

Evolution Mapping & Historical Summary

Natural History and Land Formation

West Toronto Junction is located in the Iroquois Plain physiographic region, a gently sloping plateau formed by glacial Lake Iroquois at the end of the last ice age, about 12,500 years ago. The area was initially submerged under Lake Iroquois, which receded around 10,000 years ago, exposing the land. Streams and rivers carved valleys such as Lavender Creek and Spring Creek, shaping the local topography, a flat plain bordered by ridges and valleys, influencing transportation routes and infrastructure.

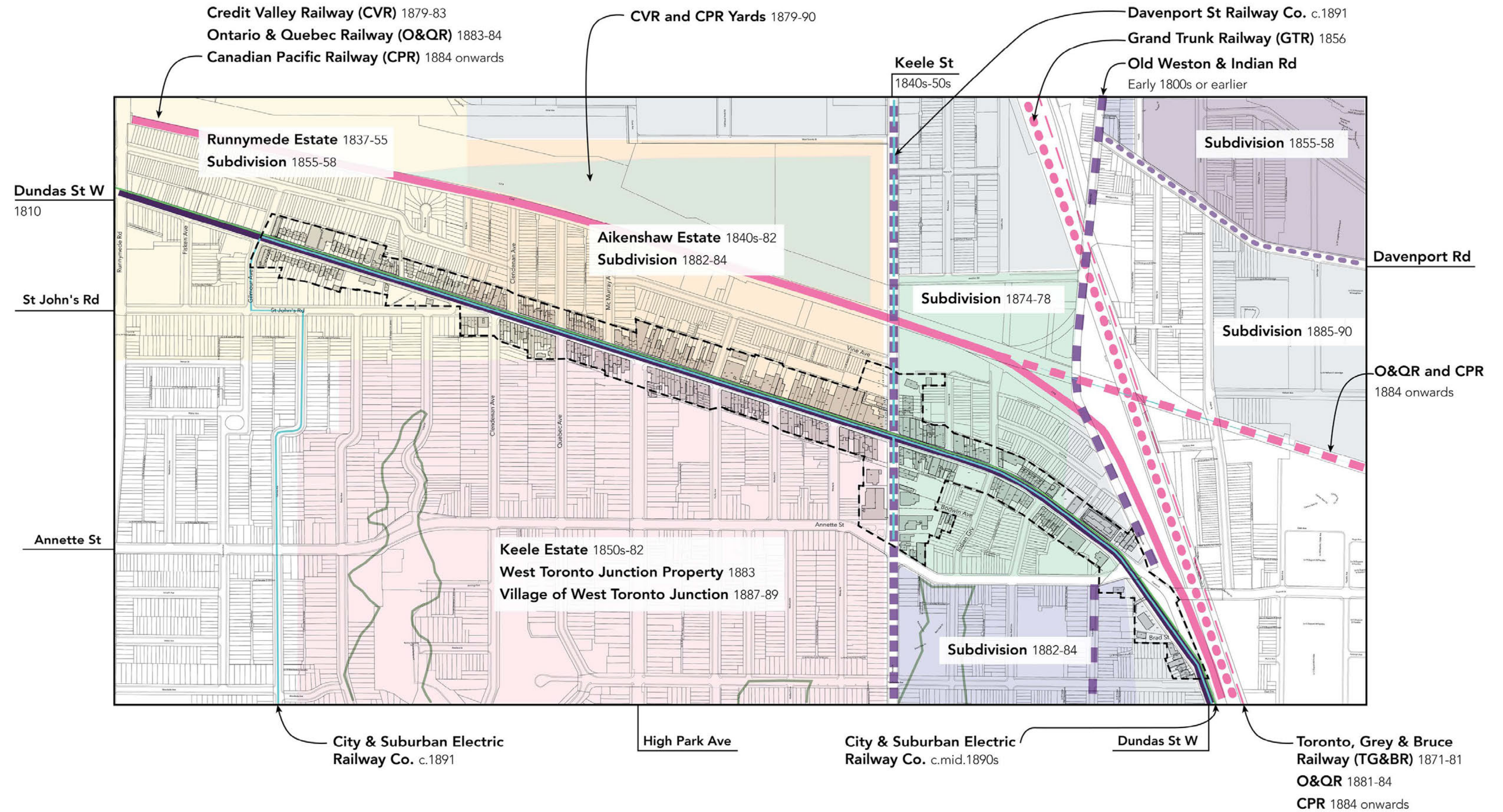
Indigenous Presence

Indigenous peoples have inhabited Toronto for millennia, with oral histories extending back 13,500 years or more. Early groups were highly mobile, hunting and gathering according to seasonal cycles. Waterways and shorelines were vital for sustenance, trade, and ceremonies. The introduction of maize and squash around 500 CE led to horticulture and year-round villages. These villages were home to ancestors of the Wendat Nation. Indigenous trails, such as the Toronto Carrying Place Trail and Gete-Onigaming (Old Portage) beneath portions of today's Davenport Road, crisscrossed the region, facilitating movement and trade.

After 1640, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy expanded into Southern Ontario and dispersed the Wendat peoples. In the late 1680s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy left their villages in the Toronto area and returned to their homelands in upstate New York. By 1700, the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, had moved into the area. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation negotiated the Toronto Purchase (1787) and Treaty 13 (1805) with the British Crown.

Colonial Settlement and Development

French settlers established fortified sites on the Humber River in the early 18th century. After British control and the founding of York (Toronto) in 1793, roads like Dundas Street and Old Weston Road were built, adapting to the local topography and connecting rural districts to mills and villages. Early development included estates, inns, and agricultural land, with prominent families establishing country homes.



Railways and Urban Growth

The second half of the 19th c. saw the construction of multiple rail lines, leveraging the flat terrain between a ridge to the northeast and valleys to the north and south. Grand Trunk Railway (1856), Toronto Grey & Bruce Railway (1871), and Credit Valley Railway (1879) converged, later consolidated under Canadian Pacific Railway. This nexus, known as the West Toronto Junction, spurred industrial growth and gave the area its name. Streetcar networks further connected the Junction to Toronto and surrounding communities.

Emergence and Annexation

The Junction evolved from a rural area to a key industrial satellite, attracting industry and workers. It incorporated as a village (1887-89), then a town (1989-1907), and finally a city (1908-09) before its annexation by Toronto in 1909. Annexation improved transit and utilities, supporting further development. The area became home to diverse immigrant communities, including Maltese and Eastern European Jewish populations, with religious and cultural institutions marking their presence.

Recent Changes and Renewal

Post-WWII, the Maltese community flourished, but commercial activity declined from the 1950s due to suburban competition, industrial closures, and an alcohol ban. Renewal began around 2000 with lifted alcohol restrictions and redevelopment of former industrial sites north of Dundas Street West, revitalizing the commercial district.

Phases of Development

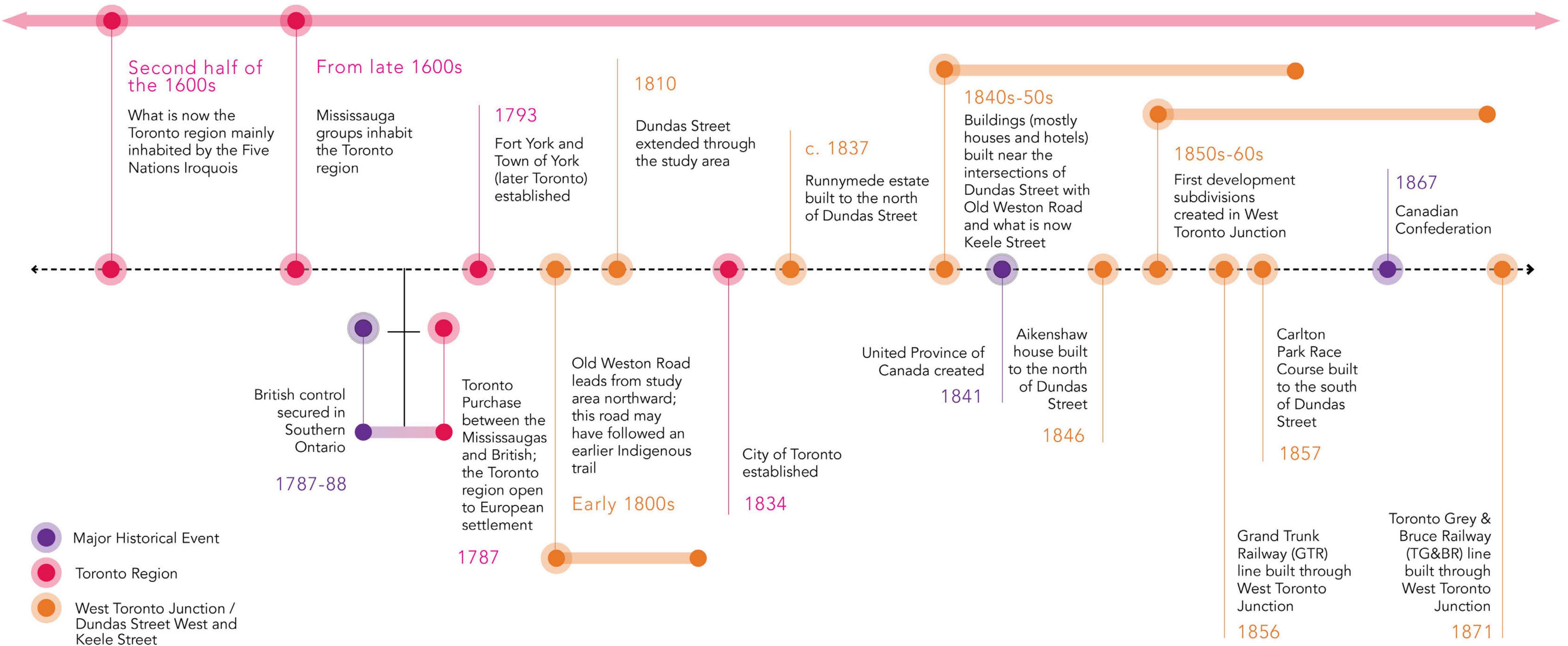
- The Study identifies four key periods:
- Up to 1879: Early Development
 - 1880-1929: Subdivision, Annexation, Intensification
 - 1930-1999: Evolving Community
 - 2000 onward: Renewal

West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District Study: Open House

June, 17, 2026 | 5:30-7:30pm



Timeline (1/3)



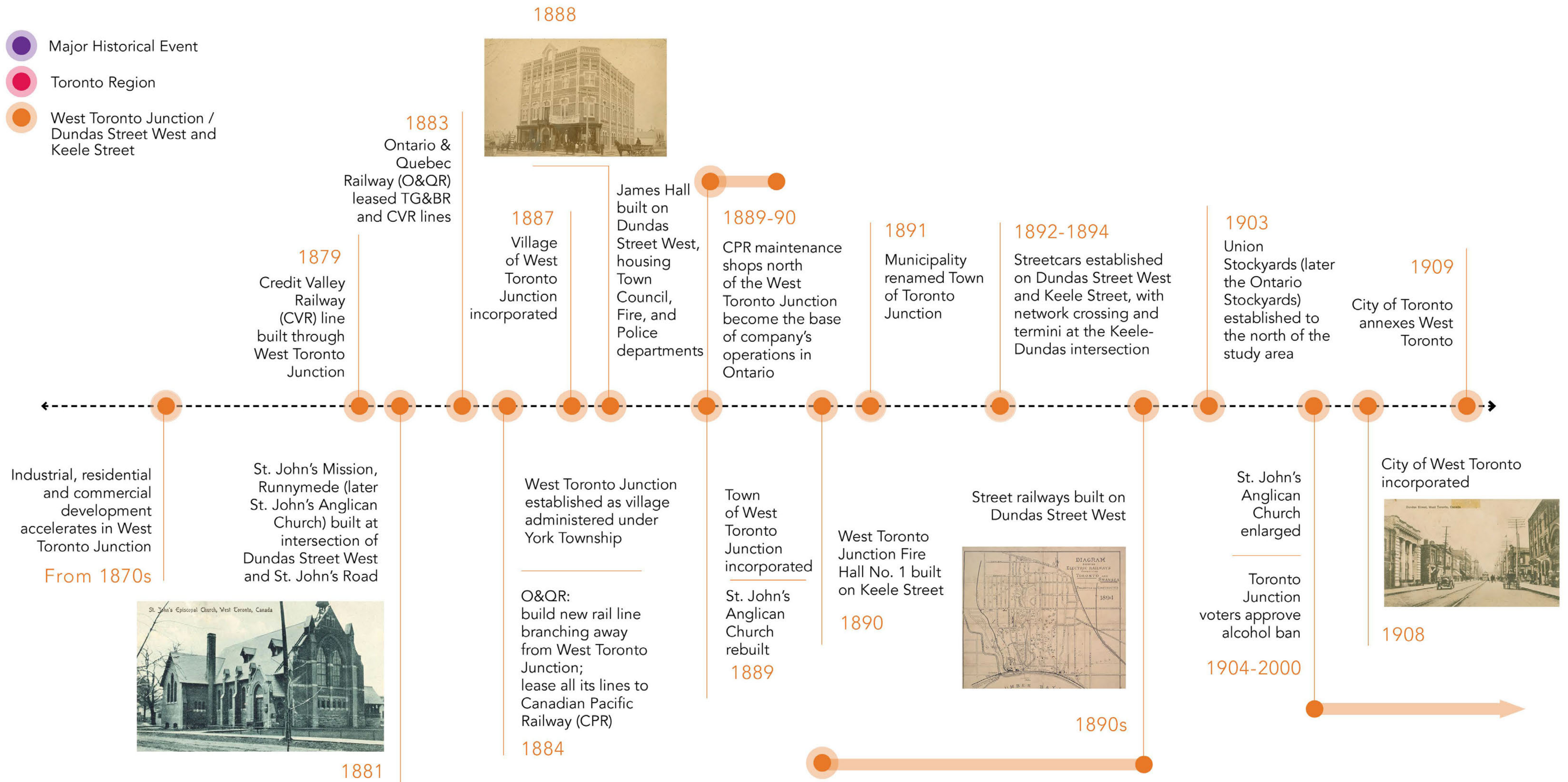
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Timeline (2/3)

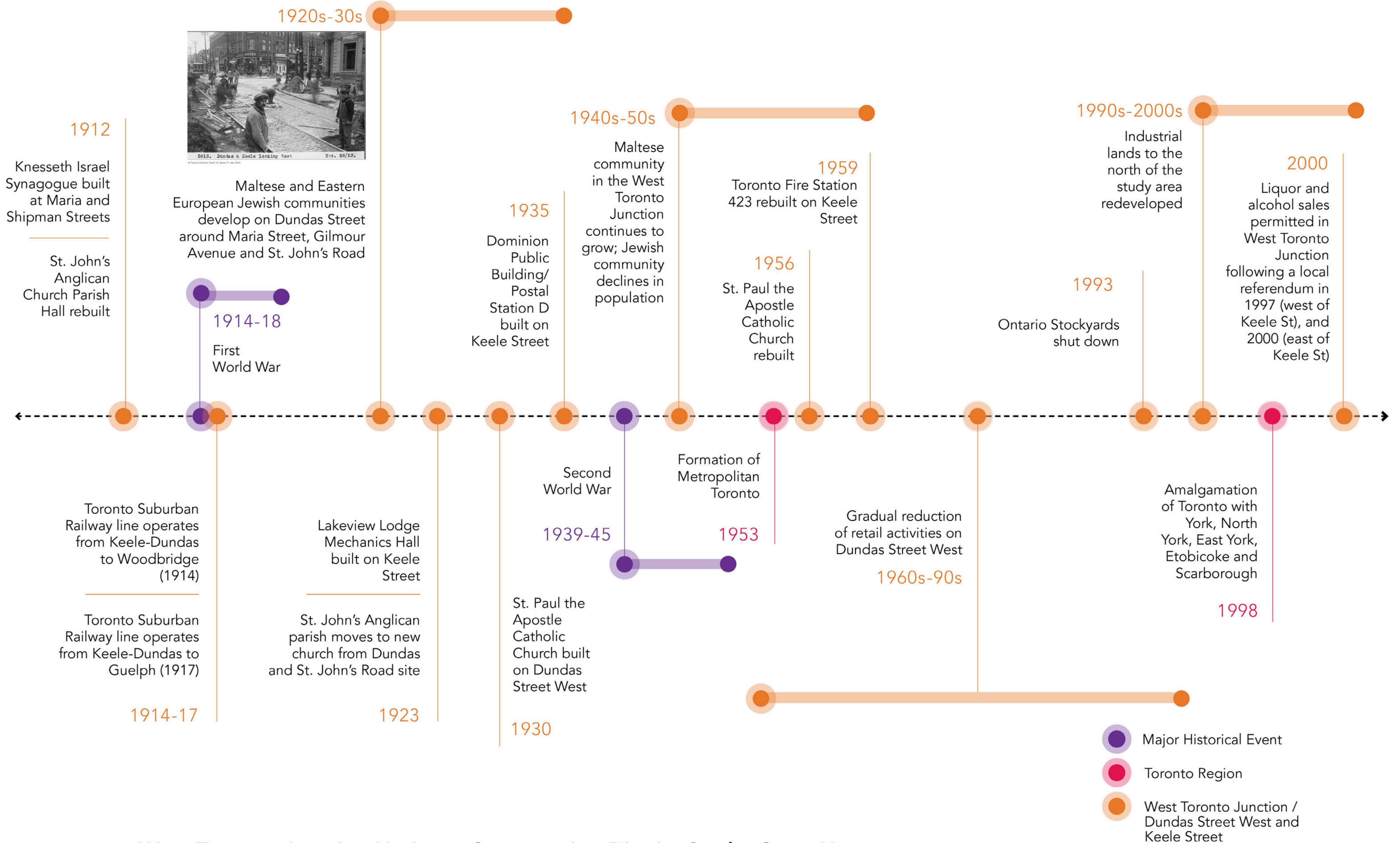
- Major Historical Event
- Toronto Region
- West Toronto Junction / Dundas Street West and Keele Street



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Architectural Stylistic Influences



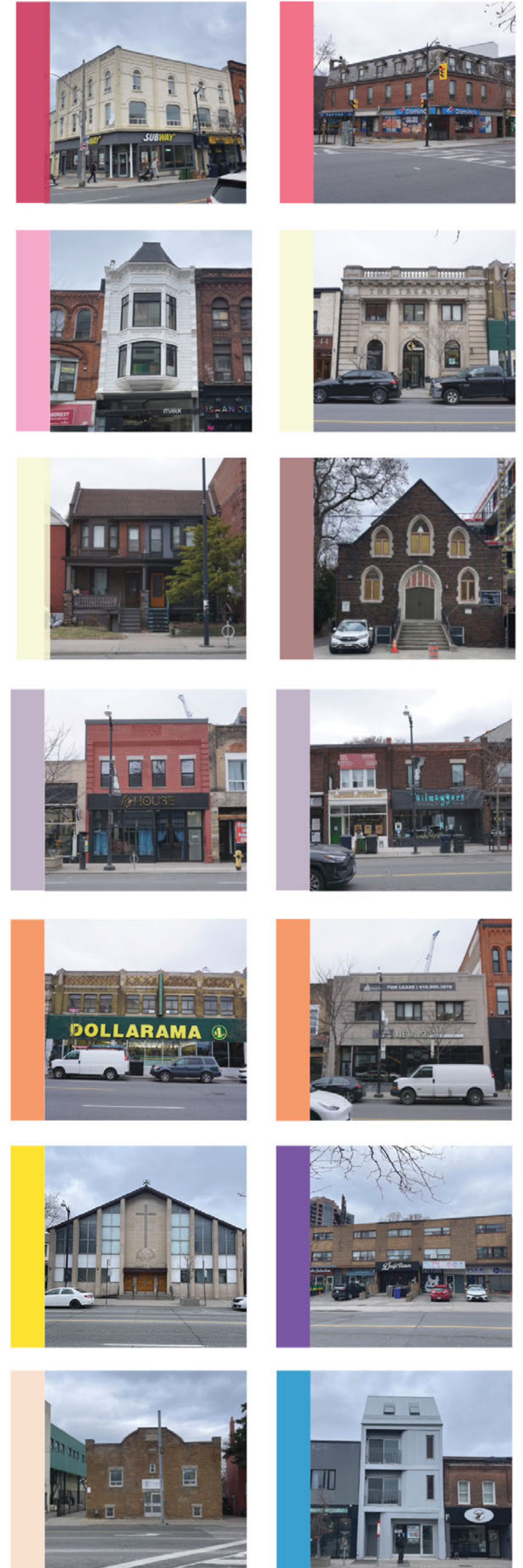
Legend

- Italianate
- Second Empire
- Queen Anne Revival
- Edwardian Classical
- Neo-Gothic Revival
- Main St Vernacular (19th-20c)
- Commercial Vernacular (late 20thc)
- Art Deco
- Modernist
- Contemporary
- Other
- Undetermined

The West Toronto Junction HCD Study Area includes a variety of architectural styles as a result of the area's evolution from an early-20th century main street to a 21st century urban neighbourhood. The

predominant style, a vernacular late 19th to early 20th century commercial main street, is characteristic of Toronto main streets. It is defined by 2-3 story construction with Victorian or Edwardian embellishments and

storefronts that create a porosity at grade and contribute to the animation of the streetwall. Significant historic styles include Italianate, Queen Anne Revival, Edwardian, Neo-Gothic, and Art Deco.



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Dates of Construction



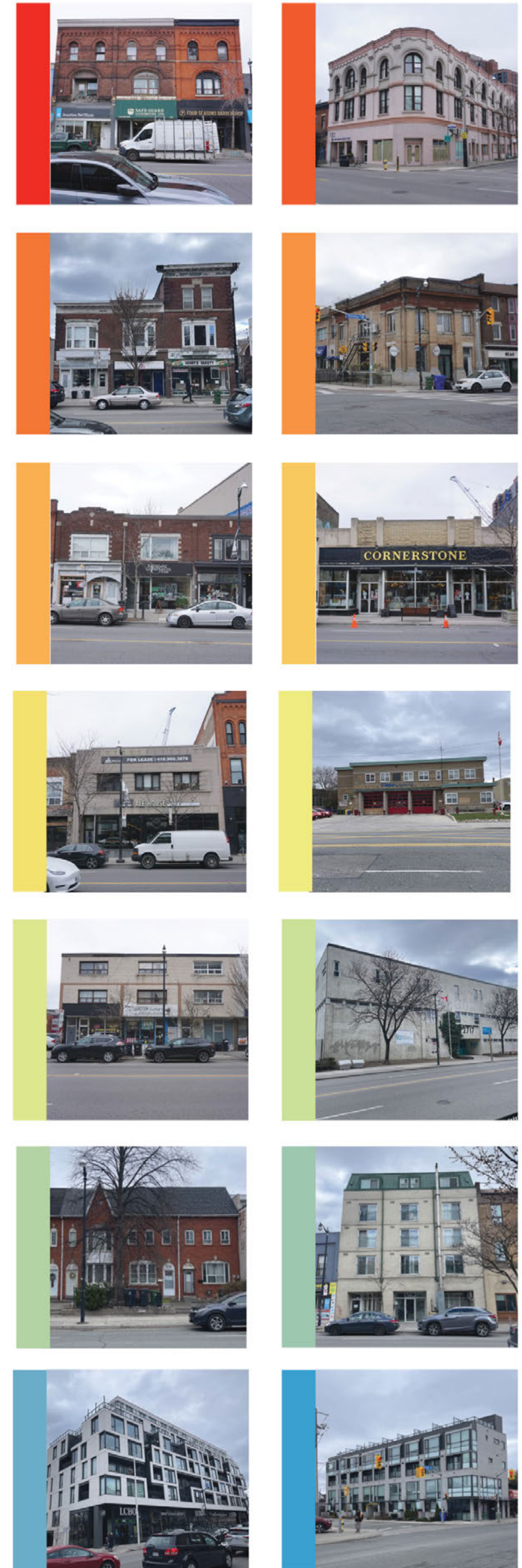
Legend

■ 1880-1889	■ 1960-1969
■ 1890-1899	■ 1970-1979
■ 1900-1909	■ 1980-1989
■ 1910-1919	■ 1990-1999
■ 1920-1929	■ 2000-2009
■ 1930-1939	■ 2010-2019
■ 1940-1949	■ 2020-onward
■ 1950-1959	

The dates of construction of buildings within the Study Area range between 1885 to present day and reflect the evolving nature of the district. With the exception of 3150 Dundas Street West, all extant buildings in the Study Area were constructed after the incorporation of the

Village of West Toronto (1887). Almost 50% of the buildings were constructed between 1900-1919 and 70% of the existing buildings in the Study Area were built before 1920. Development began to slow in the mid-twentieth century with infill projects occurring throughout the Study

Area. A slight development resurgence occurred during the 1960s and again after 2000, with the reversal of the longstanding liquor and alcohol ban. The construction dates reflect the historic waves of development in the Study Area.



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Number of Storeys

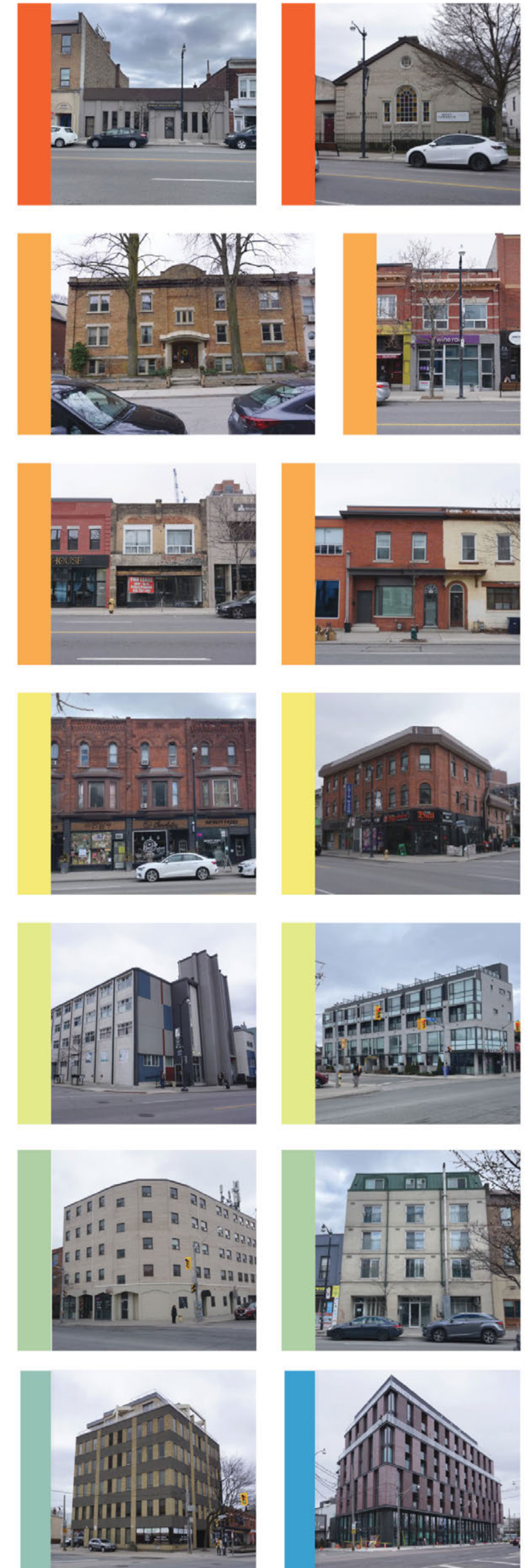


- Legend**
- 1 Storey
 - 2 Storeys
 - 3 Storeys
 - 4 Storeys
 - 5 Storeys
 - 6 Storeys
 - 8+ Storeys

Building storeys in the West Toronto Junction HCD Study Area range from 1 to 10 storeys. The Study Area has predominantly low-rise (1-3 storey) structures, with distinct grouping of 2-storey structures comprising over 60% of the existing

building stock. There are six properties ranging from 4-6 storeys located throughout the Study Area, with a slight concentration around Indian Grove and Gilmour Avenue.

All buildings 8 storeys and more are currently being constructed or were constructed in the 21st c. These buildings are located throughout the Study Area.



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Heritage Evaluation

Historical and Associative Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	Yes	The West Toronto Junction area has direct associations that are significant to the local community and history of Toronto. Its associations can be charted against the area's periods of significance: 1. Early Development (up to the 1879) The period is associated with the western exit of the city (Dundas Street West), the 19th century estates of Runnymede, Aikenshaw, and Keele, subdivision of the Runnymede estate, and the onset of railway development, and commercialization of Dundas Street West. 2. Subdivision, Annexation, and Intensification (1880-1929) The period is associated with the creation of the independent Town of West Toronto Junction and its annexation to the City of Toronto. The area saw an intensification of development related to the railways, their associated industries and population growth. During this period Maltese, Italian, German, Ukrainian, and Eastern European Jewish communities established a presence in and around the Study Area.
Yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of the history of a community or area	No	The main street is representative of a typical late 19th and early 20th century commercial main street development reflective of its early periods of development. It is not strongly associated with a specific community. There is representation of the Maltese community with Malta Park.
Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of a planner, architect, landscape architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	No	The development of the area is a result of gradual subdivision and lot creation from individual estates or owners rather than a formally planned process. This is neither a planned nor designed community.

Design and Physical Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Has a rare, unique, representative or early collection of a style, type, expression, materials, or construction method	Yes	The area includes a concentration of late 19th and early 20th century main street commercial properties typical of its period of development. The styles of the area include Main Street Commercial Vernacular, Italianate, Edwardian Classical, and Art Deco. Typical and representative buildings are modest 2-storey brick structures with flat roofs, and ornately detailed 3-storey brick structures. The buildings are all constructed to the front and side property lines, have similar proportions and solid-to-open window ratios. The ground floor storefronts are marked with wide sign bands that create a continuous datum line; recessed entrances and display windows generate a distinctive rhythm at the sidewalk.
Has a rare, unique, or representative layout, plan, landscape, or spatial organization	No	This section of Dundas Street has a similar relationship to the City's grid as it travels from east to west.
Displays a consistently high degree of overall craftsmanship or artistic merit	No	While some individual buildings display a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, the overall Study Area lacks consistency. Most buildings are more vernacular and simpler commercial structures that do not display a high degree of overall craftsmanship.



Contextual Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Possesses a character that defines, maintains or supports the area's history and sense of time and place	Yes	The experience of the street is defined by continuous streetwalls of buildings with a rhythm of narrow storefronts with recessed entrances, and a strong datum of sign bands. The density of fine grain historic commercial buildings creates a streetscape with a highly defined sense of The Town of West Toronto Junction's Main Street development.
Contains resources that are interrelated by design, history, use and/or setting	Yes	The Study Area is largely defined by the commercial storefronts and civic buildings that reinforce the active and historic Main Street character. Most of the buildings fall within a period of construction from 1880s to 1920s, and their style, form and material palette are representative of historic Main Street development patterns, including corner lots with chamfered buildings.
Is defined by, planned around, or is a landmark	No	The area is neither defined by nor planned around a landmark, however, there are a number of landmark civic and commercial buildings within the area.

Social and Community Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Yields information that contributes to the understanding of, supports, or maintains a community, culture or identity within the district	No	This criterion is not relevant to the area.
Is historically and/or functionally linked to a cultural group, or organized movement or ideology that is significant to a community, plays a historic or ongoing role in the practice of recognition of religious, spiritual or sacred beliefs of a defined group of people that is significant to a community	No	This criterion is not relevant to the area.

Natural and Scientific Value

Criterion	Yes/No	Significance
Has a rare, unique or representative collection of significant natural resources	No	This criterion is not relevant to the area.
Represents, or is a result of, a significant technical or scientific achievement	No	This criterion is not relevant to the area.



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Proposed Heritage Attributes

Heritage attributes are the physical, spatial and material elements within the district that convey its heritage character and that should be conserved. They include buildings, streets and open spaces that are a collective asset to the community. Heritage attributes can range from physical features, such as building materials or architectural motifs, to overall spatial patterns, such as street layout and topography.

Heritage attributes that embody the *historical and associative values* of the district include:

- the concentration of civic and commercial buildings around the intersection of Keele and Dundas, and along Dundas Street West;
- the commercial and civic buildings constructed within the period of significance: Subdivision, Annexation, and Intensification (1880-1929); and
- the offset street pattern formed by the T-intersections of local roads at Dundas Street West and the skewed lots that reflects its separate historic development.

Heritage attributes that embody the *physical values* of the district include:

- the building construction to the front and side lot lines;
- the predominantly low rise scale of 2 to 3 storeys;
- the ratio of the streetwall to the street;
- the contributing properties that reflect the late 19th century and early 20th century vernacular Main Street commercial development;
- the predominant fine (4-10m) grain lot widths and pattern of building;
- the contributing properties that reflect the area's history as an independent town, including the landmark civic and commercial buildings;
- the predominant use of brick, and ornamentation and detailing of masonry;
- the configuration of the narrow ground floor storefronts, with their wide sign bands creating a datum line, their large display windows, and recessed entrances;
- the chamfered building corners at street intersections;
- the Main Street Commercial Vernacular, Italianate, Edwardian Classical, and Art Deco styles;
- the proportion and rhythm of windows, often set within narrow bays with flat arched lintels.

Heritage attributes that embody the *contextual value* of the district include:

- the curve of Dundas Street West and its parallel relationship to the neighbouring railway lines;
- the late 19th and early 20th century main street commercial character of the area represented by its continuous streetwall, low buildings, rhythm of narrow storefronts, recessed entries, and sign bands; and
- the collection of notable buildings, including:
 - Wardell's Monumental Works, 2694-6 Dundas St W
 - Commercial building, 2790-6 Dundas St W
 - Killburn Hall, 2822 Dundas St W
 - Simcoe Block, 2835-43 Dundas St W
 - A.C. Thompson Block, 2845-2853 Dundas St W
 - TD Bank, 2854 Dundas St W
 - Campbell Block, 2856 Dundas St W
 - Bank of British North America/Bank of Montreal, 2859 Dundas St W
 - Alexander Chisholm Building, 2867 Dundas St W
 - William Rowntree Building, 2881 Dundas St W
 - Woolworth Store, 2884 Dundas St W
 - S.S. Kresge Co., 2890 Dundas St W
 - Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, 2896 Dundas St W
 - Crystal Theatre, 2897 Dundas St W
 - Cumming and Co. Undertakers, 2903 Dundas St W
 - William Speers Commercial Building, 2928 Dundas St W
 - Dominion Bank, 2945 Dundas St W
 - William Rowntree Block, 2946 Dundas St W
 - W.H. Ives Tailor Building, 2959 Dundas St W
 - James Hall, 2975 Dundas St W
 - Former Mosque, 3047 Dundas St W
 - West Toronto Baptist Church, 3049 Dundas St W
 - Standard Bank of Canada, 3079 Dundas St W
 - Lakeview Lodge Mechanics Hall built on Keele Street, 319 Keele St
 - Dominion Public Building/Postal Station D built on Keele Street, 330 Keele St
 - Avenue Hotel, 340 High Park Ave
 - Toronto Fire Station 423, 358 Keele St



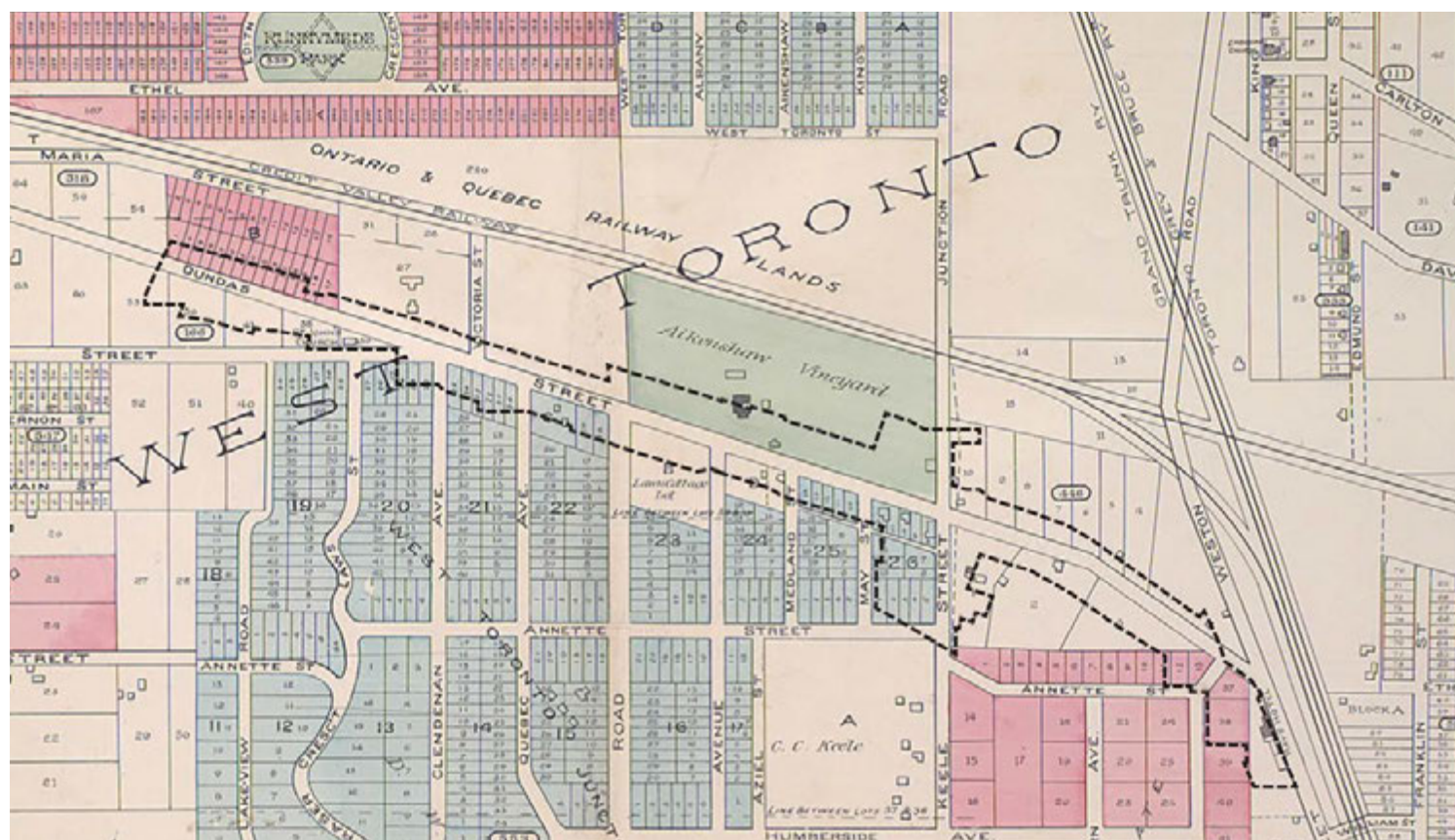
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Statement of Significance

Description of Historic Place

The District is the commercial and civic centre of the former Town of West Toronto Junction. Named after the rail junction located northeast of Keele and Dundas Streets, the District developed alongside the railways and industry to its north, as well as the residential areas to its south. Beginning in the early 19th century, Dundas Street West functioned as the primary western access to the City of Toronto, and access to western municipalities in the Province. The District encompasses properties on both sides of Dundas Street West, extending from 2665/2668 Dundas Street West at Annette Street in the east to 3179/3190 Dundas Street West to the west near Malta Park. It also includes intersecting streets with properties at 319-359 and 330-358 Keele Street, 384-394 Pacific Avenue, 466 Quebec Avenue, 331-341 High Park Avenue, 1-25 St John's Road, and 1-9 St John's Place. The District features predominantly 2-to-3 storey commercial buildings from the late 19th to early-20th centuries, interspersed with former banks, theatres, and hotels. This reflects the District's distinct character and self-reliance as an independent municipality and, later, a unique community within the City of Toronto.



Culture Heritage Value

The District has historical and associative value as part of the ancestral lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples – and for its proximity and connection to traditional Indigenous trading routes, such as the Carrying Place Trail.

Its historical and associative value is also derived from its historic and continued role as the commercial main street of the former independent Town of West Toronto Junction. It developed in tandem with and in support of the freight operations and the industries established along neighbouring the rail lines to the north, as well as the residential area to the south.

Dundas Street West was an early principal road that developed into a major transportation route, functioning as an essential connecting corridor between York and settlements to the west. The street's distinctive curvature at Annette Street reflects the historic road alignment on relatively flat terrain situated between creek valleys and the glacial shoreline of the former Lake Iroquois ridge. This topography played a defining role in locating and developing the railway corridor that runs parallel to Dundas Street West. The railway development, in turn, directly shaped the pattern of urban development that followed.

During the 1870s and 1880s, the convergence of major rail corridors along Dundas Street West transformed the District into a transportation, industrial, and commercial hub. This growth gave rise to the independent Village of West Toronto Junction, established in 1884, incorporated in 1887, and elevated to the Town of West Toronto Junction in 1889. Following a 1904 vote, the municipality banned alcohol – a prohibition that persisted through its annexation by the City of West Toronto in 1908 and by the City of Toronto in 1909, remaining in effect until 2000.

The District's evolving historic character is legible in the buildings and urban fabric. Most were constructed between the 1880s and 1920s, during the period of commercial growth driven by rail, industry, and residential densification. Surviving historic civic and commercial buildings reflect the District's origins as an independent town, including the former Town Hall (James Hall, 2975 Dundas St W), the commercial warehouse of Campbell Block (2856 Dundas St W), the former hotel at 340 High Park Ave, the former Crystal Theatre (2897 Dundas St W), and several banks: TD Bank (2854 Dundas St W), Bank of British North America (2859 Dundas St W), Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (2896 Dundas St W), Dominion Bank (2945 Dundas St W), and Standard Bank of Canada (3079 Dundas St W). The historic subdivision development patterns remain legible today, as evidenced by the offset alignment of the north and south cross-streets at Dundas Street West that form T-intersections.

The District's contextual value is strongly shaped by the historical development of Dundas Street West and the patterns of early settlement, subdivisions, and transportation that influenced the evolution of West Toronto Junction, as a separate community.

The area has contextual value as an example of a late-19th-and early 20th-century commercial main street developed in and around Toronto alongside civic and cultural institutions.

The extant historic civic and commercial landmark buildings contribute to the character and identity of the West Toronto Junction as both a neighbourhood and a once self-sufficient town. These anchors help create a strong sense of place and community, and since their inception, have served as focal points for entertainment, recreational, and civic activities. The intersection of Keele Street and Dundas Street West provides the historic core of the area, while Dundas-

Watkinson Parkette and Malta Park provide important green and open spaces. The rail yards to the north created a defined boundary that reinforced the area's identity.

The District's physical value is derived from a concentration of low-rise buildings. The visual continuity and pedestrian experience of the street are shaped by a continuous streetwall of low buildings, with a rhythm of narrow storefronts (4-10m), recessed entrances, and sign bands.

The historic commercial buildings that define its main street character reflect architectural typologies and styles characteristic of their era. These include two- and three-storey structures with flat roofs, commercial blocks, and institutional buildings. The architectural expression is a late 19th and early 20th century main street vernacular typical of modest scale urban development. The District also features notable examples of Edwardian, Italianate, and Art Deco architecture.

The historic commercial properties are mostly fine-grained, with buildings constructed to the front and side property lines sharing similar proportions and solid-to-void ratios. They generally feature storefronts at grade, brick upper storeys with regular window bays, expressed rooflines, and flat roofs. Buildings at street intersections have chamfered or curved corners. The storefront sign bands create a continuous datum line, while the recessed entrances and display windows generate a distinctive rhythm along the sidewalks. Brick is predominantly used for the upper stories and can include corbeled courses that define bays and articulate cornices and parapets.



Proposed Boundary & Contributing Properties

Proposed Boundary

The areas excluded from the proposed HCD Plan boundary do not have a consistent historic main street character, and are typically more residential. The boundary includes 292 properties and 2 City-owned Parks. The area encompasses properties fronting both sides of Dundas Street West from 2665/2668 Dundas Street West at the east to 3179/3190 Dundas Street West at the west, 319-359 & 330-358 Keele Street, 384-394 Pacific Avenue, 331-341 High Park Ave, 466 Quebec Ave, 1-25 St John's Road, and 1-9 St John's Place.

Contributing Properties

Properties within the proposed West Toronto Junction Main Street HCD were individually evaluated to determine whether they contribute to the area's heritage value. Contributing properties are those that have design, historic, and/or associative value and that contribute to the area's heritage character. A property was identified as contributing if it satisfied the following criteria: was constructed during the period of significance; is a prevailing commercial or civic built form; has architectural design interest; and retains its integrity.

There are 2 parks and 154 contributing and 138 non-contributing properties. This is the proposed list of contributing properties and may be subject to change during the Plan phase.



Contributing properties include:

2694 Dundas St W	2747 Dundas St W	2790 Dundas St W	2841 Dundas St W	2859 Dundas St W	2890 Dundas St W	2928 Dundas St W	2957 Dundas St W	2994 Dundas St W	3022 Dundas St W	3049 Dundas St W	3069 Dundas St W	3089 Dundas St W	3109 Dundas St W	3136 Dundas St W	3188 Dundas St W	19 St John's Rd	466 Quebec Ave
2733 Dundas St W	2749 Dundas St W	2798 Dundas St W	2843 Dundas St W	2861 Dundas St W	2896 Dundas St W	2932 Dundas St W	2959 Dundas St W	2996 Dundas St W	3023 Dundas St W	3054 Dundas St W	3071 Dundas St W	3091 Dundas St W	3111 Dundas St W	3138 Dundas St W	3190 Dundas St W	21 St John's Rd	
2735 Dundas St W	2751 Dundas St W	2800 Dundas St W	2844 Dundas St W	2867 Dundas St W	2897 Dundas St W	2934 Dundas St W	2961 Dundas St W	2998 Dundas St W	3032 Dundas St W	3056 Dundas St W	3073 Dundas St W	3093 Dundas St W	3115 Dundas St W	3140 Dundas St W	3044 Dundas St W	23 St John's Rd	
2737 Dundas St W	2753 Dundas St W	2802 Dundas St W	2845 Dundas St W	2871 Dundas St W	2903 Dundas St W	2945 Dundas St W	2963 Dundas St W	2998A Dundas St	3036 Dundas St W	3058 Dundas St W	3075 Dundas St W	3095 Dundas St W	3118 Dundas St W	3154 Dundas St W	319 Keele St	25 St John's Rd	
2738 Dundas St W	2775 Dundas St W	2804 Dundas St W	2847 Dundas St W	2876 Dundas St W	2912 Dundas St W	2946 Dundas St W	2975 Dundas St W	3000 Dundas St W	3038 Dundas St W	3060 Dundas St W	3074 Dundas St W	3097 Dundas St W	3120 Dundas St W	3178 Dundas St W	323 Keele St	340 High Park Ave	
2739 Dundas St W	2783 Dundas St W	2806 Dundas St W	2848 Dundas St W	2877 Dundas St W	2914 Dundas St W	2949 Dundas St W	2978 Dundas St W	3006 Dundas St W	3040 Dundas St W	3062 Dundas St W	3079 Dundas St W	3099 Dundas St W	3128 Dundas St W	3180 Dundas St W	330 Keele St	331 High Park Ave	
2741 Dundas St W	2785 Dundas St W	2822 Dundas St W	2853 Dundas St W	2880 Dundas St W	2916 Dundas St W	2951 Dundas St W	2989 Dundas St W	3013 Dundas St W	3042 Dundas St W	3063 Dundas St W	3083 Dundas St W	3103 Dundas St W	3130 Dundas St W	3182 Dundas St W	347 Keele St	333 High Park Ave	
2743 Dundas St W	2787 Dundas St W	2834 Dundas St W	2854 Dundas St W	2881 Dundas St W	2920 Dundas St W	2953 Dundas St W	2991 Dundas St W	3015 Dundas St W	3045 Dundas St W	3065 Dundas St W	3085 Dundas St W	3104 Dundas St W	3132 Dundas St W	3184 Dundas St W	358 Keele St	337 High Park Ave	
2745 Dundas St W	2788 Dundas St W	2835 Dundas St W	2856 Dundas St W	2884 Dundas St W	2925 Dundas St W	2955 Dundas St W	2993 Dundas St W	3021 Dundas St W	3047 Dundas St W	3067 Dundas St W	3087 Dundas St W	3106 Dundas St W	3134 Dundas St W	3186 Dundas St W	17 St John's Rd	341 High Park Ave	



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Contributing Properties: Dundas St W North Streetscapes



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Contributing Properties: Dundas St W South Streetscapes

Quebec Ave



Clendenan Ave



St. John's Road



Pacific Ave



High Park Ave



Keele St



Maverly St



Medland St



Annette St



Indian Rd Cres



Indian Grove



Contributing
 Non-contributing



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HCD Plan Objectives

The City of Toronto's Terms of Reference for Heritage Conservation Districts in Toronto states in HCD Policy 8:

The primary objective for every Heritage Conservation District is the protection, conservation and management of the attributes and heritage resources of the district so that the area's historic significance, cultural heritage values and character, as identified in the HCD Study and Plan, are protected in the long-term.

In keeping with HCD Policy 8, the following objectives were developed from the understanding and analysis of the district's history and character to ensure that the resulting HCD Plan is able to conserve and enhance its cultural heritage values.



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, f1231_it1985

Statement of Objectives

1. Conserve and maintain the cultural heritage value of the District as expressed through its heritage attributes, contributing properties, building typologies, and public realm.
2. Conserve the legibility of the District's period of significance as expressed through the District's heritage attributes
3. Conserve and maintain the legibility of the historic West Toronto Junction Main Street and the civic core on Keele Street.
4. Conserve and maintain the District's contributing properties, Part IV designated properties and listed properties.
5. Conserve the historic main street character of the District, including its consistent streetwall, scale, fine-grained built form, rear laneways, and pedestrian orientation of buildings, and support the mixed commercial, retail, or civic uses that main street character implies.
6. Ensure alterations to contributing properties are compatible and conserve and maintain the heritage attributes of the District.
7. Ensure that new development and additions conserve and maintain the cultural heritage value of the District in general, particularly with respect to the historic scale, form and massing of its contributing properties and public realm, and the general pattern of buildings.
8. Encourage high-quality architecture in the design of new development, additions and alterations that is compatible with the District's cultural heritage value.
9. Conserve and maintain the District's human-scale built form that supports and enhances the pedestrian main street experience and sense of place.
10. Promote excellence in streetscape, lighting, landscape, signage, and civic design to enhance the public realm that supports the District's ongoing use by pedestrians as a historic main street and reinforces its cultural and civic role.
11. Ensure compatibility of materials between new and old, including but not limited to, type, colour, scale, finish and details.
12. Conserve and maintain the well-defined and articulated streetwalls of the District.
13. Conserve the scale and heritage attributes of the District's historic storefronts to acknowledge and support the diversity of shops and retail activity that reflect and support the cultural and economic diversity of the District.
14. Honour and celebrate the area's historic and contemporary Indigenous heritage. Encourage an interpretation strategy and land-based initiatives to bring forward the Indigenous history of the area.



West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District Study: Open House

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Engagement

Urban Indigenous Engagement

Engagement Process

Acosys Consulting Services Inc. was engaged to lead the Urban Indigenous Engagement component of the West Toronto Junction Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Study.

Our approach was grounded in Indigenous-led methodologies, cultural protocols, and relationship-based planning, organized across four phases: pre-engagement and relationship building, engagement design and preparation, session delivery, and post-engagement reporting.

The engagement process centred on establishing trust and cultivating meaningful connections with Indigenous communities prior to the event. Outreach was conducted to local Indigenous organizations, Friendship Centres, community leaders, and knowledge keepers.

The planning phase also focused on designing a session format rooted in storytelling, circle-based dialogue, and ceremonial protocols reflecting Indigenous ways of knowing rather than conventional consultation models.

The Indigenous Engagement Session took place on September 15, 2025, bringing together Elders, knowledge keepers, Indigenous residents, and community partners. The session was opened and closed with ceremony, and featured a presentation and teachings from Indigenous Knowledge Keeper Philip Coté (Shawnee, Lakota, Potawatomi, Ojibway, Algonquin, Mississauga, Mohawk), who shared oral histories, cultural knowledge, and perspectives on the deep Indigenous presence and history of the Junction area. Participants also engaged in facilitated dialogue and a collaborative mapping exercise exploring Indigenous connections to the landscape.

Summary of What We Heard

Participants emphasized that the history of the West Toronto Junction does not begin with European settlement, but reflects a continuous Indigenous presence stretching back thousands of years. Knowledge Keeper Philip Coté shared oral traditions indicating Algonquin peoples including those historically referred to as the Etobicoke have maintained relationships with this land for at least 13,500 years, with some teachings extending that presence significantly further. These teachings provide an important counterbalance to Western archaeological dating and highlight the depth of Indigenous ancestral memory carried through oral tradition.

Indigenous members connected to the West Junction area highlighted that much of this history has been obscured through successive waves of urban development with trails, gathering places, and cultural landmarks buried beneath roads and built form.

There was a strong and consistent call to restore this history through reconnection with original place names, recognition of historic travel routes and cultural sites, and the meaningful integration of Indigenous perspectives into future planning and heritage designation processes.

Participants also emphasized the importance of decision-making that supports the well-being of future generations, reflecting long-standing Indigenous governance principles and responsibilities to land and water.

Community Engagement

Engagement Process

The objective of community engagement is to gather feedback to inform the HCD Study process. Engagement provided face-to-face and virtual opportunities for community participation. Between June 2025 and June 2026, two public Community Consultation Open Houses and three Local Advisory Committee (LAC) meetings were held.

Local Advisory Committee

A Local Advisory Committee (LAC) was established to obtain feedback from a range of voices within the Study Area throughout the HCD Study process. The LAC is comprised of representatives from the local organizations and local residents who have an interest in the study area. The LAC was led by City Staff with support from the facilitation consultant (LURA Consulting) and the heritage consultant (EVOQ).

Community Consultation

Community consultation meetings were held as drop-in style open houses. The meeting format featured an open house with stations offering community members an opportunity to learn about the HCD Study, speak to City staff, the consultant team and share feedback. Participants were invited to submit comment forms at the event, visit the project website and submit comments and/or feedback via mail or email.

Summary of What We Heard

Participants described the West Toronto Junction as a distinctive, walkable main street community defined by its low-rise historic character, cohesive streetscape, and mix of commercial, residential, institutional, and cultural uses. Dundas Street West was consistently identified as the heart of the neighbourhood, valued for its fine-grained storefronts, pedestrian scale, consistent heights and rooflines, materiality, laneways, and sunlight on sidewalks. Participants emphasized that the area's charm comes not only from individual buildings, but from the collective character, continuity, and lived experience of the Junction as a complete town.

Community members highlighted the Junction's strong historical identity and social history, including its roots as an independent working-class town shaped by railways, industry, churches, immigrant communities, and local institutions.

Participants expressed broad support for heritage recognition and conservation, alongside concerns about development, rising rents, vacant storefronts, and the erosion of the Junction's low-rise, pedestrian-oriented character. While some welcomed new housing and growth that supports main street vitality, many stressed the need for context-sensitive development, preservation of affordable and family-oriented housing, and recognition of sympathetic infill projects that reinforce existing character.

LAC members highlighted the importance of recognition of architectural diversity, cultural landscapes, social and associative value, and the relationship between commercial activity, residential life, and community identity that together define West Toronto Junction.



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