban fabric, reversing decades of separation and finally allowing cross-streets to pass.

13 This date refers to Campbell House's original construction at Adelaide and Frederick streets. The structure was moved to its current site in 1972.

14 College Street was historically known as Yonge Street Avenue. See Section 1.4 for a summary of historic street names used in this report.

The following existing buildings were constructed during this period:

Address	Current Name	Earliest Date of Construction
426 University Avenue	Residences at Royal Canadian Military Institute (RCMI)	1890
1 Queen's Park	Ontario Legislative Building / Queen's Park / Provincial Parliament Building	1892
101 College Street	Toronto General Hospital; College Street Wing	1913
620 University Avenue	Princess Margaret Hospital	1915

Table 3: Buildings constructed between 1888 and 1927.

1928 - 1946

In 1931 University Avenue was extended southeast to Front Street West, formally establishing the street as a major thoroughfare connecting Union Station and the financial district with Queen's Park and areas further north. In conjunction with this new role, by-law #13409 established building controls for all construction in the immediate surrounding context seeking to foster a cohesive and conservative streetscape. The imposing Canada Life Building signified a new corporate interest in University Avenue, and with the Hydro-Electric Building established the office tower on the Avenue. Together with the University Club they conveyed the conservative revival styles and reliance on masonry that characterized recent development (despite preceding the by-law). A description of the Canada Life Building's location conveys the prestige and conservative nature of University Avenue and its surrounding addresses by the early 1930s:

> *Not alone in width, length and direction is University Avenue important. It is the artery about which are clustered many of Toronto's most impressive buildings. It takes its name from the University of Toronto group at its extreme north. The Parliament Buildings, the Toronto General Hospital and the Conservatory of Music are all University Avenue buildings, while further to the south are Sproatt and Rolph's Oxford University Press building a beautiful essay in the Tudor style, Marani and Lawson's Abitibi and Provincial Paper Company's buildings delightful examples of Classic adaptation, and Mathers and Haldenby's charmingly "Adamesque" University Club.*[15]

15 Sinaiticus, "Canada Life Building, Toronto," *Construction (Toronto),* (April 1931), pp. 113-114.

The following existing buildings were constructed during this period:

Address	Current Name	Earliest Date of Construction
330 University Avenue	Canada Life Building / Canada Life Assurance Company Building	1931
380 University Avenue	University Club of Toronto	1931
6 Queen's Park Crescent West	Tanz Neuroscience Building / University of Toronto Saint George Campus; C. David Naylor Building	1931

Table 4: Buildings constructed between 1928 and 1946.

1947 - 1953

Two hospitals were constructed during this short period, signifying the emergence of an institutional healthcare district on University Avenue. The United States Consulate building was also constructed, continuing the Avenue's civic trend.

The following existing buildings were constructed during this period:

Address	Current Name	Earliest Date of Construction
555 University Avenue	Hospital For Sick Children	1949
550 University Avenue	Toronto Rehab Hospital / Queen Elizabeth Hospital / New Mount Sinai Hospital	1952
360 University Avenue	United States Consulate General	c.1953

Table 5: Buildings constructed between 1947 and 1953.

1954 - Present

Most of the buildings in the immediate surrounding context date from this period, as do many additions to existing buildings. Those constructed during this period were typically mid- or high-rise developments, overwhelmingly reflecting modernism as an architectural style. Modern classicism in particular played a significant role in defining University Avenue's streetscape In the late 1950s and early 1960s. The tenets of the style, emphasizing mass, horizontality, noble masonry materials, and relief sculpture conveyed a conservative aesthetic that was embraced by government / financial institutions, while also being compatible with the aesthetic ambitions laid out in by-law #13409. By the early 1960s the by-law had been successfully challenged, opening the door to new massings, materials and setbacks on University Avenue, first under the International Style, but then expanding to include brutalism and late modernism, usually for corporate or financial entities. Hospital development also continued during this period.

The following existing buildings were constructed during this period:

Address	Current Name	Earliest Date of Construction
375 University Avenue	University Centre	c.1954
250 University Avenue	Bank of Canada Building	1958
443 University Avenue	443 University Avenue	c.1958
505 University Avenue	Shell Oil Building	1958
500 University Avenue	University of Toronto Saint George Campus; Rehabilitation Sciences Building / Centre for Function and Well-Being	1958
621 University Avenue	Norman Urquhart Wing	1959
200 University Avenue	Sun Life Building	1961
481 University Avenue	Maclean Hunter Building / McClelland and Stewart House	1961
100 Queen Street West	City Hall	1965
361 University Avenue	Toronto Courthouse / Metropolitan Toronto Court House	1966
7 Queen's Park Crescent East	Ministry of Finance	1965
488 University Avenue	Global House	1968
400 University Avenue	Bank of Zurich Building / Traveller's Tower	1971
522 University Avenue	National Life Building	1972
439 University Avenue	Phoenix Building	1973
181 University Avenue	ING Tower / Guardian of Canada Tower / Adelaide Place	1974
600 University Avenue	Mount Sinai Hospital	1974
145 Richmond Street West	Hilton International Toronto / Hotel Toronto / Toronto Hilton Hotel	1975
393 University Avenue	University Centre / Bell Canada Building	1976
425 University Avenue	425 University Avenue	c.1976
700 University Avenue	Ontario Power Building / Ontario Hydro Building / Hydro Place	1976
525 University Avenue	AT&T Canada / Credit Suisse Centre	1990

Address	Current Name	Earliest Date of Construction
438 University Avenue	438 University Avenue	1991
144 College Street	University of Toronto Saint George Campus; Leslie L. Dan Pharmacy Building	2006
145 Queen Street West	Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts	2006

Table 6: Buildings constructed between 1954 and present.

4.1.2 DESCRIPTION OF IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The study area is surrounded by a collection of buildings, and several landscapes reflecting the historical development of University Avenue, and other nearby areas including the University of Toronto St. George campus, Queen's Park, and the financial district.

Built Form

While some structures date to the early 19th century, there are no obvious remnants of the later 19th century residential dwellings that once lined both sides of the study area. Instead, the vast majority of extant buildings bordering the study area were built following 1892, when University Avenue first developed a strong civic identity. As such the buildings in the immediate surrounding context are generally prominent structures, reflecting architect designs and high styles, and are associated with significant institutions in the history of the city and province.

The immediate surrounding context is dense, with slightly over half the buildings being high-rise, with the rest split between mid- and low-rise. In many cases sites have been intensified over time, and contain numerous additions. In general, buildings are directly adjacent and have minimal setbacks resulting in a well-defined streetwall, with some exceptions between Queen Street West and Armory Street. Building materials are typically masonry, with more contemporary materials used on structures from the 1960s and later. A diverse range of architectural styles are reflected, with conservative styles (referencing classical proportion, design and materiality), and various modern styles predominating. Between Richmond and Elm streets are a number of limestone clad buildings that together reflect the intentions of the 1931 design control by-law.

Building types are primarily commercial offices, civic / institutional buildings, and healthcare facilities, but also include residences, hotels, museums and clubs. Some uses are clustered - hospitals are heavily concentrated between Elm and College streets, and commercial buildings predominate south of Elm Street.

Provincial government buildings such as the Ministry of Finance building are close to the Ontario Legislative Building. This area forms a broader civic precinct with

the Queen's Park parkland, and other provincial government buildings beyond the immediate surrounding context such as the MacDonald Block and Whitney Block.

Another notable cluster of important civic sites is located northeast of Queen Street West and University Avenue. It includes judicial and municipal sites such as Osgoode Hall law offices and courts, the Toronto Courthouse at 361 University Avenue, and Toronto City Hall with Nathan Phillips Square. These three sites are linked thematically through their important public functions; aesthetically, through significant and historic high-quality architecture; and physically, through interconnected and publicly accessible landscaping. Adjacent to this area but beyond the immediate surrounding context are other judicial and municipal sites, namely the new Toronto Ontario Court of Justice building and Old City Hall, both of which contribute to the civic character.

Landscape

Despite minimal setbacks predominating throughout the immediate surrounding context several exceptions to this condition result in notable landscape conditions. The Hospital for Sick Children's west entry is set back from the property line, allowing for a curved driveway with plantings, grass and trees. A small landscape with grass and plantings is also found on the block directly north.

North of Queen Street West, several significant landscape conditions define a unique local context. Osgoode Hall and Campbell House are both set back from University Avenue and Queen Street West, and feature grassed landscapes with plantings and trees. Both sites are fenced but usually open to the public. The Canada Life Building lacks a significant setback but the site contains a generous grassed area fenced in north of the building.

The Toronto Courthouse is set back to roughly match that of Osgoode Hall's University Avenue frontage. A modernist hard-scape plaza designed by landscape architect Michael Hough is located within the setback, connected to a related pedestrian mall along the courthouse's south elevation. Conceived while University Avenue and Toronto City Hall were under construction, the courthouse landscape was designed to complement and link these monumental civic spaces. This was achieved through a compatible modernist design, and provision of a pedestrian mall to physically connect the two spaces.

Nathan Phillips Square comprises the civic landscape component of the Toronto City Hall site, located directly east of Osgoode Hall and the Toronto Courthouse. The civic square is a modernist open landscape occupying most of the City Hall site. It contains a large pool/skating rink, accessory structure and an elevated colonnaded walkway. A Spirit Garden honouring those affected by Canada's residential school system is currently under construction on the west end of the square. The design features sculpture as well as teaching, learning, sharing and healing space. Nathan Phillips Square is an important civic site of public identity and gathering.

Taken together, these landscapes immediately north of Queen Street West help define a unique local context, both in their relief from unbroken streetwalls predominating elsewhere, and in their pedestrian connections to nearby sites.

Street System

The study area intersects with three important Toronto streets - College Street, Dundas Street West and Queen Street West. These points represent major intersections within the study area, all contain streetcar tracks crossing University Avenue and also offer connections to subway stations.

4.1.3 TOCORE AND DOWNTOWN PARKS & PUBLIC REALM PLAN

In 2014 the City of Toronto initiated the TOcore study, which resulted in the Proposed Downtown Plan (August 18, 2017). As a part of this work, the Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan (PPRP) was developed. The PPRP proposes a framework of strategies to guide the expansion and transformation of Toronto's public spaces through five transformational ideas informed by four objectives. Two of these transformational ideas relate to the study area's context - those pertaining to great streets, and two important civic precincts.

Great Streets

The PPRP identifies Great Streets as those in the downtown core that have civic and historical significance, contribute to the public realm network, and foster important connections in the city core. University Avenue is identified as a Great Street. The plan seeks to reinforce the identity and characteristics of Great Streets, highlight their cultural heritage, and enhance their contributions to the downtown parks and public realm systems. It specifically identifies the potential to re-imagine University Avenue as an outstanding civic place and connector for public life. The study area intersects with other Great Streets in two instances: Queen Street West, and College Street.

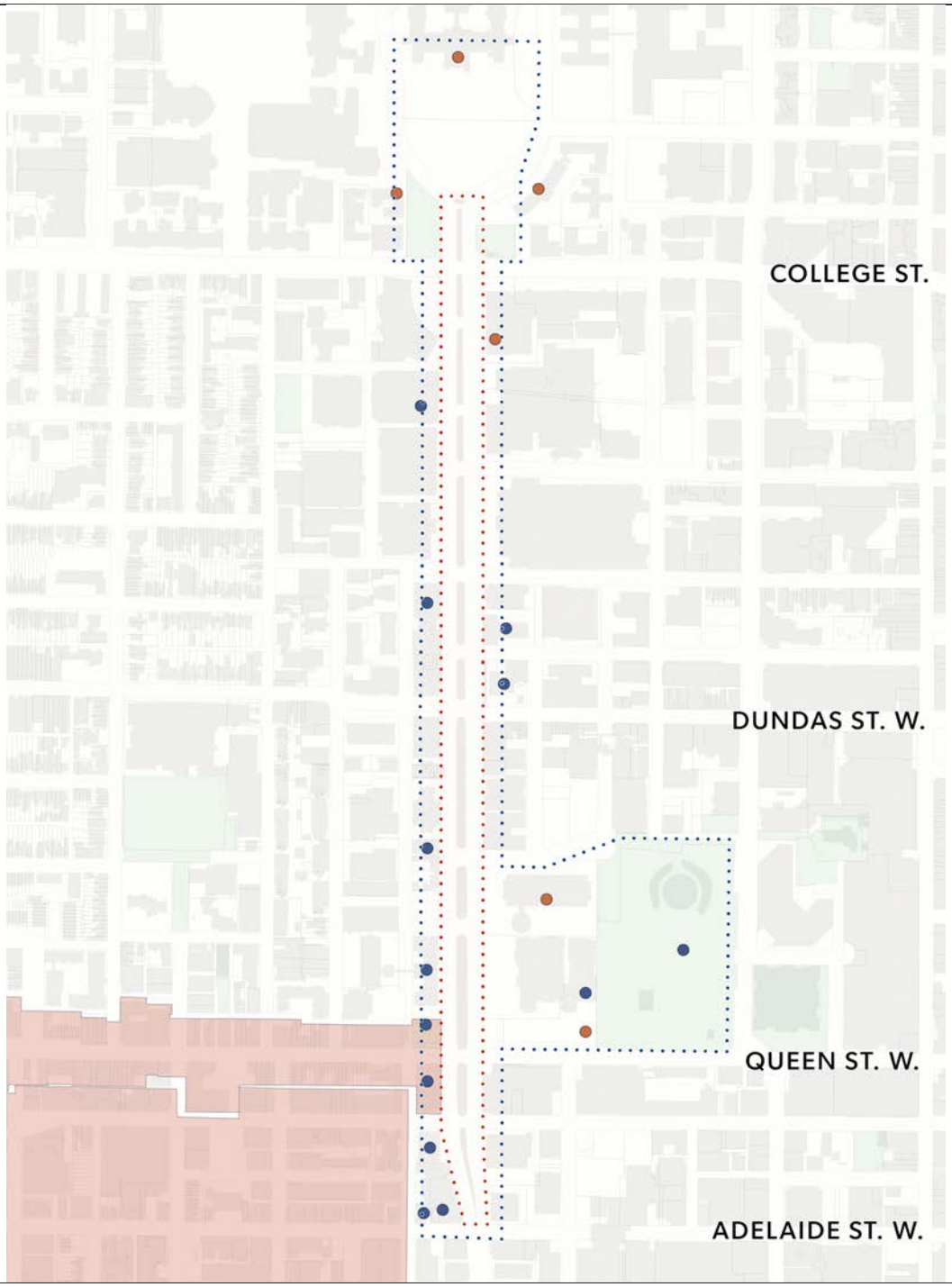
The Queen's Park Precinct and Civic Precinct

The PPRP identifies these two precincts as important parks and public spaces centred on significant civic buildings. The Plan seeks to reinforce the important civic function and identity of these precincts through public realm design.

4.1.4 PROPERTIES ON THE MUNICIPAL HERITAGE REGISTER

The immediate surrounding context contains numerous properties on the City's Heritage Register (Map 3). Additionally, the Queen Street West Heritage Conservation District extends into the immediate surrounding context, and the King-Spadina heritage conservation district is adjacent to it.

MAP 3: MUNICIPAL HERITAGE REGISTER



- Listed under OHA s. 27
- Designated under OHA s. 29
- Study Area
- Heritage Conservation Districts
- Immediate Surrounding Context

Basemap: City of Toronto, CBCollective

0m 100m 200m

The following properties are included on the City's Heritage Register under Part IV, s.27 of the Ontario Heritage Act (listed):

Address	Register Building Name	Date of Construction
130 Queen Street West	Osgoode Hall fence & gates	1866
1 Queen's Park	Ontario Legislature Building / Lennox Library, Waite West Wing	1892
657 University Avenue	Toronto General Hospital	n/a
6 Queen's Park Crescent West	Botany Building	n/a
7 Queen's Park Crescent East	Toronto Psychiatric Hospital	1925[16]
361 University Avenue	Toronto Courthouse	1966

Table 7: Properties included on the City's Heritage Register under Part IV, s.27 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The following properties are designated under Part IV, s.29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

Address	Register Building Name	Date of Construction
160 Queen Street West	Campbell House	1822
130 Queen Street West	East wing of Osgoode Hall	1829
188 University Avenue / 192 Adelaide Street West	Bishop's Block, Pretzel Bell Tavern	1829
130 Queen Street West	Toronto General Hospital	1913
610/620 University Avenue	Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario Building	1915
330 University Avenue	Canada Life Building	1931
380 University Avenue	University Club of Toronto	1931
250 University Avenue	The Bank of Canada Building	1958
505 University Avenue	Shell Oil Building	1958
200 University Avenue	Sunlife Building	1961
481 University Avenue	Maclean-Hunter Building (1961) / Maclean Publishing Company Building (1928)	1961
100 Queen Street West	City Hall	1965
522 University Avenue	National Life Building	1974

Table 8: Properties included on the City's Heritage Register under Part IV, s.29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

16 The extant building associated with this date is located outside the immediate surrounding context, however this address is included in the listing, which also includes 2 Surrey Place.

5.0 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Stakeholder consultation was targeted and undertaken solely for the purposes of informing the Cultural Heritage Landscape Study. City-wide Indigenous and stakeholder consultation would be required as part of environmental assessment processes related to any significant changes to the study area.

As a first step, a stakeholder plan was created by Common Bond Collective in collaboration with the City of Toronto. The plan identified stakeholders in the immediate context of the study area, as well as the objective of the consultation meeting. The stakeholder consultations had two overall objectives. First, to understand how the stakeholders regarded the central median and islands - whether they were used as amenities by staff, and whether they contribute in any way, positive or negative, to their identity. Second, to understand the importance, if any, of University Avenue to the identity of the stakeholder. The following meetings were conducted with stakeholders:

- Great West Life - 2024.08.13 (Virtual)
- Campbell House - 2024.08.14 (In person)
- Royal Canadian Military Institute - 2024.08.28 (In person)
- University Health Network - 2024.09.12 (Virtual)
- Osgoode Hall - 2024.09.12 (In person)
- University Club - 2024.08.22 (By email)

Stakeholders were provided with a list of questions prior to the meeting. They were asked to:

- Provide a brief overview of their organization's history - when was it founded and why, previous location(s).
- Describe the reason for their organization's location on University Avenue.
- Describe whether there are aspects of University Avenue that make it an important address? Have these aspects changed or evolved over time?
- Describe whether aspects of University Avenue (islands, median, width, length) contribute in any way, positive or negative, to the identity of their organization.
- Whether there are other historic buildings on University Avenue that are important to the identity of their organization.

Overall, the stakeholders responded that the islands/median were not viewed or used as amenities, generally due to the difficulty in accessing them. In one instance, the median was viewed as a barrier to establishing relationships with organizations and associations located east of University Avenue.

Regarding the importance of University Avenue to the identity of their organization, both Great West Life (GWL) and University Health Network (UHN) indicated that it was very significant. GWL indicated that their flagship building at 330 University Avenue was extremely important to their corporate brand and to stakeholders. They noted that University Avenue was the widest and most prominent street in Toronto, that it felt different from other parts of the city, and that it was a 'high quality street.' They also felt that the width of the street provided space to view and appreciate the building.

Similarly, UHN said their location was integral to their brand as 'University' is part of their name. They noted that University Avenue had cache, and that was important when recruiting medical professionals from around the world. UHN also cited the proximity and relationship with the University of Toronto as very important and something that helps create the 'secret sauce' of the area - the energy that exists created by the location and thousands of people who want to positively change the lives of people around the world.

Osgoode Hall and Campbell House discussed their historic and current association with the legal profession in Ontario. The land for Osgoode Hall was purchased in 1828 and construction of the first structure completed in 1832, just a year before André Parmentier formal *allée* was completed. Osgoode Hall initially served as the headquarters of the Law Society of Ontario (LSO). Established in 1797 the LSO is the governing body of the legal profession in Ontario and also had exclusive rights over legal education in the province until the 1950s. In addition, Osgoode Hall has housed the highest courts in Ontario since 1846, and it continues as a working courthouse for the Court of Appeal for Ontario and the Superior Court of Justice.

Campbell House Museum was originally the clubhouse for the Advocate's Society which was established in 1963 to promote 'a strong, independent and courageous bar.' The Society was determined to find a historic house and looked at many buildings before choosing Chief Justice William Campbell's 1822 home located at Adelaide Street East and Frederick Street. Originally, the Advocate's Society wanted the house to be relocated at Osgoode Hall, but instead reached an agreement with the City and Canada Life[17] (which owned the property) in 1971 to locate it at the northwest corner of Queen Street and University Avenue. When it was relocated, the house was intentionally set back from Queen Street and landscaped to mirror Osgoode Hall. The Advocate's Society had offices and a dining room in the building, while the Sir William Campbell Foundation ran the museum component. The Advocate's Society used the building until 2019.

The Canadian Military Institute was established in 1890 to study military heritage and changing technology. In 1908, the Royal Canadian Military Institute (RCMI) established their organization on University Avenue across the street from the Toronto Armories (built 1894; demolished). The RCMI noted the importance of the military to Toronto's

17 Canada Life became part of the Great-West Lifeco group of companies in 2003.

social fabric in the late-19th and early-20th century, and that Toronto was a military centre in Canada. The RCMI also discussed the use of University Avenue for parades and military events, noting its size meant that it could hold a crown and its length meant that one could march up one side and down another between Union Station and Queen's Park.

The University Club was founded in 1906 by graduates of the University of Toronto and was originally located in rented premises on King Street. When the Club decided to build its own clubhouse, they originally purchased the property where the Campbell House is located and owned by Canada Life at the time. The University Club and Canada Life swapped properties so that Canada Life could construct their building further to the south. The University Club opened in 1929 with its membership drawing heavily from the nearby legal, business and medical communities. One notable member was Charles Best of the Banting and Best partnership responsible for the discovery of insulin. Today, the Club regards itself more as the 'University Avenue' Club and noted that the grandeur University Avenue provides a fitting setting for the building's 'Palladian-windowed, Neo-Georgian design'.

6.0 HISTORIC OVERVIEW

6.1 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The study area is located roughly one kilometer north of the Lake Ontario shoreline, on a plain comprising the former Lake Iroquois lakebed. It is geologically composed of silty clays, tills and sand deposits from the ancient lake.[18] The area has an even topography, rising gently between Queen Street West and Queen's Park Crescent.

Historically a ravine flowed through the study area. Known to European settlers as Taddle Creek, in the 18th century it ran southeast from the former Lake Iroquois shoreline, crossing southeast through the study area around today's Elm Street[19], and continuing southeast to discharge in Lake Ontario west of the Distillery District. Archival mapping shows the ravine disappearing east of the study area around 1862, and to the west in the 1880s and 1890s (see Appendix D). The following text is from the Heritage Toronto plaque located at the southeast corner of Bloor Street and Queen's Park which was installed in 2020.

> *Prior to colonization and urban development altering the landscape, the land Toronto now occupies was teeming with waterways that flowed through marshes and forests of pine and oak trees. Taddle Creek ran for six kilometres across land that remains the traditional territory of Indigenous Nations including the Wendat and Haudenosaunee and is part of the Treaty 13 lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Small rivers like Taddle Creek are known as ziibiinsan in Anishinaabemowin, the language spoken by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Davenport Road follows the route of an Indigenous trail between the Don and Humber Rivers that connected to a wider travel network. The rivers of this area played a vital role in the lives of Indigenous peoples as springtime gathering places. Families would fish with gill nets, spears, and weirs for salmon and trout. Wild rice and berries near waterways provided abundant food and wildlife.*
>
> *As Toronto expanded around it, the southern section of Taddle Creek supported some of the city's earliest farms and industries. One of the first industries to use the creek was the city's first brewery, which Robert Henderson opened around 1800. The creek flowed roughly south through the University of Toronto grounds, where it was dammed in the 1860s to create McCaul's Pond. Students boated, fished, skated, and socialized there. As the city grew, industrial and residential waste was dumped in the creek and it became a public health hazard. Taddle Creek was buried in sections and directed into the sewer system, which moved the pollution problem to Lake Ontario. By the mid-1880s, Taddle Creek was*

18 Ministry of Natural Resources. *Ontario Geological Survey Preliminary Map P. 2204 Geological Series Quaternary Geology Toronto and Surrounding Area Southern Ontario*. Reprinted 1990.

19 See *Figure 10*.

almost completely buried except in the Wychwood Park area. Today, traces of the creek remain visible in the University of Toronto's Philosopher's Walk ravine. Many depressions in the land and deviations in the street grid are subtle clues to Taddle Creek's former presence.

6.2 INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

For time immemorial, Toronto has been home to Indigenous peoples. Ojibway oral histories speak of Ice People, who lived at a time when ice covered the land.[20] Following the retreat of glaciers approximately 13,000 years ago, small groups of Indigenous peoples moved from place to place, hunting and gathering the food they needed according to the seasons. Over millennia, they adapted to dramatically changing environmental conditions, developing and acquiring new technologies as they did so. Waterways and the lake were vital sources of fresh water and nourishment, and shorelines and nearby areas were important sites for gathering, trading, hunting, fishing, and ceremonies. Long-distance trade moved valuable resources across the land.

After maize and squash were introduced to Southern Ontario, by approximately 500 CE, horticulture began to supplement food sources. By 1300 CE, villages focused on growing food became year-round settlements surrounded by crops. These villages were home to ancestors of the Huron-Wendat Nation, who would continue to occupy increasingly larger villages in the Toronto area and beyond. These villages were connected to well-established travel routes which were part of local and long-distance trail networks, including the Carrying Place trails on the Don, Rouge and Humber rivers that connected Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay. Beads made from sea shells from the eastern seaboard were found at the Alexandra site in North York, which was a community of 800-1000 people in approximately 1350.

By 1600, the Wendat had formed a confederation of individual nations, and had concentrated most of their villages away from Lake Ontario, in the Georgian Bay area. Following contact with French explorers and missionaries in Southern Ontario in the early 1600s, European diseases decimated First Nations. Competition for furs to trade with Europeans and the desire to replenish numbers through absorption of captives, among other factors[21], contributed to the Beaver Wars, which after 1640, saw the Haudenosaunee Confederacy expand into Southern Ontario, dispersing the Wendat. Within the boundaries of today's Toronto, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy then occupied villages on the Carrying Place trails on the Humber and Rouge Rivers from approximately the 1660s to the 1680s.

20 With thanks to Philip Cote for the reference to Benton-Banai, Edward, *The Mishomis book: The voice of the Ojibway* (Indian Country Press, 1985), p. 26.

21 https://histindigenouspeoples.pressbooks.tru.ca/chapter/chapter-5-colonial-wars-looking-east; Gary Warrick, "The Aboriginal Population of Ontario in Late Pre-history," in Munson and Jamieson, eds., Before Ontario: The Archaeology of a Province (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), p. 72.

In the late 1680s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy chose to leave their village in the Toronto area and returned to their homelands in upstate New York. As evidenced by the 1701 Great Peace of Montreal, the 1701 Nanfan Treaty, and the Dish with One Spoon Treaty, the Haudenosaunee continued to have an interest in the resources of the area. Anishinaabe people from the Lake Superior region then moved into the Toronto area. While the Wendat and Haudenosaunee people lived in year-round villages surrounded by crops, the Anishinaabe people continued to live primarily by seasonally moving across the land to hunt, fish and gather resources that were available at a specific time, including migrating birds and maple syrup. To the west of Toronto, the Anishinaabe people became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit. To the east, they became known as the Chippewas of Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama and the Mississaugas of Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha, Scugog Island.[22]

In 1787, as the British began to prepare for an influx of colonists into the area following the American Revolution, the British Crown negotiated the Toronto Purchase with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to obtain title to the land. The flawed and poorly documented agreement was invalidated, and Treaty 13 was negotiated in 1805 for lands now including much of the City of Toronto. In 1923, the Governments of Ontario and Canada signed the Williams Treaties for over 20,000 km2, including portions of eastern Toronto, with seven First Nations of the Chippewa of Lake Simcoe (Beausoleil, Georgina Island and Rama) and the Mississauga of the north shore of Lake Ontario (Alderville, Curve Lake, Hiawatha and Scugog Island).

The Mississaugas, Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, or the Wendat did not traditionally regard land as a commodity to be sold. Following the Toronto Purchase, the British government quickly set out to survey the land into lots which were either sold or granted into private ownership of settlers. In 2010, the Government of Canada settled the Toronto Purchase Claim with the Mississaugas of the Credit after agreeing that the Mississaugas were originally unfairly compensated. In 2018, the Williams Treaties First Nations settled litigation about land surrenders and harvesting rights with the Governments of Canada and Ontario.

The City of Toronto remains the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. Toronto is also covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with seven Mississaugas and Chippewa First Nations.

6.3 A ROAD TO KING'S COLLEGE - 1792 to 1857

University Avenue's origins date to the establishment of King's College in the Town of York, during the late 1820s.

22 Mississaugas of the Credit, "The History of Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation." n.d.

6.3.1 TOWNSHIP SURVEY & THE ESTABLISHMENT OF YORK

Following negotiation of the Toronto Purchase, the British Parliament created Upper Canada and appointed John Graves Simcoe Lieutenant-Governor. Upper Canada was divided into a series of counties, composed of townships, which were further surveyed into concessions and lots. These lots were distributed to settlers, forming the basis of Simcoe's land grant system.

York County was created in 1792, followed by both York Township and the Town of York in 1793. By 1797 the survey of lots in the southern portion of York Township was complete, with 100 acre park lots (half the width of farm lots to the north) laid out across the First Concession from the Bay (*Figure 1*). The study area is equally divided between Park Lots[23] 11 & 12, First Concession from the Bay, which were patented in 1797 and 1798 respectively to Reverend Thomas Raddish[24] and William D. Powell.

The Town of York was initially ten square blocks bounded by today's Front, George, Adelaide and Berkeley streets. In 1797 it became the capital of the Province of Upper Canada, by which time the town limits had been expanded west to Peter Street and the Garrison Reserve lands, and north to Lot Street (today's Queen Street) (*Figure 2*). The town lay at the intersection of two major colonial roads initiated by Simcoe to provide access to strategic locations in the province - Dundas Street and Yonge Street. Yonge Street travelled north from York, crossing the ancient Indigenous trail along the Lake Iroquois shoreline (formalized by settlers as Davenport Road) before continuing on to the Holland River. Dundas Street was the military road providing access to London further west, originally accessed via York's Lot Street.

The town's public spaces were primarily planned squares at the time, though in 1818 the government granted thirty acres of lakefront (see *Figure 2*) property (between today's Bathurst Street and Spadina Avenue) to a committee of trustees to be used as a public promenade.[25] As the provincial capital, York attracted a number of important institutions in the 1820s, including the University of King's College, Osgoode Hall, and Upper Canada College. The Law Society of Upper Canada purchased six acres of land at the south end of Park Lot 11 in 1828, and erected the first portion of Osgoode Hall between 1829 and 1831 fronting onto Lot Street.[26] Upper Canada College was founded under Royal Charter in 1829, with the first permanent buildings completed by 1831 on King Street.[27] The development of the University of King's College was much less straightforward.

23 Whereas standard Farm Lots were 200 acres in size, York Township's First Concession From the Bay (comprised of lands between today's Queen and Bloor streets) was surveyed into 100 acre Park Lots half the width.

24 York Land Registry Office, Book 113, p. 217.

25 See Mark Osbaldson, *Unbuilt Toronto: a history of the city that might have been,* Dundurn Press, Toronto: 2008, p. 18; and David Bain, "The Queen's Park and its Avenues: Canada's First Public Park" *Ontario History 95*:2 (2003): 194.

26 York Land Registry Office, Book 113, p. 217.

27 William Dendy, *Lost Toronto: images of the city's past*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993, p. 59.

6.3.2 UNIVERSITY OF KING'S COLLEGE AND THE ORIGINS OF COLLEGE AVENUE

The University of King's College was chartered in 1827 as an arts college for Upper Canada. Two years later the college council purchased a significant amount of land north of the town's west end (*Figure 3*). They acquired the northern halves of Park Lots 11, 12 & 13 (roughly 150 acres running between today's College and Bloor streets), along with two narrow strips for avenues (*Figure 4*). The avenues were essential, given that there were no roads leading to these remote lands. The north-south avenue (eventually named College Avenue) was 132 feet wide (66 feet each from Park Lots 11 & 12), running between the grounds and Lot Street at the town limits. The east-west route (eventually named Yonge Street Avenue) was 66 feet wide, extending east to Yonge Street.

Almost immediately however, the growth of King's College was arrested by politics when Sir John Colborne succeeded Sir Peregrine Maitland as lieutenant-governor in 1828. Unlike his predecessor, Colborne was unsupportive of the college's strong ties with the Church of England. As a result the development of King's College stalled while Colborne actively supported the development of Upper Canada College instead. There were no plans drawn for buildings or campus development, with the clearing and completion of College Avenue and Yonge Street Avenue between 1830 and 1833 among the only improvements to the college grounds during its early years.[28]

The designs for both avenues are attributed to André Parmentier (b.1780-d.1830), a Belgian horticulturalist based out of Brooklyn, New York. At College Avenue, he aligned a French *allée* on axis with the grounds, creating a grand and processional approach to the future campus. The design was based on a 120 foot wide thoroughfare, containing a central carriageway flanked by boulevards and walkways on both sides. The width of the thoroughfare lent grandeur to the design, as did the double rows of pink flowering horse-chestnuts trees shading each side (*Figure 5*).[29,30]

Parmentier's designs were executed by John Wedd, Superintendent of Grounds for King's College. Planting material was provided by Prince and Sons of Long Island, New York.[31] Henry Scadding gives account of the avenue's construction out of thick forest in 1830, making reference to the long, straight nature of the parcel and men

28 Dendy, Lost Toronto, pp. 180, 182.

29 American elm and English thorn were also part of College Avenue's original plantings, but the horse-chestnuts are the dominant feature in both documentary sources and cultural accounts. See Ontario Line Technical Advisor, *Documentation, Restoration and Landscape Management Plan (Draft) University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape and South African War Memorial* (January 2023), p. 10.

30 Octavius Thompson notes that following John Wedd's death, the original plans were varied when, '...the trees which were originally planted temporarily to fill up the spaces and protect the chestnuts were not cut out, and result in a great intermixture of other trees with the chestnuts…'. See O. Thompson, *Toronto in the Camera,* Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co., 1868.

31 "*Documentation, Restoration and Landscape Management Plan* (Draft)," p. 31.

using hand tools, oxen and ploughs to clear the ground. He describes the plantings at a subsequent date:

> *One novelty we discovered-viz. That on each side along a portion of the newly cleared ground, young saplings had been planted at regular intervals; these, we were told, were horse-chestnuts procured from the United States expressly for the purpose of forming a double row of trees here. In the neighborhood of York the horse-chestnut was then a rarity.*[32]

Being private college property, the avenue was secured from its surroundings. It was fenced for its entire length, preventing any cross-streets for the length of the avenue and maintaining the integrity of the linear pathway. Gates were installed at the Lot Street entrance in 1833 to control access - members of the public were permitted but all commercial traffic was denied (*Figure 6*). A lodge was built next to the semi-circular gates in 1833, a one-storey wooden Gothic-revival structure designed by John G. Howard (*Figure 7*).[33]

Upon completion in 1833, College Avenue was a formal landscape running between Osgoode Hall at the north limits of the Town of York, and the yet undeveloped King's College grounds. As a controlled, decorative landscape extending a kilometer into York's undeveloped hinterlands, it would have represented an unprecedented landscape in terms of scale and grandeur for the budding provincial capital of barely 9,000 people (*Figure 8*). Indeed College Avenue was not merely designed to provide access, but represented a strong symbolic gesture asserting the cultural roots and ambitions of European settlers, as well as the importance of King's College as an institution of the elite within the province.

Officially College Avenue was designed as a processional route to the college grounds, but such use was limited given the school's tumultuous development. In 1837 Thomas Young designed a set of three connected Greek-revival college buildings at the head of the avenue, but it was not until 1845 that the first, southwest block was complete.[34] The first use of College Avenue by the school was in 1842, when cornerstone ceremonies travelled north on the avenue to the campus site. Henry Scadding described the unprecedented pomp of the event, calling it, "A procession such as had never before been seen in these parts slowly defiled up the Avenue to the spot where the cornerstone of the proposed university was to be laid."[35]

Ultimately, only the southwest portion of Young's scheme was built and its use by the college was short-lived. The University of Toronto[36] began construction of University

32 Henry Scadding, *Toronto of Old.* Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1987, p. 231.

33 Dendy, Lost Toronto, pp. 182-183.

34 Dendy, Lost Toronto, p. 180.

35 Scadding, pp. 223-234.

36 King's College was secularized by the Provincial Government in 1849, becoming the University of Toronto.

College in 1856 some 250 metres to the west, weakening the symbolic and functional relationship with College Avenue (see Appendix D).

Despite the slow and limited development of the university, College Avenue found steady use as a public promenade upon its completion, informally serving as park space.[37]

6.3.3 URBAN GROWTH IN THE CITY OF TORONTO

In 1834 College Avenue was a cultivated pathway leading to nowhere, as the first university development would not occur until the mid-1840s (see *Figure 3*). Its surroundings were rural in character with the only adjacent structures Osgoode Hall at the south end, and the Caer Howell estate further north on the west side (*Figure 9*). However Toronto's growth over the 1830s, '40s and '50s changed the context of College Avenue, which found itself in the midst of a growing municipality.

The Incorporation and Growth of the City of Toronto

The Town of York was incorporated as the City of Toronto in 1834 with a population of just over 9,000. The new city's liberties extended two kilometres north of Lot Street to the First Concession Line (today's Bloor Street), and the garrison lands east of Garrison Creek were sold for development between 1833-1836.[38] Toronto grew considerably as development hastened beyond the original town limits, reaching a population of over 44,000 by 1861. Amidst the growth, in 1848 the City took out a 999 year lease on 287 acres of the remaining lands for future parkland from the British Board of Ordnance.[39]

Several plans illustrate how this transformation affected the study area between 1842 and 1858 (see Appendix D). In 1842 development was concentrated in the blocks north of Queen Street (renamed from Lot Street in 1837), and along Yonge Street. The emergence of urban fabric was clear in 1851, with typical street, block and lot patterns running the length of College Avenue's east side in St. John's Ward. Development of dwellings within this framework was concentrated further south. Urban patterns were slower to emerge on the west side (St. Patrick's Ward), which contained a patchwork of subdivisions and estate grounds. In 1852 the Provincial Agricultural Exhibition was held in Toronto, with grounds located south of the Caer Howell estate on the west side of the Avenue (*Figure 10*). By 1858, most of the lots east of College Avenue had been developed, primarily with modest frame dwellings. The west side meanwhile was developing more slowly, despite increased subdivision activity.

There is a clear disconnect between the street and block patterns east and west of College Avenue, with little, if any alignment between east-west streets. This was likely due in large part to the fact that College Avenue was fenced for its entire perimeter

37 Bain, pp. 194-196.

38 Isobel K. Ganton, *Development of the Military Reserve, Toronto, 1792-1862* (April 1975), pp. 22 & 28.

39 Osbaldson, pp. 18-19.

and cross-streets were not permitted. In effect, it acted as a kilometre long barrier, physically separating the urban fabric growing around both sides.

College Avenue's New Urban Context

The growth of Toronto through the 1850s meant College Avenue was being surrounded by the fabric of the expanding city, an emergent context that had several important impacts on the Avenue.

First, the development of St. John's Ward physically augmented College Avenue through the creation of Park Lane. In St. John's Ward blocks adjacent to College Avenue were laid out facing wast. Since the Avenue was at that time fenced-off private land, Park Lane was created as a 50 foot-wide laneway to provide access to properties faceing west. It appears to have been first created through an 1850 subdivision plan and continued through adjacent subdivision plans for the length of College Avenue (*Figure 11*). While Park Lane remained separated by College Avenue's fence for about three decades, it still served to buffer the Avenue from the east streetwall by an additional 50 feet, supporting the impression of a generous open space in the face of expanding urban fabric.

Second, amidst the forces of urban growth College Avenue became an increasingly important park amenity for Torontonians. As the city grew many of its planned public and park spaces were lost to development, an issue exacerbated by the rise of industry. In the early 1850s the railways cut off the waterfront promenade from the city, and had taken over the 287 acres of garrison reserve previously leased for parkland. What remained, in the case of Toronto Island Park, was difficult to access. As a large, centrally located promenade space, College Avenue served as a popular and important public promenade space through the 1830s, '40 and '50s, used most commonly for walking, horseback riding and carriages, and less often for foot races, concerts and parades.[40] Thus despite remaining private property, College Avenue had become an important urban amenity within a growing Toronto.

The 1850s saw intensification of the debate surrounding College Avenue's impermeable nature, in particular its lack of cross-streets. Opponents to opening College Avenue up to cross-streets favoured keeping the Avenue intact, while George Brown summarized the pro-cross street position in an 1855 *The Globe* editorial:

> *It is also very noticeable how comparatively few houses are going up north of Queen street – a fact difficult of satisfactory explanation. It may, however, be in great measure owing to the circumstance that the College Avenue, being surrounded by fences, imposes a positive barrier to the locomotion of the residents in that vicinity… This is an inconvenience, which in the interest of land owners and residents, should at once be remedied. It is no argument to contend that the beauty of the Avenue would be thus destroyed, and its privacy as a park intruded upon.*[41]

40 Bain, pp. 194-196.

41 George Brown, "The Growth of the City," *The Globe,* September 12, 1855, p. 872.

Unsurprisingly the City favoured cross-streets. In 1856 a by-law was passed to authorize the construction of a road across College Avenue, but lacked authority to carry out the work as the Avenue did not belong to the City.[42]

Another contextual change from this time relates to the provincial expropriation of the University of Toronto grounds at the head of College Avenue. An expropriation bill was passed in 1853 to provide a site for the Province's new parliament building, and in 1856 the government appropriated the original King's College building. The new Provincial buildings were still three decades away however, and the college building housed a Provincial mental health asylum until permanent facilities were complete at the Queen Street West asylum in the late 1860s.[43] With the University no longer occupying the site at the head of College Avenue, this change symbolized the end of the original contextual relationship between school and avenue, while heralding the new provincial relationship to come.

6.4 A PUBLIC PARK - 1858 to 1887

6.4.1 MUNICIPAL PARKLAND AND QUEEN'S PARK

In the mid-1850s, the City was negotiating with the University to lease portions of the campus as city parkland. The University Senate acknowledged the importance of College Avenue as a transportation route and open space, and was happy to relieve itself of broader management and maintenance responsibilities:

> *...the University has little more interest in the avenue than what it has in common with the rest of the public, and it does not appear an appropriate expenditure of funds what are all required for educational purposes to make a maintain in order, nearly a mile and a half of what have in fact become streets of the city of Toronto.*[44]

The University Senate entered into a 999 year lease with the City of Toronto on January 1, 1859, for lands including College Avenue, Queen Street Avenue, and a portion of the former King's College campus east of Taddle Creek - giving the City of Toronto control of roughly 45 acres of parkland (*Figure 12*). The terms of the lease made the City responsible for the maintenance of existing roads, grounds and lodges, as well as any new roads, fences and gas lighting. The terms also allowed the University to void the lease should City Council cease to uphold its responsibilities.[45]

These leased lands, including the study area, became the first municipally-operated park in British North America. The park north of College Avenue was originally dubbed University Park, and English designer Edwin Taylor was hired by the City and University

42 "Meeting in the College Avenue," *The Globe,* August 11, 1859, p. 2.

43 Dendy, Lost Toronto, p.181.

44 "City Council Last Night," *The Globe,* April 7, 1857, p. 2.

45 Bain, p. 197.

to prepare landscape plans.[46] It was officially christened Queen's Park during opening ceremonies in August 1860.

The Prince of Wales presided over the opening of Queen's Park, laying the cornerstone for a structure at the park's south end, at the head of College Avenue. The base was intended to support a statue of Queen Victoria, installed in 1871 but eventually removed following a financial dispute between City Council and sculptor Marshall Wood.[47] Nonetheless the statue played a role in establishing the trend of Queen's Park being used as a site for memorials and monuments. Other early monuments displayed in Queen's Park included two cannons from the Battle of Sebastopol (1859), the Canadian Volunteers Monument (1870), a George Brown monument (1884) and Northwest Rebellion monument (1885). The concentration of monuments imbued the parkland with a strong public or civic dimension, despite being at odds with aesthetic taste.[48]

The new formal use of the parkland at the head of College Avenue represented the continued evolution of College Avenue's surroundings. No longer associated with King's College or the University, College Avenue was now contextually and functionally related to Queen's Park, and with that it attained a new public identity (*Figure 13*).

6.4.2 DEVELOPMENT AROUND COLLEGE AVENUE INTO THE 1880S

Fire insurance plans and other resources show the continued development around College Avenue into the 1880s (*Figure 14*; see Appendix D). St. John's Ward filled out with dwellings and churches, which were typically modest buildings of frame construction often built as rows or duplex forms. On the west side of College Avenue, St. Patrick's Ward developed with dwellings, schools and churches. These included a higher proportion of brick dwelling, with more substantial structures set on larger lots. Most buildings adjacent to the west side of College Avenue faced west.

Thus by the late 1880s College Avenue was set in the midst of a dense and mature urban environment to its east and west. These surroundings were characterized by residential neighbourhoods of varying economic status (*Figure 15*).

To the north, the King's College building was demolished in 1886 in anticipation of new Provincial Parliament buildings, and stately homes had been developed on former University lands surrounding Queen's Park.

6.4.3 COLLEGE AVENUE UNDER CITY OF TORONTO MANAGEMENT

College Avenue remained an impressive, tree-lined promenade when it was leased by the City in 1859. That year, Simon Nichol suggested the park was unparalleled in the Province of Canada:

46 *The Globe,* November 2, 1858.

47 Dendy, Lost Toronto, p. 183.

48 Bain, p. 199.

> *Mark how we got this Avenue. We got it as a grant for nothing from the University, and we had no right to it. We got it under condition it should be a public park, and we had no right to despoil its beauty, or to allow its being despoiled. We could travel from Gaspe [sic] to Sarnia, and there was no such beautiful park anywhere else.*[49]

While most City resources went to landscaping the former university ground parkland following the lease, a number of improvements were also made to College Avenue. Howard's Queen Street lodge was improved, with new gates replacing the originals, which were installed at the juncture of Yonge Street Avenue and Yonge Street. New fencing was also constructed along the perimeter of the Avenue.[50] Subsequently the City replaced the Queen Street gates around 1868, then again in 1883. College Avenue received new plantings in 1870, and Taddle Creek was channelled underground in 1884.[51] The city commenced macadamizing of the central carriageway in 1879.[52]

The issue of cross-streets on College Avenue remained contentious under City of Toronto management, with City Council voting to join Agnes and Anderson streets (present Dundas Street West) across the Avenue in 1859. Instead however, one gate with turnstile was installed on each side of the Avenue in that area, a course that nearly incited a riot.[53]

Ultimately no cross streets were cut through, but a significant change took place in 1881 when the City began integrating Park Lane into College Avenue. The work replaced the existing eastern fence with a four foot sidewalk, along with curbing and grading to formalize a boulevard between Park Lane and the original College Avenue.[54] Physically, the change extended the functional width of College Avenue by 50 feet to the east, while removing an impediment to access on that side for pedestrians. Symbolically, it represented a significant integration within the adjacent urban fabric, and the end of College Avenue an enclosed and controlled, if not private, landscape.

The earliest photographs of College Avenue as a subject date to the 1860s and following decades, with most taken looking north from the Queen Street gates. Archival images all show the original plan, with central carriageway and flanking components (*Figures 16 & 17*; see *Figure 5*). The trees along the outer sides appear mature and retain a regularity in their planting. By the mid-1870s light standards were added to the medians flanking the carriageway, and by the early 1880s the open relationship to Park Lane was evident.

---

49 "Indignation Meeting in the College Avenue: Nearly a Riot," *The Globe,* August 5, 1859, p. 2.

50 Bain, p. 197.

51 Dendy, Lost Toronto, pp. 183-183; Bain, pp. 196 & 204.

52 "The College-Avenue," *The Globe,* August 4, 1879, p. 2.

53 "Indignation Meeting in the College Avenue: Nearly a Riot," *The Globe,* August 5, 1859, p. 2.

54 "City News: Queen Street Avenue Improvements," *The Globe,* August 11, 1881, p. 8.

College Avenue's function as park space was retained, and expanded by the City's lease, as the development of Queen's Park created a new destination for citizens at the head of the Avenue (*Figure 18*). Its processional function was also restored, as many groups would parade up the Avenue en route to special events being held in Queen's Park (*Figure 19*). In this way College Avenue was very much an interconnected part of this public parkland, rather than merely a road leading to it (*Figure 20*).

6.5 EMERGENCE OF A PARKWAY - 1888 to 1927

It was in the late 1880s that the name University Avenue was first used in newspapers.[55] This use appears to be an informal combination of College / Queen Street Avenue with University Street, and unrelated to any specific event or development. In September of 1895 City Council's sub-committee on street naming submitted a number of changes for approval, among them College Avenue to University Avenue.[56]

6.5.1 A MATURING CIVIC CONTEXT

In 1888 the University of Toronto terminated the parkland lease with the City of Toronto for not upholding their responsibilities under the agreement. Among other concerns the University charged that the City had not taken proper care of the grounds and trees in the park, while also taking issue with the removal of gates, lodges and fences on both avenues, as well as the operation of a streetcar route along Yonge Street Avenue.[57] Later in 1888 the lease was restored with additional terms. Notable among these was a provision for dispute resolution via arbitrator, and a reversal of the University's attitude to the avenues:

> *The said avenues are to be dedicated by the Crown*[58] *to the public, and all restrictions as to traffic thereon removed, except in so far as the city may choose to restrain and regulate the same as hereinafter provided…*[59]

As such under the new terms the City gained additional autonomy over the leased lands, and in particular the avenues.

The new lease coincided with the construction of several significant civic projects abutting University Avenue - the new Ontario Legislative building in Queen's Park between 1889-1893, and the Toronto Armories north of Osgoode Hall built between 1891-1893 (demolished 1963). These were in addition to ongoing expansions of Osgoode Hall,[60] and a new Toronto General Hospital facility at the southeast corner

55 "Local News," *The Globe*, December 15 1886, p. 8.; "Local News," *The Globe,* July 19, 1887, p. 8.

56 *The Globe*, 10 October 1895, p. 5.

57 "Queen's Park Muddle," *The Globe,* April 21, 1888, p. 13.

58 The Crown held the leased lands in trust for the University.

59 "Municipal Affairs: Queen's Park Agreement Signed by University and Corporation," *The Globe,* November 28, 1888, p. 5.

60 Osgoode Hall was expanded at least ten times between 1833 and 1912.

of University Avenue and College Street opened in 1913. Just east of the study area on Queen Street, Toronto's third city hall was built at the head of Bay Street between 1889-1899.

These important developments introduced a strong civic dimension to University Avenue and the local context through their prominent buildings, institutional uses, and the jurisdictions they represented. In the cases of the Toronto Armories and Toronto General Hospital, entire residential blocks were replaced by the new structures. They also brought new processional uses to University Avenue, which was used for military parades, and demonstrations to the legislature (*Figures 21 & 22*).

Most significant among these was the new Ontario Legislative Building, finally constructed over three decades after the expropriation of the original King's College site. The Province's monumental brown sandstone building had a Richardson Romanesque design, a style it shared with the Toronto Armories. The legislature was built in the southern half of the Queen's Park lands, and unlike the former King's College building was directly on axis with University Avenue (*Figure 23*). The siting was intentional, as described in contemporary newspapers:

> *The pile will directly face the Queen-street avenue, and the ground will be graded so as to preserve the line of horizon to those approaching the front of the building.… The site, Mr. Waite considers, is the most commanding that could have been selected, and his designs are such that persons approaching by way of the Queen-street Avenue get a geometrical view of the south or principal front, the grouping of the centre with the east and west wings producing strong lights and shades.*[61]

> *A more appropriate or advantageous site could not have been selected, for the beauties of the partially wooded park add grace and grandeur to the pile, and, as viewed from University Avenue or from any of the other coigns of vantage in the neighbourhood, it makes up a colossal monument to the one hundred years' progress of the great province of Ontario.*[62]

The new Ontario Legislative Building represented a terminal point at University Avenue's north end that for the first time matched the monumentality and formal nature of the Avenue itself. University Avenue became a ceremonial boulevard to the legislature, a relationship that symbolized the Avenue's new civic character and provincial identity.

At a finer scale, local development was characterized by new brick, rather than frame residential buildings (*Figure 24*; see *Appendix D*). The shift from a residential to institutional context was also occurring on smaller sites, with numerous masonry places

61 "New Parliament Buildings: Description of the Proposed Structure in Queen's Park," *The Globe*, August 13, 1886, p. 5.

62 "Parliament Buildings: The New Legislative Edifice in the Queen's Park," *The Globe,* March 11, 1893, p. 11.

of worship replacing frame dwellings (*Figure 25*). In 1905 the Canadian Military Institute (who had been occupying a house at 48 University Avenue) purchased a dwelling fronting onto Simcoe Street to establish permanent quarters with a fireproof library. The rear of the dwelling was close to the Toronto Armouries, and in 1908 a new frontage was completed on this elevation, re-orienting the property to University Avenue (*Figure 26*).[63,64] Two years later the property to the south was purchased, and an addition to the facility was completed by 1913.[65]

6.5.2 PLANNING FOR THE 20TH CENTURY

Toronto was growing rapidly in the early 1900s, with strong industrial growth and a developing financial and service core. The population doubled between 1900 and 1912, as the city expanded through annexation and new suburban development. Amidst these changes University Avenue found itself in the centre of an emerging metropolis.[66]

As the automobile emerged as an important form of commuting, Toronto's piecemeal urban grid was increasingly viewed as archaic and inefficient for conducting high volumes of traffic. Civic advocates put forward a number of transformative plans for Toronto during these years, reflecting the influence of the City Beautiful movement and contemporary plans for several American cities. Through the use of wide diagonal boulevards and imposing public spaces, the plans sought to streamline traffic movement while simultaneously imparting civic grandeur through monumental urban gestures.[67]

Plans from 1905 and 1909 (by the Ontario Association of Architects and Civic Guild respectively) proposed two major diagonal thoroughfares to convey motor and electric railway traffic to the top of the downtown core at Queen Street. The new northwest street was to terminate at the juncture of University Avenue and Queen Street West. The Civic Improvement Committee's 1911 plan built on the idea by creating a new monumental boulevard running north from the future Union Station site to a proposed Federal Square between the 1899 City Hall and Osgoode Hall (*Figure 27*).[68] This new gesture acknowledged the area's civic identity, and expressed a desire for a major street to connect with the city's future rail hub. Ultimately the large-scale interventions of these plans were never realized.

Separately, the idea of extending University Avenue south to Front Street and Union Station was being considered in conjunction with the University Avenue improvement

63 "Library and Lecture Hall," *The Globe,* October 26, 1905, p. 12.

64 Arthur Manvell, "The Stones of 426: A History of the First RCMI Quarters at 426 University Ave., 1907-2010," p.2.

65 Ibid., p. 3.

66 James Lemon, "Plans for Early 20th-Century Toronto: Lost in Management," *Urban History Review / Review d'histoire urbaine* 18*,* No. 1 (1989), p. 12.

67 James Lemon, pp. 11-12.

68 James Lemon, pp. 13 & 16.

plans initiated in 1910 (see below), but Commissioner Wilson deemed it premature and too expensive at the time.[69] The idea was revived in 1918 when it was seen as an opportunity to serve as a memorial avenue to those who fought in the First World War.[70] This idea reinforced the existing Avenue's monumental and civic qualities.

6.5.3 UNIVERSITY AVENUE UNDER THE SECOND CITY OF TORONTO LEASE

The City maintained University Avenue more or less as it was following the new lease, with only a bicycle path and bridle path separately added in the 1890s. By the early 1900s City officials were noting the shortcomings of the contemporary design to traffic needs: "We have two streets there within a few feet of each other, and neither of them good enough to make a good driveway."[71] Substantial changes were not initiated until 1910 however, when the City's Civic Parks and Exhibition Committee recommended Commissioner Wilson to report on the advisability of beautifying University Avenue as a driveway.[72] Several plans were developed by Wilson and his successor Commissioner Chambers, involving various designs for boulevards and roadways, some of which contemplated electric railway routes and formal parade grounds.[73]

Ultimately, the chosen improvement plan significantly altered the original extant symmetrical plan of the Avenue, as well as Park Lane. The plan called for a wide roadway running along the west side and a single road on the east side. These were separated by a series of grassed and treed boulevards, which were divided by openings to allow traffic at cross streets. A grassed and treed strip also ran along the west side of the main road (*Figure 28*).

The work was carried out in 1913 (*Figures 29 & 30*). Under the plan the original 24 foot carriageway with flanking grassed medians and walkways were removed, and replaced by a 60 foot road. The original double-treed sections of University Avenue were absorbed into the new boulevards and western section. They were modified, reduced in scale, and lost their symmetrical arrangement.

With the character and function of the parkland now subverted to the road requirements of the parkway, the pastoral character of the original avenue gave way to wide curbed streets. Previously distinct from the surrounding urban fabric it preceded, the new parkway design fully integrated University Avenue into the surrounding road network. The improvement plan marked a watershed development for the study area,

69 "Extensive Work on City Park: Commissioner Wilson Has a Busy Season Ahead," *The Globe,* April 17, 1911, p. 7.

70 Dendy, Lost Toronto, p. 191.

71 "Abolish Queen's Avenue: and Make University Street a Park Driveway," *The Globe,* March 30, 1905, p. 10.

72 "Playground for East: Committee Urged to Acquire Arnold Square," *The Globe,* April 15, 1910, p. 9.

73 See "Beautify the Avenue: Park Commissioner's Plans Before Committee," *The Globe,* June 15, 1910, p. 8; "Propose to Improve University Avenue: Parks Committee Changes Plan of Last Year in Some Respects," *The Globe,* April 23, 1912, p. 8; and "Prompt Action Needed to Save Fifty Fine Trees," *Toronto Daily Star*, June 1, 1912, p. 1.

as University Avenue's character shifted from delineated parkland to urban parkway (*Figure 31*). This shift was described by town planner G. Wray Lemon in 1914, when explaining why University Avenue should not be extended south:

> *Because University avenue never has been, and in all probably never will be, primarily a business thoroughfare. It is a parkway. … It would never serve as a great main artery of traffic to and from the joint terminals…*[74]

It was also during this period that two war memorials were erected as University Avenue's earliest monuments. The South African War Memorial was built facing south to Queen Street West on the east boulevard in 1910 (*Figure 32*), and the Sons of England War Memorial was built in 1921, originally located south of College Street facing north. The erection of imperial war memorials on the Avenue reflected its growing civic character and relationship with Queen's Park, the city's primary repository for monuments and memorials.

6.6 A VISION FOR A CIVIC THOROUGHFARE - 1928 to 1946

6.6.1 THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE EXTENSION

Traffic challenges worsened by the 1920s as automobile commuting increased with only minor changes made to the city's road network. At the same time, Ontario Premier Howard Ferguson was interested in extending University Avenue south to create an extended vista north to Queen's Park.[75] The former led to yet another plan for the City of Toronto, while the latter resulted in a Provincial act.

The University Avenue Extension Act, passed in 1928, authorized the City to expropriate and finance the extension of University Avenue on a south, or southeast course to any point as far as Fleet Street. The Act also empowered the City to pass by-laws that could control the use and designs of new buildings on University Avenue, including setback, materials, height and character.[76]

In 1929 the Advisory City Planning Commission released their plan for public and street improvements in Toronto. It included a similar monumental avenue north from the Union Station site to previous proposals, but added a south extension to University Avenue. The extension comprised a monumental circular plaza named Vimy Circle at the intersection with Richmond Street, beyond which a 100 foot (30.5m) wide Queen's Park Avenue continued to Front Street at a slightly southeastern angle (*Figure 33*). The plan recommended a consistent and monumental built form along the new streets through building requirements and design controls (*Figure 34*).

74 G. Wray Lemon, "City Planning in Toronto, Some Good and Bad Points and a Few Sharp Contrasts," *The Globe,* July 18, 1914, p. A2.

75 James Lemon, p. 19.

76 "Chapter 17, An Act to Provide for the Extension of University Avenue in the City of Toronto," *Statutes of the Province of Ontario*, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, Toronto: 1928, pp. 36.

A public discourse on the extension of University Avenue was also taking place apart from the 1929 plan.[77] Ultimately Torontonians rejected the 1929 plan at the ballot box, and in 1930 the City passed by-law #12790, for an extension generally resembling that proposed by Watson Griffin in December 1928.[78] The plan continued University Avenue south at a slightly eastern angle, with the street narrowing from the original 182 feet (55.5m) to 100 feet (35.5m) between Richmond and Adelaide streets west before terminating at Front Street West (*Figure 35*). Unlike the original section, the University Avenue extension was symmetrically laid out, with traffic lanes divided by the centreline of the street.

The work was completed rapidly, with the extension open to traffic by November 1931 (*Figures 36 & 37*). Two grassed boulevards were built, one between Queen Street West and Richmond Street West, and a smaller wedge south from Richmond Street West. These two were centrally located, anticipating the realignment of all boulevards sixteen years later (*Figure 38*). Aesthetically the extension stood in contrast to the original portion. The extension was centrally organized, and lacking significant trees or grassed medians (*Figure 39*), while the original retained its 1913 configuration (*Figure 40*). Shortly after the extension opened, another monument was added to University Avenue when Emanuel Hahn's Adam Beck Memorial was erected on the new boulevard south of Queen Street West in 1932. It faced north toward the South African War Memorial.

Also in 1931, the City took advantage of the powers vested in it by the province to pass by-law #13409 - *To impose certain restrictions on the use of land fronting or abutting on University Avenue.* The by-law prescribed design standards controlling height, setback, massing, materials, and design, while also regulating signage, advertising and fencing. The regulations were conservative overall, requiring uniformity in massing and design, while prescribing substantial, conservation and staid materials - buff or grey masonry bases with brick permitted on walls. Building uses were limited to the following: office or financial; retail; hotel; club; theatre; all government purposes (other than manufacturing) and institutional / educational.[79]

Ultimately the influence of the by-law was limited in a tangible sense, as the financial turmoil of the 1930s curtailed significant development on University Avenue until after the Second World War. Nonetheless, it reflected an understanding that University Avenue should serve as a major traffic thoroughfare leading downtown, with adjacent buildings designed to emphasize its importance and distinction.[80]

77 See S.G. Curry 'Suggested Improvements for Toronto's Downtown Section' in *Construction (Toronto)* Vol. 22 (Feb. 1929) pg 62-68.

78 "University Avenue Extension: Plan Proposed by Watson Griffin, F.R.G.S.," *The Globe,* December 31, 1928, p. 11.

79 *Minutes of the City Council 1931 consisting of By-laws Passed During the Year*. Toronto: The Carswell Company Limited, 1932, Appendix B, pp. 1239-1243.

80 City of Toronto Planning Board. *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*. February 1971, p. 4.

By-law #13409 and the 1931 extension together marked another significant shift in the evolution of University Avenue. With the extension, University Avenue immediately became an important thoroughfare in the City of Toronto, connecting elite civic and financial areas. Meanwhile the by-law signified that University Avenue had a new level of symbolic importance to the city and province, and an awareness that buildings fronting onto the thoroughfare played an important role in defining the overall streetscape. What was once a fenced off *allée* insulated from its surroundings, University Avenue had become an important artery fully integrated within Toronto's urban fabric.

An article on the recently completed Canada Life Building provides a contemporary description of University Avenue and its broader function following the completion of the extension in 1931:

> *There can be no doubt that in their choice of a site for the location of their new head office building the board of directors of the Canada Life Assurance Company were guided by the smiling gods of good taste and good fortune. University Avenue … is Toronto's widest thoroughfare. When the extensions thereto, now under construction, are completed, the street will provide an un-interrupted flow of traffic direct from the Union Station at the south to the Parliament Building at the north where, sweeping majestically through Queen's Park, it will continue up Avenue Road to the Northern bounds of the city to join there with the great King's Highway which connects with the vast and fast-growing development of Northern Ontario.*[81]

As alluded to in the quote above, the University Avenue extension also served Provincial transportation interests. In 1931 Ontario's Department of Highways (precursor to the Ministry of Transportation) created Highway 11A, as a parallel route to Highway 11 (Yonge Street) south from Hoggs Hollow into Toronto's downtown. The northern portion of the highway was assumed by the Province, while University Avenue and most of Avenue Road south of Lawrence Avenue West remained under municipal control and ownership.[82]

6.7 MUNICIPAL BEAUTIFICATION INITIATIVES - 1947 to 1953

In May 1947, the City authorized the widening of University Avenue between Queen Street West and Queen's Park Crescent through By-law No. 16929. While the widening of the street to accommodate increased traffic had been discussed since the mid-1920s, it was not possible until Toronto could access money from the provincial government. As part of the provincial highway system as an 'arterial highway', the

81 Sinaiticus, "Canada Life Building, Toronto," *Construction (Toronto),* (April 1931), pp. 113-114.

82 Cameron Bevers, "The King's Highway 11A (Toronto), accessed July 5, 2024 https://www.thekingshighway.ca/Highway11A_toronto.htm

widening of University Avenue qualified for a one million dollar provincial grant.[83] Park Lane was widened to accommodate northbound traffic, effectively becoming the eastern part of University Avenue, while the boulevard was centred and reduced in width. Unfortunately, this action resulted in most of the remaining American elms and horse chestnut trees being removed (*Figure 41;* see Appendix D).

This radical change to the medians prompted the Toronto City Planning Board to approach the landscape architecture firm of Dunington-Grubb & Stensson about designing a layout for the reconfigured medians. Howard B. Dunington-Grubb was immediately receptive to the idea, writing that "...it is our idea that this might be made by far the most attractive and popular gardening feature of the whole city."[84] The firm prepared the overall approach to the medians in early 1948 which featured walls, paving, water features, benches, flowers, low shrubs, camperdown elms, mophead elm, pin oak, linden, weeping cherry (see Appendix D) The plan only pertained to medians between Queen Street West and College Street.

Dunington-Grubb & Stensson estimated the landscape treatment to cost $193,000. While the City Architect and Commissioner of Works were satisfied, the City Planning Board considered the plans too elaborate and instructed Dunington-Grubb & Stensson to prepare plans for a simpler and symmetrical layout. The revised plans were completed by April 1948. The boulevards between the two traffic lanes were to be built up with a pedestrian path running between two lines of trees. Covered resting places for pedestrians were provided on the interior of the medians (*Figure 42*). The Queen Street median was to include an ornamental pond with fountains. Overall, there was a desire to make University Avenue which was "already Toronto's finest main thoroughfare" into one of the finest on the continent. While the City Planning Board felt it could approve the plan in principle, it could not set a dollar amount for the budget.

Shortly after the presentation to the Board, Howard Dunington-Grubb wrote to Tracy leMay, Commissioner of City Planning to clarify the intent of the design, since it had been interpreted as treating each median with a different design in order to provide visual interest for the public. Dunington-Grubb stated,

> *Our work is not to be regarded as a set design for the Avenue as a whole but rather as ten alternative designs as we have used a different style for each block. Among them will be found symmetry and asymmetry, regularity and irregularity, formality and informality. We were expecting that a choice would probably be made from amongst these various designs perhaps accepting some and discarding others. The Board might even feel that it would prefer one uniform scheme from end to end like the Prado at Havana, Cuba, but my own opinion is that variation would provide more interest.*[85]

83 "University Avenue Widening Costing $900,000 Hastened," *Globe and Mail*, March 20, 1947, p. 7.

84 City of Toronto Archives 1947 as cited in *Documentation, Restoration and Landscape Management Plan (Draft),* p. 14.

85 H.B. Dunington-Grubb to Tracy D. leMay, April 14, 1948. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, Files 31/32.

Ultimately, the City Planning Board believed that the design was too complicated, requesting a sketch of a simpler and symmetrical pattern.[86] Dunington-Grubb replied with a revised sketch in May after having studied the 'problem' as a symmetrical scheme. The new treatment eliminated the central promenade feature, and proposed a continuous planting of dwarf growing flowering trees throughout the length although each block was given a different design.[87] Again, the plans were viewed as 'unnecessarily elaborate and costly', this time by the City's Board of Trade. Dunington-Grubb & Stensson submitted revised plans for islands between Adelaide and College streets in July 1948 which were accepted by the Board of Trade in September. This plan includes discussion of the 'outer' boulevards (i.e. the sidewalks) which the Board of Trade recommended be treated in a manner corresponding with the centre medians with stone paving laid to accommodate trees but no other decorative treatment.

In their report to the City Planning Board at the end of November 1948, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson note the importance of University Avenue to the city as a whole as it is:

> *almost the only wide street in Toronto. Connecting the Union Station with the Parliament Buildings, the University, and the north, its location makes it inevitably, not only a great traffic artery, but also a monumental street providing sites for many of the City's most important buildings. Adequately developed it could become the most famous street in the Dominion of Canada.*[88]

The landscape architects then asked if the public should be able to use the medians or to be kept out altogether:

> *The question as to whether these areas are to be regarded as something to be merely looked at as decoration, or as something to be actually used by the public is quite fundamental. This must be settled before any adequate approach to the problem of planning can be attempted. It is not a question of making a choice between use and beauty. A development designed for use is likely to prove more beautiful than any conceivable scheme from which the public is to be fenced out. We favour a layout for use, but would suggest that access to the central boulevard should be restricted to street intersections.*[89]

The City's Committee on Works recommended that City Council approve the proposal submitted to the Toronto City Planning Board for the decorative treatment for University Avenue estimated at $235,000 subject to "decorative treatment being Canadian in

86 Letter from Secretary-Treasurer [City Planning Board] to H.B. Dunington-Grubb, April 23, 1948. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, Files 31/32.

87 Letter from H.B. Dunington-Grubb to Toronto City Planning Board, May 10, 1948. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, Files 31/32.

88 Letter from H.B. Dunington-Grubb to Toronto City Planning Board, November 16, 1948. In *University Avenue* [1961].

89 Ibid.

nature, particularly the trees…"[90] In May 1949, the City Planning Board reported that when the province was approached for financial assistance, it was opposed to the construction of a walk in the centre medians for pedestrians. The Board of Trade, on the other hand, felt strongly that the provision of a walkway was necessary.

In response, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson provided yet another iteration of the plan in June, this time with five schemes to exclude the public from using the central median. The schemes included one with a post and chain fence (*Figure 43*), one for a hedge with strands of wire mounted on a low wall and another for low iron railings on the wall.

The City's Board of Control approved plans in late June which included a walkway in the centre medians so that the public could enjoy the "vista presented by this fine thoroughfare with the Parliament Buildings and South African War memorial as its main focal points."[91] The centre medians were to be sodded with the exception of the walkway. Although Queenston limestone was the preferred choice for the paving, the Board recognized that concrete was a more economical material. Pedestrian hazards were to be minimized by limiting access to the centre median and by control signals at Queen, Dundas and College streets.[92]

The outer boulevard between the existing sidewalk and curb was to be paved similar to the centre medians and planted with pyramid-shaped trees with benches placed in between. Lighting was to be provided by ornamental standards with modern luminaires mounted at 25 feet on the outer boulevards, and designed pillar lights placed between trees in the centre medians.

One of the main objectives of the project was to beautify the approach to Queen's Park. The city wanted to emphasize the importance of University Avenue as the main approach to the 'Seat of Government of the Province' which was a matter of importance to both the province and city. The Planning Board noted Toronto's similarity with Ottawa which was a municipal entity as well as a capital city. The Board instructed Planning Commissioner Tracy leMay to discuss the plans with provincial officials as part of its appeal for financial assistance from the province.

In the summer of 1949, the plans were reviewed and modified by the Conservation Branch of the Department of Planning and Development. It eliminated all paving except a narrow safety strip along the outer edges of the central boulevard and at the ends of the blocks were necessary for pedestrian crosswalk.[93] In March 1950, under pressure from the provincial government to keep the project simple and economical, City Council

90 *Decorative Treatment of University Avenue*, November 18, 1949. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, Files 31/32.

91 Draft letter from Tracy leMay to Minister of Planning and Development, June 29, 1949. COTA Fonds 2032, Series 721, File 31/32.

92 Ibid.

93 *Decorative Treatment of University Avenue*, November 18, 1949. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, Files 31/32, p. 2.

adopted a plan which aligned with that of the provincial Department of Planning.

Public concern came in June when citizens groups and professional organizations wrote to city officials. The Garden Club of Ontario, The Men of Trees and the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners all voiced objections to the fact that the city was calling tenders for the provincial plan even though the Planning Board and Board of Trade had approved Dunington-Grubb & Stensson plan. The latter noting,

> *It is inconceivable to the Society that the City of Toronto would proceed with a scheme for such an important thoroughfare, without the approval of the Planning Board or without consulting capable Landscape Architects concerning its suitability. One of the expressed aims of the Society is 'To stimulate public thought and opinion for outstanding public works'. We would be remiss if we did not protest the development of University Avenue as now proposed.*[94]

City Council heard objections from a number of interested parties who hired landscape expert, P.J. McKenna of New York to recommend yet another approach. In order to give the avenue 'a distinctly Canadian atmosphere,' McKenna proposed Red Maples for the centre islands and Sugar or Rock Maples for the outer boulevards.

With this public outcry, the Board of Control directed city officials to stop further action regarding the proposed plan, to immediately proceed with sodding the central boulevard, and for the Commissioner of City Planning to consult with interested groups to work out a suitable and satisfactory plan. The special meeting was held in July with attendees providing a wide range of opinions.

Tracy leMay then engaged E.G. Faludi Planning Consultant to study the matter of the decorative treatment of University Avenue and submit a report setting out recommendations. Faludi's October 1950 report proposed decorative treatment was based on the following principles:

- Plants and trees were to blend their natural colour and beauty with gray stone and concrete - two materials that form the current characters of University Avenue.
- Most of the centre islands to be designed for decorative purposes rather than use
- Maintenance to be practical and economical
- Provisions to be made for locating [new] sculptures in the centre islands as budgets permit
- Decorative treatment shall be simple and become part of the existing urban framework represented by the architecture of the buildings rather than competing with it

94 Letter from Edward I. Wood to His Worship the Mayor, June 13, 1950. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, File 31/32.

In his approach, Faludi attempted to coordinate and integrate the original proposals with suggestions from concerned citizens. For the centre islands, permanent structural forms such as walls, steps and ramps were recommended. Additionally, sloped flagstone paving which would elevate the islands two feet above the roadway was recommended to provide protection from snow plows, but also to discourage pedestrians use. Access to the centre boulevards was only to be provided at intersections with traffic signals (*Figure 44*).

The plantings were suggested to be 'kept light' for simplicity and also compatibility with the strong structural lines of the outer boulevards. Colour was to be provided by decorative flowers and flowering trees such as Japanese cherries and red hawthornes. The area in front of the South African War Memorial was to be given a simple flagstone treatment, embellished by two small fountains and plantings. For the outer boulevard, lindens were proposed. Concrete slab in red terra cotta with bands of gray to match existing sidewalk was suggested.[95]

The estimate for Faludi's plan was $158,000 exclusive of the costs for moving the Sons of England monument and the Sir Adam Beck monument. In October 1950, the City Planning Board recommended that the Works Committee approve the Faludi plan. However, there is no evidence that the city took further action to implement Faludi's plan. Perhaps this was due to larger governance and land use planning issues occupying city officials at the time. In 1950, Toronto City Council voted in favour of amalgamation with surrounding municipalities. Not only was this rejected by the municipalities, but also by the Ontario Municipal Board which recommended a two-tier government structure.

6.8 TWO-TIER GOVERNMENT: THE MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO - 1953 to 1998

In April 1953, the provincial government passed legislation for the creation of Metropolitan Toronto. It provided for a system of government where thirteen area municipalities retained their autonomy over local matters and had representation on the Metropolitan Council while the upper tier Metropolitan Toronto had responsibility for providing administration of justice services (courts, jails and land registry), official plans and subdivision approval and public transit.

This new form of government was required to address the rapid suburban expansion that occurred after the Second World War. As a result, Metropolitan Toronto became responsible for several large-scale infrastructure projects including the creation of regional parks such as the Toronto Island, construction of major road networks such as the Gardiner Expressway, and construction of the University Avenue Subway.

95 E.G. Faludi and Austin Floyd, *Report to the City Planning Board: The Decorative Treatment of University Avenue* (September 3, 1950), pp. 4-5.

6.8.1 UNIVERSITY AVENUE SUBWAY

In January 1954, The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) assumed responsibility for providing public, passenger transportation services in Metropolitan Toronto and two years later were authorized to engage consulting engineers to prepare functional plans for the Bloor Street and University Avenue subway lines. In 1958, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) authorized the TTC to construct the Bloor-Danforth and University Avenue subways in three stages over a period of ten years.

Stage I was the extension of the Yonge Street subway up University Avenue from Union Station to Bloor Street. Stage II was to commence after January 1, 1962 was to include the Bloor-Danforth subway between St. George Street and Greenwood Avenue. Stage III was to commence after January 1, 1967 and was to include sections of the Bloor-Danforth subway from St. George Street to Keele Street and from Greenwood to Woodbine. The cost of the $200,000,000 project was to be shared by Metropolitan Toronto and the TTC.

Premier Leslie Frost broke ground for Stage I on November 15, 1959. The project was procured in three contracts:

- Contract U-1: Cut and cover section from Front Street to Queen Street, awarded to Johnson-Perini-Kiewit in the amount of $6,454,000.
- Contract U-2: Tunnel section from Queen Street to the north end of Queen's Park Crescent, awarded to Robert McAlpine in the amount of $7,659,000.
- Contract U-3: Cut and cover section from Queen's Park to Huron Street, awarded to McNamara-Raymond in the amount of $6,874,000.[96]

The 3.2 kilometer (two mile) section of the University subway line was substantially complete by the end of 1962 with the official opening on February 28, 1963 (*Figures 45 & 46*).

6.8.2 NEW CITY HALL AND CIVIC SQUARE

On September 24, 1956, Toronto City Council adopted a resolution for an open competition for the design of a new city hall and civic square on a site immediately west of the 1889 city hall. The site was located in The Ward, a neighbourhood where many new immigrants settled and the existing buildings were demolished to create an expansive site. Design guidelines were drawn up by the City Planning Board and Eric R. Arthur, a Professor of Architectural Design at the School of Architecture, University of Toronto. Although the project was referred to as a city hall and civic square, the building was to house both the City of Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto administrations meaning that "one City Hall and Civic Square will represent both and have to meet the needs of social and civic functions of the two municipalities - Toronto and Metropolitan Toronto.[97]

96 Toronto Transit Commission, *Annual Report 1960*, p. 14. COTA, Fonds 16, Series 2221.

97 *City Hall and Square: Conditions of Competition*, 1957, n.p.

The year-long competition opened in September 1957 and attracted over 500 entries from 42 countries. After six days of deliberations, a six-member jury, assembled specifically for the project, identified eight finalists. Another four days were needed to announce Viljo Revell of Finland as the winner. The jury was unanimous in "regarding the winning design as the most original in conception of any of those submitted," although two members voiced concerns regarding the integration of the building with its surroundings and the stark nature of the civic square. Construction on Viljo Revell's design began in November 1961 and was completed in 1965 (*Figure 47*).

City Hall and Civic Square are laid out as four distinct architectural elements - podium, council chamber, office towers and civic square. The two-storey podium was designed with the public areas on the first floor and the government offices on the second floor. The council chamber was designed as a low-domed, saucer-shaped structure. Two crescent-shaped office towers of differing heights straddle the council chamber to accommodate civil servants - one tower for the City of Toronto and the other for Metropolitan Toronto. The west tower is 20 storeys and the east tower is 27 storeys with the 27th floor originally serving as an observation deck. The towers are composed of reinforced concrete exterior walls on the exterior faces and concave steel and glass curtain walls on the interior. The civic square is located at the front of the property, occupying about three-quarters of the overall site. It contains a large rectangular pool/ skating rink covered with three sweeping arches. The outer edges of the square are delineated by an elevated and colonnaded walkway. Intended as a place for public gatherings, the square was named in honour of Mayor Nathan Phillips, who is credited with the vision to initiate the bold project.

The city hall and civic square "established a new design paradigm for development in the core area, that of the high-rise town with a low podium, open plaza and vast underground parking. … The building of city hall transformed the image of the city, and with it, the public perception of Modern architecture."[98]

6.8.3 UNIVERSITY AVENUE LANDSCAPE TREATMENT

In February 1961, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson was engaged by the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board to prepare a landscape plan that "would be in harmony with any plans of the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario for the Queen's Park area."[99] During preparation of the plan, meetings with the Metropolitan Toronto Parks Commissioner were arranged and several principles emerged. Among them, that the centre boulevard should provide for pedestrian usage and that,

98 Bureau of Architecture and Urbanism, *Toronto Modern Architecture* (Coach House Press, 2002), p. 78.

99 Report from M.V. Jones, Commissioner of Planning, Metropolitan Planning Board, October 13, 1961. In *University Avenue* [1961].

> *The Avenue as a whole should be carefully integrated with open spaces and development on either side. Of particular importance are Queen's Park at the northern end and the Civic Square with its two entries north and south of Osgoode Hall. At the southern end of the Avenue a terminal feature should, if possible, be achieved at Front Street. The overall composition would thus be the major Avenue extending from Queen's Park to the terminal feature on Front Street, with the major extensions east and west into the Civic Square and Grange Park. In addition, there is landscaping in front of many existing buildings on the Avenue and this should, as far as possible be integrated into the design.*[100]

Dunington-Grubb & Stensson prepared an overall plan for the landscape treatment and presented it to the Metropolitan Parks and Recreation Committee at its meeting on September 21,1961 (see Appendix C). While construction of the subway destroyed most of the existing boulevards, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson regarded it as an opportunity to reconsider the most suitable landscape treatment for the 'only monumental street in the city.' In introducing their plan, they stated that the

> *…treatment of civic squares and open spaces in the centre of a great metropolis demands a different type of layout from the style usually found in smaller towns. In most cases the layout becomes increasingly architectural, instead of horticultural, in character. … University Avenue, together with the new City Hall, and its surroundings, provide a wonderful opportunity.*[101]

A major consideration for the plan was the issue of winter damage and splash from passing car traffic. As a result, low walls (1 foot to 3 foot high) set two feet from the curb were proposed for both sides of each island. These walls would form the outer boundary of raised planting boxes and provide a sheltered area for people to sit. Formal trees such as Mophead Elms spaced at regular intervals would provide visual continuity. The exception to this was Island L which had slower traffic, allowing for the walls to be omitted and limiting the design to grass panels and trees in planter boxes separated by paving.

Colour was another major consideration in the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson plan. They proposed precast slabs of Mo-Sai (exposed aggregate) in various colours and textures as well as brick to provide a 'bright' and interesting environment. In addition to the exposed aggregate, the interior of the islands were to contain grass panels. Several of the islands were to be broken into levels with small flights of stairs, providing a 'decorative' effect. Underwater lighting was proposed for the fountains, and monuments were to be lit from existing standards on the sidewalks. The interiors of the islands were to be lit by recessed fixtures in the walls. Benches were provided as were pots which were to be planted with flowers or evergreen (*Figures 48, 49 & 50*).

100 Ibid.

101 Dunington-Grubb & Stensson, *University Avenue, Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto: A Plan for its Landscape Treatment*, 1961, p. 1. COTA, Fonds 416, File 33.

For the sidewalks (outer boulevard), lindens placed at 100 foot intervals was proposed as was paving similar to that on the islands (centre boulevard), and that the existing light standards be replaced with ones of a modern design.

The four existing monuments - Sir Adam Beck south of Queen Street, South African monument north of Queen Street; Sons of England memorial at Elm Street and the Robert Saunders monument at College Street were also taken into consideration. Dunington-Grubb & Stensson noted that Island K had already been developed with walls in Queenston and Credit Valley paving. They were of the opinion that the South African War Memorial was the most important island and constructed a model showing a pool with three fountains at its south end. The monument has been moved further south so that it is on axis with the terrace in front of Osgoode Hall (*Figure 51*).

Regarding the five ventilation ducts for the subway, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson noted they were mostly circular grids 10 feet in diameter. The exceptions being Islands B and K which had large, rectangular vents that were proposed to be screened by hedges. The vent at Islands C was to be treated inconspicuously and flush to the ground while the circular vent at Island E had seating that was to be a central feature for a proposed sculpture court. Similarly, the circular vent at Island G had a unique treatment with red granite accents.

Dunington-Grubb & Stensson also addressed the topic of the outer boulevards, believing that it was 'extremely important' that arrangements be made for planting of trees 100 feet apart without disturbing underground services. They suggested to Metropolitan Toronto that trees be planted in precast concrete frames resting on the pavement without foundation. The frames were to be six feet square, two feet high and placed two feet from the curb. They would be Mo-Sai or natural stone on the exterior.[102]

The Dunington-Grubb & Stensson proposal was accepted by Metropolitan Toronto on December 12, 1961. The construction contract was awarded to Conniston Construction in November 1962 and called for completion within one year.[103] In February 1963, the University Avenue subway was officially opened. The landscape treatment was substantially complete by summer 1964 (*Figures 52 - 67*). In 1966, new trees were planted on both sides of University Avenue consisting of Pin Oaks, Locust, and Little Leaf Lindens (*Figure 68*). The Oaks and Locust trees were supplied by a Chicago nursery while the Linden trees were locally sourced.[104]

In 1964 another Metropolitan Toronto initiative was taking shape with the construction of the Superior Court of Justice on the site of the Toronto Armouries property on the east side of University Avenue. The courthouse is set within a highly geometrical,

102 Dunington-Grubb & Stensson to W. W. Gardhouse, The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, October 12, 1961.

103 A set of plans for the islands by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson dated 1962 are included in Appendix C, including detailed planting plans.

104 *Documentation, Restoration and Landscape Management Plan (Draft)*, p. 18.

modernist landscape designed by landscape architect Michael Hough. The hard-scaped plazas and walkways are complemented by planting beds with a range of vegetation, pools, and sculptures. These elements provide a forecourt for the courthouse building, as well as forming a pedestrian mall between University Avenue and New City Hall/Nathan Phillips Square.[105]

6.8.4 CRITICISM AND PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

It was not long after completion of the islands and outer boulevard that the city began to question the overall quality of the Avenue and, in particular the effectiveness of the 1931 University Avenue Bylaw (#13409) that was still in force. In 1968, the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) held a meeting to discuss the design control on University Avenue, with the city's chief planner in attendance. As a result of the meeting, the OAA compiled a list of recommendations for the city regarding the Avenue and specifically for the islands. The OAA recommended planting large and massive trees in an informal manner down the centre of the islands essentially "ignoring the 'landscaping' which would we hope eventually disappear."[106]

In February 1971, the City Planning Board formally reviewed Bylaw #13409, making recommendations for a 'comprehensive landscape plan' which addressed trees and other plantings, lights, the median strip, surface treatments, sidewalks, pedestrian movements and furnishings.[107] Generally, it was believed that the trees and plantings were too sparse and small in scale, and as a result they were dominated by the buildings and cars. Regarding the islands (referred to as the median strip), the Board was forthright in its criticism, noting that "it is doubtful if the present treatment of the median strip is very satisfactory from the point of view of the appearance and usefulness of the Avenue to the pedestrian or the car - traveller."[108] The Advisory Committee recommended larger and dense trees planted in a solid row along each side of the median with a narrow pedestrian path in between.

In 1972, Metropolitan Toronto appointed the Metropolitan Parks Commissioner as a member of the University Avenue By-Law Advisory Committee, and adopted the proposals regarding pedestrians, central boulevard improvements, land use changes, sign control and landscaping.

While wholesale changes to the islands did not occur, some modifications were made during the late 1970s. Based on aerial imagery, by 1978 the original landscape treatment on Island L was no longer visible and most of the island appears as grass. Islands H and I were lengthened at the north and south ends respectively.[109]

105 Now known as the McMurtry Gardens of Justice, the landscape of the Toronto Courthouse is included on the Cultural Landscape Foundation website https://www.tclf.org/landscapes/mcmurtry-gardens-justice

106 City of Toronto Planning Board. *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*, p. 51.

107 Ibid., pp. 45-49.

108 Ibid., p. 46.

109 This is based on aerial imagery from the University of Toronto's School of Cities https://schoolofcities.github.io/historical-aerial-imagery-toronto/.

Into the 1980s, the islands retained much of their integrity and original elements including benches and pots (*Figure 69 - 72*). Island E was altered when the Airmen's Memorial was placed at the northern part of the island. By 1984 several planters were removed and a row of trees were planted/grafted (*Figure 73*).

6.9 1998 to PRESENT

In 1998, the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto was dissolved and the municipality of Toronto amalgamated with Etobicoke, Scarborough, York, East York, North York into a new, singular City of Toronto. Responsibility for the University Avenue islands returned to the City of Toronto.

Island F was rebuilt between 2017 and 2018, with its original layout and design significantly modified by a new design only marginally reflecting the layout, design and materials of the original.

In 2020, the City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) Division undertook a state-of-good-repair report of the 12 medians. In 2021-2023, Toronto City Council provided direction to city staff to explore the possibilities of a reconfiguration of University Avenue to achieve a linear park based on the recommendations in the TOCore Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan. At present there are no funding allocations or directions to undertake the environmental assessment studies required for the project.

In early 2024, the South African War Memorial was removed to allow construction of the Osgoode Station as part of the new Ontario Line subway. Metrolinx has a contract to remove, store and reinstall the monument and median elements (planters, fountain) to the current location. The target date for station completion is 2030.

Currently, the PFR Division has responsibility for the maintenance of the islands while the Economic Development and Culture Division has responsibility for the five monuments.

7.0 ANALYSIS

7.1 DESIGN AND PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

7.1.1 DUNINGTON-GRUBB & STENSSON

History of the Firm

Howard Burlington Grubb was born in York, England, in 1881. He obtained a B.S.A. from the Cornell School of Landscape Architecture before returning to England in 1908 to work for Thomas A. Mawson, one of England's best known landscape architects. Grubb married fellow landscape architect, Lorrie Alfreda Dunington and the couple emigrated to Canada in 1911, establishing their practice in Toronto - H.B. & L.A. Dunington-Grubb, Landscape Architects.

In 1913, they purchased a hundred acres of land west of Toronto in Sheridan, Ontario to "overcome the utter lack of ornamental plant material" available to landscape architects.[110] At the time, ornamental plants for pleasure gardens in Canada were imported. More practical gardens concentrated on edible produce with roses, vines and herbaceous perennials providing the ornamental component. Sheridan Nurseries was founded specifically to supply ornamental trees and shrubs to Canadian gardens and the Dunington-Grubbs hired Swedish-born horticulturalist Herman Stensson to manage it.

The Dunington-Grubbs wanted to bring the English garden to Canada but faced their challenges. Howard recalled a prominent banker telling him that the "Canadian public possessed such appreciation of the beauties of wild nature that garden design was likely to make very little headway."[111] Similarly when their design for the gardens at Government House in Toronto (1911-1915; demolished) was being constructed, Howard recalled the Minister of Public Works asking whether the cut-stone for the foundations, pavement, steps, terraces and fountains was necessary. No, responded Howard, continuing that the only really necessary work would be a "plank walk to the front door so that people could get in and out of the building without stepping in the mud." Dunington-Grubb concluded that "Garden design in a country devoid of gardens must necessarily be a gradual evolution."[112]

While garden design for private clients was a substantial component of their business, the Dunington-Grubbs had many public commissions. In 1914, the City of Brantford hired the firm to provide expert advice on making the city 'convenient, healthy and beautiful'. In 1913-1914, the office prepared a plan for the University of Calgary campus (not realized). From 1919-1927, the Dunington-Grubbs were the landscape architects

110 Canadian Society Landscape Architects (CSLA), "Howard B. Dunington-Grubb," https://www.csla-aapc.ca/awards/college-fellows/howard-b-dunington-grubb

111 Ann Milovsoroff, "For the Love of Gardens: A Biography of H.B. & L.A. Dunington-Grubb," *Canadian Horticultural History* 2 (3), 1990, p. 106.

112 Milovsoroff, p. 196.

for Gage Park in Hamilton (extant; Listed Part IV).[113] They were also responsible for the Sunken Garden in Hamilton (1929; demolished) (*Figure 74*). Among the notable private gardens designed by the Dunington-Grubbs were the Parkwood Estate in Oshawa (1930; extant; National Historic Site of Canada) and plan for the Garden Court Apartments in Toronto (1939-41; extant; designated Part IV OHA; By law 6-87; 607-2018). Lorrie and Howard were pioneers in the landscape architecture field in Canada, with both writing and lecturing on the topic and founding members of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA).

In the mid-1930s, Herman Stensson's son, Jesse Vilhelm (J.V.) Stensson joined the Dunington-Grubbs in their landscape architecture practice. One of the firm's notable and extant public projects from this period is the Oakes Garden Theatre and Rainbow Bridge Gardens in Niagara Falls (1935-1944; extant, *Figure 75*). In 1939, J.V. became the managing director of Sheridan Nurseries following his father's death. However, his association with the landscape architecture practice continued, even after Lorrie's death in 1945. In 1956, Stensson met and married Janina Korkuc, a professionally educated and internationally known landscape architect. After J.V. joined Dunington-Grubb, the focus of the firm gradually shifted from residential design to public and commercial projects. This direction continued after Janina herself joined the firm. In 1959, J.V. left the practice but remained at Sheridan Nurseries. Janina stayed on at Dunington-Grubb & Stensson.

Among the firm's notable post-World War II public projects were the:

- Entrance and grounds for the Ontario Art Gallery (1952; not extant)
- Landscape plan, terrace and plant boxes Ontario Association of Architects building, 50 Park Road (1954-7; extant; designated Part IV OHA)
- Planting plan for the Maclean Hunter Publishing Co. on University Avenue (1954-9; not extant)
- Plans for improvement to grounds of Osgood Hall (1955; not realized)
- Fountain, pool and planting beds for the Juvenile and Family Court and Youth Centre, Toronto (1957; not extant)
- Workman's Compensation Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre landscape plan for grounds (1957-8; not extant)
- Planting plan for the O'Keefe Centre (1960; not extant)

Based on the drawing list in the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson collection at the University of Guelph, it appears that the firm continued into the early 1970s.

Beaux Arts Approach

Dunington-Grubb subscribed to a Beaux Arts approach that saw buildings extending their architectural influence into the landscape to form a controlled ornamental scene

113 CSLA, "Gage Park," https://www.csla-aapc.ca/awards/gage-park-2016

that was more 'human stage than natural environment.'[114] Throughout his career, Dunington-Grubb was devoted to fine gardening, ornament, and detail. He believed that the primary purpose of a garden was to "delight the eye and sooth the spirit" and that the ideal landscape was full of "variety and surprise and delightful detail."[115]

Howard and his contemporary Humphrey Carver often debated design approaches and particularly the rise of the modern movement in the late 1930s. Carver, an architect and urban planner, recalls telling Dunington-Grubb that his gardens were places "entirely removed from the realities of 1930s life in Canada," and that he was "a kind of leprechaun who put stardust into your eyes and the real world is transformed into a Midsummer Night's Dream." Grubb snorted and replied, "That's the whole point. In a garden we have left the real world and entered the world… of pleasure and rest."[116]

In his 1938 article "The Modernist in the Garden," Dunington-Grubb critiqued one of Carver's garden designs as "an example of virile decoration, suitable for his he-man pleasuance, we see an illustration of a garden consisting of two tennis rackets, an umbrella, and a glass of whiskey and soda. Gone are the finials, our tubs, and our garden pots. Surely our flower bed, our herbaceous border, and our roses, having no possible practical value must be overboard also."[117]

For his part, Carver described Dunington-Grubb's design of the Oakes Garden Theatre which featured "little clipped hedges, balustrades, garden ornaments and interlacing patterns of flowerbeds," noting that these elements were "Grubb's vocabulary and trademark."[118] However, Carver also noted that Dunington-Grubb "couldn't forget that he was a designer, highly-trained in the 'Beaux Arts style,' and he wanted to dominate the pattern, and impose on the planting material his own view of how they ought to grow"[119] In the end, Carver spoke admiringly of Howard as "the 18th century man who knew how to lead you into the landscape scene by the terraces, pathways, and avenues, the spaces and vistas, the whole structure of the landscape picture."[120]

Howard maintained a skeptical view of the modern movement writing that "Design has always been based on functionalism. … The modernist's interpretation of functionalism may reduce our houses to the barren bleakness of an orphans' home."[121] He preferred instead an idealistic view of the landscape, "Once in the garden we have left the

114 Edward Butts and Karl Stensson, *Sheridan Nurseries: One Hundred of People, Plans and Plants* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2010), p. 84.

115 Butts and Stensson, pp. 87 and 88.

116 CSLA, "Howard Dunington-Grubb," Accessed at https://www.csla-aapc.ca/awards/college-fellows/howard-b-dunington-grubb

117 Pleasuance is an obsolete form of pleasance - a pleasure-garden. Butts and Stensson, p. 87. The original article appeared in *Canadian Homes and Gardens* (September 1938), pp. 26-7, 45.

118 Ibid., p. 98.

119 Ibid., p. 87.

120 Ibid., p. 86.

121 Ibid., p. 87.

practical world of utility and entered a world of fantasy, of make-believe, where decorative nature under control of art provides both pleasure and rest, and where the effects we think we see are mostly illusions."[122]

Rise of the Modern Movement

When Dunington-Grubb & Stensson began working on the design of the realigned median in 1947, the modern movement was in ascendancy in Canada as the new aesthetic approach in architecture, art (as seen in abstract painting and sculpture), and landscape architecture. The modern movement rejected the formalities of the historic styles such as the Italian and French Renaissance and the English picturesque. The movement emphasized the promise of modern technology, materials and forms. The movement also emphasized the social importance of a designers' decisions – that one should serve all of society, not just the elite, and that design should understand and address the problems of the time. For landscape architecture that meant satisfying the need for viable social spaces while trying to establish a balance between human activities and natural ecosystems.

In comparison to other fields, landscape architecture was slow to embrace the modern movement. In Europe there had been gradual progress towards modern landscape design in France and Belgium in the 1920s and 1930s. In North America, the appointment of professor Walter Gropius to the Harvard Graduate School of Design, marked the beginning of the movement on the other side of the ocean. At Harvard, Gropius influenced a generation of landscape architects in the late 1930s. In Canada at this time, the most prominent landscape architecture projects were still "expressed in derivative formal languages from past traditions; such projects were often splendid, but not innovative. The Art Deco sculptures and bridges of the 1930s seem to have been the only works in the landscape that embraced the new ideas of modernism."[123]

In 1938, Canadian Christopher Tunnard (1910-1979) published *Gardens in the Modern Landscape.* It was a compilation of his articles for the *Architectural Review* in which Tunnard explored the meaning of modernism in the context of landscape. Tunnard's designs for gardens at Bentley Wood in Sussex (England) and St. Ann's Hill in Surrey (England) became early icons of modern landscape design. They demonstrated a continuity between the house and garden, a vocabulary of forms inspired by modern art, and the integration of art (often abstract) into the garden. Shortly after the book's publication, Tunnard returned to North America to help Walter Gropius establish a modernist landscape program at Harvard.

The arrival of the modern movement as the main artistic approach to landscape architecture in Canada came about in the early 1950s. The August 1950 issue of the *Journal* of the RAIC dedicated itself to the domestic garden - the first subject to which

122 Milovsoroff, p. 112.

123 Ron Williams, *Landscape Architecture in Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), pp. 384-5.

landscape architecture applied the principles of modernism. For some authors, the principal tenet of modern landscape architecture was functionalism. Thomas Church wrote that "the landscape architect no longer has a choice between a functional or esthetic approach. Like it or not, the functions of the house have spilled out into the garden and must be provided for,"[124] while his contemporary Garrett Eckbo echoed this new priority, identifying "functionalism and spatial richness" as core objectives for modern landscape architecture.[125] Both landscape designers practiced in California (*Figures 76 & 77*).

In contrast, Howard Dunington-Grubb defended a traditional approach in his article "The Garden of 1950," stating that the objective of garden design was aesthetic in so far as it was meant to create "a decorative setting for the house" with most of the horticultural furniture introduced for "decorative reasons only." Although Dunington-Grubb did admit that the garden and house were becoming one unit of design as the "barrier between indoor and outdoor living is beginning to disappear."[126]

Vilhelm Stensson contributed an article on approaches to planting in which he advocated for simple, mass planting to replace the "intricate flower borders, fussy foundation plantings, and clipped trees and hedges" of traditional approaches. He also suggested that in a "purely architectural setting" such as a paved terrace surrounded by a masonry wall, introducing plants in pots, tubs and boxes could relieve the drabness created by the materials. Stensson pointed out the almost unlimited possibilities provided by form, color and texture either in designing a "tiny shrub border or the planting scheme of a great parkway."[127] Finally, Stensson advocated for meeting basic human needs through landscape design by providing shade from the sun, shelter from the wind and basic amenities.

University Avenue appears to have been on the mind of both Stensson and Dunington-Grubb when penning their articles. In fact, Dunington-Grubb made specific reference to the street as he recounted a tour of the United States and in particular Cincinnati where the "Terrace Plaza Hotel, the great layout in front of their much dated modern station, the treatment of the central park strips in the downtown avenues, [suggest] ideas for University Avenue…" (*Figure 78*)[128] Dunington-Grubb may have also visited Pittsburgh on this trip as a colour image of the paving in the Golden Triangle area of the city is included in his papers at University of Guelph (*Figure 79*).

124 Thomas D. Church, "Transition," *Journal Royal Canadian Institute of Canada Vol.* 27, No. 8 (August 1950), p. 252.

125 Garrett Eckbo, "What do we mean by modern landscape architecture?" *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Vol.* 27, No. 8 (August 1950), pp. 268-271.

126 H. Dunington-Grubb, "The Garden of Nineteen-Fifty," *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* Vol. 27, No. 8 (August 1950), pp. 272-273.

127 J.V. Stensson, "Approach to Planting," *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* Vol. 27, No. 8, (August 1950), p. 266.

128 Dunington-Grubb, "The Garden of Nineteen-Fifty," p. 272.

At the request of the City of Toronto, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson proposed several options for their 1948 design of University Avenue to address the issue of public access (See Section 6.7). Ultimately the City did not approve the design, opting instead for a design by planning consultant Eugene G. Faludi. Although approved in 1950, Faludi's design was never implemented. This may have been the result of the impending creation of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

Metropolitan Toronto and University Avenue

After 1950 the modern movement extended its influence from the domestic realm to all types of public gardens and parks. One of these was the landscape approach of the central median and islands on University Avenue for Metropolitan Toronto which upon its creation, took over transportation planning in the city. This included public transit and roadways with Metropolitan Toronto assuming responsibility for several roads including University Avenue. In 1959, the University Avenue subway broke ground prompting questions about how to reconstruct the existing 12 islands once the subway was completed. The existing central median contained 12 islands of various lengths broken by cross streets. The treatment was primarily turf with a line of crab trees in the centre of each island and the occasional planting bed (*Figure 80*) with four of the islands containing public art. In February 1961, the Metropolitan Planning Board hired Dunington-Grubb & Stensson to prepare a 'suitable' landscape plan that would take into account plans of the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario for the area. The preliminary drawings were created by Dunington-Grubb & Stennson in September 1961 and presented to the Metropolitan Parks and Recreation Committee (*Appendix B*).

The design of the University Avenue median with 12 landscaped islands is attributed to Howard Dunington-Grubb. Janina Stensson, who joined the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson in 1958, recounted that Howard was responsible for the overall design of University Avenue, while she provided detailed designs for two of the islands. She also noted that her husband J.V. Stensson contributed the design of the triangular stone planters (Island H).[129] The 1961 design bears similarity to Dunington-Grubb & Stensson's 1948 design of the islands for the City of Toronto. The similarity can be seen in the unique design for each island utilizing both symmetrical and asymmetrical approaches. Specific elements such as water features, seating and stairs were brought forward into the 1961-2 design.

The 1961-2 design was also premised on pedestrian use of the islands. Howard Dunington-Grubb argued that pedestrians could not be prevented from crossing University Avenue at the ends of each island. Once on the island, pedestrians should be protected from traffic by raised planting beds and provided with seating areas so they could enjoy the outdoors.

129 Carol Martin, *A History of Canadian Gardening* (Toronto: McArthur & Company, 2000), p. 84. In their 2014 article "University Avenue - Toronto's Grand Boulevard," Michael McClelland and Brendan Stewart propose that J.V and Janina Stensson had a "significant influence on the modernist design vocabulary of the project," because Howard was well-known for his antipathy towards modernist design. Additionally J.V. left Dunington-Grubb & Stensson in 1959 to devote his time to Sheridan Nurseries.

The Dunington-Grubb & Stensson design included stairs on several island Islands either to break up the larger ones (Islands E and H), thus providing a 'decorative' effect', or to provide access (Islands B, C, D, and I). Introducing steps also allowed for the creation of level "platforms" that could more readily accommodate the highly-disciplined Beaux Arts vernacular. Benches and pots, or the 'furniture of gardens' as Howard Dunington-Grubb referred to them, were introduced for functional uses (seating) and aesthetic reasons (pots planted with annuals or evergreens). Locations for sculpture were proposed, particularly on Island E, as were designs for modern light standards (see *Figure 48*). A broad range of paving materials, particularly varieties of exposed aggregate, provided a variety of colours and textures.

The planting plan relied heavily on rows of formal trees to provide continuity along the 12 islands. Large and small Globe Elms (85 in total) were planted on every island with the exception of Island L. Lindens (40 foot) placed at 100 foot intervals on the outer boulevard were also proposed, but based on historic photographs it does not appear this was fully realized. Evergreens were used extensively on the islands as they provided display throughout the majority of the year. They were often specified in conical shapes such as pyramids or obelisks. Other permanent plantings included Privet Hedge which was used heavily on Islands A and G. Due to winter conditions and spray from cars, Howard Dunington-Grubb acknowledged that annuals, rather than permanent plantings, must "provide the main bulk of the planting."[130] To this end, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson specified over 200 pots in various shapes and sizes to be placed throughout the islands for annuals as well as evergreens (*Figure 81*).[131]

Comments from Metro Toronto were provided in October 1961 and emphasized that the design should be based primarily on its appearance from passing traffic rather than pedestrians. In fact, Metro Toronto wanted to discourage pedestrian use and suggested that turf and plantings be used more extensively than paving to achieve this. Colourful paving and varied textures, however, were encouraged as they provided beneficial visual effects in the winter. Regardless of the concern about pedestrian use of the island, Toronto Metropolitan Council approved the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson landscape plans in December 1961.

Dunington-Grubb & Stennson made revisions to the island designs throughout 1962 culminating in a September 1962 drawing set including planting plan, as well as specifications.[132] Overall, the changes appear to be minor in nature, such as slight changes to the geometries of Islands E and K. The exception was Island G which underwent a complete redesign with the central pedestrian access replaced by a singular, central planting bed.

130 Metropolitan Parks Department Memo, 28 May 1962 in Metropolitan Toronto, Parks Department, *University Avenue Landscape Plans* (1962).

131 The Swiss designed and produced Reff pots were first imported into Canada in 1957 with their manufacture beginning in Canada in 1960.

132 Neither the 1962 drawings or specifications included any treatment of the outer boulevard or a planting plan for annuals.

The landscape design of the 12 islands along University Avenue's central median was a large-scale public project for Dunington-Grubb & Stensson, and one of the largest of the firm's post-World War II projects. While it reflects the ideas of the firm, the design is reflective of Howard Dunington-Grubb's own ideas about private garden design. Each of the islands essentially provides an individually designed garden where "decorative nature under control of art provides both pleasure and rest."[133] Several Dunington-Grubb & Stensson design approaches to private estate gardens were employed on the University Avenue islands including the use of stairs to provide access to the islands and create level changes within them, integrated and stand-alone benches, water features that served as settings for public art (Island C and E), permanent plantings which were orderly, sculpted and forced to take the shape of their containers, and annuals in decorative pots which provided additional ornamentation. These approaches can be seen in Dunington-Grubb's 1930s work at the private estates of Parkwood and the Crothers Estate also known as Annadale/Uplands (*Figures 82 & 83*).

Dunington-Grubb applied a modern vocabulary of materials to his traditional Beaux Arts approach to garden design. Exposed aggregate in a variety of colours and patterns was used extensively for paving as well as planting beds. Simple, white pots in different designs and shapes provided additional places for evergreen and annual plantings. The influence of the modern movement on the landscape design of the islands, however, is limited when compared to the adjacent Modernist landscape of the Superior Court of Justice at 361 University Avenue (1966). Michael Hough's design for the court site included a plaza on University Avenue to provide a formal setting for the building while the pedestrian mall, framed by two square fountains, provides a link between the courts and the unapologetically modern Nathan Phillips Square (1957-1965) with its vast, unadorned open space (*Figures 84 & 85*). Interestingly, the landscape for the court building uses similar materials as the islands such as cut limestone for the raised planters and exposed aggregate for the paving. However, the colour palette is much more subdued at the court site, creating a more unified and cohesive space.

Dunington-Grubb ultimately completed the University Avenue project within budget, but without fanfare. There was no ribbon cutting and the final trees were installed amidst the traffic and daily bustle of the city. The opening of the subway was the main attraction and drew more media attention.[134] In the brief biographical entry that Howard penned for the CSLA, he described his role as "Technical experience - Metropolitan Toronto University Avenue Central Boulevard Half million Dollars."[135] University Avenue was Howard Dunington-Grubb's last major work. He died 26 February 1965 at the age of 84 (*Figure 86*).

133 Milovsoroff, p. 112.

134 Butts and Stensson, p. 106.

135 Milovsoroff, p. 111.

7.1.2 UNIVERSITY AVENUE LANDSCAPE APPROACH

Extending from Richmond Street West to Queen's Park, University Avenue is a powerful Beaux Arts boulevard framing an uninterrupted vista northward to Ontario's Legislative Building. Originally designed c.1830 by Parmentier as a tree-lined pastoral promenade, the avenue served as a popular linear park before evolving into a major urban artery characterized by broad, multi-lane roadways separated by a central median. The corridor is defined by a consistent frontage of landmark civic and institutional buildings—including Osgoode Hall and the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts to the south, and the hospitals of "Hospital Row" to the north—that reinforce the avenue's monumental character. Unique among Toronto's streets, University Avenue represents one of the city's most significant urban design gestures, intentionally creating a grand civic axis that embodies civic pride and institutional prestige. The scale, formality, and overall composition of buildings, open space, and street elements distinguish it as one of Toronto's few ceremonial boulevards.

A defining feature of this composition is the wide central median, which is segmented by cross-streets into twelve distinct islands. These islands are the central focus of this study, particularly their origins and current condition.

The landscape of the University Avenue median is a structured composition of geometric patterning, axial alignment, and material variation. Designed as a series of interconnected spaces, the twelve islands integrate circulation, planting, and focal elements within a defined spatial framework.

A primary organizational characteristic of the islands is their arrangement as a sequence of distinct yet interconnected spaces, which can be described as 'beads on a string'. Each median segment has a unique configuration of planting, hardscape, and focal elements, but together they create a continuous composition that extends along University Avenue. This approach introduces variation within a structured framework, establishing a sequence of spatial experiences along the corridor.

Within this broader structure, the islands are further defined as a series of outdoor "rooms." These spaces are framed by portals—distinct points of entry and exit—that create a structured sequence along the avenue. Circulation is arranged through symmetrical alignments of trees, planting beds, and hardscape elements. The use of trees as a repeating structural component establishes rhythm and enclosure, while rectilinear and geometric forms define spatial organization.

At a more detailed level, the median designs incorporate irregular geometries that serve as counterpoint to the powerful Beaux Arts thrust of University Avenue as a whole. Different combinations of repeating angles, offsets, projections and other articulations give each island a unique character, providing enhanced interest for passing motorists and pedestrians. Taken together, however, the islands read as a single necklace of multi-coloured beads.

Material selection contributes to the islands' visual and tactile qualities. The landscape incorporates natural stone and precast concrete, often with textured or colored finishes. Contrasting materials, particularly in paving and vertical elements, reinforce geometric clarity through the use of checkerboard patterns and other bold motifs.

Monuments and public art serve as primary focal points, positioned with prominence within the islands. Water features, including fountains and pools, define spatial edges and provide sound attenuation - when they are working - to those who may venture onto an island. Decorative planters function as secondary focal elements, layering visual interest within the structured composition.

The islands also reflect some principles of mid-century Modernist landscape architecture, which emphasized structured public space design. Unlike earlier traditions that prioritized decorative formalism, the islands incorporate planting, hardscape, and open areas to define spaces for movement, gathering, and rest. Dunington-Grubb designed the islands with identifiable rooms, portals, and seating areas intended for public use, aligning with Modernist ideals that emphasized accessibility and social function alongside aesthetic composition.

The median islands are a key component of University Avenue's overall composition, reinforcing its axial structure and spatial rhythm. Designed as a sequence of formal landscape spaces, they translate the avenue's monumental scale into smaller, walkable segments. Their layout, materials, and features remain a distinctive—if aging—element of Toronto's public realm.

7.1.3 LANDSCAPE STYLE

The central median's landscaped islands represent a combination of approaches to landscape design rather than a singular and coherent style. Specifically, the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson plan from 1961-2 combines elements of Beaux Arts, decorative, and modernist landscape design.

The Beaux Arts influences on the central median are seen in its overall axial context, but also in the layouts of some of the individual islands. A number of islands are based on symmetrical and formal geometries, integrating elegant detailing with features like fountains, oblong reflecting pools and monuments to emphasize linearity and axial relationships. The Dunington-Grubb designs also reflect the Beaux Arts use of plants as highly-controlled and sometimes elaborate decorations.

A review of the 1948 plan suggests that certain elements were adapted or re-used from Dunington-Grubb & Stensson's designs from almost 15 years earlier (see Appendix A). Specifically, Islands G and H reflect layouts and circulation patterns, while Islands E and I appear to have adapted some of the more expressive geometries. Island C layout is heavily copied from the 1948 plan with only minor revisions (*Figure 87*). These similarities suggest that the 1961-2 layouts were influenced by historically-rooted

design principles from an earlier scheme, and were not generated from scratch in response to emerging ideas on modernism.

The islands are also highly decorative in nature, reflecting Howard Dunington-Grubb's training in ornamental garden design, and convictions on the importance of aesthetic experiences. Spatially, this more traditional approach is also seen in the definition of spaces as a collection of outdoor rooms. Decorative tendencies are also seen in the intentional, if not frenetic use of colours, patterns and shapes in the individual island compositions, as well as the choice of plantings, which relied heavily on shaped trees and shrubs alongside a high proportion of annuals.

The decorative approach is especially clear when contrasted with the adjacent modernist landscapes at 361 University Avenue and Nathan Phillips Square (*Figure 88*). These landscapes, designed in the early 1960s and mid-1950s respectively, are much more rational in their approach to pedestrian spaces, providing generous open areas defined by simple geometries, with restrained material, textural and colour palettes. Their lack of decorative pre-occupation underlies their overt functionality, which prioritizes connectivity and usable public space.

These underlying characteristics clash with some of the central tenets of the modernist design movement, which rejected the formality and ornamental pre-occupation of historical styles, and instead emphasized functionality and low-maintenance approaches. First, the overall design does not reject historical approaches, having a foundation in decorative and Beaux Arts design, incorporating a number of historically-derived layouts and details.

Second, functionality does not appear to have been a priority of the 1961-2 design, with a reliance on ornamental and annual plantings was demanding in terms of maintenance. Further, the overall approach is more decorative than functional in nature, with features like benches designed and sited based on aesthetic considerations in relation to the overall composition. Indeed, the sub-par quality of public space on the median has been one of the longstanding criticisms levied against the design (see Sections 7.2.1 & 8.1.C).

Modernist landscapes did prioritize public access and social function in design. However the degree to which this aspect of the median reflects the modernist ideal is unclear, given that the principle of public access was also a key consideration of the 1948 plan. That scheme generally provides public spaces on the island interiors framed by plantings and trees, with fountains, shelters and seating throughout. The 1961-2 designs appear to have largely retained this overall approach, suggesting that the design aligned more with traditional decorative approaches rather than the new modernist paradigms, as seen at 361 University Avenue and Nathan Phillips Square.

The islands' modernist elements are most apparent in the use of irregular / asymmetrical forms, along with a palette of contemporary materials, including exposed

aggregate panels and planter pots. Contemporary modernist aesthetics extend to the geometric volumes of raised planter beds, and the elegant forms of moveable and limestone pots. Mass plantings (to the degree that they were used) also represent a modernist tendency. These modernist qualities primarily relate to the aesthetic and material vocabularies employed within the landscape.

However even these are timidly or inconsistently applied across the overall median design. For example, the designs of Islands B and C are highly reflective of traditional, formal layouts based on symmetry with spaces organized around monuments and water features, while integrating traditional geometries such as ellipses (*Figure 89*). Materially, some raised planter beds still rely on projecting coping stones to convey a traditional sense of massing rather than volume. This mixture of modernist and traditional details somewhat tempers the overall effect of the modernist aesthetic.

Ultimately, the central median reflects the application of new contemporary aesthetic and material vocabularies to underlying ideas and approaches that were historically-informed and traditional in nature. The result is consistent with Howard Dunington-Grubb's conservative approach to landscape design, and his tendency to impose an aesthetic experience through landscape. Thus the central median does not reflect a coherent overall style or design paradigm, and instead represents a combination of approaches, some of which are ideologically contradictory.

7.1.4 URBAN DESIGN

University Avenue remains a significant urban design intervention that is unique in Toronto and possibly across the country. Despite its evolution from a bucolic promenade to a major traffic artery, the avenue has largely retained its sense of grandeur and ceremony. The avenue's powerful axial composition, the clear sense of architectural containment and the prominence of the Ontario Legislative Building at its northern terminus all remain evident and confirm the avenue's continuing prestige and civic importance.

While the basic urban structure remains intact, the University Avenue of today is plagued by the overwhelming impact of traffic; the poorly developed sidewalks on each side; the lack of meaningful street trees along the edges; challenges for pedestrians at the wide intersections; the difficulty of actually getting to Queen's Park; the unsatisfactory termination of the Avenue at the south end; and the uneven quality of the facing buildings. These unfortunate features compromise the experience for all users, but especially for pedestrians.

A more detailed assessment of the central medians follows.

> "*The central medians, whose positions and width are a function primarily of traffic flow considerations, are very difficult for pedestrians to reach and move between. In addition, once they are reached, they are very exposed to traffic, noise and*

> *exhaust fumes. The current design of the medians, although undoubtedly based on the best of intentions, does very little to ameliorate this condition, and it is consequently underused by pedestrians.*"
> *— The Art of the Avenue, 1989*

Written more than three decades ago, this observation remains just as relevant today. Despite their strong visual presence, the median islands of University Avenue continue to fall short as inviting, accessible, and well-integrated public spaces. The original ambition—to create a grand, landscaped civic boulevard—has been compromised by persistent challenges in spatial coherence, accessibility, and design maintenance.

Spatial Mismatch

The islands' intimate scale and compartmentalized "rooms" contrast sharply with the broad proportions of the avenue and its imposing architectural context. While some islands offer a pleasant human-scale experience, their fragmented layout and the overwhelming width of surrounding traffic lanes create a dissonance that undercuts the original design intent. This mismatch limits their role as coherent elements of a unified civic space.

Physical Accessibility Challenges

As The Art of the Avenue noted, reaching the medians remains difficult. Wide traffic lanes and a lack of direct pedestrian crossings from adjacent sidewalks inhibit access, discouraging daily use. The islands' promise as accessible public spaces is undermined by their physical isolation from the surrounding public realm.

Visual Prominence, Limited Use

The medians are highly visible, but their role is largely symbolic. Cross streets fragment them into short segments, and the intensity of nearby traffic creates an inhospitable environment. Rather than functioning as active public spaces, the islands are perceived as decorative features—visible but disconnected.

Maintenance and Design Degradation

Design elements such as fountains, pools, and specialized paving require upkeep beyond standard municipal road maintenance practices. Lacking consistent care, these features have deteriorated, diminishing the quality and character of the spaces. As their condition declines, so too does their public value.

The challenges described above are not uniform across the entire corridor—each median island along University Avenue tells a slightly different story. Some islands offer brief moments of relief from the surrounding traffic, while others remain inaccessible, underused, or in decline. Their design quality, accessibility, and condition vary widely, resulting in an inconsistent and often ineffective contribution to the public realm.

More detailed island-by-island analysis to assess their individual functionality, spatial character, and current usability is provided in Appendix E.

7.2 ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS & PRACTICES

7.2.1 UNIVERSITY AVENUE AS PUBLIC AMENITY

University Avenue as public amenity refers to the avenue's history as a landscaped public space. This includes its historic use as parkland and more recent use as accessible landscaped public space.

College Avenue was originally purchased and laid out as a linear landscape connecting King's College with the Town of York. Despite being privately held land, the College allowed the public to access the avenue, at the same time prohibiting all commercial traffic. Under these conditions College Avenue became a popular public promenade, serving as important parkland for Torontonians through the 1830s, '40s and '50s.

The Avenue's use as parkland became formalized in 1859, when the City of Toronto leased the study area, along with parts of Queen's Park and Yonge Street Avenue (College Street) to create the first municipally-operated park in British North America. With the establishment of Queen's Park in 1860, College Avenue became part of a larger park network, sometimes taking on a processional role for groups travelling between the City and Queen's Park.

University Avenue's use as a park promenade was negatively impacted when the City permitted general traffic on the Avenue sometime after 1888. Such use waned further with the rise of the automobile, and in 1913 the City re-designed the study area as a parkway. The new configuration created better conditions for motor vehicles, while reducing the green space to a series of islands broken up by cross streets. The parkway redesign represented a low-point for public usage of the avenue, as by 1914 by-laws were in place prohibiting access to the grassed islands. One pedestrian expressed their surprise at the enforcement, given how the public thoroughfare had until recently been a common ground: "...it is a pretty mean trick to serve a summons on innocent people who cannot be expected to know that any portion of a plain, unguarded avenue is not to be walked upon."[136] Subsequent alterations in 1947 accentuated these trends by creating an even more unwelcoming environment for pedestrians. The new islands were set amidst 8 rows of traffic, and featured grass with a central line of trees, lacking any park-like landscaping or amenities.

However the issue of public access to University Avenue's median was revived in 1948 when the City Planning Board engaged Dunington-Grubb & Stensson to prepare landscape designs for the newly reconfigured median. Dunington-Grubb & Stensson viewed the question of public access as fundamental to the design, and ultimately favoured a landscape to be used by the public over one that was purely ornamental. Within this new context public access provided an opportunity to leverage the Avenue's civic symbols (including the Ontario Legislative Building and the South African War Memorial), rather than provide recreational parkland in the conventional sense. Public

136 "University Ave. Civic Improvements," *Toronto Daily Star,* 29 April 1914, p. 6.

access remained a central principle of the project, informing the new designs that were ultimately completed by 1964. As a result, the landscape integrated walkways and other features for pedestrians including seating and fountains.

In 1971 the City of Toronto Planning Board undertook a review of the 1931 University Avenue By-Law, which imposed design standards and regulated land uses. The report was critical of the landscape's aesthetics and pedestrian experience given its prominent civic profile within the city. Specifically, it criticized the sparse environmental quality for pedestrians, the scale of vegetation relative to the size of the right of way, and the lack of good seating areas. Acknowledging that design controls had succeeded in creating a distinctive character and unity of appearance, the report recommended making the Avenue a more lively place for pedestrians, and increasing comfort, convenience and enjoyment for users. The Ontario Association of Architects submitted similar sentiments on the avenue in the leadup to the 1971 report, criticizing the scale and sparse vegetation of the islands, and suggesting that the limited uses permitted by the 1931 By-Law were an impediment to greater pedestrian activity.[137]

In 2020 a public life study was undertaken for University Avenue, which aligns with many of the 1971 findings on the avenue being underutilized as a public space for pedestrians.[138] A study survey revealed that 70% of respondents prefer other nearby parks, with less than one-third of respondents ever having spent time on the islands. University Avenue itself is not a destination, with 53% of respondents 'just passing through' and another 41% there for work or appointments. Traffic, combined with a lack of retail options and quality greenspace are considered important factors.

Ultimately, the site's history as a public amenity supports University Avenue's identity as a civic landscape, first as a significant municipal park, and subsequently as an intentional public space within landmark civic context. However, the landscape's public amenity function is underserved by the current design, which lacks high-quality public gathering spaces.

7.2.2 THOROUGHFARE: CONNECTIVITY, FOR BOTH VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS TO CIVIC NODES

This relates to University Avenue's use as a place facilitating connection between different points and areas.

The avenue has served this purpose since its conception in the late 1820s as a formal *allée*, providing a processional access road between Lot Street (Queen Street) at the Town of York and the King's College campus. This landscape was cleared and cultivated by 1833.

137 City of Toronto Planning Board. *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*. February 1971, pp. 45-51.

138 Park People, *University Avenue Public Space Public Life Study* (2020), pp. 6-7.

Soon after, the landscape adopted an additional use as a park. For several decades the linear landscape served as a promenade park, with no formal recreational destination at its north end. Following the establishment of Queen's Park in 1860, College Avenue served as a linear landscape facilitating travel between the City of Toronto and Queen's Park. Even while conducting this function, the avenue remained parkland itself, providing a scenic and lush promenade within which to travel to Queen's Park, for leisure, public events and assemblies. These uses pertained to pedestrian and horse traffic, as well as perhaps bicycles.

The avenue's use as street conducting city traffic was slower to develop, initially curtailed by traffic limits imposed by the University, and the lack of east-west intersections between Queen and College streets, which characterized the linear landscape through the mid-19th century. With the revised lease of 1888 however all restrictions on traffic were removed. By this time the Queen Street gate had been removed, and University Avenue could effectively function as a public street.[139] Bike paths were added in 1897.[140]

As University Avenue was gradually integrated into the city street network, the avenue underwent a major redesign as a 'parkway' in 1913. The alterations inverted the original proportions of greenspace and roads, creating a landscape dominated by a curbed roadway with a narrow band of green space passing through it. The parkway transformation marked a significant shift in University Avenue's function as a thoroughfare, giving the majority of the avenue over to vehicular traffic.

Around the same time contextual changes were altering the character and function of the linear landscape. Between the 1890s and early 1910s a number of important institutional nodes developed on and around University Avenue. These included the Ontario Legislative Building, Toronto Armouries, additions to Osgoode Hall, and Toronto General Hospital. These developments gave new prestige and importance to University Avenue's role as a thoroughfare and the nodes it connected.

The establishment of the Ontario Legislative Building at the head of University Avenue in part served to underscore the unceremonious nature of its south end, which abruptly ended at Queen Street. As contemporary Beaux Arts ideas about city planning and beautification emphasized the use of grand streets as connectors between important civic points, the extension of University Avenue further south was seen as having important symbolic and functional advantages.

Empowered by Provincial legislation, the City extended University Avenue south to Front Street by late 1931. The extension leveraged the avenue's role as a large street to create a major thoroughfare connecting Union Station with Queen's Park. That same year the Province created Highway 11A running from Hogg's Hollow to downtown

139 City of Toronto Planning Board. *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*. February 1971, p. 6.

140 Bain, p. 208.

Toronto, with University Avenue forming a part of the municipally-controlled portion of the highway.

Also in 1931 the City passed By-Law 13409 to regulate land uses and impose design controls on development facing onto the thoroughfare. According to the 1971 By-Law review report, two of the By-Laws objectives related directly to University Avenue's intended function as a thoroughfare:

1) To serve as a major vehicular traffic route linking the Parliament Buildings with Union Station; and

2) To provide access to the downtown civic and business areas.

These two objectives speak to the symbolic and functional aspects of University Avenue as a thoroughfare.

Thus the 1931 extension enhanced the function of University Avenue as a major thoroughfare for vehicular traffic that was integrated into the downtown core, and provided connections to regional networks further afield.

In 1947 the roadway was reconfigured again, with the offset median relocated to the centre of the avenue. The change improved conditions for vehicular traffic, creating more traffic lanes and balancing them on each side of the central median, which was somewhat reduced in width. Designs for the newly configured median incorporated central pedestrian walkways, but were ultimately limited as a means of conducting pedestrian travel. Revised designs were not built until 1964.

The mid-1960s also saw the development of the Superior Court of Justice and New City Hall sites. Both institutional sites incorporated modernist grounds that together formed a contiguous public landscape connected with University Avenue. These new nodes reinforced the avenue's use as a linear landscape for protest and demonstration, by providing a path between two seats of government and their related public grounds.

In 1971, the By-Law review report commented on the avenue's use as a thoroughfare, concluding that the connection between Queen's Park and Union Station was no longer a significant function. It also noted that University Avenue's success as a north-south vehicular artery had a negative effect on the street's distinctive quality, with high volumes of cars causing levels of pollution, noise and danger that were not anticipated in the 1920's (*Figure 90*).[141] Changes to vehicular use over time had created competing interests between the objectives for University Avenue to be both a site of aesthetic distinction and quality, and a functional thoroughfare.

Protected bike lanes were installed on University Avenue in 2020, as part of a larger installation running between Adelaide and Bloor streets.

141 City of Toronto Planning Board. *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*. February 1971, p. 22.

7.2.3 PUBLIC ASSEMBLY: DEMOCRATIC & CULTURAL PRACTICES

This relates to University Avenue's use as a place supporting various types of public gatherings and processions. Such events include public processions like parades, demonstrations and protests, which are important expressions of community and democratic participation. They often involve using the right-of-way in a processional fashion.

College Avenue was originally conceived and designed as a processional route connecting the Town of York to the future King's College campus. The impressive landscape was cleared and planted by 1833. However the first recorded use of the site in a ceremonial capacity came a decade later, when cornerstone ceremonies for the first college building travelled north up the avenue to the college grounds. Henry Scadding described the event as an unprecedented event in Toronto's history, "...a day indelibly impressed on the memory of those who participated", and "a procession as had never before been seen in these parts…".[142]

While the school's subsequent use of College Avenue for ceremonial events is unclear, the avenue was being used regularly for important public processions and gatherings by mid-century at the latest. In the 1850s, this included parades, such as the Orangemen's annual Twelfth[143] parade; celebrations, such as the Queen's Birthday; and demonstrations, such as those by the Sons and Daughters of Temperance.

College Avenue's early propensity for use as a public gathering or processional space likely stems from a unique combination of factors. These include location (in proximity to other major downtown streets and sites), size (double the width of standard streets), unparalleled landscape quality, and accessibility to the public (notable since it was technically private property until 1858).

Early events made use of the landscape itself as a destination setting. In 1850 the temperance demonstrations were scheduled to conclude up the avenue to the "grove of the College Avenue" for addresses and meetings, only to leave "many hundreds of the citizens and strangers who had assembled in the Avenue" very disappointed.[144] That same year it was estimated as many as 10,000 revellers thronged College Avenue and its gas-lit arches to watch fireworks in honour of the Queen's birthday.[145]

With the establishment of the municipal parkland on the former College grounds in the late 1850s, its role as a processional space took on a new dimension as a grand avenue leading to or away from an important public grounds (see *Figure 19*). This

142 Scadding, pp. 233-234.

143 The annual Orangemen's parade on July 12th celebrated the Battle of Boyne, and was a formal requirement to membership of a lodge. The parade dates to the 1820s at the latest in Toronto, and became an important performance asserting protestant identity and dominance in 19th century Toronto.

144 "Grand Temperance Demonstration," *The Globe,* 27 July 1850, p. 358.

145 "The Queen's Birth Day," *The Globe,* 25 May 1850, p. 251.

led some events to use the avenue as a final approach to Queen's Park, such as the Orangemen's 1859 Twelfth parade that proceeded up College Avenue to gather in the university park where platforms had been erected for speakers.[146] Other events inverted the route, using Queen's Park as a muster point from where processions would begin down the avenue.

In 1893 the Ontario Legislative Buildings were opened in Queen's Park, adding provincial identity and new civic meaning to Queen's Park. This gave College Avenue a formal ceremonial quality as the processional route leading to the seat of Provincial parliament, with additional meaning as a place for public assembly and procession. Other institutional developments into the early 20th century raised the public stature of the route, and in the case of the armouries, carried new groups and organizations who would use the avenue.

The avenue has a long history of civilian parades and events (*Figures 91 & 92*), some of which are ongoing. They include:

- Twelfth celebrations of the Orange[147]
- Temperance demonstrations
- Dominion Day
- Victoria Day
- Demonstration to Ridgeway Volunteers
- Good Friday
- Labour Day[148]
- Santa Claus Parade[149]
- Canadian National Exhibition Opening Day
- The Shriners Parade
- Caribana (1971-1991)

The avenue has also been used for individual events, often involving visiting dignitaries, including:

- 1856 Soiree commemorating emancipation of West Indian Island slaves
- 1894 Colonial Delegates procession
- 1900 Wilfred Laurier procession
- 1901 Royal Visit
- 1908 Lord Robert procession
- 1911 W.J. Clifford parade
- 1923 Viscount Byng of Vimy parade
- 1939 Royal Visit
- 1973 Royal Visit

146 "The Twelfth in Toronto: Procession of Orangemen," *The Globe*, 13 July 1859, p. 2.

147 University Avenue formed part of the route as late as 1855, continuing into the 20th century.

148 University Avenue has been part of the route since at least the 1920s, and into the 21st century.

149 first established in 1905, the route used University Avenue by 1914, and possibly earlier. The parade has used University Avenue throughout the 20th century and continues to do so as of 2024.

University Avenue also has a history of use as a site for military parades. This likely reflected the avenue's ceremonial civic stature (for larger parades), as much as it was a product of the Toronto Armouries' location on the street (for routine parades). Based on photographs, the larger parades travelled from at least Queen's Park to Queen Street, while smaller parades followed shorter circuits around the armouries. A September 1905 newspaper indicated that the 48th Highlanders held their first fall parade of the season, with 400 marching via University avenue, Queen, Simcoe, King, Yonge and Queen streets back to the Armories.[150] Archival photographs show military parades on University Avenue throughout the First World War years, with one caption describing a stream of soldiers south from Queen's Park as the largest military parade ever held in Toronto (*Figure 93*).

Military parades were sufficiently important in the early 20th century that plans for new layouts on University Avenue contemplated dedicated parade squares.[151] While no formal parade ground was built, a gap in the median was made directly in front of the Armouries entrance, the only such gap not corresponding to an adjacent road (see *Figure 28*). The gap was removed when the median was reconfigured in 1947, promptly a letter of protest Capt. Guy MacKen, who pointed out that guns and troops would not be able to parade as they previously had. The practice of military parades was historically important, but ceased with the changing role of military in Canada society, and loss of the armouries in the 1960s (*Figure 94*).

In addition to parades, protests are an important practice associated with University Avenue (*Figures 95 & 96*). The addition of institutional sites along the avenue over time have made it increasingly potent as a place to protest and express political opinion. In addition to the Ontario Legislative Buildings, Osgoode Hall, and the U.S. Consulate General, the institutional landscape was expanded further with the construction of the New City Hall and Superior Court of Justice in the mid-1960s. Both sites incorporated public grounds and plazas that together were connected to University Avenue, creating a natural demonstration route between the seat of municipal government and provincial government. Protests are a historically important practice on University Avenue, and one that remains strong today.

7.2.4 PUBLIC ART (MEMORY / MEMORIALIZING / COMMEMORATION)

Public art refers to works of art in any medium that are intended specifically for exhibit in public space whether outdoors or indoors. Parks, squares and other public spaces have always served as repositories of the community's public memory. Since the late 19th century, University Avenue has been a location for public art - on the median, on the adjacent properties, and on the adjacent buildings themselves. However, sites along the axis of University Avenue were preferred because of their visual prominence and association with the Legislature which is the terminal focal point of the Avenue. The

150 "First parade of season," *Toronto Daily Star,* 9 September 1905, p. 2.

151 "Prompt action needed to save fifty fine trees," *Toronto Daily Star,* 1 June 1912, p. 1.

central median provided a location for public art with other sites flanking the Avenue playing a supporting role.

Public art in the study area and its immediate context takes the form of statues, sculptures, and architectural embellishments on buildings. As these public art works are reflections of their time, the styles range from representational to abstract. They commemorate individuals, events and organizations and portray ideas that are important to Canadian society. They also seek to inspire those who work, reside and pass through the area. The public art works in the study area have most often been initiated by individuals or organizations and completed with assistance and approval by the city for their location.

The first pieces of public art were often initiated by local citizens in response to the death of an important individual or significant event. This was the case for the Sir John A. Macdonald statue erected in 1894 as a memorializing response to his death in 1891. Funds were raised through public subscription by an ad hoc committee of concerned citizens. The statue by Hamilton MacCarthy is located at the southern end of Queen's Park, and is the earliest monument in the study area. The two other statues commemorating individuals after their death are those for Sir Adam Beck and Roberts H. Saunders.

Sir Adam Beck (1857-1925) was a Canadian politician, as well as the founder and Commissioner of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario. Four years after his death, an ad hoc city council committee was created to select a site and arrange a national competition for the design of a monument. $15,000 in funds was voted on by the city in 1929 with the Toronto Hydro-Electric Commission adding $10,000. A board of assessors was then appointed with representatives from the Ontario Association of Architects and the Ontario School of Art. The project was awarded to Emanuel Hahn. Various sites were debated by city council based on recommendations from the Commissioner of Parks, the City Architect, and the Commissioner of Works. The current site on the south side of Queen Street facing north was approved in March 1932 and the statue unveiled in 1934.

In 1947 when the centre median was realigned, the statue was moved to the new alignment. The monument was then removed in 1960 for subway construction and the concrete base destroyed. It was recreated in marble and the bronze statue re-installed in 1964.

The Beck monument is one of Hahn's most important public sculptures. It is notable for the incorporation of a water feature which is designed to have water cascades down the base. Beck is depicted in bronze with one knee slightly bent as if he is stepping into motion or progressing forward - potentially a nod to his progressive thinking (*Figures 97 & 98*).

Hahn was also the artist for the Robert H. Saunders Memorial. Robert Hood Saunders (1903 - 1955) was Mayor of Toronto from 1945 to 1948, President of the Canadian National Exhibition, and Chairman of the Ontario Hydro (formally the Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario). Following Saunders' death, an ad hoc public committee raised funds by direct solicitation from various municipal hydro utilities. The Ontario Hydro employees, and the artist were to work with the Ontario Hydro Commission architect's office for the installation and creation of the piece.[152] It features a bas relief of Saunders on a stone marker and originally had a water feature on its north side.

The median contains three military monuments: the South African War Memorial; the Sons of England War Memorial; and Canadian Airmen's Memorial.

Walter Allward's South African War Memorial was unveiled on May 24, 1910. It memorialized the 267 Canadians who lost their lives in the South African War (1899-1902) which was fought between the British and independent republics of Dutch settlers. The war marked Canada's first dispatch of troops overseas when over 7,000 Canadians fought alongside their British counterparts.

Toronto formed a public committee in 1903 to raise funds through public subscription and government grants (provincial and municipal). An international competition was initiated and the commission awarded to Walter Seymour Allward with Emanuel Hahn as the sculptor. Shortly after being awarded the commission, Allward suggested University Avenue as a suitable location being, "some 600 feet about Queen Street on a circle of sod or of concrete, some 60 feet in diameter." Noting further that the roadway "would divide to the right and left of the monument in a circular line and take up with the present road leading to the Parliament buildings," thereby adding "much beauty to the entrance of the Avenue."[153]

The site location of the Armories facing east was chosen in 1908 but the Guild of Civic Art refused to approve it. The site to the south on the east boulevard was then chosen by city council in 1909 and cornerstone laid the same year.

The monument featured a granite base with three bronze sculptures. The central figure represents Canada directing two Canadian soldiers - one an infantryman and the other a dismounted cavalryman (*Figure 99*).[154] The 70 foot granite column topped by a bronze figure representing Victory was added in 1911. Victory stands atop a globe with her wings outstretched and a crown held in her hands overhead (*Figure 100*). On the front and sides of the column are the names of the battles in which Canadians participated. The monument was completed in 1914 with the addition of a bronze table inscribed

152 du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, *Art of the Avenue*, p. 154.

153 Walter Allward to the Finance Committee, South African War Memorial Association, December 15, 1905, as cited in Philip Dombowsky, *Walter S. Allward: Life and Work*.

154 The sculpture of Canada was inspired by and modelled after Allward's mother. Philip Dombowsky, *Walter S. Allward: Life and Work*. Accessed at https://www.aci-iac.ca/art-books/walter-allward/biography/#an-artist-in-demand

with an alphabetical list of names of Canadians killed in the war, although this tablet appears to be missing as of June 2021, even prior to the statue being dismantled.

The monument was Allward's first multi-figure sculpture and a departure from the single-figure war memorials typical of the time. Allward's monument demonstrates the tenets of Beaux Arts sculpture in its portrayal of "figures in a static but realistic manner within a pyramidal composition."[155]

In 1947, the widening of University Avenue required that the monument be moved 20' 8". Russell Construction Company of Toronto moved the monument, on wooden rollers, in one piece because it was felt that if the monument was dismantled it would never look the same again. It was set onto a new poured concrete foundation. In 1948 when Howard Dunington-Grubb reported to the Toronto City Planning Board on the treatment of University Avenue, he regarded the South African War Memorial as "the most important section of the project. Treatment here should be intense and consider water, walls and steps."[156]

In 1960, when the University Avenue subway was built, the monument was disassembled and moved off site while the subway tunnel was dug. It was reinstalled on axis with "the terrace in front of Osgoode Hall."[157] The Dunington-Grubb & Stennson design included a rectangular pond with three fountains. Most recently, the South African War Memorial was removed in 2024 to allow for construction of the Ontario Line.

The Sons of England War Memorial commemorates the men from the Sons of England Society who died in the First World War. The Sons of England Society raised funds and commissioned the work. Their proposal was accepted by city council in 1921 but required approval of the Commissioner of Parks. Erected in 1923, the monument was designed by Charles Adamson who had served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War. The memorial depicts a lone soldier in bronze atop a granite base engraved with the names of men who died. It is flanked by three lions - a symbol of England - which are also set on stone bases. It was originally located south of College Street facing north.

The Canadian Airmen's Memorial was created by Oscar Nemon and erected in 1984, on the island south of Dundas Street and facing north. It was realized by the Jackman Foundation and an ad hoc public committee including the Metropolitan Toronto Commissioner of Parks and Property. The most recent piece of public art on the median was installed in 2001. Lightwave uses extruded aluminum forms mounted in the median to create a visual wave which is lit in the evenings.

155 Ibid.

156 Report of Dunington-Grubb & Stensson to Toronto City Planning Board, 16 November 1948, p. 3.

157 du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, p. 144.

The immediate context of the study area also contains several pieces of public art that are connected to the Superior Court of Justice (361 University Avenue) and New City Hall. These are:

- McMurtry Fountains and pedestrian mall (installed 1966; Michael Hough, Landscape Architect) located outside of 361 University Avenue. The two fountains symbolize balance and justice.
- The Archer located in Nathan Phillips Square (installed 1966; Henry Moore, Artist)

  Sir Winston Churchill located in the Sculptor Court (installed 1977; Oscar Nemon, Artist)
- Frederick G. Gans Memorial located along the walkway to Nathan Phillips Square (installed 1980; Maryon Kantaroff, Artist)
- Peace Garden located in the west landscaped area, adjacent to Osgoode Hall and the new Law Courts Sculpture Garden (installed 1984; relocated 2016; Plant Architecture and Perkins + Will)

  McMurtry Gardens of Justice (refurbished 2007)
- Pillars of Justice located on the south side of the 361 University Avenue (installed 2007; Edwina Sandys, Artist)
- Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Expression (2011 and 2012; Marlene Hilton Moore, Artist)
- Equal Before the Law (installed 2011; Eldon Garnet, Artist)
- Peace Through Valour Monument (installed 2016; Ken Lum, Artist)
- Spirit Garden located west side of Nathan Phillips Square (installed 2024; Solomon King, Henry Kudluk, John Keeshig Maya-waasige, Raymond Skye, and Tannis Nielsen, Artists)

Additionally, Canada Life/Great West Life has used its front lawn as a Remembrance Day memorial since 2014. Each year in early November, the company places more than 12,000 Canadian flags to honour members of the Canadian Armed Forces. The Campbell House Museum has a permanent outdoor exhibit called *Lost and Found: Rediscovering Fragments of Old Toronto* which features architectural stone fragments from Toronto buildings demolished during the 1960s and 1970s.

A National Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque commemorating George Cox (1840-1914) is located outside the Canada Life/Great West Life building. Cox, who was a banker by trade, is noted for making Toronto the banking capital of Canada, thus usurping Montreal. An Ontario Heritage Trust plaque commemorating the site of Mary Pickford birthplace is located outside of Sick Kid's Hospital. A marker commemorating the Toronto Armouries is located north of Osgoode Hall in the pedestrian plaza.

7.2.5 AVENUE OF DISTINCTION

This section relates to University Avenue as a street of distinction, which has been a continuous characteristic of the street since its inception.

Several factors contribute to University Avenue having a distinct identity as a street. First is monumentality, which refers to grandeur in its size, physical features, and materials. Second is its landmark nature, which results from its unique profile within Toronto. Third is the persistent intention to implement high quality designs over time, including materials and finishes.

The study area has been an avenue of distinction since its completion as a ceremonial access route to the King's College in 1833.[158] The broad width and length gave the avenue a grandeur that was unprecedented in Toronto and Upper Canada at the time, with a striking design based on pairs of imported flowering chestnuts. A group of visitors from Buffalo commented on the landscape's beauty in 1850, claiming "College Avenue is one of the most splendid places we ever saw anywhere."[159]

John Langton's 1856 letter recalling the university's tumultuous development make clear that the avenue's monumentality and landmark potential were apparent:

> *The battle of the site too was fought in Blake's day and helped to his defeat for both he and the architect were tempted by a site at the end of a fine avenue nearly a mile long. St. Peter's would look magnificent there, but anything we could build would be but a mushroom at that distance…*[160]

In 1859 the City leased a number of lands from the University and formally established College Avenue as municipal parkland. Descriptions from this period emphasize the unparalleled quality and scale of the landscape. In 1859 a citizen boasted during a debate on cross-streets that, "*We could travel from Gaspe [sic] to Sarnia, and there was no such beautiful park anywhere else.*"[161] The 1868 publication of Toronto in the Camera suggested, "The Avenue is *one* of, if not *the* finest in the Dominion, or perhaps on this Continent…"[162] Over a decade later, George Munro Grant published his *Picturesque Canada* volume, calling College Avenue, "...one of the finest natural avenues on the Continent, and not to any architectural beauty", before describing it further:

> *A mile of chestnuts and maples flanks a carriage-drive and pathway which, in the vista, open out upon the Queen's Park. For the tourist the city has no sight so*

158 William Dendy and William Kilbourn, *Toronto Observed: Its Architecture, Patrons, and History* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 64.

159 "The Visit of the Buffalonians," *The Globe,* August 15, 1850, p. 391.

160 W.A. Langton, ed., *Early Days in Upper Canada: Letters of John Langton front he Backwoods of Upper Canada and the Audit Office of the Province of Canada* (The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited at St. Martin's House, 1926), p. 291.

161 "Indignation Meeting in the College Avenue: Nearly a Riot," *The Globe,* August 5, 1859, p. 2.

162 O. Thompson, *Toronto in the Camera* (Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co., 1868), p.34.

> *charming, unless it be a view of the bay on a still afternoon when the setting sun paves it with flame.*[163]

In 1893 the Ontario Legislative Building was completed in the southern part of Queen's Park, with a direct axial relationship to the avenue. As the closing vista north from College Avenue, the imposing structure formalized the avenue's role as a ceremonial approach to the capitol grounds, adding to its profile and landmark status.[164] It also added to the collection of monumental and high-quality edifices surrounding the avenue,[165] followed shortly after by the Toronto Armouries and Toronto General Hospital.

The presence of the courts, provincial parliament and federal armouries contributed to University Avenue as a place with a civic identity related to citizenship and its associated government institutions. In the early 20th century, University Avenue featured prominently among a number of plans for civic improvements in Toronto. Guided by City Beautiful ideas and Beaux Arts planning principles, the plans sought to make grand urban gestures using wide streets to connect public spaces. The prominent role of University Avenue within a number of these plans attests its unique qualities, including civic context and monumental size. University Avenue's name being simplified to "The Avenue" on the Toronto Guild of Civic Art's 1908 plan is indicative of its preeminent reputation as a the City's landmark avenue. The Advisory City Planning Commission's 1929 report was also clear on the importance of University Avenue, noting:

> *University Avenue with its 180' of width is a heritage of which any city should be proud. It is the main entrance to Queen's Park, the seat of the Legislative Buildings and the wealthiest and proudest province in Canada.*[166]

The report also made clear that the avenue's profile and central location meant that, "... the betterment of University Avenue cannot be termed a local matter, but is rather of general interest to the whole city."[167]

In the following years the distinctive elements of high-quality and monumental architecture were formally prescribed on University Avenue, as a means to further elevate its profile. In 1931 the City extended University Avenue south to Union Station, and the street connected two of Toronto's most significant landmark structures. That same year By-Law #13409 represented an attempt to control the development of

163 George Munro Grant, *Picturesque Canada; the country as it was and is. Volume 1,* (Toronto: Belden Brothers, 1882), p. 432.

164 Douglas Richardson, *A Not Unsightly Building: University College and Its History* (Toronto: Mosaic Press, 1990), p. 26.

165 Dendy and Kilbourne, p. 134.

166 "Report of The Advisory City Planning Commission with Recommendations for The Improvement of the Central Business Section of the City of Toronto" 1929, p. 23.

167 Ibid., p. 25.

the avenue through land-use and design regulations by the municipal and provincial governments.[168] Whereas College Avenue's original outstanding landscape reflected the control of a single landowner and designer, University Avenue had become a public right of way. As such its form and appearance could be shaped by uncoordinated private development along the Avenue, and special tools would be needed to advance a coherent environment. By-Law #13409 acknowledged the importance of a consistent and controlled character and aesthetic for a street as important as University Avenue.

By-Law #13409 sought to foster a distinguished and uniform aesthetic on University Avenue. In keeping with contemporary Beaux Arts design principles, the regulations encouraged monumental architecture (defined by masonry buildings with consistent streetwalls - see *Figure 34*) to convey the grandeur worthy of the street. The character envisioned by the 1931 By-Law was distinguished from other parts of the city in terms of the architecture, but also street life, as certain land uses were restricted. Limits on commercial advertising and other signage prevented a conventional commercial character, allowing the buildings and architecture themselves to serve as symbols.

When the City sought designs for the soon-to-be centred median in 1947, University Avenue was understood to be a landmark site and "Toronto's finest main thoroughfare." The City hired Dunington-Grubb & Stensson to prepare designs, who noted the avenue's width, landmark buildings, and monumental nature gave it the potential to be Canada's most famous street.[169] One of the project's objectives was to emphasize the avenue as the main approach to the Ontario Legislative Buildings, an attempt to bolster the site's civic identity and context. The significance of University Avenue within Toronto was illustrated by the public outcry when the approved Duningston-Grubb & Stensson plan was replaced by a plan designed by a forester with the Province of Ontario.[170]

In 1961 Dunington-Grubb & Stensson were again hired to prepare designs for the median. The new plans continued to leverage University Avenue's identity as a monumental street and expand its civic profile through integration with important new sites including Nathan Phillips Square and the new Superior Court of Justice.

The 1971 By-Law review report considered the earlier ideas about University Avenue's identity against the current conditions of the site. It concluded that the avenue was a street of distinction within Toronto, but that the specific monumentality prescribed by the 1931 By-Law was outdated and the quality of public spaces was lacking. The report ultimately recommended improvements to user experience, and prescribed a more comprehensive landscape plan to help support it.

168 The municipal by-law was enabled by provincial legislation – the 1928 University Avenue Extension Act.

169 Letter from H.B. Dunington-Grubb to Toronto City Planning Board, November 16, 1948. In University Avenue [1961].

170 Letter from Edward I. Wood to His Worship the Mayor, June 13, 1950. COTA, Fonds 2032, Series 721, File 31/32.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, University Avenue retains a distinct character in a city that lacks other monumental public streets or places. It continues to enjoy a reputation as a highly prestigious address valued by both corporate, cultural, healthcare, and institutional organizations for its location and profile.

University Avenue's history as a private institutional, then public right-of-way has created a street of unique stature (both in terms of size and location) in Toronto, and with a rare history of urban design that extends beyond its functionalism as a city street. The street's prominent profile in Toronto has resulted in consistent efforts over the years to cultivate a landscape of distinguished and high quality.

7.2.6 MUNICIPAL / PROVINCIAL / NATIONAL PROFILE

Since it was laid out in 1833, University Avenue has played a unique and special role in the identity of the City of Toronto. Designed as a processional route to King's College, André Parmentier's *allée* created a grand approach to the college and expressed the importance of King's College as an elite institution within the province. When Charles Dickens visited Toronto in 1842 during his first tour of North America, the college was under construction. In his American Notes, Dickens writes favourably about the future building, noting it would be "approached by a long avenue which is already planted and made available as a public walk."[171]

King's College was appropriated for the Ontario Legislative Building in 1856, and the location and siting of the new building directly on axis with University Avenue were praised in the press. In 1886, *The Globe* remarked that the approach from the south provided a commanding view of the front facade of the new building. As viewed from University Avenue "it makes up a colossal monument to the one hundred years' progress of the great province of Ontario."[172] The new Legislative Building became a terminal point for University Avenue and University Avenue became the ceremonial boulevard for the Legislature, thus creating a tangible and symbolic relationship between the city and province.

After the 1931 by-law prescribing design standards, and its extension to Union Station, University Avenue became a significant thoroughfare in the city. The by-law signified that University Avenue had a new level of symbolic importance to the city, province and country, and an awareness that buildings fronting onto the thoroughfare played an important role not only in defining the streetscape, but in being drivers of the Canadian economy through the financial institutions that built them.

One of the first companies to locate their headquarters on University Avenue was the Canada Life Assurance Company. Canada Life was founded in 1847 in Hamilton, Ontario and their decision to build their new headquarters on University Avenue in 1929

171 Charles Dickens, American Notes (New York: John Lovell Company, 1883), p. 779.

172 "Parliament Buildings: The New Legislative Edifice in the Queen's Park," *The Globe,* March 11, 1893, p. 11.

was dictated by the scale of their growing business. As Toronto's widest and most prominent street, it was important for Canada Life to locate there to distinguish the insurance company from its competitors.[173] Canada Life is proud to be the only major commercial/financial business operating out of its historic building. They noted that University Avenue feels different from other downtown locations and that the building and University Avenue location are important components of the company's brand.[174] Similarly, the University Health Network (UHN) noted that it is one of the top-ranked hospitals in Canada and internationally. It is an epicentre of research and its location on University Avenue is important in sustaining its ability to attract leading doctors and scientists.[175]

7.3 SUMMARY

The preceding research and analysis finds that University Avenue is more than an important public space, and instead represents a landmark civic place within the city of Toronto. This identity, combined with the avenue's size and function as a major public thoroughfare, supports the understanding of the study area as a landmark civic avenue in Toronto.

This identity is related to a collection of ideas, associations and practices that are interconnected by the themes of public life, identity, and citizenship. These intangible elements are sustained by the landscape's physical features and characteristics.

University Avenue's civic dimensions are multifaceted. On the one hand, its setting and form provide for tangible views or connections to public symbols that help define civic identity. However, as a venue for gathering and the performance of rituals associated with democratic society, it also permits individuals and groups to assert their citizenship, another form of civic identity.

These elements do not only reflect the current place, but are rooted in the landscape's historical development and growth. While University Avenue has evolved substantially over its history, its underlying identity as a landmark civic avenue has remained consistent. Below is a summary of the different elements that support this underlying identity of the landscape:

A. University Avenue's civic quality stems in part from its contextual relationship to nearby government sites, embodied in both visual and physical connections to those landscapes, buildings and symbols. The civic character is also reinforced by relationships to other significant healthcare, educational, and commercial institutions, which are adjacent to or prominently located along the avenue.

173 Common Bond Interview with Great-West Life, 13 August, 2024.

174 Ibid.

175 Common Bond interview with University Health Network, 12 September 2024.

B. Several specialized functions also sustain the landscape's civic identity. The first is the overall landscape's ability to support public assembly in the form of parades, demonstrations, and protests. These activities are civic in nature, representing the performance of rituals integral to democratic society, identity, and citizenship.

C. The landscape's second civic function relates to its use as a public amenity space, which first dates to the creation of the Avenue by King's College in the 1830s. This use was formalized in 1859, but diminished with increased motor traffic in the early 20th century. When the central median's landscaped islands were re-landscaped in the early 1960s, public access to the landscape was fundamental to the designs, which integrated features such as walkways, fountains, bench seating, access to existing monuments, and space for additional sculpture. This intended use represents a unique type of public space within Toronto, as a publicly accessible linear landscape. Set amidst its specific context, the use reflects an inherently civic gesture.

D. Another element contributing to the landscape's civic character is its public art, primarily in the form of monuments. University Avenue has historically served as a preferred location for monuments due to the visual prominence it afforded and its distinguished context, which included symbolic views to and from the Ontario Legislative Building and other prominent sites. The concentration of monuments related to public figures, themes and events supports the landscape's civic character, by effectively making the landscape a repository of public memory.

E. Finally, the landscape's unique context, form, and physical characteristics make it a highly distinctive street within Toronto. The result is a landscape with an elevated quality and stature relative to other streetscapes. This landmark character is an important and intentional aspect of the University Avenue's identity, which further reinforces the landscape's civic identity.

8.0 INTEGRITY

The NCC guide states that the evaluation process should be informed by an understanding of a cultural landscape's integrity. Since a cultural landscape is defined as a set of ideas and practices embedded in the place, the relationship that emerges between a site's intangible and tangible elements is central to the cultural landscape. Based on this understanding, a cultural landscape's integrity is based on the strength of this relationship, and not strictly the condition of physical features. The NCC guide reinforces this, stating that integrity should be assessed, "... in terms of the enduring strengths of the ideas or practices, and how well they are supported by the place's physical features and environment."[176]

This integrity section addresses two aspects of the cultural landscape. The first is the strength of the Avenue's current identity as a landmark civic avenue. As described above, this identity is the product of a number of interrelated ideas, associations and practices that are sustained by its physical features. The integrity of the elements that contribute to this identity (as enumerated in Section 7.3 above) are first assessed individually, followed by a summary of the overall strength of the landmark civic avenue. This portion of the integrity assessment considers the entire study area, including sidewalks, roadways and central median, as they pertain to relevant topics.

This is followed by an assessment of the integrity of the central median's landscape design. This assessment is strictly concerned with the design of the central median as developed and implemented by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson between 1961-1963.

Integrity is expressed using the following rating scale:

HIGH: The ideas, associations and practices associated with the place are strongly expressed, and exist in a stable relationship with the site's physical features.

MEDIUM: The ideas, associations and practices associated with the place are expressed, but not to their ideal or full potential. The relationship with the site's physical features may be somewhat compromised due to condition or inappropriate design.

LOW: The ideas, associations and practices associated with the place are expressed poorly or not at all. The relationship with the site's physical features may be tenuous or damaged due to poor condition or inappropriate design.

176 National Capital Commission, "Working with Cultural Landscapes: A Guide for the National Capital Region," January 2023, p. 30.

8.1 LANDMARK CIVIC AVENUE

Individual Elements

A - Integrity: The integrity of the landscape's relationships to adjacent government and institutional sites is considered **HIGH** for the following reasons:

- University Avenue retains an axial relationship with Queen's Park and the Ontario Legislative Building.
- The visual relationship with the Ontario Legislative Building from University Avenue remains strong from numerous points along the street.[177]
- The contiguous landscapes of the Superior Court of Justice and Nathan Phillips Square remain accessible from University Avenue.
- Numerous prominent buildings and sites associated with various levels of government remain adjacent to University Avenue.
- Numerous prominent institutional, healthcare and research facilities retain an address on University Avenue.

B - Integrity: The integrity of the landscape's ability to support public gatherings and processions (including parades, protests and demonstrations) is considered **HIGH** for the following reasons:

- University Avenue's overall right of way, and north- and southbound sections retain a large width relative to other major streets in the downtown core.
- University Avenue still occupies a central location within Toronto, and continues to provide a physical connection between Nathan Phillips Square and Queen's Park.
- Parades, demonstrations and protests continue to take place on University Avenue

C - The integrity of the landscape as a public amenity space is less straightforward, as this function has varied considerably over its history. The landscape was most functional and popular as a public amenity space during the 19th century, when it was configured as a tree lined *allée*. Its integrity as a public amenity space declined as traffic increased on the Avenue, starting in 1888. It had reached a low point by 1914, when the Avenue was reconfigured to a parkway design and access to the single grassed median was prohibited altogether.

When new landscape designs for the recently centred median were being considered in 1948, the issue of public access was revived. Ultimately, public access and use of the central median landscape became an objective for the project, and served a key principle of Dunington-Grubb & Stensson's designs in the early 1960s. To that end, the

177 This relationship has been slightly altered over time, as historically University Avenue's main path was centred on the Ontario Legislative Building, whereas following reconfiguration of the roadway in 1947 both northbound and southbound lanes of traffic are slightly off from the building's centre. Both arrangements sustain the visual relationship in question.

landscapes were not designed to be purely ornamental, but also integrated a series of outdoor spaces or framed "rooms" on the islands, with benches and other points of interest to support the user experience.

Despite the emphasis placed on public access and use of the central median, the overall success of the design in creating an attractive environment for pedestrians has been questioned and criticized since shortly after its completion. In 1968, the Ontario Association of Architects provided criticism on the new median design. They charged it was underused by pedestrians, and out of scale with and lacking a meaningful relationship with the larger Avenue. They also questioned the aesthetic treatment. In 1971 a Planning Board report was critical of the quality of the environment, noting that landscaping was out of scale with the overall street, the pedestrian experience could be improved, and high volumes of vehicular traffic were negatively impacting the quality of the space. It criticized the design of the central median as unsatisfactory to pedestrians and vehicles alike, recommending denser vegetation, better seating areas and more comfortable seats to improve the pedestrian experience.

These match other criticisms identified in contemporary newspapers, which addressed the impacts of traffic on making the islands safe and enjoyable, a perception of sterile or incoherent aesthetics, the scale of the plantings, and a lifelessness outside of business hours.[178] Landscape architect Emil Van Der Meulen likened the design to miniature golf course, while journalist Ron Haggart questioned the quality of the public spaces, noting "...there is nothing less inviting than a polished marble vent around a subway airshaft."

In 1989 a consultants report prepared by duToit, Allsopp, Hillier described the historical decline of University Avenue as a public space in correlation to its growth as a traffic artery. It noted the central median was underused by pedestrians, criticizing the narrow and concrete character of public spaces, the undersized and ineffective trees, and the impacts of traffic noise and exhaust on user experience. The report also noted the islands were challenging to reach from the sidewalks, and difficult to travel between.[179]

The 2020 public life study reported that University Avenue remained highly underutilized as a public space, repeating a number of familiar criticisms as likely reasons. In stakeholder consultations related to this Cultural Heritage Landscape Study (see Section 5.0), interviewees typically held negative or neutral opinions about the islands as public space, with none reporting use of them personally. Based on historical and more recent records, the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson design for the central median was not successful in drawing pedestrians and activating the islands as a public amenity space.

178 See Ron Haggart, "The long, sad career of University Ave.," *Toronto Daily Star,* 15 June 1964, p. 7; "Maggie Grant's Column: There are flowers on University Avenue," *The Globe and Mail,* 10 August 1965, p. 8; "Reeve Riled: "Concrete canyon a millstone," *The Globe and Mail,* 17 November 1965, p. 5; Zena Cherry, "After a Fashion: University Avenue landscaping called a sad sight, a nothing," *The Globe and Mail,* 10 June 1968, p. 12.

179 *Art of the Avenue*, pp. 109 & 111.

The integrity of the current landscape as a public amenity space is considered **LOW** for the following reasons:

- The central median functions poorly as public space and is not well-used by pedestrians.
- The quality of public spaces on the central median is considered poor due to:
  - Limited and undersized seating areas set within sterile settings;
  - Undersized trees and vegetation;
  - Proximity to vehicular traffic; and,
  - A poor relationship to the overall University Avenue landscape.
- Individual islands are difficult to access from adjacent sidewalks.
- Pedestrian connections between individual islands are limited or non-existent.
- The volume of vehicular traffic creates noise and pollution that degrades the user experience.
- The sidewalk areas are dominated by concrete, and lack sufficient vegetation and dedicated seating spaces.

D - Integrity: The integrity of the landscape as a place of public memory is considered **MEDIUM** for the following reasons:

- In-place monuments are intact, and retain prominent locations with high visibility along the Avenue's central median.
- The South African War Memorial has been disassembled and is in storage. Per the 2023 Landscape Management Plan, the monument will be reinstated following completion of Ontario Line construction, with any necessary conservation work being carried out in the interim.[180]
- 2020 University Avenue Public Life Study found over 75% of survey respondents were unaware of any topics being commemorated by monuments.
- It is unclear how resonant the subject matter of monuments is with contemporary values, and what the strength of these ideas is
- It is unclear whether the monuments convey themes and subjects that reflect contemporary public or civic values

E - University Avenue's history as a highly distinctive landscape dates to its original *allée* landscape of 1832. Despite numerous physical configurations since time, changes to the landscape have always been made with an understanding of the importance of its landmark status and distinctive character. City regulations have historically been used to control various aspects of the landscape, including traffic and the designs of adjacent buildings.

180 Ontario Line Technical Advisor, *Documentation, Restoration and Landscape Management Plan (Draft) University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape and South African War Memorial* (January 2023), p. 68.

The redesign of the roadway in 1947 reinforced the landscape's distinctive character, with a new formal configuration that took full advantage of the Avenue's monumental right-of-way. In 1964 the central median was re-landscaped, reflecting an effort to apply a new aesthetic treatment to the existing medians, and re-introduce an element of public access to the landscape.

In 1971 the by-law review report noted that University Avenue successfully distinguished itself from other streets. However it also noted that ideas about monumental and distinctive design change over time, and that distinction should be pursued as a quality relative to contemporary rather than historical design principles.[181]

The 2020 University Avenue public life study found that roughly one-third of respondents valued the street for its unique width and open space, while 13% valued its grandeur and architecture.[182] In stakeholder consultations related to this Cultural Heritage Landscape Study (see Section 5.0), multiple respondents indicated that University Avenue remains a prestigious location for an organization. They also noted that the location is important to their brand, and plays a positive role in attracting staff.

Integrity: The integrity of the landscape's distinctive identity is considered **MEDIUM** for the following reasons:

- The street remains a coveted and prestigious address for various types of organizations.
- The right-of-way maintains a monumental width of 180 feet.
- The presence of a landscaped central median with numerous monuments distinguishes the streetscape from other streets.
- There are many prominent, historic, or landmark properties and buildings adjacent to the right-of-way.
- Some adjacent properties maintain high-quality public realm spaces, including generous forecourts and public art.

Landmark Civic Avenue Summary

The overall integrity of University Avenue as a landmark civic avenue is considered **MEDIUM**. While several aspects of this identity are intact and functioning well, others operate below their full potential, and sometimes at poor levels. As such, the existing landscape still conveys the idea of a landmark civic avenue, but there are a number of areas that can be improved to bolster this identity and strengthen the cultural landscape.

The elements of the landmark civic avenue that function well are its relationships to government and institutional sites, and its ability to support large public gatherings.

181 *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*. February 1971, p. 22.

182 Park People, "University Avenue Public Space Public Life Study," 2020, p. 15.

These are supported by the landscape's underlying spatial form and context. This includes the straight path and monumental width of the right-of-way, the wide roadways, its axial relationship to Queen's Park, and its collection of surrounding buildings and sites, all of which are generally stable and support these ideas and practices.

Sub-optimal elements of University Avenue as a landmark civic avenue are its function as a place of public memory, and its distinctive character. The concerns with the former relate to the relevance and resonance of the subject matter memorialized, rather than the physical condition or prominence of the monuments themselves, which is generally good. The Avenue retains a distinctive character, largely due to its monumental form and contextual relationships. However at a finer scale the sidewalks, roads and central median lack a cohesive relationship, and there have been consistent criticisms of the streetscape's quality and function for pedestrians.

Finally, University Avenue functions poorly as a public amenity space. This deficiency is attributed to the configuration of the landscape, including its outer sidewalks, roadways, and central media. The outer sidewalks have not been designed to meaningfully accommodate this use, and the central median, despite being designed to incorporate public amenity spaces, has been consistently criticized as unsuitable for this purpose.

Thus while University Avenue does convey the identity and function as a landmark civic avenue, there are opportunities to strengthen the identity by improving public engagement with the space, and by fostering a more cohesive distinctive environment.

8.2 DUNINGTON-GRUBB DESIGN

Since the proposed design of the islands in 1961 and their completion in 1964, a number of factors have impacted the original landscape design by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson.

1. Some of the proposed design elements were never realized, impacting the overall design intention of the project.
2. Several of the islands have been physically altered since 1964, affecting their individual design integrity.
3. Many individual elements of the original design have been removed from the islands.
4. Several permanent additions have been installed on the islands.
5. The original plantings have been removed and/or replaced.
6. In particular, the original mass planting of diverse and colourful annuals has been discontinued.

1. The approach to University Avenue by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson proposed a

relationship between the inner and outer boulevards. Howard Dunington-Grubb always viewed the outer boulevard as very important to the treatment of the avenue as a whole and recommended 40 foot Lindens placed at 100 foot intervals along the outer boulevard in square planters faced with exposed aggregate. It was further suggested that the outer boulevard be paved with materials similar to those used on the inner boulevard. Finally, Dunington-Grubb suggested that the city consider a modern design for the light standards on the outer boulevard.

None of these proposals were ever realized. While square planters exist on the sidewalk today, it is not evident that they were consistently placed and planted with Linden trees at 100 foot intervals. Currently the sidewalk contains a variety of trees including Linden, Elm, Horse Chestnut, Ginkgo, Kentucky Coffeetree and Maple. There is no evidence that the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson recommendations for the outer boulevard paving and redesign of the light standards were ever implemented.

2. Three of the islands have undergone significant alterations since the late 1970s. Island L was completely redesigned c. 1978 and currently consists of grass with one raised planter (See Island Comparison Document). This intervention has obliterated the original design composed of permanent potted plants on alternate sides of the street interspersed with grass panels and moveable potted evergreens.

Island E was altered with the addition of the Airmen's Memorial at the north end c. 1984, requiring removal of four raised planters to create an area for the monument and two rows of trees planted in the middle of the island. This intervention has disrupted the consistent rhythm of the raised planters with their large Elms located on the outer edge of the island (See Island Comparison Document).

Island F was completely renovated c. 2018. While it retains its basic configuration, the southwest and northeast raised planters were replaced with wider planters of cast-in-place concrete clad in new limestone slabs. The new limestone facing is only installed on the road facing sides and does not match the original limestone used by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson. The original grass panels were also replaced with modern pre-cast concrete unit pavers, and the stairs were removed (See Island Comparison Document).

Other islands have had their original materials, typically Queenston paving with brick inlay, on the north and south access points replaced by poured in place concrete. These are Islands A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I (south end only), K (north end) and L.

3. Many individual elements of the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson design have also been removed over the years. The original landscape design included four types of benches designed specifically for the project: one-sided with the raised planter providing a backrest; one-sided with backrest; two-sided without backrest; and two-sided with backrest.

Of the original benches, the one-sided benches integrated into the raised planter are the most common to remain. The two-sided benches with backrest have all been removed. In some cases, contemporary benches have been added to islands that were not originally designed to have benches such as Islands B and D. In other instances, benches have been moved to other islands from their original location, such as the benches at Island G.

All of the original ornamental pots (200+) have been removed and in some cases replaced with generic black pots in various sizes that can be found along many main streets in Toronto.

4. There have been several additions to the islands in the form of commemorative plaques (Island J), lighting installations (Islands H, I, J and others), and garden structures, ie trellis (Island A and Island B).

5. The planting plan for the islands relied heavily on large and small Elms to provide consistency across the length of the islands. Many of these have been replaced with different species. For example, Island G was originally planted with six small Elms in round containers and a large number of Privet Hedges in the central planter. Other evergreen plantings were contained in ornamental pots. Currently, Island G contains five different species - Elm (1), Norway Maple (1), Norway Maple Globe (2), Linden (2), and Pyramidal English Oak (3).[183] The Norway Maple, Norway Maple Glove, and Linden trees replaced the original plantings in the same location. It is not known if the Elm is an original or replacement planting. The three English Oak have been added to the planting scheme.

Additionally, the original planting plan relied heavily on the widespread planting of annuals in the raised beds and ornamental pots. This practice continued into the late 1980s and while the planting of annuals continues today in the ornamental pots, it does not appear to continue in the raised beds. Currently the raised planting beds contain native and non-native species which are all typically overgrown.

Dunington-Grubb & Stensson Design Summary

The overall integrity of the Dunington-Grubb & Stensson design of the median and islands is considered **LOW.**

Of the 12 islands, two have had significant alterations with the resulting current design only marginally reflecting the original. On the remaining islands elements of the original design such as the layout and materials are still evident. However, where materials have been replaced they are lower quality than the original.

The degradation of the original planting plan significantly impacts the integrity of their 1962 design. The Dunington-Grubb & Stensson design relied on highly manicured and orderly plantings to provide a sense of continuity along the islands. Similarly,

183 City of Toronto, Toronto Maps, Street Tree layer - https://map.toronto.ca/torontomaps/

the design required large-scale planting of annuals which created visual cohesion within each island. Since completion of the island in 1964, the introduction of several different tree species to replace the original elms has resulted not just in a lack of visual coherence along the length of the islands, but a visually chaotic experience. Similarly, the haphazard approach to plantings and in the raised planter beds adds to the sense of disorder.

9.0 ASSESSMENT AGAINST CRITERIA

The section assesses the heritage value of the study area based on the National Capital Commission's *Working with Cultural Landscapes: A Guide for the National Capital Region* (January 2023). In order to plan for and conserve a cultural landscape it must be assessed against established criteria to demonstrate its heritage value(s). The *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* refers to heritage value as the aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual importance or significance for past, present, or future generations.

9.1 ASSESSMENT

The cultural landscape has heritage value because it:
Reflects defined, or otherwise notable architectural styles or landscape concepts (aesthetic value).

University Avenue as a whole reflects important historical aesthetic approaches to city design that are based on the Beaux Arts style popular during the 1800s and the City Beautiful movement that was influential from the late 1800s into the early 20th century. Together, these schools of thought emphasized thoughtful composition, civic beauty, and landscape and architectural harmony, all intended to generate civic pride and promote social betterment. Accordingly, University Avenue features monumentality, formal geometries, symmetry, axial cohesion, notable buildings and landscapes, and major commemorations and public art. Overall, University Avenue represents a cohesive composition of buildings, landscapes, spaces and objects within space on a grand scale and in accordance with the established aesthetic principles of the day.

The University Avenue median landscapes are an example of Canadian civic landscape design, combining decorative garden paradigms of the 1800s and early 1900s with modernist approaches emerging from contemporary industrial and architectural design. The median designs clearly embody traditional decorative Beaux Arts expressions in many respects. At the same time, the islands utilize a modernist geometrical and material vocabulary that lends a more contemporary aesthetic to the composition. The design does not have aesthetic value for several reasons, as per the criteria to reflect defined or notable architectural styles or landscape concepts.

First, the landscape does not reflect a single landscape concept, but a combination of approaches that are ideologically contradictory. For example, the application of modernist aesthetics over a decorative Beaux Arts foundation betrays modernism's foundational rejection of historical styles. Similarly, the decorative design tendencies, including choice of plantings, are at odds with the modernist principle of functionalism. In both cases, these contradictions impact the ideological coherence of the overall design, reflecting modernism as decoration rather than philosophy (see Sections 7.1.1 & 7.1.3).

Second, the design's use of multiple landscape approaches appears to reflect the conservatism of its principal designer, rather than a pioneering or transitional use of modern design upon its completion in 1964. There are multiple contemporary or earlier landscapes in Toronto that display robust modernist approaches, including Nathan Phillips Square (completed 1965) and the McMurtry Gardens of Justice (completed 1966). University Avenue landscape design does not feature prominently in resources on landscape history in Canada, and research did not identify any instances where its design played an influential role on other designers or sites.

Additional conditions impeding the aesthetic value of the central median designs are its integrity and limited functionality. The integrity of the design has been negatively impacted by the loss of original trees and plantings, and changes to the material landscape. The latter includes degradation and incompatible replacement of materials, as well as complete changes to the designs, as has occurred on Islands L, F, and the northern third of Island E.

Functionally, the design of the median—with defined 'rooms', portals, and integrated seating—was conceived to support movement and public occupation. As is well-documented, the spaces did not fully succeed in practice and were criticized by members of the design community soon after their completion (see Sections 7.2.1, 8.1.C and 6.8.4). As *The Art of the Avenue* noted in 1989—and remains true today—the islands are difficult to access, exposed to traffic and pollution, and ultimately underused. Their isolation within a traffic-dominated corridor has limited their function as meaningful public space.

Thus while the central median is an interesting record of mid-century landscape thinking in Canada, the design itself is not considered to have aesthetic value per the criteria.

Is associated with important events, activities, people, or has meaningfully contributed to the development of a community, region, province or nation (historical value).

The study area and its immediate context has meaningfully contributed to the development of the city, the province and the nation. Since 1833 when University Avenue was laid out as a grand ceremonial route to King's College / the University of Toronto,[184] it has attracted institutions and businesses that were significant in the development of Toronto as the financial, scientific and judicial centre of Ontario, and in some instances of the country. Beginning in the 1930s, several Canadian businesses in the banking and insurance sectors located their headquarters on University Avenue, helping Toronto solidify its position as the financial capital of the country. Similarly, the study area and its immediate context has attracted numerous hospitals making Toronto a centre of medical treatment and research in Ontario and Canada. The study

184 King's College became the University of Toronto in 1849, following secularization by the Provincial Government

area and immediate context has also played an important role in the development of Ontario as a civil society. It contains several buildings associated with the legislative and judicial branches of government, notably the Ontario Legislative Building and southern grounds, the Osgoode Hall National Historic Site of Canada[185] (Law Society of Ontario and Ontario Court of Appeal), and the Superior Court of Justice (361 University Avenue).

The study area is directly associated with the landscape architecture firm of Dunington-Grubb & Stensson - a preeminent firm well known for its residential garden design for wealthy clients in the 1930s and 1940s. After World War II, the firm began undertaking more public projects in Toronto and with Howard Dunington-Grubb applying his significant skills and experience to the design of important institutional and civic landscapes. In addition to his landscape practice and founding of Sheridan Nurseries, Howard Dunington-Grubb was an early leader in the landscape architecture field, a prolific writer and lecturer, and advocate for landscape architecture education. He was a founding member of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects and Town Planners (later becoming the CSLA), and received numerous awards and honours including the first Allied Arts Medal from the Royal Canadian Architectural Institute awarded to a landscape architect.

The landscape design of the 12 islands along University Avenue's central median was a large-scale public project for Dunington-Grubb & Stensson and reflects its move from private estate work to public projects, as well as the modernist influence of J.V. and Janina Stensson on the firm's design approach. Designed by Howard Dunington-Grubb, whose early work was rooted in Beaux Arts traditions, the islands reflect a shift in his practice toward the aesthetics of modernism that were emerging in mid-20th-century landscape architecture, while remaining resistant to its overall ethos. As such, the design of the islands marks an important point in the history of Dunington-Grubb & Stensson.

Is an important source of knowledge for research and study (scientific value).

The study area and immediate context is an important source of scientific research and study, and a place where world leading discoveries have been made. This is due to the presence of hospitals since the early 1900s in the study area and immediately adjacent areas, as well their long-standing research and educational relationships with the University of Toronto. Today, the research and scientific community includes the University Health Network (UHN), Sick Kids Hospital and Mount Sinai Hospital. The UHN (Toronto General Hospital, Ontario Cancer Care Institute/Princess Margaret Hospital and the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute) runs six research institutes focused on investigating the causes of various diseases and developing more effective methods of treating them. This makes UHN a leader in medical research in Canada and its scientists can be credited with numerous medical breakthroughs and world firsts.

185 Osgoode Hall was designated as a National Historic Site in 1979 because it represents the judicial institution in Ontario. https://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4258&pid=0

Sustains cultural traditions or ways of life (cultural value)

The study area sustains cultural traditions related to public assembly including parades, demonstrations and protests. The earliest recorded public gatherings on College Avenue were in the 1850s, when numerous large events made use of College Avenue. Since then, the study area has sustained public assemblies of various types, including parades (civilian and military), individual events / processions, and protests. The study area's use as a venue for large public gatherings relates to a number of factors, including its central location, generous width and length, high-quality landscape, and public accessibility. New institutional developments in the avenue's surrounding context have also contributed to its suitability as a venue for public assembly, both contributing an overt civic character to the space, and creating logical nodes for gatherings or protests. Cultural traditions related to public assembly are significant because they permit expressions of community identity, public celebrations, and the performance of democratic rights in the form of public assembly and freedom of speech. The study area provides an important venue for the public performance of these rituals that are an important aspect of Canadian society and democracy.

Contributes to a community's identity or sense of belonging (social value)

The study area contributes to Toronto's identity as the city's most prominent street. The avenue has been considered an exceptional element of Toronto's urban environment since its completion in 1833, and its evolution since that time has been informed by this awareness. As a thoroughfare, it is Toronto's widest downtown street, providing access to a number of significant institutions and sites in the downtown core. Its width also contributes to its preeminent stature, which is reinforced further by its formal layout and configuration, relying on a landscaped median separating lanes of traffic, plus other monumental qualities. The street's prominent profile in Toronto has resulted in consistent efforts over the years to cultivate a landscape of distinguished and high quality. These factors lend a coherent and consistent quality to the study area, giving it a distinct identity within downtown Toronto. In a city otherwise characterized by modest main streets and a functional grid layout, the study area has a unique profile as an important landmark and symbol of Toronto.

The study area also contributes to Toronto's identity as the provincial capital, as a ceremonial approach to the Ontario Legislative Building and Queen's Park. Several decades after expropriating a large part of the University of Toronto campus, the Provincial Government began construction on a new legislative building in the lower portion of Queen's Park, facing south onto University Avenue. Upon completion in 1893, the new provincial building's integration with one of the city's most significant public landscapes represented a strong tangible and symbolic expression of Toronto as the provincial capital. In addition to serving as the ceremonial approach to the Provincial Capital, the study area's relationship to provincial governance is also reflected by provincial institutions and buildings in surrounding context, and the Sir Adam Beck memorial on the median south of Queen Street West.

The study area's contributions to Toronto's identity are in part supported by its important history as a public amenity space designed for public use and occupation. This use began as parkland in the 1830s before being formalized in 1859 by the City of Toronto as the first municipal park in British North America. After parkland gave way to vehicular traffic in the early 20th century, Dunington-Grubb & Stensson reintroduced public access through their designs featuring intentional public space within the landmark civic context. Notwithstanding the documented limitations of the current median design, the site's history as a public amenity supports University Avenue's identity as an important civic landscape in Toronto.

As a repository of public art and commemoration, the study area and immediate context contributes to the sense of identity of the city, province and nation. Since the late 19th century, it has been a place for the community's collective public memory. Beginning with public art that commemorated individuals, events and organizations of importance to the city (Robert Saunders), the province (Sir Adam Beck) and the country (South African War Memorial), more recent public art portrays ideas and principle that are important to Canadian society such as equality, freedom of expression and religion and justice. The location of public art within the study area, and specifically those on the median, reflects University Avenue's status within the city. The fact that the public artworks on the median have been moved, but maintained through successive changes testifies to and reinforces the continuing idea of University Avenue as an important public place.

Reflects the sacred traditions, ceremonial practices or rituals of a community (spiritual value).

Broader consultations, including with Indigenous groups, is required to identify spiritual value.

9.2 FINDINGS

9.2.1 ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The assessment finds that the study area has heritage value related to a number of the criteria:

- Historical value, for its role in the development of the city, the province, and the nation as well as being an important public work by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson;
- Scientific value, as a place where internationally significant discoveries have been made;
- Cultural value, for its cultural traditions of public assembly related to democracy and expression;
- Social value, for its contributions to the identity of Toronto (both as a city and as the provincial capital), Ontario, and Canada.

These findings are unified by the common themes of identity, public life and citizenship, and align with the understanding of the cultural landscape as a landmark civic avenue. In particular they relate to its connections with nearby governmental and institutional sites; its unique context and physical characteristics; and its ability to support public spaces, gatherings and places of memory. These represent the intangible elements sustained by the landscape's physical features, which together form the critical relationship at the core of the cultural landscape.

9.2.2 UNESCO CATEGORY

The study area is an evolved landscape, with a historic development informed by a consistent awareness of the avenue's landmark quality and stature within the city. The completion of André Parmentier's original *allée* in 1833 established the site as a landmark avenue, and through its subsequent evolution as a public park and then city street, it has retained that status as one of Toronto's highest-profile landscapes. The street's evolution over time has been shaped by consistent efforts to cultivate a landscape of distinguished and high quality.

Over time, the avenue's landmark quality and stature has attracted uses and adjacent development related to civic and public life in Toronto. The resulting landscape has a strong civic identity and distinct monumental character, both of which are fundamental to its significance in Toronto.

The study area is considered an organically evolved landscape[186] because it reflects important ideas and practices that have developed over time in response to the environment, whose form reflects that process of evolution. More specifically, it is considered an organically evolved landscape of the continuing sub-type, because it retains an active social role in contemporary society and its evolutionary processes remain active, and it retains material evidence of its evolution over time.

186 Definitions of the organically evolved landscape category are found on page 20 of the NCC Guide, and on UNESCO's Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

10.0 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

Description of Place

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape is a 1.4 km linear landscape located in downtown Toronto. It is composed of the public realm on University Avenue between Adelaide Street West and Queen's Park Crescent. This portion of University Avenue has a monumental width of roughly 180 feet and is currently configured with multiple lanes for northbound and southbound traffic movement (Map 4). Its exceptional width provides space for a central median containing 12 islands of varying lengths, individually landscaped to designs by Dunington-Grubb & Stennson and completed in 1964. The treatment is decorative in nature, integrating modernist elements within the overall Beaux Arts context of the central median.

The University Avenue CHL is an evolved landscape, whose various configurations over time reflect over 190 years of transformation while remaining an important public place in Toronto. Originally laid out in 1833 as a formal *allée* connecting the Town of York with the King's College (precursor to the University of Toronto) grounds, the landscape evolved from a verdant promenade lined with horse chestnuts, to municipal parkland before reconfiguration as roadway in the early 20th century. In 1947 University Avenue was altered to its current configuration with a central median intersected by east-west streets that created a number of islands. While the reconfiguration prompted a discussion of the landscape treatment for the islands, it was ultimately construction of the University Avenue subway which began in 1959 that led to the design that is evident today. Throughout these successive changes, University Avenue has remained a high-quality street of distinction in Toronto.

The physical characteristics of the University Avenue CHL support numerous activities and practices including public assembly in the form of parades, demonstrations and protests. These are important civic components of the CHL as they permit freedom of expression. This civic dimension of the CHL is heightened by the role of University Avenue as the physical and ceremonial route to the Ontario Legislative Building. Additionally, the central median features several large-scale public art pieces with their prominent siting providing focal points along University Avenue.

The University Avenue CHL is tightly framed by the adjacent buildings and sites that make up its surrounding context. Among them are a number of important, if not landmark places, including the Ontario Legislative Building, Osgoode Hall, and the Canada Life Building. Other adjacent buildings along the University Avenue CHL house important justicial, commercial and healthcare institutions that are significant to the City of Toronto itself, and to its role as the provincial capital.

Heritage Values

The University Avenue CHL has cultural heritage value as a landmark civic avenue in Toronto. The landscape is considered one of the city's most important streets, with a unique context, form and history of public use that supports ideas and practices about public identity and citizenship, within the city and beyond. It serves as an important symbol of Toronto's identity as a city, and as the provincial capital.

As a monumental urban feature dating to the 1830s, the Avenue has played a significant role in Toronto's development. It has served as a landmark organizing feature of the city, attracting numerous important organizations and institutions, and helping to establish Toronto as a notable healthcare, judicial, and financial centre in Ontario and Canada. The Avenue's contributions to the development of the city, province, and nation are seen in its prominent location in downtown Toronto, running north-south past important healthcare, judicial, and commercial office centres. The landscape is framed by adjacent properties, a high proportion of which are landmark or significant sites associated with important organizations. These notable organizations and high-quality buildings also contribute to the avenue's distinguished profile and stature.

A defining element of the CHL's context is its axial relationship with Queen's Park, dominated by the monumental Ontario Legislative Building that terminates its northern vista. This relationship establishes University Avenue as the ceremonial approach to the legislature, symbolizing Toronto's role as the provincial capital in dramatic fashion. It also represents one of two important civic areas adjacent to the CHL, the others being Toronto City Hall / Nathan Phillips Square, and the judicial precinct at Queen Street West. Connections to these areas reinforce the avenue's civic character, and contribute to its municipal and provincial identity.

As the widest thoroughfare in downtown Toronto, the University Avenue CHL conducts high volumes of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, fostering physical connections between significant nodes in the city. Public space for pedestrians includes the outer sidewalks, but also the central median, whose islands were designed with fountains, public art, and seating intended to attract pedestrians to a novel type of public space in Toronto. These functions, along with subway stops and adjacent employers, bring large numbers of the public into daily use of University Avenue, reinforcing the CHLs representative function as a symbol of Toronto and its identity as the city's most prominent street.

The CHL also functions as an important space for formal public assembly in Toronto, having served as a venue for parades, celebrations and demonstrations since the 1850s if not earlier. The landscape's unique size, quality, and adjacent institutional nodes make it a suitable and prominent space for gatherings that express identity, celebrate, and exercise fundamental rights related to freedom of assembly and speech. The public performance of these rituals is an important element of citizenship in Canada and democratic society, and imbues the cultural landscape with additional meaning as a civic avenue.

The CHL reflects Beaux Arts design principles as a wide avenue, with a symmetrical layout, and strong axial relationship with the landmark Ontario Legislative site. The formality of Beaux Arts design supports the civic quality and stature of the landscape, contributing to a broad avenue capable of supporting dramatic views and landmark sites, and lending to the overall a sense of monumentality that is otherwise rare in Toronto. Beaux Arts principles are also seen in the formal configuration of the right of way, which is occupied by broad sidewalks, with separate banks of north and south traffic lanes divided by a central median. This configuration represents a unique urban design feature in a city otherwise devoid of grand urban gestures, and contributes to the landscape's civic character and stature.

The 12 landscaped islands along the central median designed by landscape architects Dunington-Grubb & Stensson in 1961-2 marked an important point in the firm's history. Not only was it a prominent and large-scale project for Dunington-Grubb & Stensson, the design of the landscaped islands reflected its move from private estate work to public projects, as well as the modernist influence of Jesse Vilhelm (J.V.) and Janina Stensson on the firm's design approach. Designed by Howard Dunington-Grubb, whose early work was rooted in Beaux Arts traditions, the islands reflect a shift in his practice toward the aesthetics of modernism that were emerging in mid-20th-century landscape architecture, while remaining resistant to its overall ethos.

As a repository of public art and commemoration, the cultural heritage landscape contributes to public identity at the municipal, provincial and national levels. The site has been a place for collective public memory since the late 19th century, with numerous monuments and works of public art being located within, or directly adjacent to the cultural landscape. The works contribute to public memory by commemorating individuals, events and organizations relevant to municipal, provincial and national identity. Despite the ad hoc development of public art and commemorations within the cultural landscape, their incorporation into the redesigned central median in 1947 affirmed the site's status as a high-profile, public place, with an inherent civic function. The monuments and public art also contribute to the distinct character of the Avenue's public realm, providing focal points, nodes of interest, and contributing to its monumentality.

Heritage Attributes

The following heritage attributes contribute to the value of the University Avenue CHL.

Attributes related to evidence of Land Use and Traditional Practices:

- The ongoing ability of the landscape to be used for large public assemblies reflecting democratic and cultural practices, including parades, celebrations, demonstrations, and protests.
- The ongoing ability of the avenue to be used as a public amenity space, in the form of a landscaped public space, a promenade, or a park.

Attributes related to its circulation system:

- The substantial length and unique width of the right of way.
- The north-south orientation of University Avenue as a straight avenue.
- The strong axial relationship to the Ontario Legislative Building as its northern terminal point.
- Its connection to existing civic landscapes at Queen's Park, and the McMurtry Gardens of Justice and Nathan Phillips Square.
- Aspects of the landscape's prominent context in downtown Toronto, including:
    - The high proportion of significant, landmark, or historic adjacent sites.
    - The use of high-quality architecture, finishes, and landscapes on adjacent properties fronting onto University Avenue.
    - Major intersections with significant cross-streets at Queen Street West, Dundas Street West, and College Street.

Attributes related to visual relationships:

- Views north to the Ontario Legislative Building in Queen's Park from the length of University Avenue north of Queen Street West.
- Views south down University Avenue from the Ontario Legislative Building and south portion of Queen's Park.
- View northeast from Queen Street West to the collection of important civic structures including Osgoode Hall, the Superior Court of Justice, Toronto City Hall and Old City Hall.
- Views south along University Avenue from Armory Street, framed by the Canada Life Building and Bank of Canada Building on the west side.
- Views to the Sir John A. MacDonald statue in Queen's Park.
- Former views of the South African War Memorial.

Attributes related to its spatial organization:

- The formal configuration of the right of way as a landscaped public space with an axial relationship to Queen's Park and the Ontario Legislative building.
- Role of the landscaped public realm as an organizing principle and unifying feature of the avenue.

Attributes related to its built features:

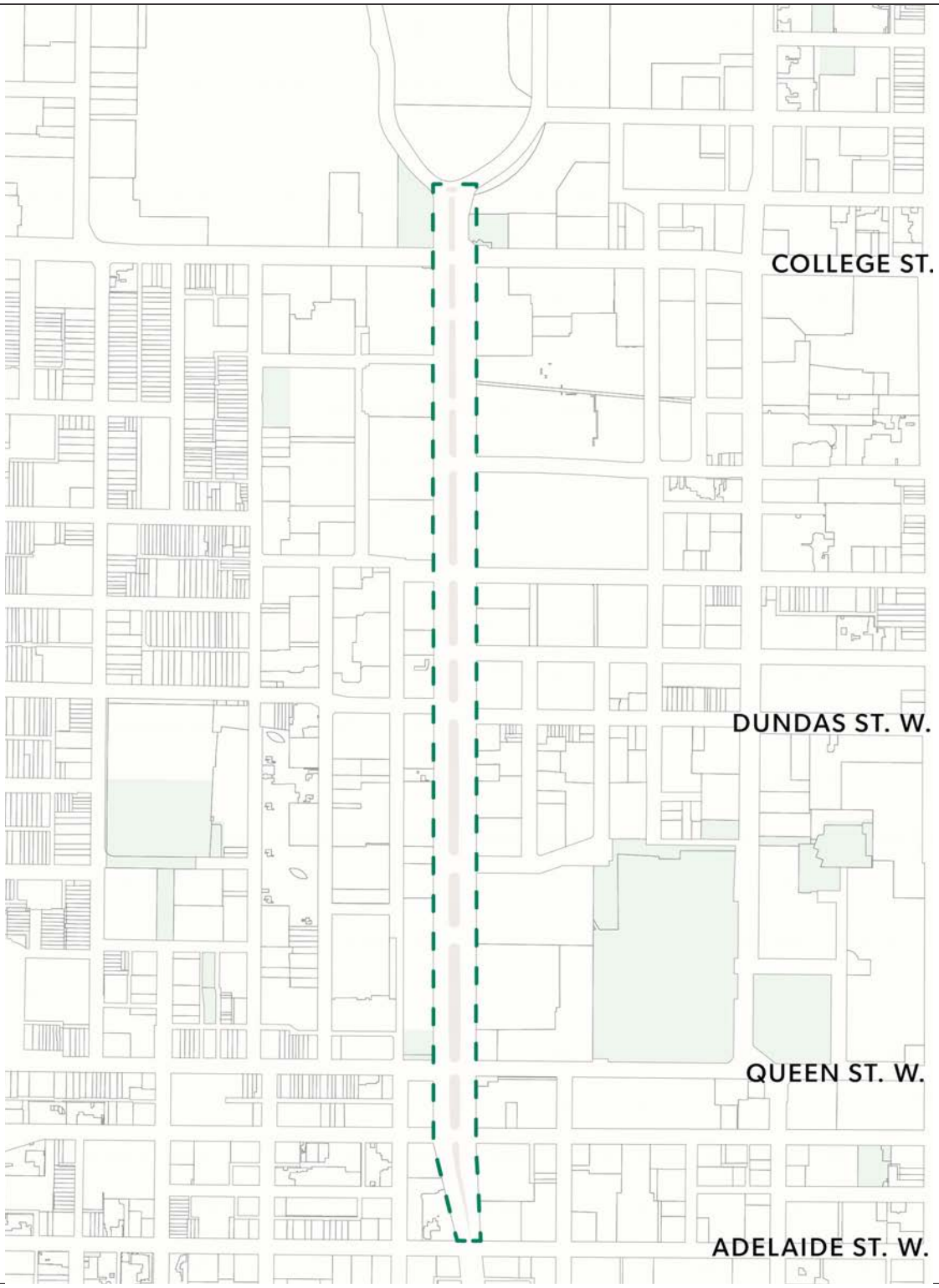
- University Avenue's Beaux Arts features, including:
    - Axial layout with Queen's Park.
    - Monumental width of the right of way.

    - Symmetrical configuration of the public right-of-way.
    - The monumental Ontario Legislative Building as a focal point.
    - Monuments as focal points and gateways.
- Public art and commemorative monuments, often monumental in scale.

The value of the University Avenue CHL also lies in its relationship to:

- Significant adjacent healthcare, educational, and financial institutions.
- Significant sites associated with the Province of Ontario, including Queen's Park, the Ontario Legislative Building, the Campbell Family Building (former Hydro Electric Power Commission of Ontario building), the Superior Court of Justice, and Osgoode Hall.
- Significant sites associated with the judicial branch of government, including Osgoode Hall, the Superior Court of Justice, the New Toronto Courthouse, Campbell House, the Canada Life Building and federal courts at 180 Queen Street West.
- The Queen's Park grounds, the McMurtry Gardens of Justice and Nathan Phillips Square as major sites of public art and commemoration.
- The continuous roadway, known as Queen's Park Crescent to the north, and University Avenue to the south.

MAP 4: UNIVERSITY AVENUE CHL BOUNDARY



Proposed CHL Boundary

Basemap: City of Toronto, CBCollective

0m 100m 200m

11.0 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES, GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 POLICY CONTEXT

11.1.1 CITY OF TORONTO OFFICIAL PLAN

Public Realm Policies

Section 3.1.1 of the Official Plan identifies the public realm as a fundamental organizing element of the city. The public realm consists of all public spaces, and private spaces to which the public has access and includes streets, lanes, parks, and open spaces. Section 3.1.1 contains several policies pertaining to the public realm that are applicable to the study area.

Policy 3.1.1.2 (f) sets out the objectives for the public realm including providing opportunities for passive and active recreation. The city will seek opportunities to expand and enhance the public realm (Policy 3.1.1.3) and in so doing it will consult, partner and collaborate with Indigenous communities (Policy 3.1.1.4). City streets are identified as significant public open spaces and the city will apply a 'complete streets' approach to new and existing streets including creating spaces for trees, landscaping, street furniture and boulevard cafes (Policy 3.1.1.6). Pedestrian safety is a priority for the public realm (Policy 3.1.1.14) with urban design principles to ensure that walking is safe, comfortable, convenient for people of all ages and abilities outlined in *Toronto's Pedestrian Charter*.

Cultural Heritage Policies

Section 3.1.6 of the Official Plan identifies that Toronto's cultural heritage is seen in its significant buildings, properties, districts, landscapes and archaeological sites. It sets out policies related to their conservation including those pertaining to cultural heritage landscapes.

Policy 3.1.6.4 states that properties on the Heritage Register will be conserved and maintained consistent with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, as revised from time to time and as adopted by Council.

Policy 3.1.6.5 states that "Proposed *alterations*, development, and/or public works on or adjacent to, a property on the Heritage Register will ensure that the integrity of the heritage property's cultural heritage value and attributes will be retained, prior to work commencing on the property and to the satisfaction of the City. Where a Heritage Impact Assessment is required in Schedule 3 of the Official Plan, it will describe and assess the potential impacts and mitigation strategies for the proposed alteration, development or public work."

Policy 3.1.6.14 states that “Potential and existing properties of cultural heritage value or interest, including cultural heritage landscapes and Heritage Conservation Districts, will be identified and included in area planning studies and plans with recommendations for further study, evaluation and conservation.”

Regarding Cultural Heritage Landscapes, Policy 3.1.6.43 states that “Potential cultural heritage landscapes will be identified and evaluated to determine their significance and cultural heritage values. Significant cultural heritage landscapes will be included on the Heritage Register and/or designated under either Part IV or Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.”

Adjacent: means those lands adjoining a property on the Heritage Register or lands that are directly across from and near to a property on the Heritage Register and separated by land used as a private or public road, highway, street, lane, trail, right-of-way, walkway, green space, park and/or easement, or an intersection of any of these; whose location has the potential to have an impact on a property on the heritage register; or as otherwise defined in a Heritage Conservation District Plan adopted by by-law.

Cultural Heritage Landscape: a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Aboriginal community. The area may involve features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, trailways, viewsheds, natural areas and industrial complexes of heritage significance, and areas recognized by federal or international designation authorities (e.g. a National Historic Site or District designation, or a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

11.1.2 PROVINCIAL PLANNING STATEMENT (2024)

Section 4.6 of the Provincial Planning Statement encourages planning authorities to create “proactive strategies for conserving *significant built heritage resources* and *cultural heritage landscapes”* (Section 4.6.4b).

Conserved: means the identification, protection, management and use of built heritage resources, cultural heritage landscapes and archaeological resources in a manner that ensures their cultural heritage value or interest is retained. This may be achieved by the implementation of recommendations set out in a conservation plan, archaeological assessment, and/or heritage impact assessment that has been approved, accepted or adopted by the relevant planning authority and/or decision-maker. Mitigative measures and/or alternative development approaches should be included in these plans and assessments.

Cultural heritage landscape: means a defined geographical area that may have been modified by human activity and is identified as having cultural heritage value or interest by a community, including an Indigenous community. The area may include features such as buildings, structures, spaces, views, archaeological sites or natural elements that are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association.

11.2 CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

11.2.1 CONSERVING CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

> *A cultural landscape approach is premised on the relationship between human interactions and a place's physical features. This brings the ideas and practices that ultimately sustain a place and give it value into the conservation process.*[187]

In defining the concept of cultural landscapes, Section 1.2 of the NCC's *Working With Cultural Landscapes* also provides guidance on what it means to conserve them. Fundamentally, a cultural landscape is a dynamic place ultimately defined by the relationship between the physical site and its important ideas and practices. Within this framework, "the objective of conservation is to sustain the evolving relationship."[188]

This approach is consistent with international practices on cultural landscapes. For example, one of the guiding principles of UNESCO's *Handbook for Conservation and Management* of cultural landscapes states that the focus of cultural landscape management should be the interaction between people and their environment.[189]

This understanding is compatible with the PPS definition for cultural heritage landscapes, which explicitly notes that a landscape's individual features '…are valued together for their interrelationship, meaning or association.' As such, the importance of individual elements to the landscape is not inherent, but contingent on how they function to support the larger landscape's overall values. This understanding may permit changes to or removal of certain elements over time, but only if they are replaced with features that have a similar relationship to the essential values of the site in terms of the interrelationships, meanings, or associations.

Based on this understanding, a cultural landscape's primary object of conservation is not a site's physical features, but the underlying relationships, or sustained interactions between people and the place that give it value. Conserving these relationships may involve physical conservation in the conventional sense. But it also requires a broader understanding of the site's important intangible qualities, such as how it sustains specific practices, or fosters particular meanings.

187 NCC, *Working with Cultural Landscapes*, p. 5.

188 Ibid.

189 Nora Mitchell, Mechtild Rössler and Pierre-Marie Tricaud, *World Heritage Papers 26 World Heritage Cultural Landscapes: A Handbook for Conservation and Management* (UNESCO, 2009) p. 35.

The NCC guide describes how conservation objectives can differ based on the different UNESCO cultural landscape categories. Evolved landscapes are those where ongoing cultural practices and ideas have persisted through changes within the physical environment. As such, the built forms and configurations of evolved landscapes are considered somewhat flexible, where the focus of conservation should be on the landscape's ability to sustain its significant cultural practices and ideas.[190]

UNESCO's 1996 San Antonio Declaration is explicit about this, stating that cultural landscapes:

> *…may be considered to be the product of many authors over a long period of time whose process of creation often continues today. This constant adaptation to human need can actively contribute to maintaining the continuum among the past, present and future life of our communities. Through them our traditions are maintained as they evolve to respond to the needs of society. This evolution is normal and forms an intrinsic part of our heritage. Some physical changes associated with maintaining the traditional patterns of communal use of the heritage site do not necessarily diminish it's significance and may actually enhance it. Therefore, such material changes may be acceptable as part of on-going evolution.*[191]

11.2.2 CONSERVING THE UNIVERSITY AVENUE CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

In the case of the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape, the site's underlying relationships and heritage values are those related to its identity as a landmark civic avenue. This identity describes the current landscape, but it has also defined the place for most of its 192 year history. It is a fundamental idea to the site, having precipitated various physical changes and configurations over time, while also enduring amidst the changes. The persistence of this fundamental idea amidst evolution over time is the basis for the site's recognition as an organically evolved landscape type.

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape's identity as a landmark civic avenue is sustained by a group of five interconnected elements:

1. The landscape's contextual relationship to nearby government, institutional and commercial sites.
2. The landscape's ability to support large public assemblies.
3. The landscape's function as a landscaped public amenity space and historically, a park.
4. The landscape's function as a place of public memory.
5. The landscape's distinctive character.

190 NCC, *Working with Cultural Landscapes*, p. 21.

191 As quoted in Cari Goetcheus & Nora Mitchell, "The Venice Charter and Cultural Landscapes: Evolution of Heritage Concepts and Conservation Over Time," in *Change Over Time* 4, No. 2 (Fall 2014), p. 352.

These elements are interrelated, and are fundamental components of the site's heritage values. They are described in greater detail earlier in this report. Section 7.3 provides a more detailed description of the landmark civic avenue, the five constituent elements. This is followed by Section 8.1, which provides an integrity assessment of these elements and the overall landscape.

The overarching conservation objectives of the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape should be to sustain and enhance its identity as a landmark civic avenue. This means seeking to maintain the elements of that identity which are currently strong and functioning well, while at the same time seeking to strengthen elements that have become weaker over time, or are not functioning well.

Section 8.1 provides an outline of how well the cultural landscape is functioning as a landmark civic avenue. This is through the metric of an integrity assessment, which describes the strength of the individual elements that support the landmark civic avenue identity. It describes the landscape's contextual relationships and its ability to support large public assemblies as strong. Conservation should seek to maintain these dimensions of the landscape's identity. It describes the landscape's function as a place of public memory and its distinctive character are given medium integrity, indicating that these elements remain legible but are not expressed to their optimal potential. Conservation should seek to improve on the function of these elements. Finally, the landscape's function as a public amenity space is considered poor, and conservation should seek to significantly improve, or fundamentally re-establish this function of the place.

Summary of conservation objectives:

1. Maintain or improve the landscape's contextual relationships with adjacent governmental, institutional or commercial sites.
2. Maintain or improve the landscape's ability to accommodate large public assemblies.
3. Maintain or improve the landscape's function as a place of public memory.
4. Maintain or improve the landscape's distinctive character.
5. Improve upon, or re-establish the avenue as a landscaped public space and / or park.

11.3 CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

11.3.1 PRIMARY CONSERVATION TREATMENT

The *Standards and Guidelines* provides for three different primary conservation treatments: preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration. These reflect different approaches to conservation work, corresponding to stabilization, adaptive reuse and period restoration respectively. The primary conservation treatments are tied to specific

standards and guidelines, ensuring different projects adhere to best practice in Canada.

The *Standards and Guidelines* provides guidance on determining which conservation treatment is most appropriate for a given site, considering factors such as the characteristics of the place, the nature of the heritage value, condition, and the conservation objectives. Rehabilitation has been identified as the most appropriate conservation treatment for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape for the following reasons:

- The landscape's significance and heritage values are strongly based on its contextual relationships, and overall spatial characteristics (such as monumental width and axial arrangement). In comparison to these elements, the material condition of individual elements or built features are less important to the overall place.
- As a continuing organically evolved landscape, the site's physical environment has changed considerably over time, and its continued evolution is considered appropriate insofar as it supports the cultural landscape's foundational ideas and heritage values.
- The landscape's overall integrity is fair, with a number of underlying ideas and practices that can be strengthened. As such, conservation of the landscape should seek to improve upon these deficiencies. This may necessitate alterations to historic place, where existing features are deteriorated or do not function adequately.

This aligns with the *Standards and Guidelines*, which identify rehabilitation as the appropriate primary conservation treatment when repair or replacement of deteriorated features is necessary; alterations or additions to the historic place are planned for a new or continued use; and depiction during a particular period in its history is not appropriate. It also notes rehabilitation's ability to revitalize historical relationships, where significant contextual values exist.[192]

Preservation is not considered an appropriate long-term conservation treatment, because stabilization of the landscape's current features may inhibit its ability to evolve and revitalize historic uses that are poorly served by its current features. Further, this conservation treatment is most appropriate when heritage values are strongly related to physical materials, and the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape's values are typically related to its contextual and spatial qualities.[193] However, preservation may be appropriate on a short-term basis if planning for the site determines that interim stabilization is required.

Restoration is not recommended as a conservation treatment. The site is considered a

192 Parks Canada, *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada, Second Edition* (Her Majesty in Right of Canada, 2010), p. 16.

193 Parks Canada, *Standards and Guidelines*, p. 16.

continuing organically evolved landscape because it has a history of different physical configurations related to its underlying ideas. The landscape's continued evolution is considered important to revitalize its historical practices and associations. Restoration to a specific physical configuration during its history does not support these objectives, nor would it be appropriate given the site's current context and function in downtown Toronto.[194]

Rehabilitation of the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape

The *Standards and Guidelines* provides the following definition for rehabilitation: "The action or process of making possible a continuing or compatible contemporary use of an *historic place*, or an individual component, while protecting its *heritage value*." It also describes rehabilitation as the sensitive adaptation of an historic place for a continuing or compatible contemporary use, while protecting its heritage value.[195] As a cultural landscape, the object to be rehabilitated is not a singular feature or physical element, but the significant relationship that defines the landscape. At the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape, that is the underlying idea of a landmark civic avenue.

This identity is conveyed by several constituent elements which vary in terms of their strength, with some functioning poorly, some partially, and some well (see Section 8.1). Rehabilitation of the cultural landscape should thus focus on sustaining and enhancing this identity, through appropriate adaptations of the physical environment. Such adaptations may include repairs, modifications, or replacements of landscape features that improve sub-optimal elements (ie. functions as public amenity space and place of public memory, plus its distinctive character), without compromising the strength of well-functioning elements (ie. contextual relationships with adjacent governmental, institutional or commercial sites, and its ability to support large public gatherings).

A rehabilitation conservation treatment is also inherently compatible with the landscape's continuing organically evolved UNESCO type. As a landscape that has changed over time in response to changes in technology, infrastructure, and evolving notions of civic space and design, a rehabilitation approach provides a conservation treatment that allows that evolution to continue, but in service of the landscapes underlying relationships and heritage value.

11.3.2 RELEVANT PARKS CANADA CONSERVATION STANDARDS

The *Standards and Guidelines* provides 14 different standards for conservation. These standards function as important principles that together encompass a larger philosophical framework reflecting best practice in Canada.

The standards are provided in three groups. The first 9 apply to all three conservation treatments – preservation, rehabilitation and restoration. The next 3 are additional standards that apply to rehabilitation, while the last 2 apply specifically to restoration.

194 Ibid., p. 50.

195 Ibid., p. 17.

Since the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape is considered an evolved landscape for which restoration would not be appropriate, only standards 1 through 12 would be applicable to the site. Applicability of specific standards varies on a case by case basis, based on the particular characteristics of a site and potential intervention.[196]

At University Avenue, the majority of the cultural heritage landscape's heritage attributes are contextual or spatial in nature, rather than materially-based. As such, many of the standards that address principles related to material conservation may be less applicable than those related to use or additions / new construction.

11.3.3 RELEVANT PARKS CANADA GUIDELINES

The *Standards and Guidelines* also provides guidelines to assist in making individual decisions about conserving specific elements of historic places. Guidelines are provided in different sections related to five different categories of elements: cultural landscapes, archaeological sites, buildings, engineering works, and materials.

Within each category are a number of elements, each having specific guidelines, again corresponding to the three conservation treatments. Guidelines related to rehabilitation also specifically address additions or alterations to a cultural landscape.

As with the standards, the applicability of individual guidelines varies depending on the site and potential intervention. Based on the heritage attributes, the following elements contain guidelines that may pertain to the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape:

4.1.1 - Evidenc of Land Use

4.1.2 - Evidence of Traditional Practices

4.1.4 - Spatial Organization

4.1.5 - Visual Relationships

4.1.6 - Circulation

4.1.11 - Built Features

11.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

University Avenue has heritage values related to its longstanding identity as a landmark civic avenue in Toronto. While those values and identity remain largely intact and legible, their overall integrity is not considered strong. As such rehabilitation of the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape is recommended to prevent the continued deterioration of the landscape, and improve its function as a landmark civic avenue over the longer term.

196 Ibid., p. 21.

The University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape should be rehabilitated through the following recommendations:

1. Council to consider the recognition of University Avenue as a Cultural Heritage Landscape[197]
2. City to develop a Conservation Strategy for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape which may include:
    3. A vision and goals
    4. Public realm guidelines
    5. Public art strategy

A Cultural Landscape Approach

Specific recommendations, and planning for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape in general, should be informed by a cultural landscape approach to conservation. Using a cultural landscape approach means understanding the avenue's identity and heritage values in terms of the cultural relationships that sustain the cultural landscape, and conserving it through strategies to strengthen those relationships.

Conventional approaches to heritage conservation are often reactive, and focused on impacts to existing heritage attributes. In contrast, a cultural landscape approach encourages proactively seeking opportunities to strengthen the landscape's defining ideas and practices throughout its visioning, planning, and management processes. In the case of University Avenue, the goals and initiatives identified in the Downtown PPRP provide opportunities to proactively strengthen, and conserve the cultural landscape.

For example, a cultural landscape approach might prioritize physical coherence between elements of the streetscape when designing or undertaking alterations within the right-of-way, as a means to reinforce the avenue's landmark civic character. Other example strategies might leverage the landscape's important visual relationships in future alterations, explore ways to increase connectivity with adjacent civic spaces, or seek to improve the landscape's capacity for public gatherings or as a public amenity space.

The ultimate goal of the approach is to sustain and improve the cultural landscape's ideas and practices over time, through an understanding of how its component parts work together to support the heritage values and identity of the whole.

197 Alternate recognition mechanisms to the City's Heritage Register may be identified following the development of formal guidelines for cultural heritage landscapes by the City of Toronto.

11.4.1 RECOGNIZE UNIVERSITY AVENUE AS A SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

In accordance with City of Toronto Official Plan Policy 3.1.6.43 which states that "Significant cultural heritage landscapes will be included on the Heritage Register and/or designated under either Part IV or Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act," Council should consider the recognition of University Avenue as a Cultural Heritage Landscape.

As a property on the Heritage Register, the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape will be conserved and maintained consistent with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* Policy (3.1.6.4), be identified in future city planning studies and plans (Policy 3.1.6.14) and have the integrity of its heritage values and attributes conserved through proposed alterations and/or public works (Policy 3.1.6.5). Alterations, development and/or public works adjacent to the cultural heritage landscape will comply with the city's application requirements set out in Schedule 3 (Policy 3.1.6.5).

11.4.2 DEVELOP A HERITAGE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Based on guidance in the Provincial Planning Statement for creating proactive strategies to conserve significant cultural heritage landscapes (Section 4.6.4b), the City should undertake a Heritage Conservation Strategy for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape which builds on the conservation objectives and guidelines outlined in this study as well as the State of Good Repair Report (2020).

The Heritage Conservation Strategy should establish a proactive conservation framework by identifying a vision for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape based on its cultural heritage values, and identifying relevant and appropriate tools including those related to conservation planning, public realm, and public art. Conservation planning should prescribe the approach and sequencing for the conservation of the landscape's heritage values and attributes, and inform planning for its short, medium, and long-term future.

Articulate a Vision for University Avenue

The Heritage Conservation Strategy should articulate a clear vision for the cultural landscape that is informed by the site's heritage values, and aligns with the goals for University Avenue as a Great Street[198] and Civic Precinct[199] as identified in the Downtown PPRP. The current landscape has suffered from a lack of cohesion, in part related to ad hoc development and changes over time. An intentional and clearly articulated vision for the landscape can strengthen its civic character and functions by firmly establishing the identity of the place. The goals articulated for University

198 Public Work, *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* – Attachment 1, Section 3a Great Streets, University Ave, p. 87.

199 Public Work, *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* – Attachment 1, Section 5a Park Districts, University Ave, p. 161.

Avenue in the Downtown PPRP provide an opportunity to bring the cultural heritage landscape's form and function in line with contemporary ideas and values pertaining to citizenship and public identity as well as the City's current approaches to the public realm.

Heritage Conservation Strategy Contents

The Heritage Conservation Strategy should also include or address:

- Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and mapping (boundary and attributes)
- Vision for University Avenue
  - long-range (25 year) vision statement for University Avenue
  - short, medium and long-term options that might affect the heritage value(s) and attributes of the cultural heritage landscape
- City of Toronto Official Plan policies (Public Realm and Heritage Conservation)
- Primary conservation treatment and applicable guidelines
- Conservation Planning, including:
  - Planting plan and landscape maintenance program
  - Maintenance and repair program for hard landscape
  - Priorities and phasing for actions to reduce the risk of loss of heritage value
  - Costing estimates
  - Implementation strategy
- Public Realm Guidelines (see below)
- Public Art Strategy (see below)

The Conservation Strategy should be prepared by qualified heritage professionals, with expertise in cultural heritage landscapes, landscape architecture, and urban design. It should be undertaken in collaboration with the Parks, Recreation and Forestry, and City Planning (Urban Design/Heritage Planning) departments. Discussion with Urban Design is particularly important as the current configuration and landscape approach of the central median and islands does not align with many of the City's in-force public realm policies.

11.4.3 PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES

Design guidelines should be used to cultivate an appropriate and distinctive civic character for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape, while also improving upon and expanding public amenity space where possible. Guidelines should apply to the right-of-way, but also to adjacent properties to ensure that development or alterations on University Avenue contribute positively to the public realm environment. Guidelines may include requirements for high quality design, materials and plantings,

and for maximizing opportunities for public art and other appropriate amenities, while ensuring conservation of the cultural heritage landscapes heritage values and attributes.

Both the Heritage Conservation Strategy and the Civic Precinct Public Realm and Public Art Master Plan recommended in the Downtown PPRP[200] provide opportunities to develop and implement such design guidelines. Guidelines should be prepared with an understanding of the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape, and ensure that the heritage values and attributes are sufficiently integrated into the plan. Alternately, public realm design guidelines for the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape may be prepared as a standalone document if the timing of the larger Public Realm and Public Art Master Plan is delayed/deferred, or in advance of a larger Heritage Conservation Strategy.

11.4.4 PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

Develop a strategy to re-establish University Avenue as a prime venue for public art in Toronto. Public art is an important aspect of the site, helping to support its heritage values and identity through subjects related to civic themes, groups and individuals. While the study area retains a function as a place of public memory defined by notable public art and monuments, this function has declined over the last century. The current landscape reflects an ad-hoc approach to public art development, with historical (post-settlement) subject matter and values predominating.

Both the Heritage Conservation Strategy and the Civic Precinct Public Realm and Public Art Master Plan recommended in the Downtown PPRP[201] provide opportunities to re-establish the cultural heritage landscape as a prime venue for public art, provided the plan is prepared with an understanding of the University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape, and ensures that the heritage values and attributes are sufficiently integrated. Alternatively, a standalone strategy to reinvigorate University Avenue as a public art venue may be prepared if timing of the larger Public Realm and Public Art Master Plan is delayed or the project delayed/deferred, or in advance of a larger Heritage Conservation Strategy.

The Public Art Strategy should build on the findings of DTAH's 1989 Art of the Avenue study, and address the following:

- Summary of current monuments' design, siting and subject matter;
- Site selection guidelines and identification of potential sites;
- Subject matter selection guidelines;
- Design guidelines; and
- De-accession strategies and considerations.

200 Ibid.

201 Ibid.

Additionally, since the cultural landscape is adjacent to Queen's Park and the McMurtry Gardens of Justice, the Public Art Strategy should also examine University Avenue's role within the broader context of public art landscapes at Queen's Park and the McMurtry Gardens of Justice, and identify potential opportunities to leverage connections (physical or contextual) with these nearby spaces.

12.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

ARCHIVES

CITY OF TORONTO ARCHIVES

Fonds 16 Toronto Transit Commission, Series 2221 Library of the Planning Department.

Fonds 220 Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, Series 1736 Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Department, Operations Division Records, File 486 Central Parkway - University Avenue: Photographs showing progress of the work, 1962-4.

Fonds 416 Dunington-Grubb & Stensson:

> File 30, Sir Adam Beck Memorial, 1963-1964
> File 33, University Avenue, Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, A plan for its Landscape Treatment, c1961-2.
> File 33, Specifications for the construction of Central Parkway on University Avenue, Toronto, Contract No. P-31-62.
> File 119, University Avenue: Full Set, 1962.

Fonds 2023 Toronto Planning Board, Series 721 Papers of Tracy leMay, Files 31 and 32 University Avenue Beautification, Parts I and II.

12.4.1 UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH ARCHIVES

Fonds XL3 MS A001 Dunington-Grubb & Stensson Collection:

> Photos, slides and correspondence concerning the University Avenue Project, Toronto, Ontario, 1961-1966.
>
> Details of paving patterns, benches, sections of islands, granite guard rails, diagrams of islands, surveys of islands for University Avenue, Toronto, 1961-1964.

PUBLISHED SOURCES

Bureau of Architecture and Urbanism, *Toronto Modern Architecture*. Coach House Press, 2002.

Butts, Edward and Karl Stensson. *Sheridan Nurseries: One Hundred of People, Plans and Plants*. Toronto: Dundurn, 2010.

“Chapter 17, An Act to Provide for the Extension of University Avenue in the City of Toronto,” *Statutes of the Province of Ontario*, Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majesty, Toronto: 1928, pp. 34-36.

Dendy, William. *Lost Toronto: Images of the City's Past.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1993.

Dendy, William and William Kilbourn. *Toronto Observed: Its Architecture, Patrons and History.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Grant, George Munro. *Picturesque Canada: The Country As It Was And Is. Volume 1.* Toronto, Belden Brothers, 1882.

Langton, W.A., ed. *Early Days in Upper Canada: Letters of John Langton from the Backwoods of Upper Canada and the Audit Office of the Province of Canada.* Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited at St. Martin's House, 1926.

Martin, Carol. *A History of Canadian Gardening*. Toronto: McArthur & Company, 2000.

Osbaldson, Mark. *Unbuilt Toronto: A History of the City That Might Have Been*. Dundurn Press, Toronto: 2008.

Parks Canada. *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, Second Edition. 2010.

Richardson, Douglas. *A Not Unsightly Building: University College and Its History.* Toronto: Mosaic Press, 1990.

Scadding, Henry. *Toronto of Old.* Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1987.

Tunard, Christopher. *Gardens in the Modern Landscape: A Facsimile of the Revised 1948 Edition*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, c2014.

Thompson, O. *Toronto in the Camera.* Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co., 1868.

Williams, Ron. *Landscape Architecture in Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014.

JOURNALS, PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS

Advisory Planning Commission. *Report of the Advisory Planning Commission*, pp. 25-9; and *Construction* (Toronto) Vol. 24, July 1931, p. 214.

Bain, David. "The Queen's Park and its Avenues: Canada's First Public Park." *Ontario History* Vol. 95, No. 2, 2003, pp. 193-215.

Curry, S.G. "University Avenue Extension, Toronto." *Construction (Toronto).* Vol. 21, December 1928, p. 420 & 428.

Curry, S.G. "Suggested Improvements for Toronto's Downtown Section. *Construction (Toronto)* Vol. 22, February 1929, pp. 62-68.

Dunington-Grubb, Howard. "The Garden of Nineteen-Fifty," *Journal Royal Architectural*

Institute of Canada Vol. 27, No. 8, August 1950, pp. 272-273.

Dunington-Grubb, Howard. “The Garden and the Park Today.” *RAIC Journal*, Vol. 31, No. 7, July 1954, pp. 221-225.

Eckbo, Garrett. “What do we mean by modern landscape architecture?” *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Vol.* 27, No. 8, August 1950, pp. 268-271.

Globe and Mail. “University Avenue Widening.” 20 March 1947, p. 7.

Globe and Mail. “Fountains, Pond, Shrubs for Avenue Beautiful." 8 April 1948, p. 5.

Globe and Mail. “Reeve Riled: 'Concrete Canyon a Millstone’.” 17 November 1965, p. 5.

Globe and Mail. “University Avenue Landscaping Called a Sad Sight, A Nothing.” 10 June 1968, p. 12.

Lemon, James. “Plans for Early 20th-Century Toronto: Lost in Management,” *Urban History Review / Review d’histoire urbaine* Vol. 18, No. 1, 1989, pp. 11-31.

McClelland, Michael and Brendan Stewart. “University Avenue - Toronto's Grand Boulevard.” *Ground Quarterly*, Issue 26, 2014, pp. 28-31.

Milovsoroff, Ann. “For the Love of Gardens: A Biography of H.B. & L.A. Dunington-Grubb,” *Canadian Horticultural History* 2 (3), 1990.

Milovsoroff, Ann. "Howard Burlingham Dunington-Grubb." *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Historica Canada. Article published May 19, 2008. Last Edited March 04, 2015.

Sinaiticus. “Canada Life Building, Toronto.” *Construction (Toronto),* Vol. 22, April 1931, pp. 112-131.

Skene, Angus. “Business History: Who Gave Gardens to the Grandest Street in Toronto?” *Toronto Star*. December 14, 2014.

Stensson, J.V. “Approach to Planting.” *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada Vol.* 27, No. 8, August 1950, pp. 266-267.

Toronto Daily Star. “The Long, Sad Career of University Ave.” 15 June 1964, p. 7.

PLANNING STUDIES & UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

City Hall and Square: Conditions of Competition, 1957. Accessed at Toronto Public Library Virtual Exhibit, A Grand Design: The Toronto City Hall Design Competition.

City of Toronto Planning Board. *A Review of the University Avenue By-law*. February 1971.

Cosburn Nauboris. *City of Toronto University Avenue Medians State of Good Repair*. September 29, 2020.

du Toit, Allsopp, Hillier, The *Art of the Avenue: A University Avenue Public Art Study.* 1989.

Faludi, E.G. and Floyd, Austin. *Report to the City Planning Board: The Decorative Treatment of University Avenue*. September 3, 1950.

"Report of The Advisory City Planning Commission with Recommendations for The Improvement of the Central Business Section of the City of Toronto." 1929.

Manvell, Arthur. "The Stones of 426: A History of the First RCMI Quarters at 426 University Ave., 1907-2010."

Metropolitan Toronto. *Annual Report.* 1953-1965.

Metropolitan Toronto, Parks Department. *University Avenue Landscape Plans*. 1962.

National Capital Commission. *Working with Cultural Landscapes: A Guide for the National Capital Region*. January 2023.

Ontario Line Technical Advisor. *Documentation, Restoration and Landscape Management Plan (Draft): University Avenue Cultural Heritage Landscape and South African War Memorial*. January 2023.

Park People. *University Avenue Public Space Public Life Study*. 2020.

Public Work. *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan*. [2018].

WEBSITES

Canadian Society Landscape Architects (CSLA).

"Howard B. Dunington-Grubb," Accessed at https://www.csla-aapc.ca/awards/college-fellows/howard-b-dunington-grubb.

"Gage Park," Accessed at https://www.csla-aapc.ca/awards/gage-park-2016.

City of Toronto Official Plan. Accessed at https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-planguidelines/official-plan

City of Toronto Open Data – Trees, Heritage, Aerial layers. Accessed at https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/open-data/

Cultural Landscape Foundation. Accessed at https://www.tclf.org/

The Provincial Planning Statement. Accessed at https://www.ontario.ca/page/provincial-planning-statement-2024

University of Toronto's School of Cities, Aerial Imagery. Accessed at https://schoolofcities.github.io/historical-aerial-imagery-toronto

13.0 FIGURES

Figure 1: Circa 1797 map of the Township of York. The original town plot it coloured pink on the plan, and Park Lots 11 and 12 (green arrows) can be seen the west (Ministry of Natural Resources).

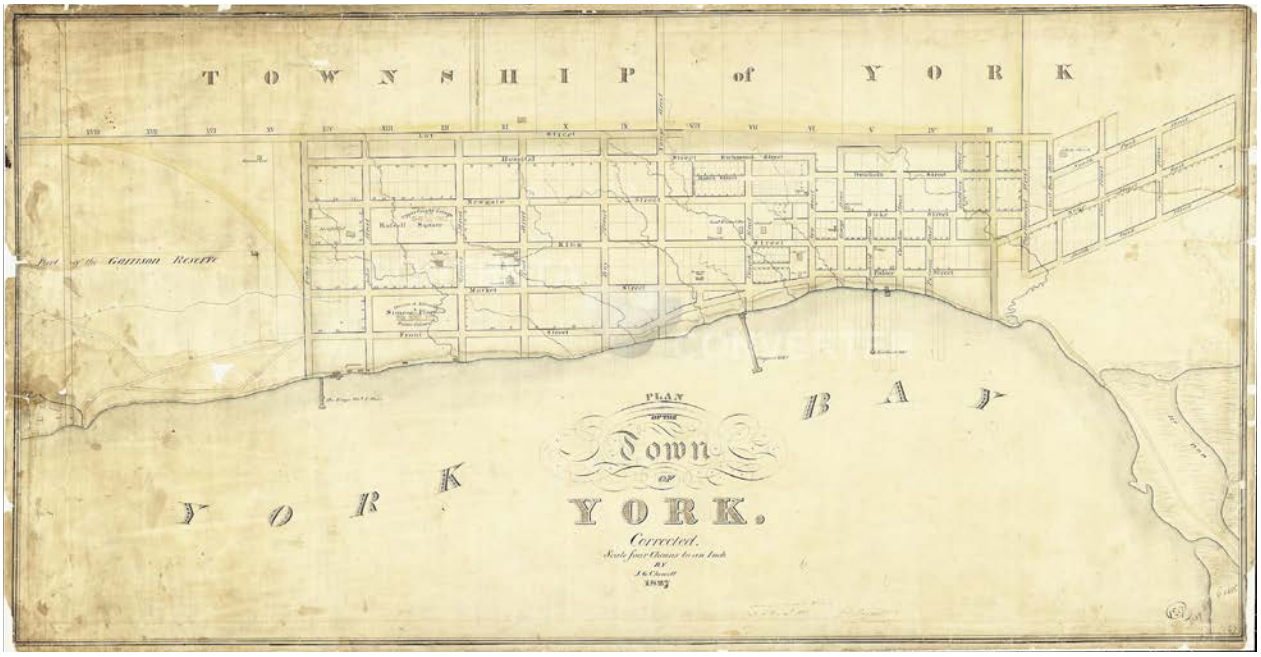


Figure 2: Map of the Town of York in 1827, show the expansion west of the original town plot to Peter Street and the reserve lands beyond. College Avenue is shown extending north from Lot Street, likely added to the basemap at some point later (LAC, NMC16819).

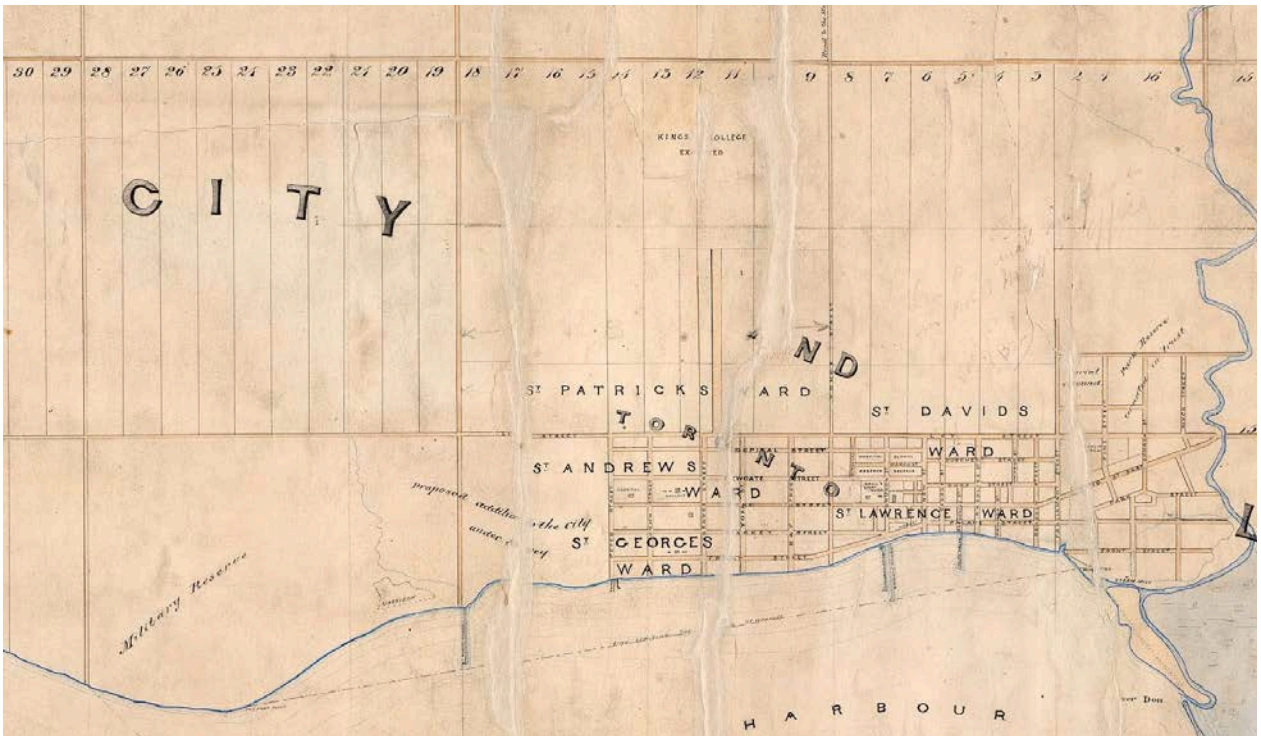


Figure 3: 1834 map showing the expanded liberties of the City of Toronto. The lands acquired by King's College are shown and lines indicate the locations of College Avenue and Yonge Street Avenue, connecting the faraway site to Lot (Queen) and Yonge streets respectively (COTA, MT 401).

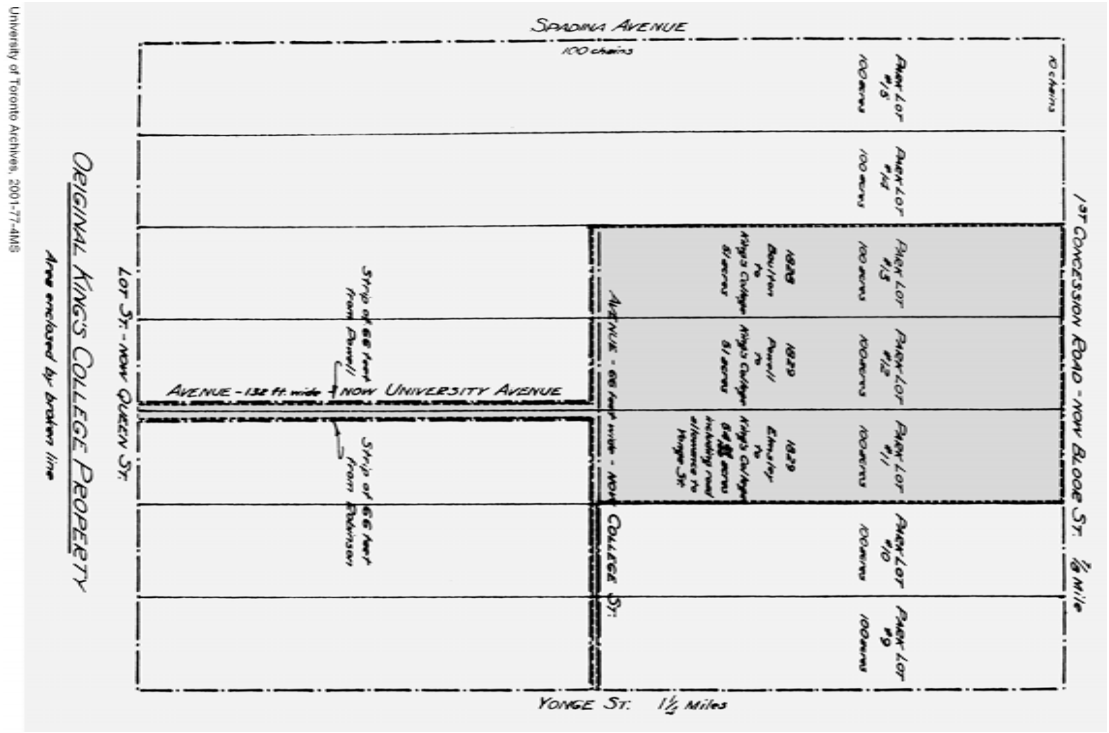


Figure 4: Diagram illustrating the lands acquired by King's College in relation to park lots 9 through 13 (UTA, 2001-77-4MS).

Figure 5: 1867 photograph from Octavius Thompson's Toronto in the Camera, looking north from the Queen Street West gates (TPL, PICTURES-R-4104 30831).

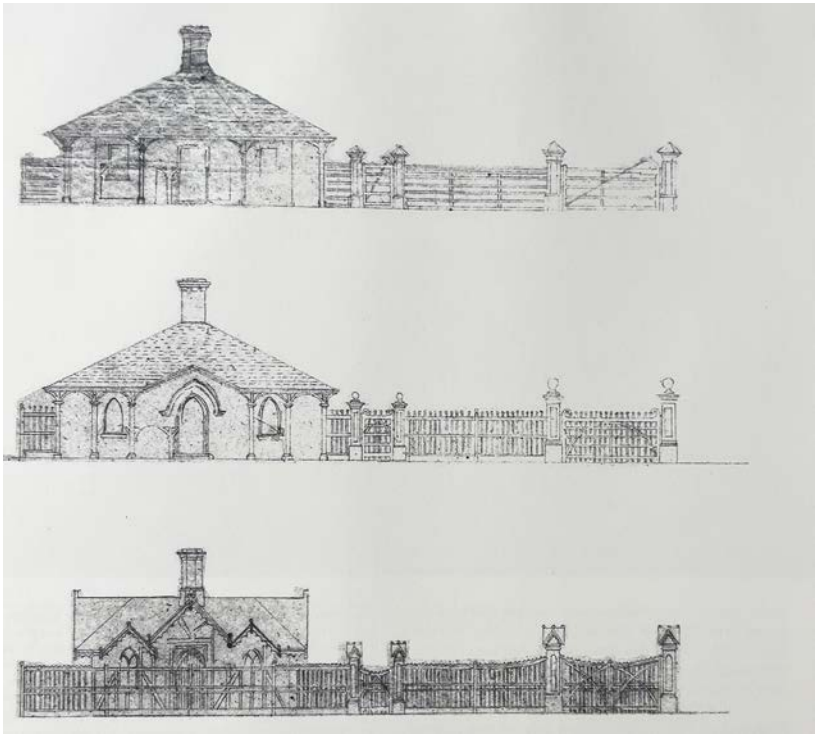


Figure 6: Three designs for the gate and lodge combination prepared John G. Howard from 1833. The middle scheme for the lodge appears to have been selected (A Not Unsightly Building, p. 36).

Figure 7: Circa 1885 photograph looking northwest at Howard's lodge, with a replacement gate in front (TPL, PICTURES-R-4070 45022).

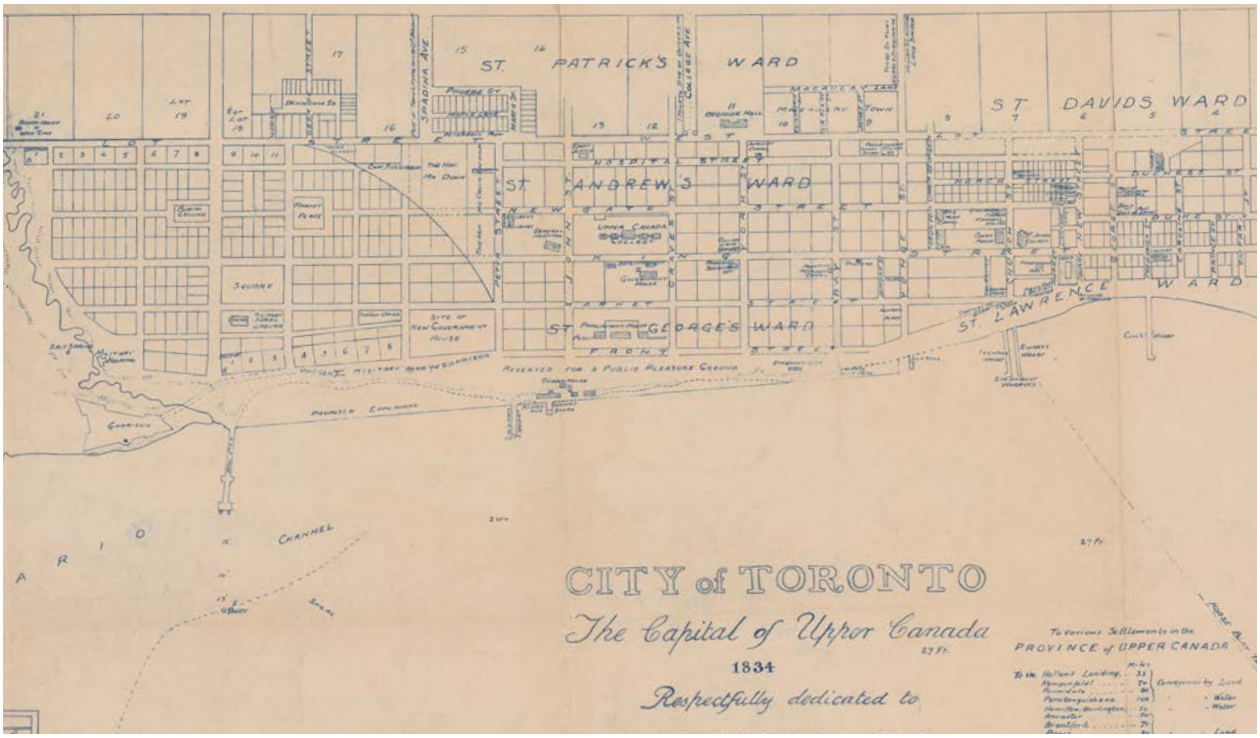


Figure 8: 1834 Bonnycastle map showing the extent and street layout of Toronto in 1834. College Avenue is shown adjacent to Osgoode Hall (upper centre), with a breadth greater than all other streets but Spadina Avenue (COTA, Series 726, Item 33).

Figure 9: 1830 watercolour depicting buildings and sheep on the Caer Howell estate (TPL, PICTURES-R-327 49030).

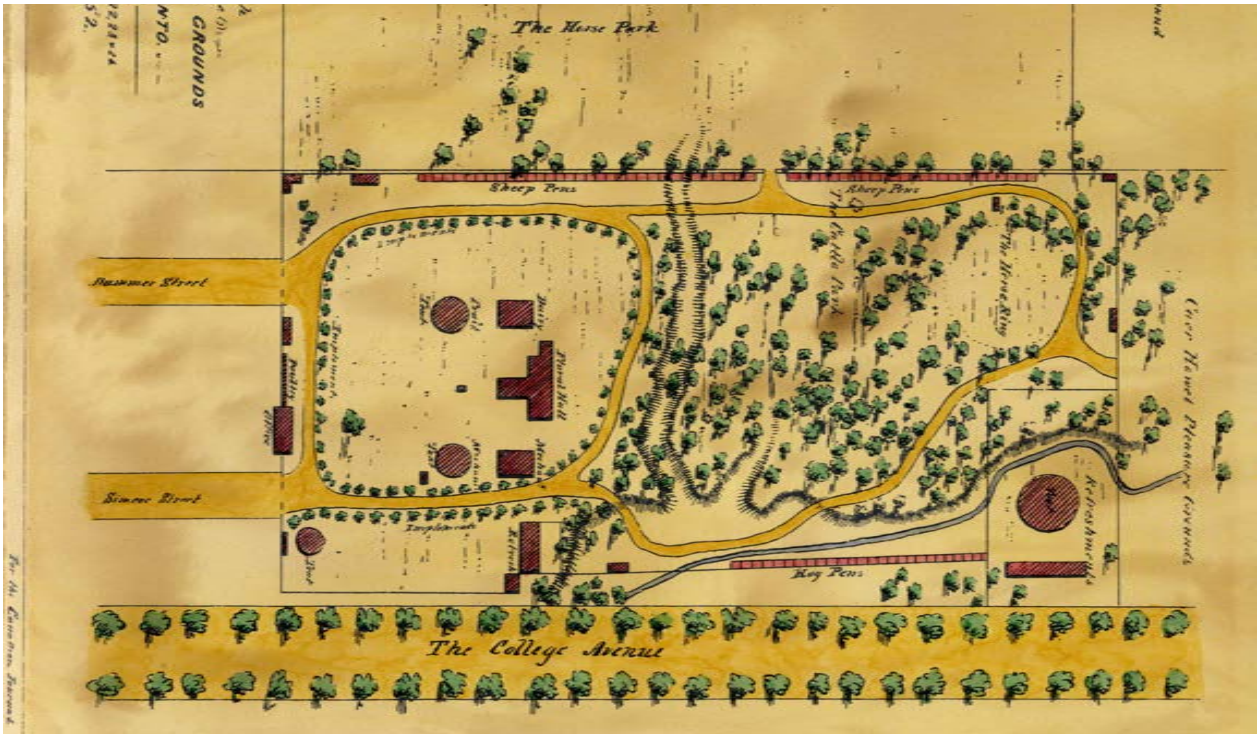


Figure 10: 1852 plan showing the exhibition grounds adjacent to College Avenue. The sketch shows the double rows of trees on College Avenue, as well as Taddle Creek. The latter is seen approaching College Avenue from the northwest and intersecting it near present Elm Street (TPL, PICTURES-R-5345 48732).

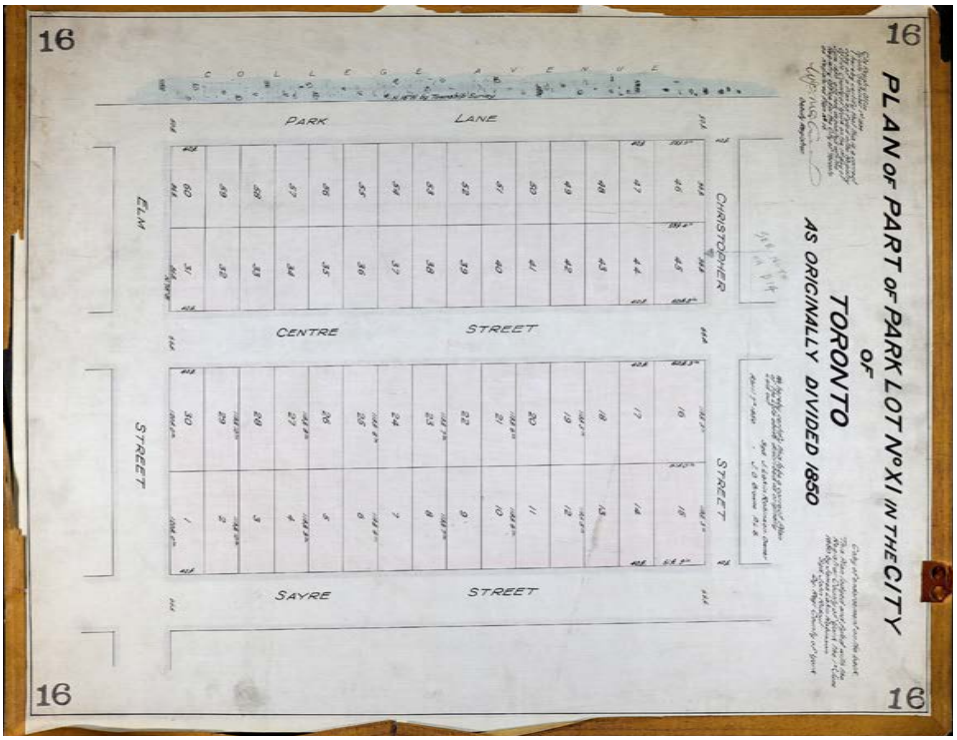


Figure 11: 1850 subdivision plan showing Park Lane as 50' right of way directly east of College Avenue (OnLand - LRO 80).

University of Toronto Archives, 2003-42-3MS

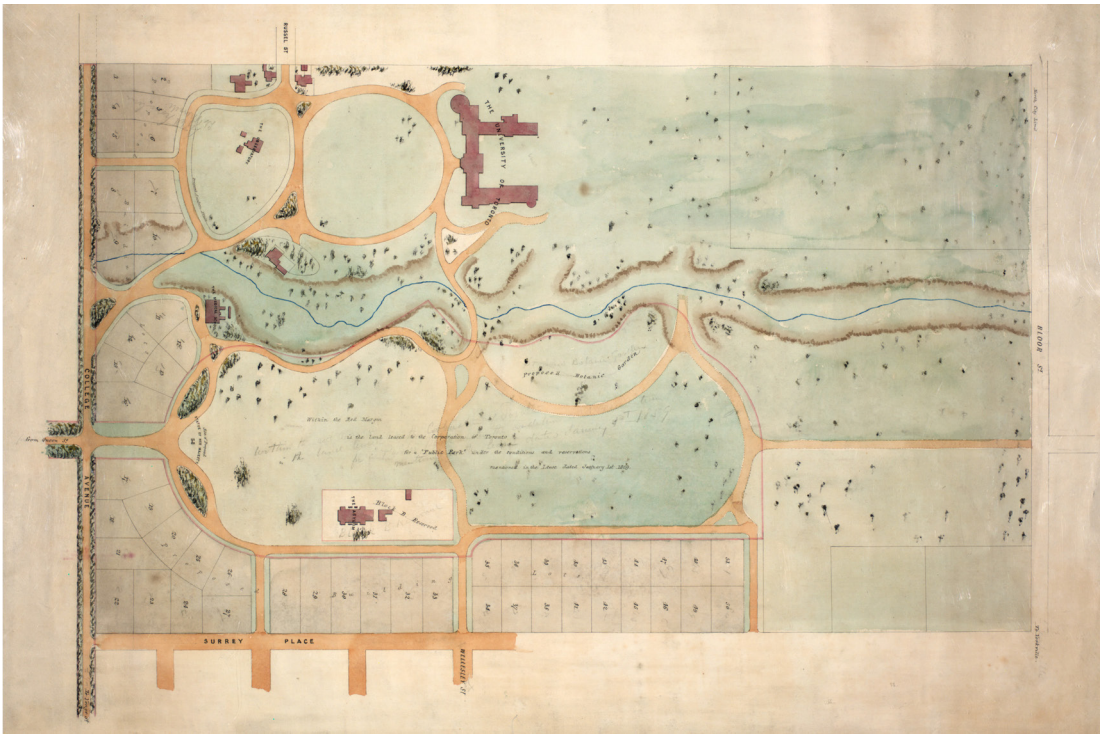


Figure 12: Unattributed plan showing the original King's College lands north of College Street in 1859. The leased parklands are outlined in pink, and continue to include both avenues. The original college building is now labelled 'The Asylum', with a new University of Toronto building further west, far off axis from College Avenue (UTA, 2003-42-3MS).

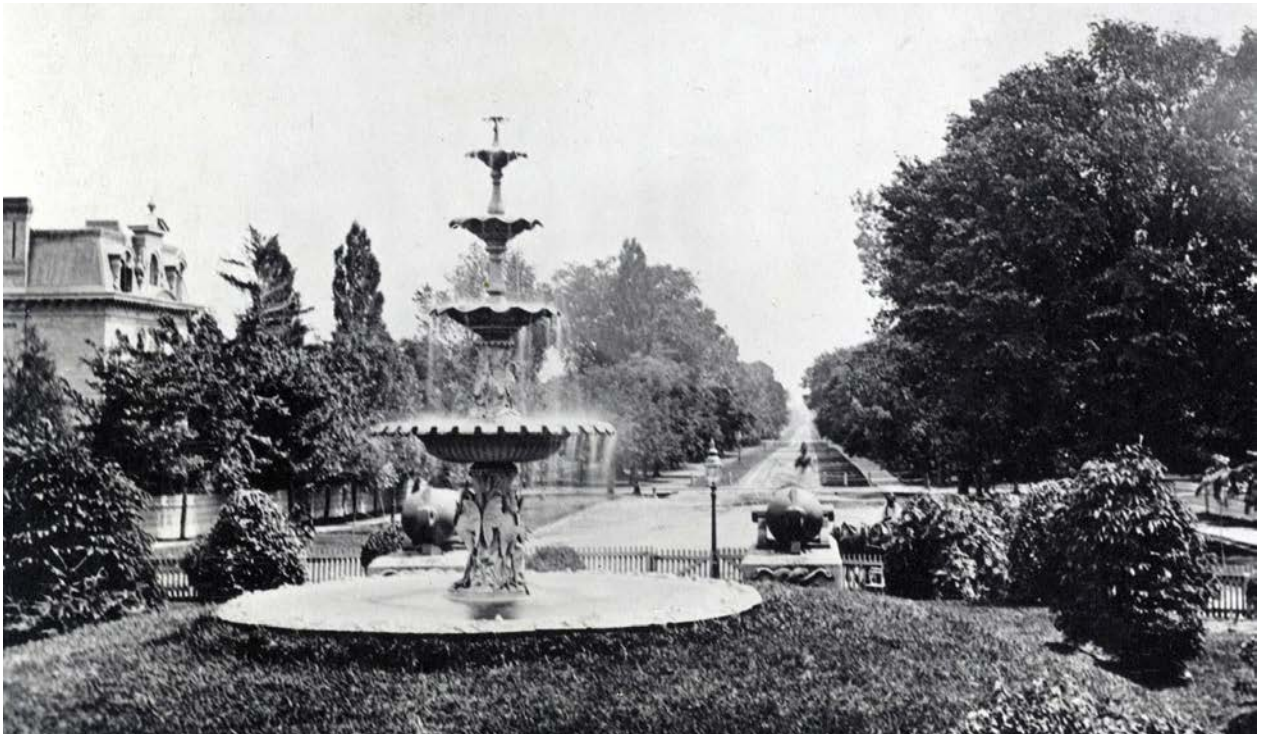


Figure 13: Circa 1890 photograph, looking south from Queen's Park and showing the direct axial relationship with College Avenue (TPL, PICTURES-R-5286 49892).

Figure 14: Gross' 1876 bird's eye illustration of Toronto, showing College Avenue (green arrow) as a treed thoroughfare next to Park Lane, leading to Queen's Park (UTMD, G 3524 .T61 A3 1876).

Figure 15: Circa 1890 photograph showing frame and brick dwellings on the east side of University Avenue, south of Armory Street (TPL, PICTURES-R-5728 45777).

Figure 16: 1870 photograph looking north up College Avenue from Queen Street West (TPL, PICTURES-R-4110 32215).

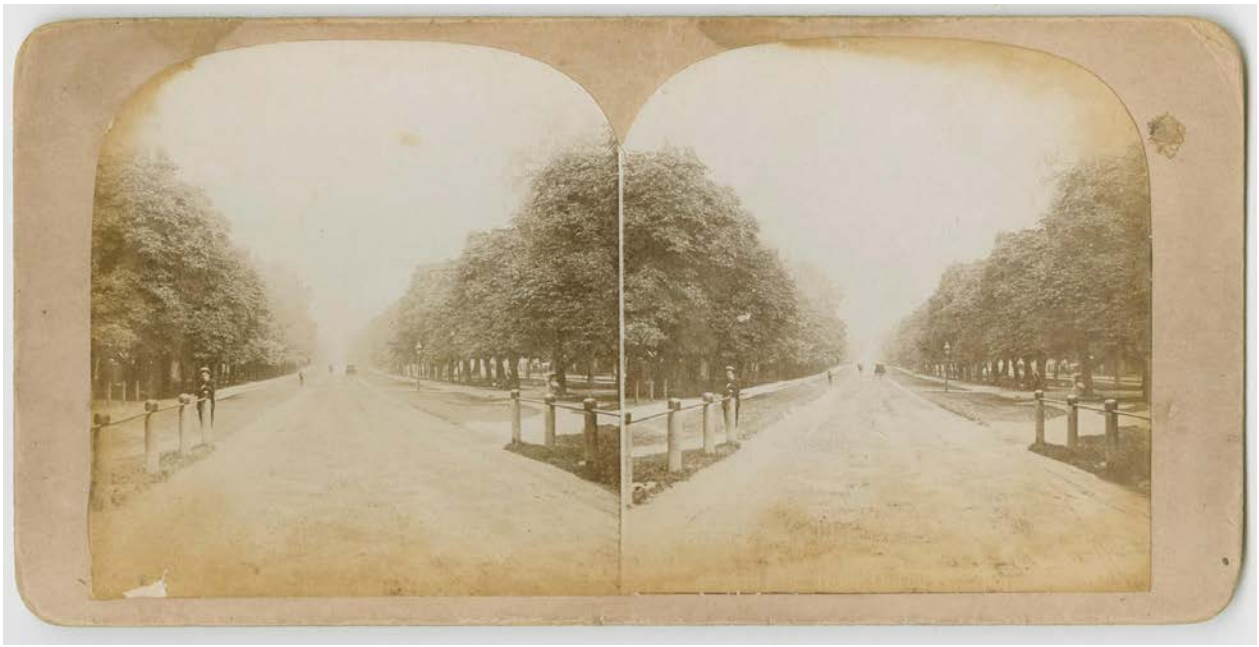


Figure 17: Circa 1880 photograph looking north up College Avenue from Queen Street West (TPL, 2015-2-1-328).

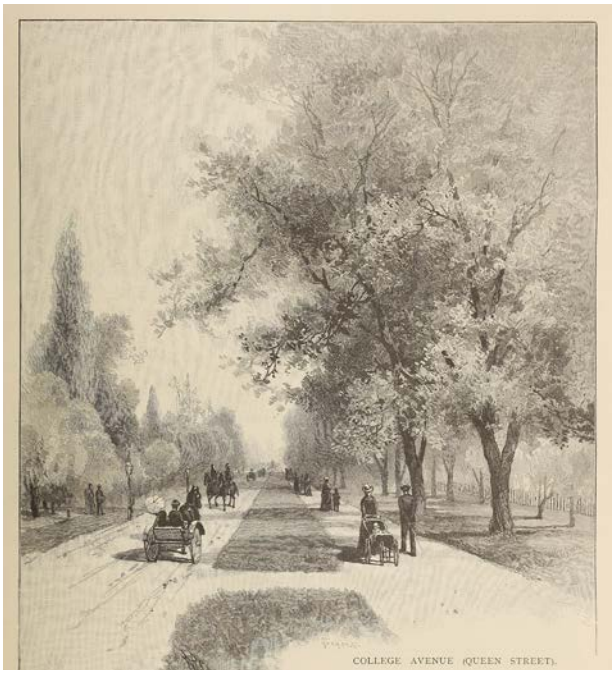


Figure 18: 1882 drawing of College Avenue from Picturesque Canada, showing its public use (Picturesque Canada, Volume 1, p. 417).

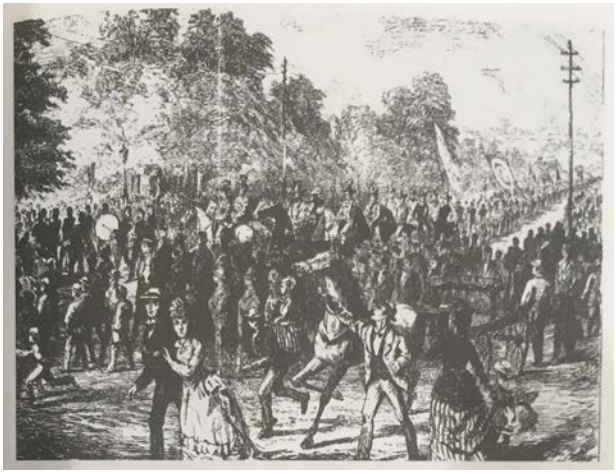


Figure 19: Illustration of a procession travelling from College Avenue into Queen's Park, during the Foresters' Fete in 1874 (Bain, p. 201).

Figure 20: Westbroom's 1886 bird's eye illustration of Toronto, showing the treed areas of College Avenue (green arrow), Yonge Street Avenue, and Queen's Park as an interconnected green space (UFFT, G3524 .T61 1886).

Figure 21: Circa 1915 photograph showing a military procession on University Avenue, south of Queen's Park (COTA, Fonds 1244, Item 811).

Figure 22: Photograph showing a parade during the Viscount Byng of Vimy's visit to Toronto in 1923 (TPL, PICTURES--R-4103 57713).

Figure 23: 1910 photograph, showing the siting of the Ontario Legislative Building at the north axis of University Avenue (COTA, Fonds 1568, Item 310).

Figure 24: 1906 photograph showing women in front of the ornate Alexandra Apartments (TPL, PICTURES-R-3650 59417).

Figure 25: 1907 photograph looking east on Christopher Street from University Avenue with the Bethany Chapel on the left (TPL, PICTURE-R-4001 34216).

Figure 26: Circa 1907 photograph showing the Royal Canadian Military Institution building prior to the 1913 additions, with remnants of older house visible at the rear (TPL, PICTURES-R-5676 49542).

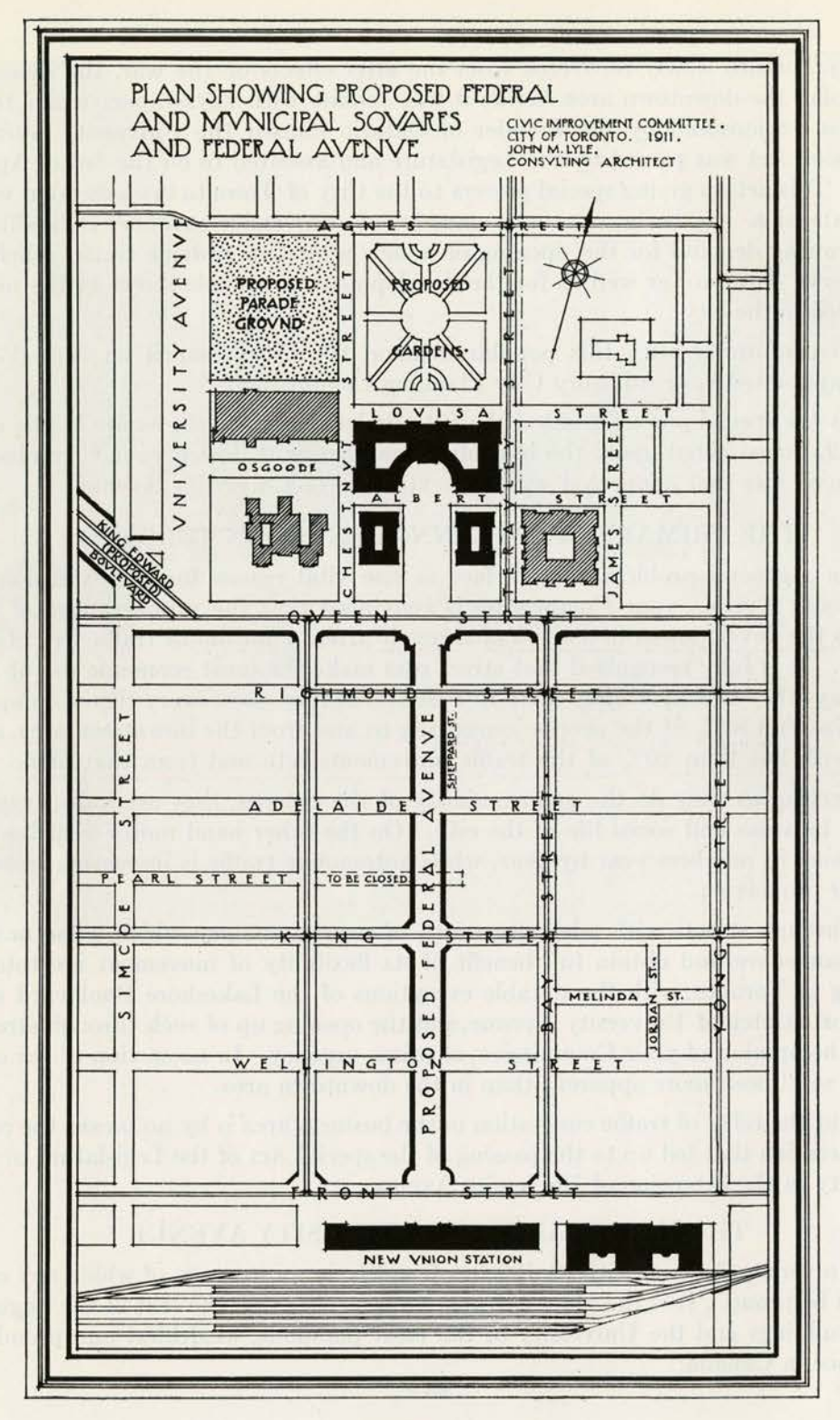


Figure 27: Map showing the Federal Avenue and related civic squares as proposed in 1911 (1929 Report of The Advisory City Planning Commission, p. 24).

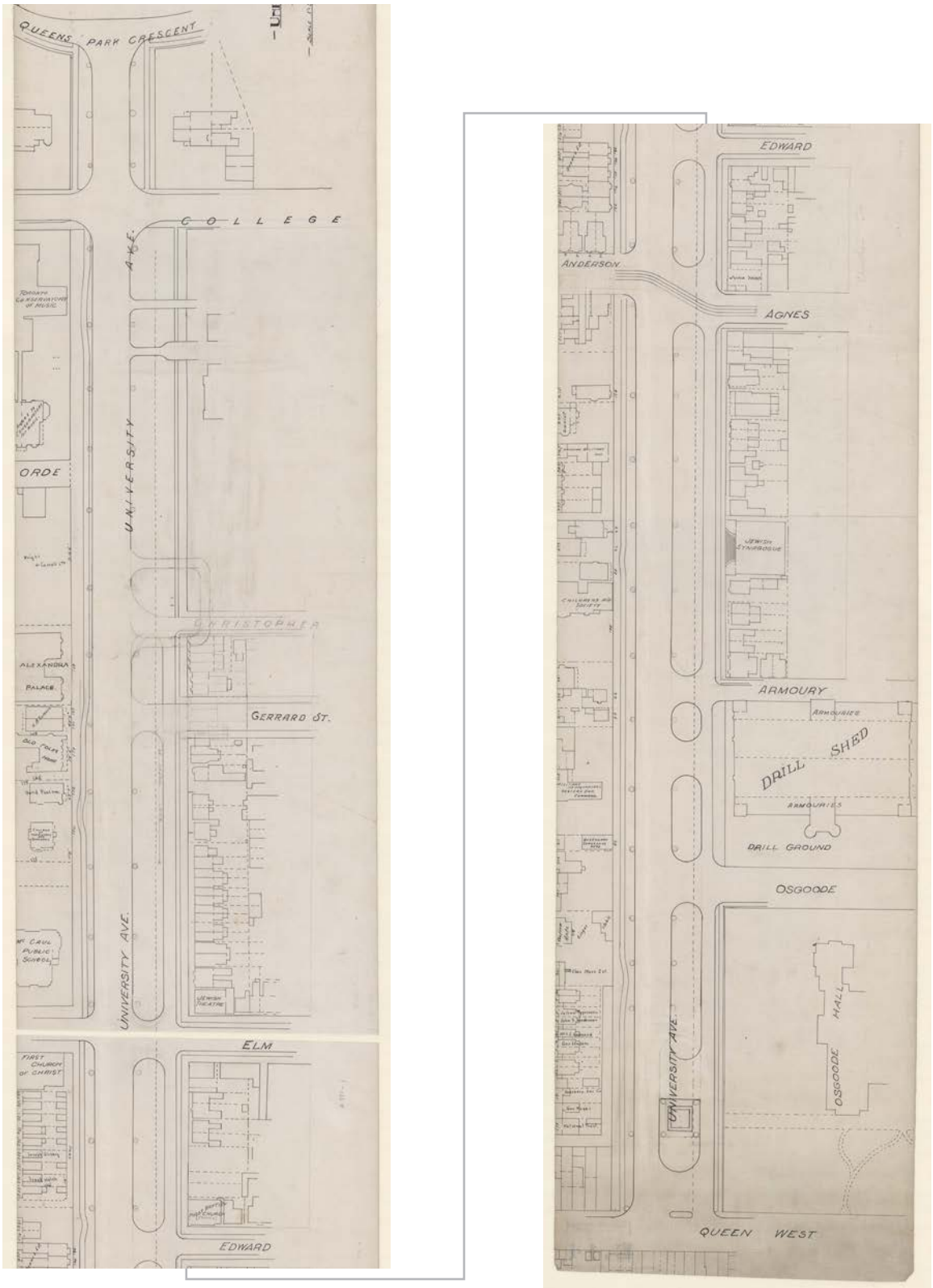


Figure 28: Split sections of a 1914 plan by the Parks Department, showing the typical configuration of Park Lane, the boulevards and University Avenue. The plan appears to describe the work as completed in 1913. (COTA, SEries 724, item 207).

Figure 29: 1913 photograph showing the new University Avenue design under construction (COTA, Series 372, Sub-series 58, Item 249).

Figure 30: 1914 photograph looking north at the completed alterations (COTA, Series 372, Sub-series 52, Item 334).

Figure 31: 1913 photograph looking south on University Avenue from College Street, highlighting the broad road that characterized the new design (COTA, Series 372, Sub-series 58, Item 249).

Figure 32: 1913 photograph looking north from Queen Street West at the South African War Memorial (COTA, Series 372, Sub-series 52, Item 89).

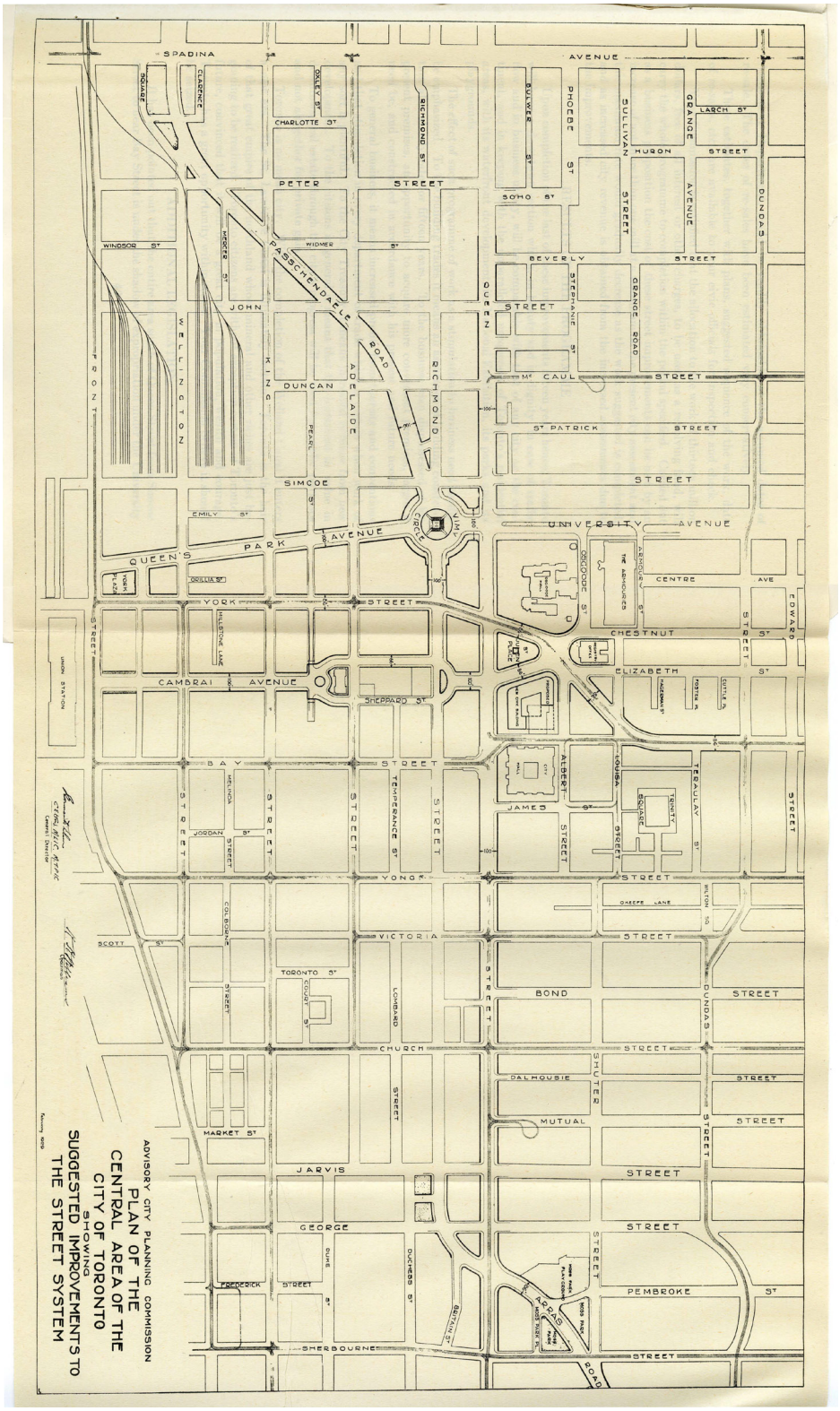


Figure 33: Map from the 1929 Advisory City Planning Commission report showing the proposed configuration of the University Avenue extension with Vimy Circle at Richmond Street West (1929 Report of The Advisory City Planning Commission, p. 55).

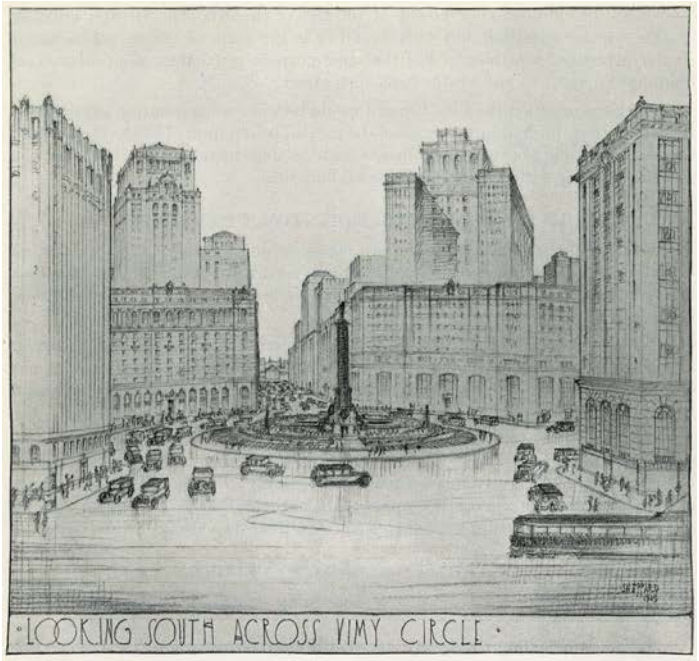


Figure 34: Illustration from the 1929 report, giving an impression of the types of architecture envisioned and promoted by the plan (1929 Report of The Advisory City Planning Commission, p. 30).

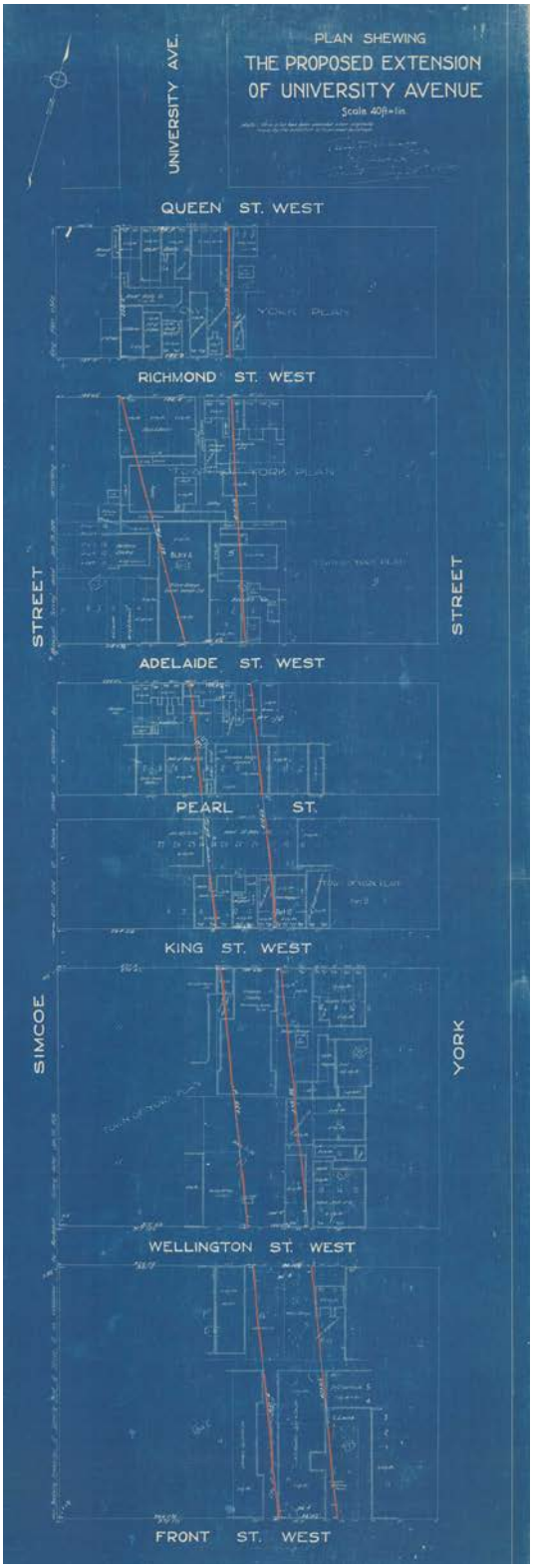


Figure 35: 1930 plan showing the proposed route of the University Avenue extension in red over the existing urban fabric (COTA, Series 726, Item 538).

Figure 36: 1931 photograph showing demolition on the south side of Queen Street West as part of the University Avenue Extension (COTA, Fonds 1266, Item 23589).

Figure 37: 1932 oblique aerial photograph showing construction of the University Avenue extension (COTA, Fonds 1244, Item 10003).

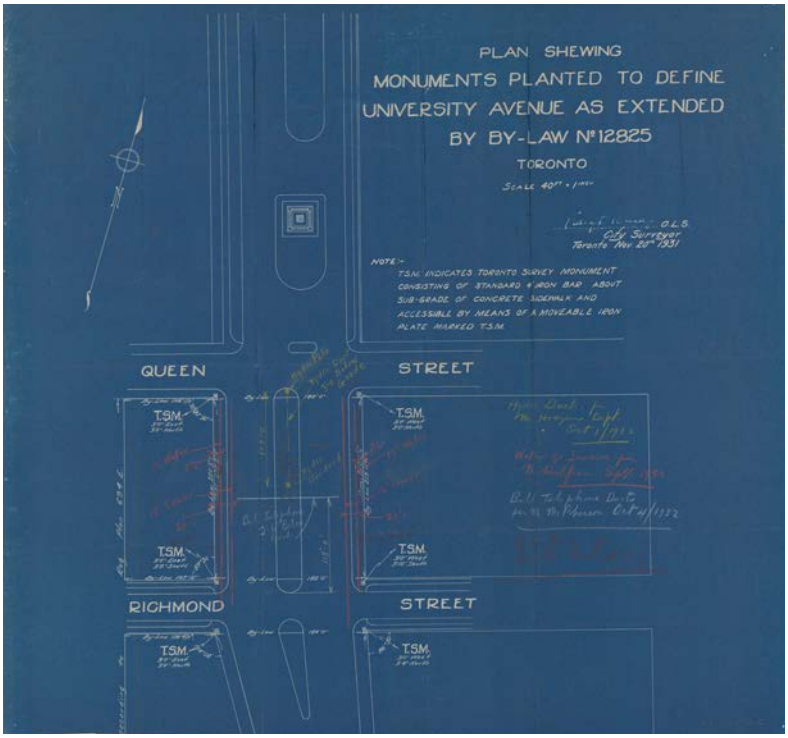


Figure 38: 1931 plan showing the arrangement of the medians south of Queen Street West, in contrast to those further north (COTA, Series 2347, Item 839).

Figure 39: Circa 1932 oblique aerial showing the sparse decorative treatment of the University Avenue extension (COTA, Series 1465, File 606, Item 19).

Figure 40: 1930 photograph north from the Canada Life Building, showing the configuration of University Avenue north of the extension (COTA, Fonds 1266, Item 20992).

Figure 41: University Avenue widening looking south from Dundas Street in December 1947 (COTA, Series 372, Subseries 58, Item 755).

University Ave., already Toronto's finest main thoroughfare, is to be given a beauty treatment which should place it among North America's finest. This view, south to Queen St., shows what the planners have in mind. The boulevards between the two traffic lanes are to be built up. A walking space will run between lines of trees. At either side are covered resting places. At the Queen St. end will be a small ornamental pond, with fountains. The plans were studied yesterday by the city planning board, city works department and board of control.

Figure 42: The simpler and symmetrical plans for the islands, April 1948. "Fountains, Pond, Shrubs for Avenue Beautiful," (The Globe and Mail, April 8 1948, p.5).

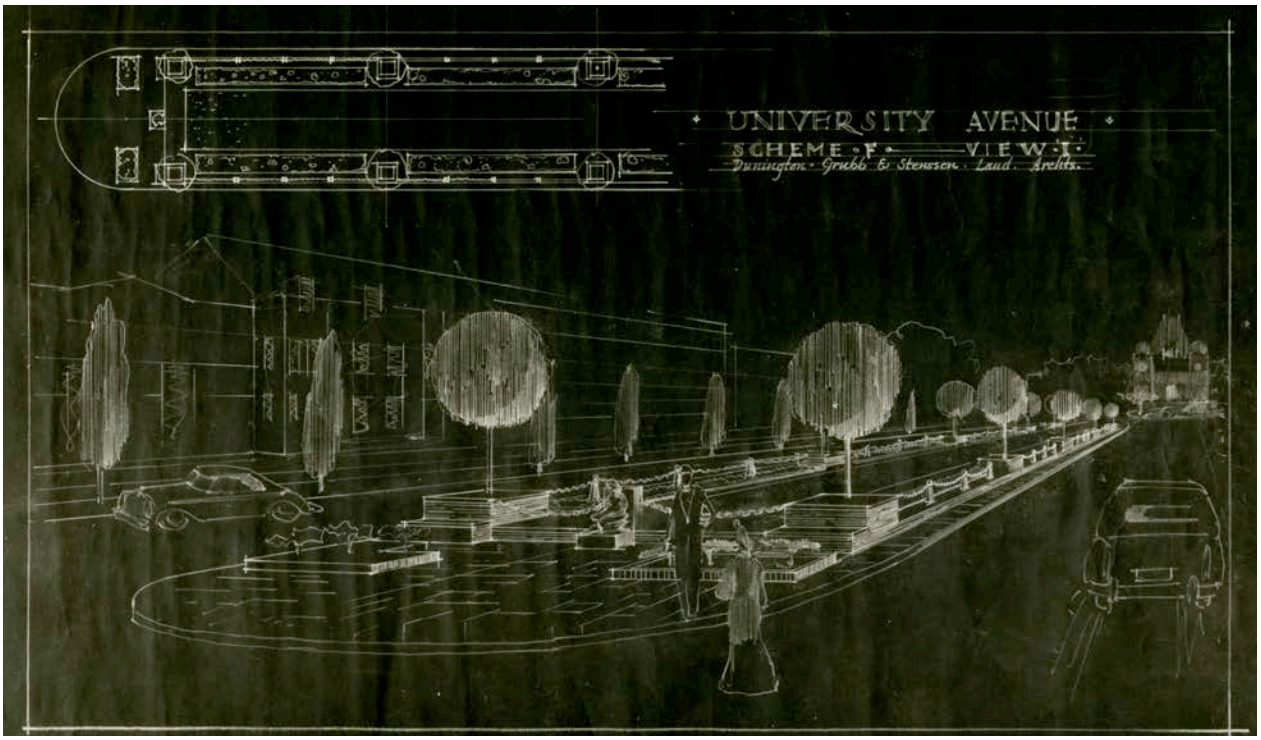


Figure 43: Scheme showing a typical island surrounded by post and chain fence which exclude the public but made it possible to view see the flower beds (UOGA, XL3MSA00152, DUN 152/43).

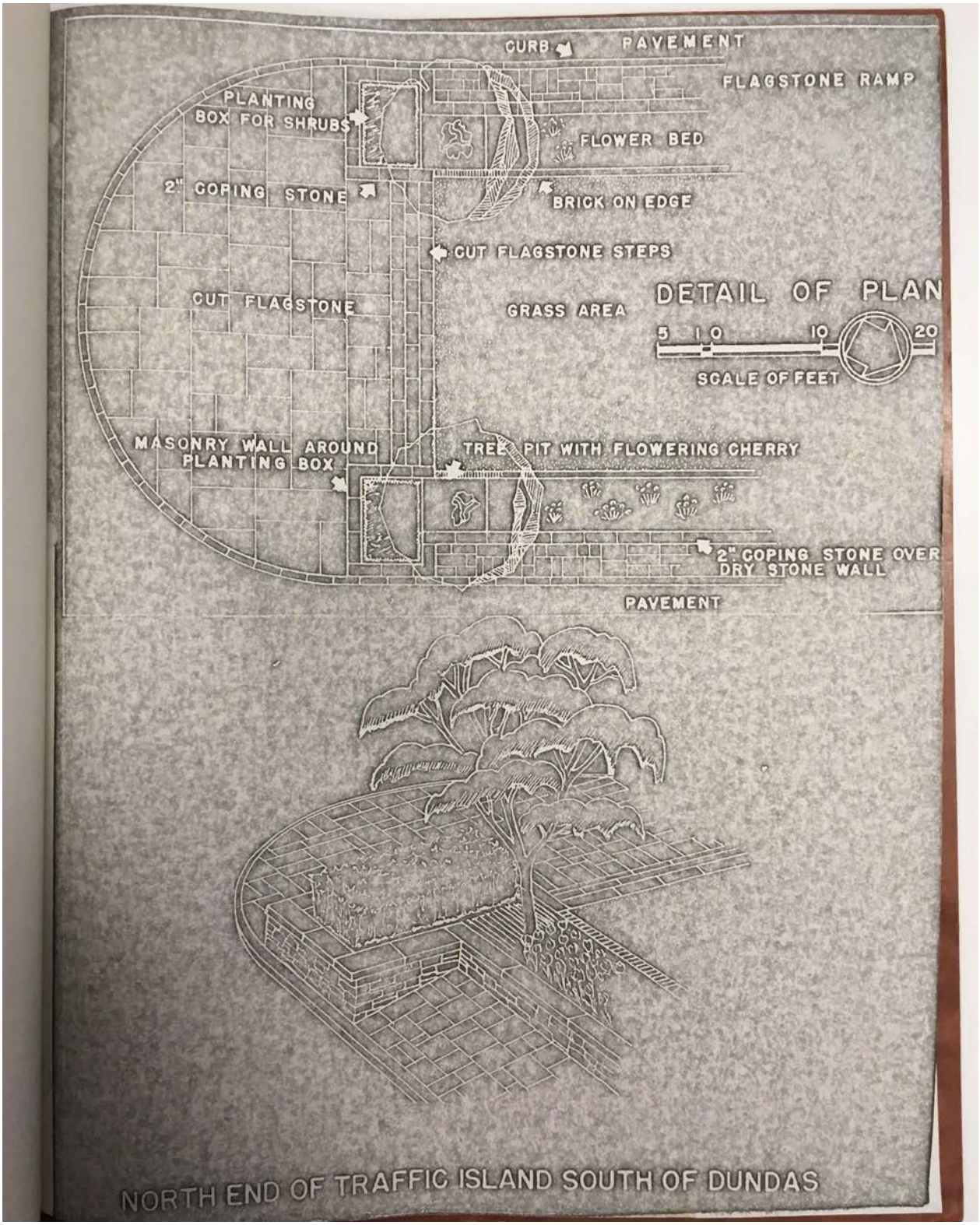


Figure 44: Faludi's proposed elevated islands in order to limit public access (E.G. Faludi and Austin Floyd, Report to Toronto City Planning Board, The Decorative Treatment of University Avenue, p. 15).

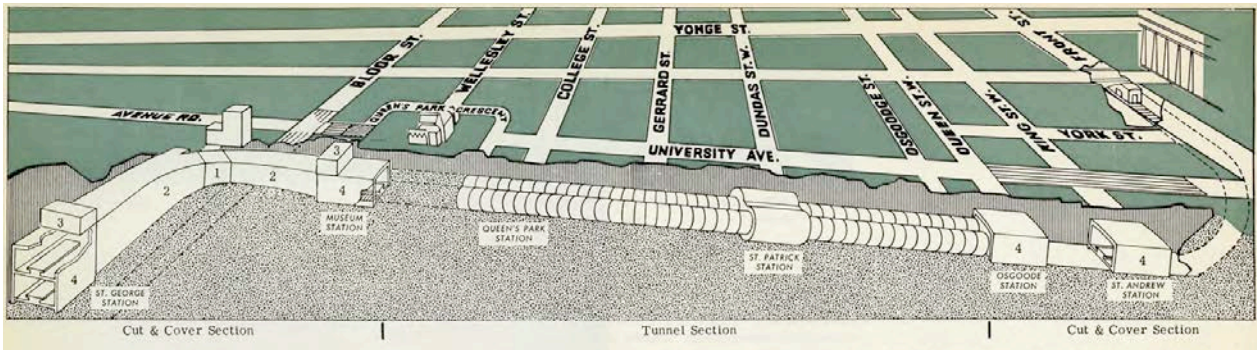


Figure 45: Diagram of the University subway (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, Metropolitan Toronto Report 1961, p. 24).

Figure 46: Removal of the South African War Memorial for the University subway, c1960 (COTA, Series 65, File 286, Item 13).

Figure 47: City Hall and Civic Square under construction 1961 (Panda Associates, CAA, Fonds 26, Series 3, ID 61881-205).

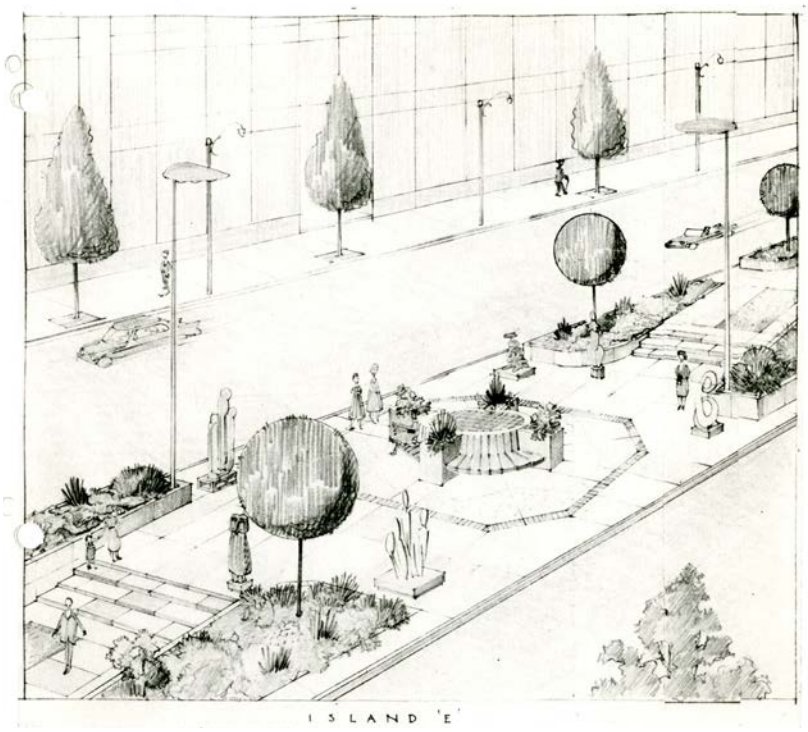


Figure 48: Dunington-Grubb & Stensson sketch of Island E with plantings, 1961 (UOGA, XLMSA005003).

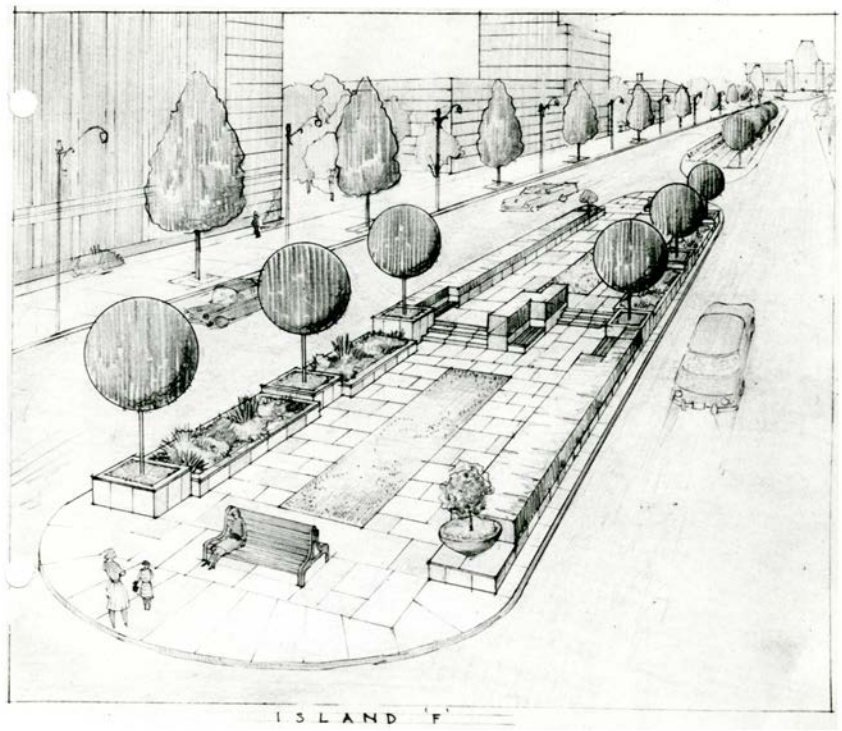


Figure 49: Dunington-Grubb & Stensson sketch of Island F with plantings, 1961 (UOGA, XLMSA005003).

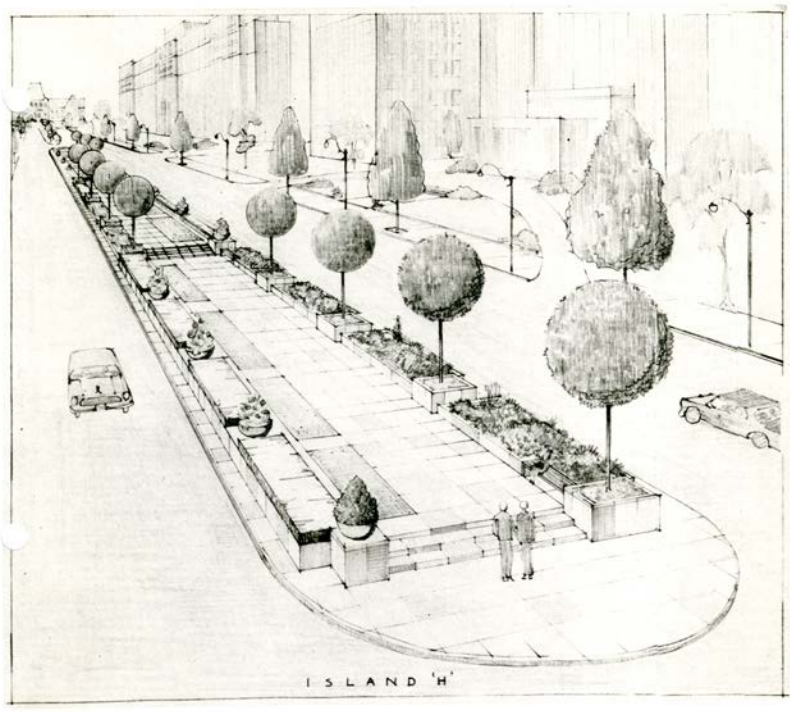


Figure 50: Dunington-Grubb & Stensson sketch of Island H with plantings, 1961 (UOGA, XLMSA005003).

Figure 51: Model of Island C, 1960 (UOGA, XLMSA005003).

Figure 52: Island A with Beck monument being reinstalled in the background, 1964 (UOGA, XLM1SA005003).

Figure 53: Island B looking north, August 1964 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 54: Island B looking south, August 1964 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1733, File 486).

Figure 55: Island C looking north shorty after completion in 1964 (UOGA, XLMSA005003).

Figure 56: Island D looking north after completion, c1964 (COTA, Series 1465, File 606, Item 4).

Figure 57: Island E looking south, c1964 (UOGA, XLMSA001152).

Figure 58: Island E looking south, c1964 (UOGA, XLMSA00152).

Figure 59: Island F looking north, August 1964 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 60: Island G looking north, 1964 (UOGA, XLMSA005003).

Figure 61: Island G looking south, 1964 (UOGA, XL3MSA001152).

Figure 62: Island H looking north, September 1964 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 63: Island I looking south, August 1964 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 64: Island J completed August 1964 (COTA, Fonds, 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 65: Island K looking south, October 1963 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 66: Island L looking south, July 1964 (COTA, Fonds 220, Series 1736, File 486).

Figure 67: Oblique aerial of Islands J, K, and L, 1964 (TPL, TSPA, 0115293F, 144981).

Figure 68: Photograph of University Avenue looking north from Island B (Panda Collection, CAA, Fonds 26, Series 3, ID CU110863745).

Figure 69: Island E original double sided bench c1980 (COTA, Series 1465, File 23, Item 3).

Figure 70: Island E original double sided bench 1983 (COTA, Series 1465, File 607, Item 24).

Figure 71: Island I looking north, c1983 (COTA, Series 1465, File 425, Item 3).

Figure 72: Island J looking south, 1987 (COTA, Series 1465, File 607, Item 6).

Figure 73: Island E and the Airmen's Memorial prior to the addition of trees c1984 (COTA, Series 1465, File 606, Item 2).

Figure 74: The Sunken Garden in Hamilton was completed in 1929 and has since been removed (*Sheridan Nurseries, p. 74*).

Figure 75: Planting detail of the Rainbow Garden in Niagara Falls which was completed in 1944 (*Sheridan Nurseries, p. 74*).

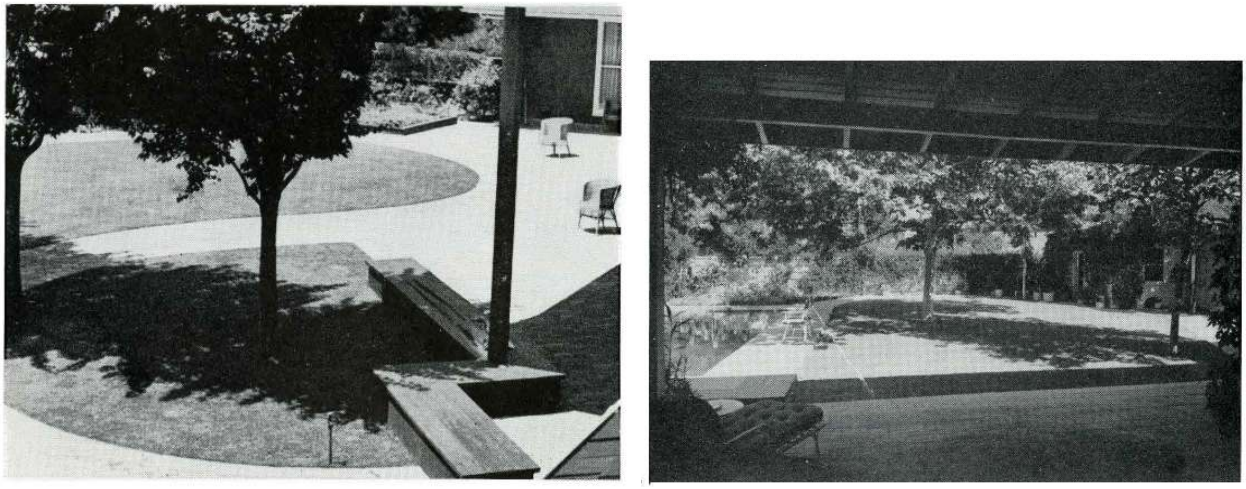


Figure 76: c.1950 photographs of the Corbus (left) and McBride (right) Gardens, both designed by Thomas D. Church Landscape Architect (*Journal Royal Canadian Institute of Canada (August 1950), pp. 253 & 254.*).

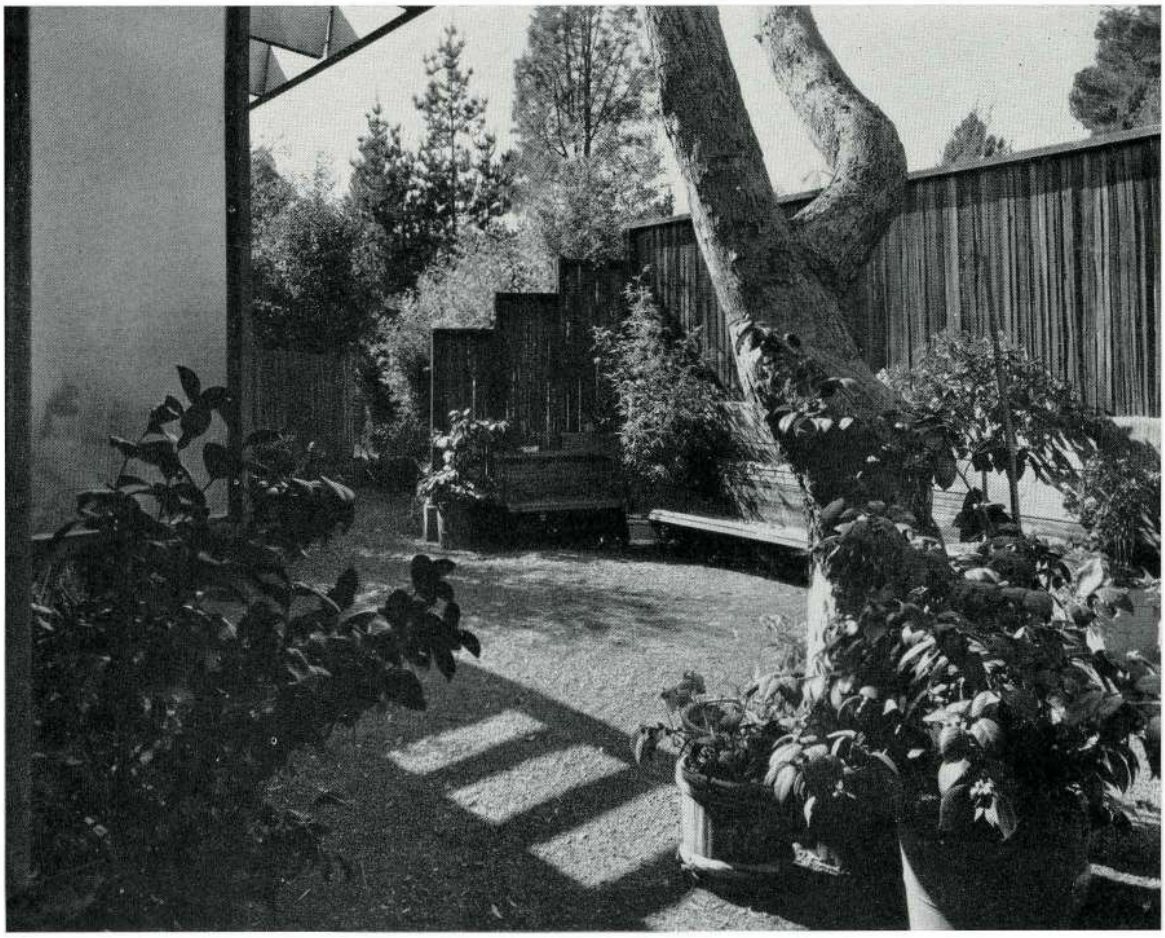


Figure 77: c.1950 photograph of a small hillside garden in Maine County, California designed by Eckbo, Royston and Williams Landscape Architects (*Journal Royal Canadian Institute of Canada (August 1950), p. 271.*).

Figure 78: The Central Parkway in Cincinnati was completed in 1928. Dunington-Grubb noted it in his 1950 RAIC Journal article (*Public Library of Cincinnati*).

Figure 79: Photograph of the Golden Triangle in Pittsburgh taken by Howard Dunington-Grubb (*UofGA, XL1MSA005003*).

Figure 80: Looking south on University Avenue at the grassed medians c. 1960 (*Ebay*).

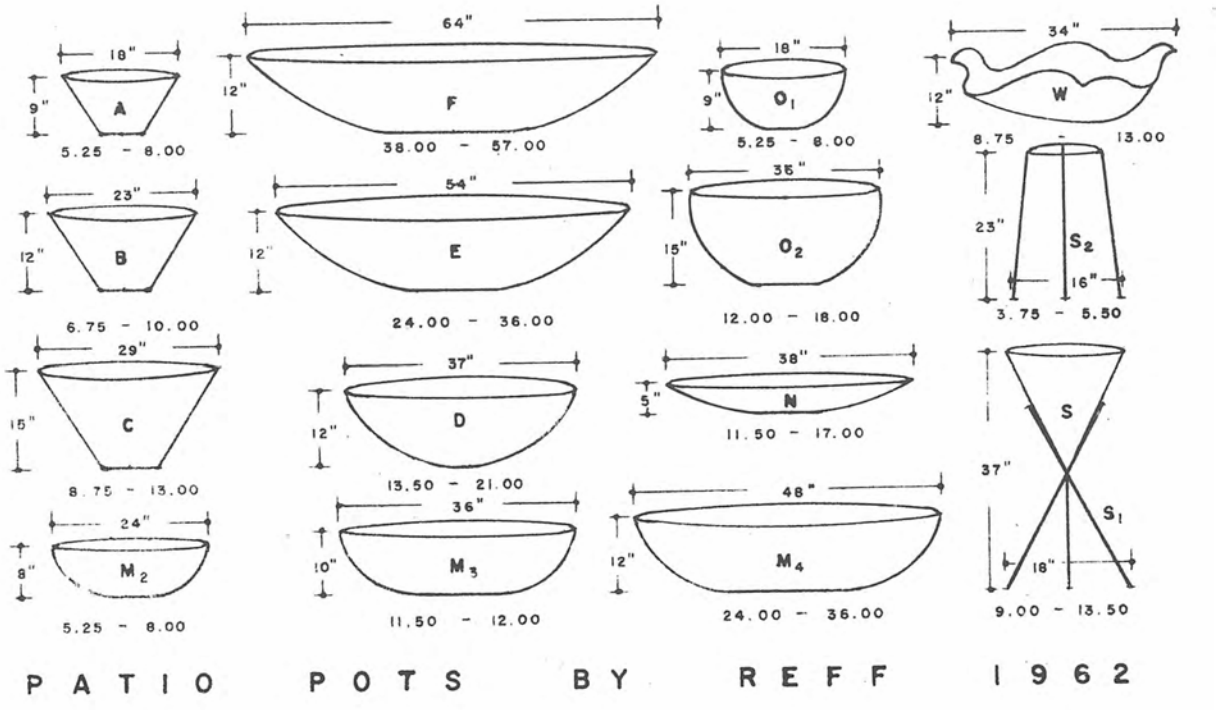


Figure 81: Promotional material for Reff Patio Pots, c. 1960. Dunington-Grubb specified pots B, C, D, O2, M2, M3, and M4 for the re-landscaped medians (*Sheridan Nurseries, p. 132*).

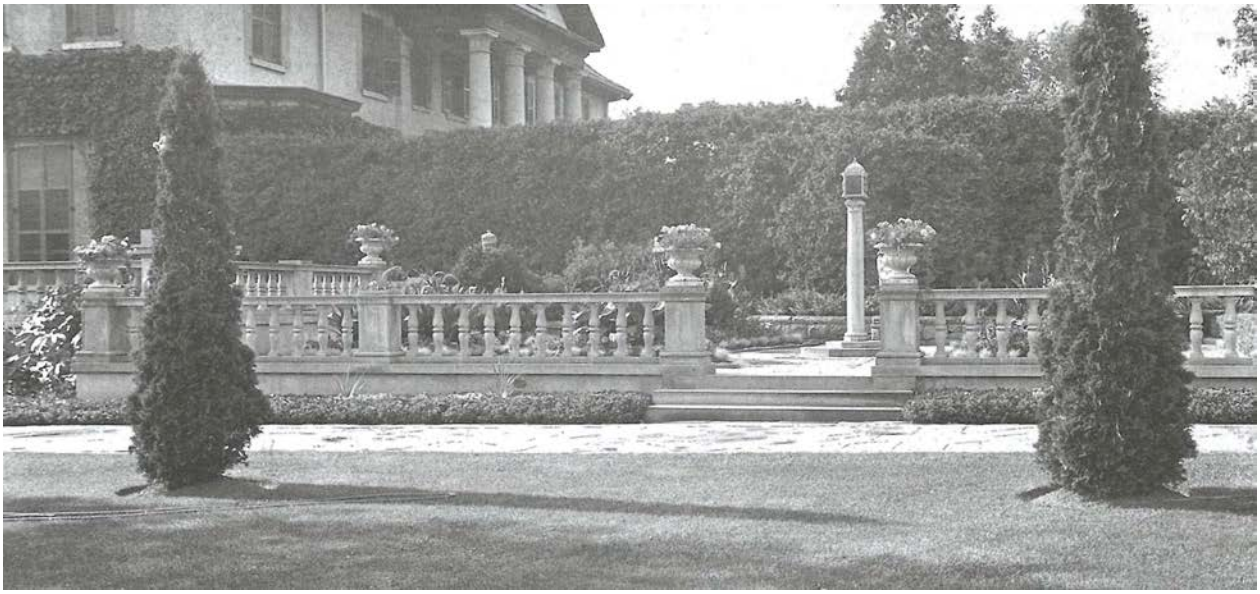


Figure 82: Dunington-Grubb's 1930 design for Parkwood Estate used stairs to create levels, conical plantings and ornamental pots (*Sheridan Nurseries, p. 94*).

Figure 83: The garden at the Crothers Estate, c. 1930. Dunington-Grubb's design employed an enclosed central pedestrian path, highly manicured plantings and central water feature (*Sheridan Nurseries, p. 95*).

Figure 84: 1969 photograph looking northeast at Michael Hough's landscape for the Superior Court of Justice at 361 University Avenue (TPL, *TSPA_0111735F 140850*).

Figure 85: c.1970 photograph looking north at Toronto's new City Hall, with the modernist Nathan Phillips Square landscape in front (*COTA. 1965-1975 f0492_it0131*).

Figure 86: Howard Dunington-Grubb on University Avenue just after its completion in 1964 (*Sheridan Nurseries, p. 104*).

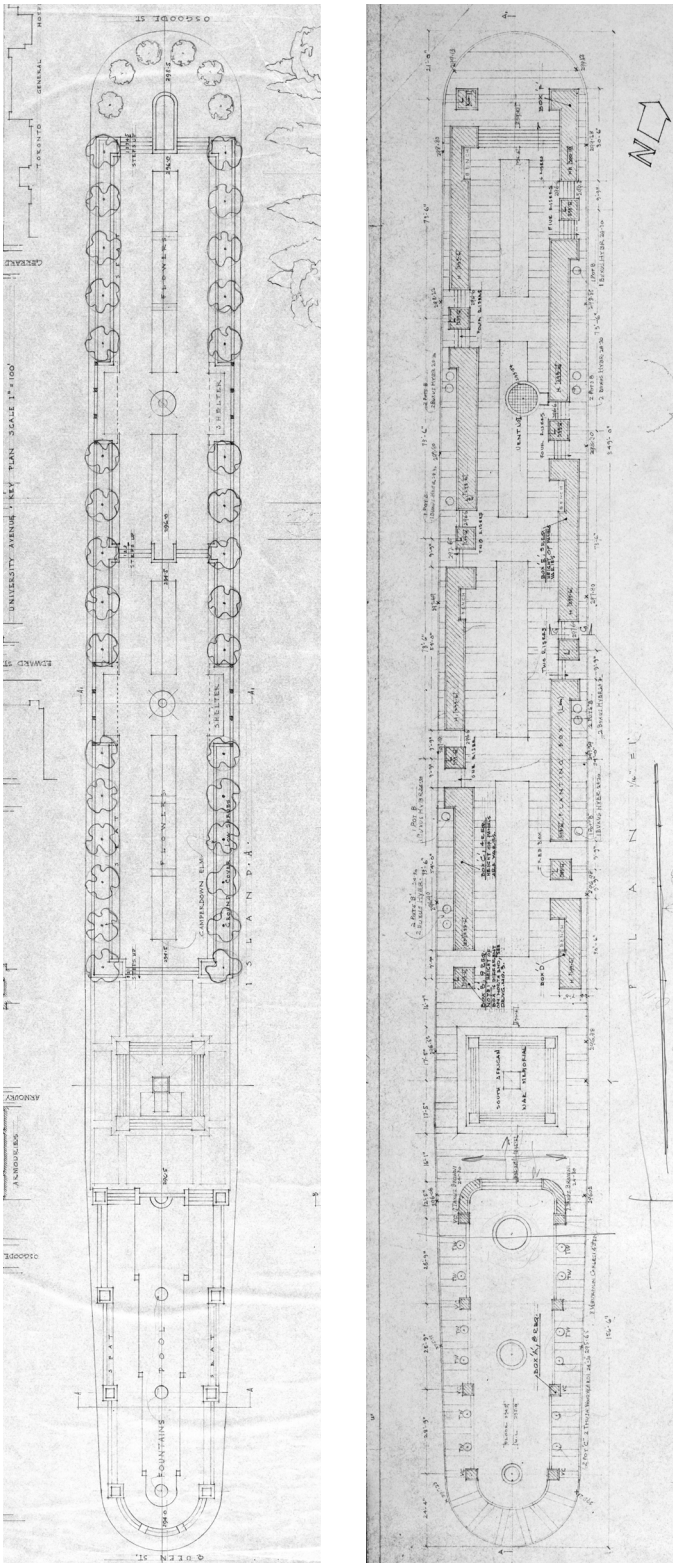


Figure 87: Comparison of Island C designs from 1948 (left) and 1961-2 (right), showing the similarities in overall design, including spatial organization, despite the use of a modernist aesthetic vocabulary on the latter (*COTA, Fonds 416, File 216, Item 2 & COTA, Fonds 416, File 119, Item 5*).

Figure 88: 1967 aerial photograph contrasting the overtly modernist approaches of Nathan Phillips Square (right) and 361 University Avenue (centre) with the highly decorative University Avenue islands directly left (*COTA, Series 12, File 1967, Item 46*).

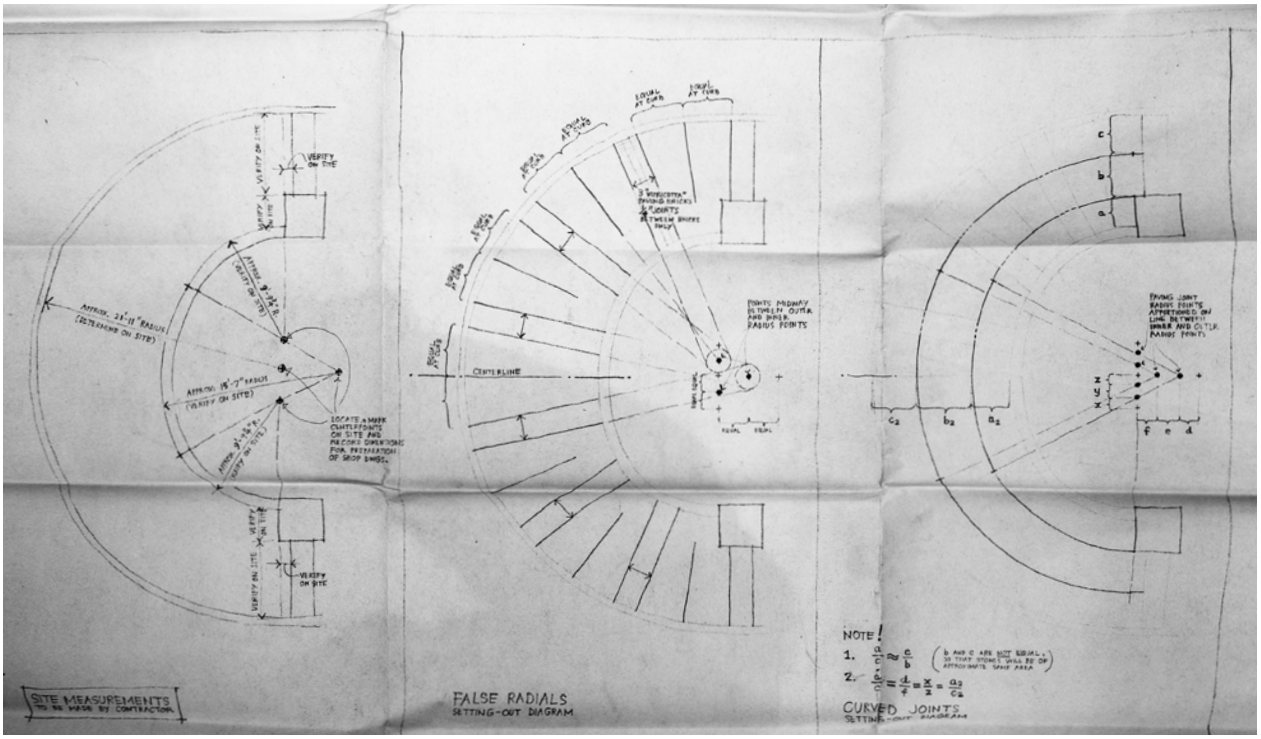


Figure 89: c.1963 drawing showing the complex geometries required to layout the classical elliptical shape at the south end of Island C (*COTA, Series 416, File 84, Box 576280*).

Figure 90: 1974 photograph looking south down University Avenue from Queen's Park with high volumes of traffic occupying all lanes (*TPL, TSPA_0016925F 107519*).

Figure 91: 1934 photograph of the Santa Claus Parade running south down University Avenue, with spectators lining the street and the Ontario Legislative Building visible in the distance (*COTA, File 1266, Item 35341*).

Figure 92: 1972 photograph showing revelers in the 1972 Caribana Parade on University Avenue (*TPL, TSPA_0102978F 131999*).

Figure 93: 1915 photograph showing a large military parade travelling south along University Avenue with Queen's Park and the Ontario Legislative Building rear-left (*TPL, PICTURES-R-5766 62432*).

Figure 94: 1963 photograph showing the 48th Highlanders leaving the Toronto Armories in anticipation of its closure (*TPL, TSPA_0109227F 138792*).

Figure 95: 1969 photograph showing trade unionists marching north up University Avenue in 1969 to Queen's Park, protesting the Rand Royal Commission report (*TPL, TSPA_0011651F 99746*).

Figure 96: Protesters staging a die-in on University Avenue in front of the American Consulate in 1988 following the American attack on an Iranian airliner (*TPL, TSPA_0011976F 100072*).

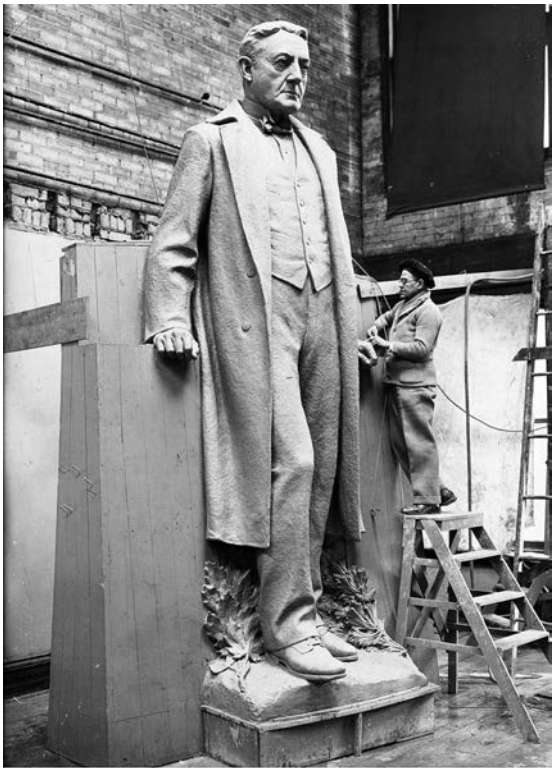


Figure 97: The Sir Adam Beck Memorial with sculptor Emanuel Hahn, 1934 (*COTA, Fonds 1231, Item 4*).

Figure 98: The Sir Adam Beck Memorial just after it was installed on the island south of Queen Street, 1924 (*COTA, Fonds 1231, Item 340*).

Figure 99: The unveiling of the South African War Memorial in 1910 (*COTA, Fonds 1244, Item 715*).

Figure 100: The South African War Memorial after addition of the granite column and figure of Victory (*TPL, PICTURES-R-5590 48768*).